



## STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### MEMBER REPORT

<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY</b>	Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
<b>DATE OF LAST MEETING ATTENDED</b>	18 January 2023

#### BRIEF REPORT:

Members received two useful reports from the GFirstLEP team:

- A report on the support and assistance currently being provided to small businesses and start-ups; the issues and challenges facing these businesses; and whether further support could be provided. The economic landscape for almost all business is tough at the moment and as a result business confidence is lower than it was during Covid. GFirstLEP has an emerging plan for support through the Growth Hubs, in particular for priority areas (e.g. start up) and sectors e.g. Manufacturing. In addition, the aim is to develop really good digital solutions and great collaboration with partners (e.g. Barclays Eagle Labs) that can enrich and fill gaps in the provision.
- A report on the challenges of the labour shortage and what could be done to address the issues, including provision of education and training, and encouraging migration to key sectors. The Gloucestershire Skills Strategy 2022-27 addresses and explains many of these issues <https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/2022/gfirst-lep-gloucestershire-skills-strategy-2022-27.pdf> and was recommended to the members of the Committee.

Katherine Martin from the GCC Data & Analysis team presented her half-yearly update on the Economic Dashboard. Numbers of residents claiming Universal Credit with no work requirements – those whose health or caring responsibility prevents them from working or preparing for work - have risen every quarter since January 2019. 62.4% of these individuals are female, and they are spread across the age groups between 16-65. The Committee discussed the various factors likely to be causing this ongoing rise and whether anything further could be done to reverse the trend.

Members also received an update report from Colin Chick, Executive Director of Economy, Environment & Infrastructure.

Meeting papers:

<https://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=731&MId=11203>

<b>FUTURE MEETINGS</b>	30 March 2023
<b>REPORT SUBMITTED BY</b>	Cllr Chloe Turner
<b>DATE</b>	30 January 2023