

Gloucestershire Joint Economic Scrutiny Committee
20th January 2021

Report: Governance of GFirst LEP

Presented by: David Owen, Chief Executive, GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership

The LEP is recognised by Government (in annual performance reviews) as having good governance that goes beyond compliance and demonstrates a commitment to a culture of accountable and transparent governance and scrutiny.

The local Assurance Framework outlines the Governance arrangements for Gloucestershire's Growth Deal, including the roles and responsibilities of the LEP Board, as well as the roles and responsibilities of other Boards/decision making forums

<https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/2020/assurance-framework---v8-.pdf>
<https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/2019/assurance-framework-annexes-20-6-19.pdf>

For the full details on Governance see section one of the Assurance framework

The LEP Board and staff are committed to adhere to the Seven Principals of Public Life (The Nolan Principles) and sign up to the GFirst Code of Conduct

[https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/library/96-gfirst_lep_-_code_of_conduct_for_lep_board_members_\(jan_18\).pdf](https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/library/96-gfirst_lep_-_code_of_conduct_for_lep_board_members_(jan_18).pdf)

There are clear and transparent structures and processes in place to ensure decisions are evidence based. The LEP Board is responsible for strategic decision making. It has a diverse membership, with a strong business voice, with at least 2/3 of the Board from the private sector, ensuring that there is active private sector challenge and engagement throughout the decision-making process. The remaining Directors represent the public sector, including local government, further education and higher education and the voluntary, community, environmental and social enterprise sectors. At least one Director is appointed by Gloucestershire County Council. There is a designated SME Champion Board Member, drawn from the private sector, and Board Champions for 'risk' and 'diversity'.

The GFirst LEP Board is ultimately responsible to Government for ensuring that all aspects of the Growth Deal are delivered. The Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee provides democratic accountability for those investments made through the Growth Deal, supported by this committee (Scrutiny). Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) acts as Accountable Body for all Growth Deal funding.

There is effective and close liaison between the LEP, the Accountable Body and the Section 151 officer.

The LEP decision making process has been reviewed by this committee in recent meetings. The full details are available in the Assurance Framework (1.4)

All Board decisions are recorded in the minutes of Board meetings which are published on the GFirst Website. The 'Governance' section provides a comprehensive list of relevant documents.

<https://www.gfirstlep.com/lep-governance/>

Funding processes are supported by the LEP investment panel of independent businesses, and the Programme Management Group. The private sector voice is also heard through the Business Groups, which in turn influences the Board.

There is collaboration and engagement with external stakeholders with the LEP showing confidence, inspiration and influence. As well as representation on the Board, and through the work of the Joint Committee, the public sector, including skills organisations, have opportunities to influence and inform the decision making. Outside of formal structures the LEP Chief Executive and Deputy Chief executive meet regularly with both elected and non-elected representatives.

The LEP takes an active role in influencing strategic planning and decision making across a wider area, both regionally and Nationally. This includes involvement at Government level, and in the Western Gateway.

Succession planning is managed effectively, new Board members have a thorough induction so they are able to make a strong contribution from the start.

This paper is for information only