



**FOREST**

ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Delivering a thriving economy

CIC Number: 12262533

## Stakeholder Meeting Notes 09:30 to 11:30 11th December 2019

Forest Campus, Gloucestershire College

***“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”***

### **Notes:**

#### Community Interest Company (CIC)

Wendy Jackson confirmed that the **FOREST ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP CIC** is incorporated under the Companies Act 2006 as a Community Interest Company. Is a private company, which the company is limited by guarantee, and the situation of its registered office is in England and Wales.

**Company Number:** 12262533

**Registered Office (2019/2020):** Beaumont House, 172 Southgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 2EZ.

**Trading Address:** Forest of Dean District Council, High St, Coleford, GL16 8HG.

6 out of the 12 potential directors have been appointed and the FEP logo has been updated with the Company Number.

Wendy confirmed that a Treasurers Account has been opened with Lloyds and an insurance provided has been identified by the board.

In early 2020, FEP will move from the Forest of Dean District Council website to their own independently hosted site.

***If any member of the stakeholder group is interested in becoming a stakeholder director, please speak to one of the directors for more information on how to get involved.***

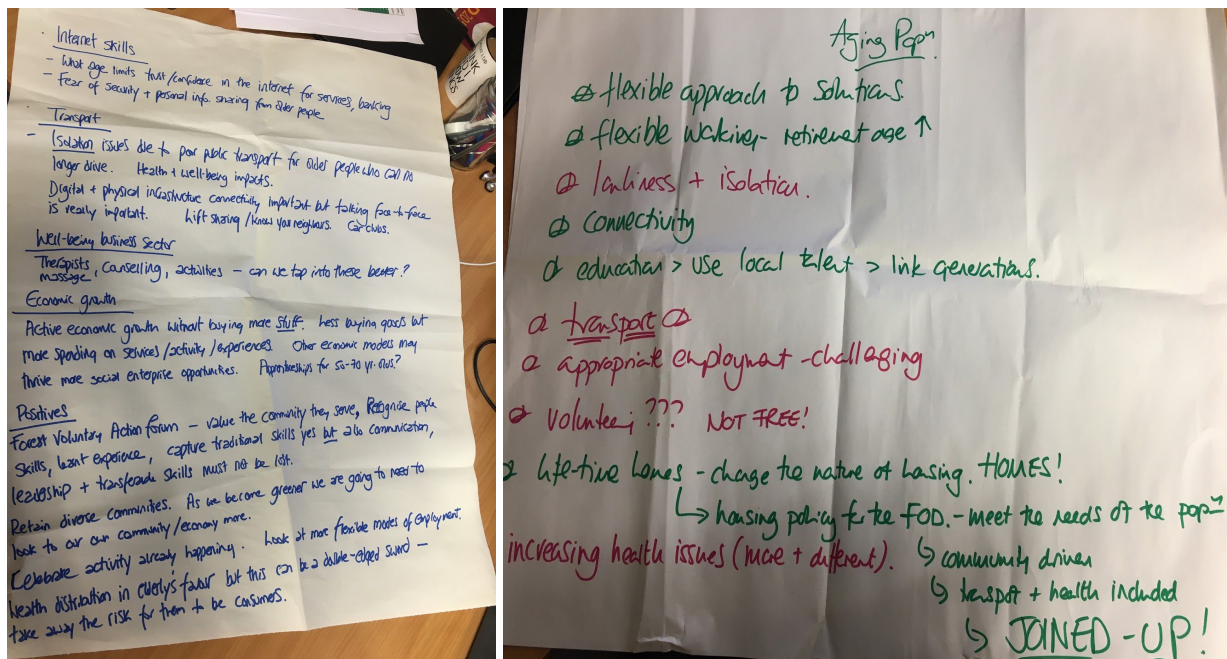
#### Aging Society

Round table discussions took place around the 4th Industrial Grand Challenge, Aging Society, set out in the UK Industrial Strategy.

These 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.

The Aging Society challenge looked at how we will harness the power of innovation to help meet the needs of an ageing society; help our ageing population lead independent and fulfilled lives and continue to contribute to society.

Discussions called for **joined up thinking**; life-time homes and community driven developments along with a change in perception when looking at the ageing society from a burden to an asset, in both society and in business.



## Projects Update

### Forest of Dean Heritage Biosphere Reserve

Alastair Chapman informed that since the report published by the ONS into the economic benefits of a biosphere reserve in the Forest of Dean, the Transport, Infrastructure, Bridges and Borders group put forward an action group (BRAG) to look into the options of taking the project forward.

Following research and discussions the Biosphere Reserve Action Group came to the conclusion that we know what the benefits would be economically, however it was determined that we need to know if there was a community backing.

In conjunction with FoDDC the action group proposed to submit a bid to the Lottery for funding for 10K to support community and stakeholder engagement to assess the wider appetite for a Biosphere Reserve.

Both FoDDC & FEP will be committing staff resources, which can be used as match, effectively doubling the total value of the project.

The Project will:

- Develop wider partnership to guide the next phase of the project
- Specific engagement with statutory organisations such as GCC, LEP, NE, EA, FE, Tourism Association etc
- Utilise online surveys, short videos and facilitated workshops to engage a wide range of stakeholders

Questions arose in relation to interest in the District to becoming an AONB and talks with Hereford regarding a national park. Alastair confirmed that neither of these were mutually exclusive, based on different types of modelling and are managed differently to a Biosphere Reserve.

**Stakeholders voted on the proposal:**

- 2 abstained
- 17 in favour

How Fast;How Good?

David Trevelyan, Chair of the Digital Connectivity Sub-Group informed that group that the results from the first How Fast; How Good? have been forwarded to the GFirst LEP to feed into the Local Industrial Strategy and FoDDC Local Plan: Issues and Options Consultation.

The next stage of the study is planned for early 2020 which will take a deeper analysis of broadband speed focusing on performance over time.

Bridging the Gap

David Trevelyan, informed that the Bridging the Gap case study in Hewelsfield was advancing as expected, however since engaging with other contract providers, BT are now re-surveyed the area. Longer term, Fastershire will deploy in the area hopefully resolving the issues.

The project is still giving ongoing support for the Fastershire Churcham Broadband pilot and meeting with Monmouthshire CC Rural Connectivity provider.

Smart Rural / Tech Nations

In 2019 David Trevelyan has attended the Mobile UK presentation to GCC and UK5G Events on behalf of the Forest Economic Partnership. David advised there is a mixed message from the Automotive Industry, Urban before Rural , Sales rather than better.

Mobile UK seem to have a similar view with 5G deployment in rural areas likely in the next 10-15 years. FEP will continue to challenge this in the project Smart Rural with aims to be the first Smart Rural district in the UK.

### Inspiring the Forest - IF

Andrew Callard informed that the first Local Inspiring the Forest Event (LIFE) event due to take place in the Autumn was postponed and will be taking place on 30 March 2020 with support and funding from FoDDC & GFirst LEP.

More sponsorship opportunities are available to stakeholders.

The aim of the event is to raise aspirations amongst the young, parents, teachers and adults across the Forest of Dean.

### Future Transport Consultation

Andrew Callard informed that the Transport, Infrastructure, Bridges and Borders sub-group will be proposing the project in the new year to look at a future ground zero transport study.

The project will give residents of the Forest of Dean a way to look at the opportunity approach to local and regional transport.

The sub-group are looking to present a full proposal in Summer 2020.

### MAaS

David Trevelyan informed that MAaS (Mobility as a Service) is the use of integrated technology and information to get around. It looks at how you move the conversation from the journey to getting from A to B.

The digital connectivity group along with GCC and MCC are looking at creating a database of current transport service, data and governance and how to link them to enable a smart platform for rural infrastructure.

It will open an opportunity for 5G rural project funding, which subsequently would lead to an early roll out of 5G in the Forest of Dean.

The sub-group are looking to present a full proposal in early 2020.

### Severn Vale Board

Andrew Callard, informed that the FEP have been invited to join the Severn Vale Board. The Severn Vale Board is one of 3 boards established by Leadership Gloucestershire from Concordat

of October 2018. The purpose of the board was been challenged and has evolved, principally the board will focus on the digital and transport connectivity in the key geographic area given the impetus of the Great Western Powershouse.

Terms of Reference were circulated to the stakeholders prior to the meeting.

Queries were made to whether the entirety of the Forest of Dean was included within the board. Andrew confirmed that as both FEP and FoDDC are inclusive of the entire Forest of Dean that it would be.

Stakeholders **agreed** by voted on FEP becoming members of the board.

### 2020 Meeting Dates

- Tuesday 17 March 2020, 9:30am to 11:30am - Venue to be confirmed
- Wednesday 17 June 2020, 9:30am to 11:30am - Venue to be confirmed
- Thursday 17 September 2020, 9:30am to 11:30am - Venue to be confirmed
- Thursday 17 December 2020, 9:30am to 11:30am - Venue to be confirmed