



FOREST

ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Delivering a thriving economy

Stakeholder Meeting Notes 09:30 to 11:30 11th June 2019

The Conference Centre, Vantage Point Business Village, Mitcheldean

“The Forest Economic Partnership (FEP) is bringing together business, education, public sector, people, ideas and resources to give the Forest of Dean a voice and to help deliver a thriving and sustainable economy”

1. My Sector Shout-Out

36 Stakeholders present completed a questionnaire highlighting the challenges and success of their business and sectors. An on-line version of the questionnaire will be sent out to all stakeholders to complete shortly. This is the start of a process to promote more fully sector successes, address sector challenges and feeds into the sector-based approach of the Inspiring the Forest project

2. The Industrial Strategy Grand Challenges

Round table discussions took place around the 4 Grand Challenges set out in the UK Industrial Strategy issued in November 2017 The Grand Challenges are an invitation to business, academia and civil society to work together to innovate and develop new technologies and industries in areas of strategic importance to our country. They underpin the Local Industrial Strategy being prepared by GFirst.

The Grand Challenges are:

- Growing the AI and Data-Driven Economy
- Ageing Society
- Clean Growth
- Future Mobility

Attached is the power point with more detail. A synthesis of the discussions will follow later.

3. Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)

Katie Jenkins, Director of Local Industrial Strategy from GFirst LEP advised that the call for evidence for the LIS has now closed. Over 200 files of data evidence were received and will be reviewed to help writing the LIS.

The LIS is underpinned 5 principles of productivity of the national Industrial Strategy:

- People
- Place
- Infrastructure
- Business Environment
- Ideas

GFirst are keen for youth engagement in the LIS as it is about long term future direction and have launched a survey aimed at 14 to 25 year olds

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GlosMagnet> to find what we should do to make Gloucestershire a 'Magnet County' for young people.

GFirst LEP are expecting to have the complete evidence base by the end of the summer as some organisations have already identified that a longer period was necessary to gather needed data. The LIS will look at what makes Gloucestershire special, enables clean green growth and flexible working.

4. CIC Update

The CIC is beginning to take shape with the draft Articles of Association and Directors handbook circulated prior to the meeting. Please see a copy of these attached. Any questions or notes on these, please email to fep@fdean.gov.uk no later than the 28th June. A final version will then be circulated for approval upon which the CIC will be formed.

The Board of Directors will be composed of:

- Chair of FEP
- 2-3 Individuals nominated by the Stakeholder Group
- Leaders of Sub-Groups who opt to serve
- The Regeneration Officer nominated by Publica on behalf of The Forest of Dean District Council (ex officio)
- The Council Cabinet Member Responsible for Economic Development (ex officio) subject to an agreed process and who serves as Vice-Chair of FEP2-3 Individuals nominated by the Stakeholder Group

If you are interested in being a Stakeholder Group Director, please read the Directors Handbook for more information on what this means and then email fep@fdean.gov.uk.

5. Project Updates

IF - Inspiring the Forest

Clare Vertigen (IF Action Group) presented an update on the IF project. With insufficient funding and the state of preparedness of the sector groups, the Action Group postponed the July LIFE event at Dene Magna. The first Local IF Event will now take place on 14th October 2019.

This event will showcase 5 of the 10 key sectors across the Forest of Dean:

- Manufacturing and Engineering
- ICT
- Tourism and Hospitality
- Health and Care
- Construction

With funding constraints IF is looking for business sponsors.

The LIFE events will be eventually held at each of the district's secondary schools. Another is planned for the spring of 2020 in the South of the District. A District Inspiring the Forest Festival (DIFF) with all 10 sectors open to all is currently planned for 2020/2021.

How Fast; How Good?

David Trevelyan (Chair of the Digital Connectivity Sub-Group) advised that the How Fast; How Good? Survey has launched.

Please complete this very short survey and encourage others to do so: bit.ly/HowFastHowGood

The survey is now live on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The survey will close on 31st July 2019 but early response will allow the team to focus on areas in July where there is no data. The data will be reviewed in August and an update will be provided at the next Stakeholder Meeting on 11st September 2019.

Bridging the Gap

David Trevelyan advised that the Digital Connectivity Sub-Group have now met with their first case study for 'Bridging the Gap project' the Hewelsfield Broadband Group (Brockweir). The area, as evident from the results of using the How Fast How Good survey, has major issues with their connectivity. Gigaclear are expected to service the area in Q1 of 2020, however the residents are not keen on waiting. As such, we are looking at how we could help, by putting them in touch with independent contractors to look at feasibility and estimated costs.

Once the case study has been completed in Brockweir, the project has the invitation to speak to the parish of Awre about their issues. The How Fast How Good Survey will also flag up other areas where help might be needed to resolve current poor connectivity.

Economic Case for a Biosphere Reserve

Andrew Callard (Chair of FEP) represented the Transport and Infrastructure Sub-Group and is there an Economic Case for a Biosphere in the Forest of Dean project. He advised that the data has been compiled by the ONS and based on the initial data there is an economic case for a Biosphere. The data will now need to be fully modelled with report hopefully due at the September meeting.

6. AOB

The Digital Connectivity Sub-Group advised that the FEP will be represented at the 5G workshop in Newport on 19th June.

The Sub-Groups are looking for more members, should you wish to join any of the 4 Sub-Groups, please contact fep@fdean.gov.uk to register your interest

7. Actions for Stakeholders

- Complete & share the How Fast; How Good? survey <http://bit.ly/HowFastHowGood>
- Spread the news of the LIFE event at Dene Magna
- Raise any comments on the proposed Articles of Association and Directors Handbook by 28th June
- Volunteer as a Stakeholder Director of CIC by 28th June
- Engage with the LIS

8. Upcoming Meetings

- Education & Skills Sub-Group - 26th June 2019 - 16:00 to 18:00 Dene Academy, Lydney
- Transport & Infrastructure Sub-Group - 17th July 2019 - 09:30 to 11:30 Cafe 16, Coleford
- Bridges and Borders Sub-Group – 23rd July 2019 - 9:30 to 11:30 Café 16, Coleford
- Digital Connectivity Sub-Group - 7th August 2019 - 09:30 to 11:30 Cafe 16, Coleford
- Stakeholder Meeting - 11th September 2019 - 9:30 to 11:30 Lydney Town Council