

A Competitive, Connected Economy

Priority Outcome: A Competitive, Connected Economy – A more competitive, connected and productive Gloucestershire economy in terms of sector diversity, through stimulating innovation and enhancing employment opportunities.

Why is this a priority?

Competitiveness is one of the main drivers of business performance, productivity and wider economic activity and national and international trade and associated exploitation of regional comparative advantage is a fundamental component of competitiveness, whilst good connectivity, both physical and electronic, is vital to exploiting Gloucestershire's location and delivering a strong and resilient economy, whilst reducing the carbon emissions.

Where do we want to be in three years time? By March 2013 Gloucestershire needs to have:

- An effective investor support service, offering active employer engagement in order to nurture growth and appropriate skills development in priority and emerging sectors
- Increased the use of 'Solutions for Business' to support businesses particularly SMEs and micro businesses
- Strengthened the County's offer to tourists, visitors and businesses through a re-organisation of the Destination Management Organisation
- Increased Broadband access that meets the Universal Service Commitment (USC) of 2 Mbits/s from 75% to 90% of premises in the County
- A programme in place to provide Next Generation Broadband to 90% of the County's residents and businesses by 2017.
- Maintained momentum on the economic business case to drive through key strategic infrastructure improvements
- An LTP3 that achieves a local transport infrastructure and integrated public transport services that are appropriate to the needs of a developing Gloucestershire economy and provides solutions to the road and rail capacity issues in the County, including the handling of freight

What we will do this year

Improvement Activity	Planned Benefits	Key Resources	Dates	Lead	Partners
Apprenticeships – Promote an integrated offer and broker the effective take up of apprenticeship options across priority and emerging sectors.	An increased number of apprenticeship places at all levels by employers, by a minimum of 10% Focus on growing opportunities in emerging sectors – advanced engineering, finance and business services, public services and green technologies.	Skills Funding Agency, HE and FE funding	Review April 2011	GFirst – Ahmed Goga	NAS, GCC 14-19 Unit PSEPs, SSCs, HE/ FE & WBL providers
High Speed Broadband – To deliver the recent submission made to the RDA through expanding and developing the connect.glos2 project in a rural District – subject to being successful.	If funded 7 rural settlements in the Forest of Dean and at least 20 businesses would have access to high speed broadband Greater influence on network providers Awareness of future infrastructure needs and requirements <i>CF: Super fast Network/RDA</i>	SWRDA £350K GFirst staff time	Start June 2010	GFirst – Claire Edwards	RDA, Broadband providers, FODDC

<p>Destination Management Organisation (DMO) Implement the Review and work with partners to deliver the recommendations made in the review report</p>	<p>Improve local authority support to the tourism industry through coordination and partnership with the local tourism industry. Increase in value of tourism sector to Gloucestershire Support to the sector to develop workforce potential Improve tourism packages and bookability for customers</p>	<p>GCC – £2.5k</p>	<p>Review September 2010</p>	<p>GFirst – David Owen</p>	<p>Districts Tourism Businesses</p>
<p>Solutions for Business – Work collaboratively with Business Link to improve the take up of the initiatives with a particular focus on the Start Up package, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Export development opportunities – Glos City focus 	<p>240 new businesses start trading, having completed training Survival rate of new start ups at 80% + after 12 months 1200 business advice sessions completed 750 businesses receive 'Intensive Assistance' 120 companies wishing to grow receive Strategic Development Support 600 business receive Skill Support with over 2,500 learners assisted</p>	<p>Business Link is funded to provide this, plus UKTI</p>	<p>Review April 2011</p>	<p>Business Link – Grant Cozens</p>	<p>GEL</p>
<p>Sector Development/Workforce Planning – Review the collection and co-ordination of intelligence on the County's priority sectors and introduce a more effective process for tackling the needs identified with partners.</p>	<p>Greater awareness of the needs of the priority sectors and more effective action taken to address these and strengthen the businesses in these sectors.</p>	<p>GFirst Staff time</p>	<p>Review April 2011</p>	<p>GFirst – Angela Presdee</p>	<p>BL, Parklife Districts, GMG, SVA, GCC, providers</p>
<p>Parklife Business Parks Project – Act as a key conduit/bridge in brokering support to businesses located in 6 key locations and across 20 business parks in County</p>	<p>Sustainable employer led business network Increased network membership Improved co-ordination of public sector support to employers</p>	<p>£35k Districts + FOD LAG £208k (Bid pending)</p>	<p>Start April 2010</p>	<p>GFirst – Angela Presdee</p>	<p>Business Parks, all Districts/ Borough Councils</p>

<p>Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP) – Influence the formulation of the LTP to reflect the economic needs of the County</p>	<p>Active business engagement with and participation in the consultation process Improved links between the Environment and Economic Partnerships Enhanced understanding of travel to work patterns Improve access for rural communities and less reliance on public transport especially, through enhanced local service provision <i>Cf: to Glos Economy – RDPE activity and ongoing VCS contract work, plus evolving broadband focus) cf: SIDP/Local Economic Assessment</i></p>	<p>GFirst Staff time</p>	<p>Review April 2011</p>	<p>GCC – Nigel Riglar</p>	<p>CoC, FSB GEP</p>
<p>Key Strategic Infrastructure – Identify and influence the opportunities around strategic infrastructure requirements i.e. Road/rail and air transport</p>	<p>A better rail service to London which makes Gloucestershire a more attractive business location. Active engagement in SIDP; greater awareness and utilisation of Economic Assessment to support infrastructure planning Collaboration with key partners to enhance the County's lobbying capability <i>LINK: Level 2 ENVIRONMENT PLAN: Infrastructure Planning priorities</i></p>	<p>GFirst /GCC/ District Partners Staff time</p>	<p>Review April 2011</p>	<p>GCC – Nigel Riglar</p>	<p>Transport operators</p>

How will we know what difference we have made?

Indicator	Baseline	Targets 2010/11	Lead	Links
<p>Quantitative and qualitative performance measures, illustrating the strategic nature of the range of activity reflected on the card, are identified where available and especially where consistent with LAA targets. Beyond this, the central Performance Management System (link), which sits behind the Plan, provides understanding of the broader effects of Partnership effort in this area. Key management information about the Partnership's achievements will be regularly reported directly to the Board, CSEB and principal funding partners whilst the system will be refined over the year with additional measures identified, where appropriate, in due course.</p>				
<p>N171 – New business registration rate</p>	<p>53.9 (2008)</p>	<p>45.0</p>	<p>GFirst</p>	
<p>N172 – Percentage of small businesses in an area showing employment growth</p>	<p>14.9% (2007/08)</p>	<p>8.0%</p>	<p>GFirst</p>	
<p>The proportion of apprenticeship need filled in each sector</p>	<p>Establish a baseline in year 1</p>	<p>10% increase in each sector in 2010/11</p>	<p>GCC – 14-19 Unit</p>	
<p>Percentage of premises in the County with Broadband access that meets the USC of 2 Mbits/s</p>	<p>75%</p>	<p>90%</p>	<p>GFirst</p>	

Resources:

Gloucestershire First staff time to monitor and implement various projects/initiatives is underpinned by an annual operational budget from GCC totalling £1.4m.

Other significant sources of funding supporting activity featured in this card include:

£35k (District/Borough Councils) to support Parklife

SWRDA – £350k

Note: funding streams may span more than one financial year

Key risks:

The Partnership's full risk register can be viewed at www.glosfirst.co.uk however headline issues, relating to the delivery of the range of Improvement Activity within this card, are considered to be as follows:

Not able to deliver the projects on time – all projects have been asked to develop a project initiation document, detailing activity, timings and staffing implications to contribute to efficient programme management

Unable to secure sufficient resource to deliver Partnership priorities – proposed activity moved to Partnership Gap Analysis and external funding strategy reviewed by Gloucestershire First Senior Management Team and Economic Strategy Advisory Panel

Related Documents and References

Local: Cheltenham Borough Council – Business Rates Hardship Relief, Internet and web design skills for businesses via Gloucestershire College, Cheltenham Business Pride Start-up Grant Scheme (**Solutions for Business**), complementary activity to Graduate Challenge programme, member of 'Backing Young Britain' and providing a variety of apprenticeship training in partnership with Gloucester City Council (**Apprenticeships**), Gloucestershire County Council – **Local Transport Plan; Level 2 Environment Plan**

Regional/National: National Apprenticeship Service – priorities 2010-2011; **Digital Britain Debate and Digital Economy Bill, UK Trade and Investment Strategy**, Business Link Solutions for Business portfolio