

Terms of reference for the Economy and Skills Partnership

1. The Purpose and Aims of the Partnership

- 1.1 As its Primary purpose, to oversee and help deliver actions that support sustainable economic development in South Gloucestershire and ensure that these actions are consistent with the Local Enterprise Partnership West of England functional economic market area priorities, and the wider national economic agenda.
- 1.2 In particular, to encourage, support and propose actions that will help achieve the economic development aims set out in the South Gloucestershire Community Strategy and the South Gloucestershire Economic Development Strategy, namely to :-
 - (i) Encourage existing businesses to stay and to invest in South Gloucestershire.
 - (ii) Encourage the development and growth of new/starter businesses including social enterprises.
 - (iii) Improve business competitiveness and productivity particularly in targeted sectors as identified and defined by the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership
 - (iv) Meet the land and premises requirements of indigenous businesses and new businesses in targeted sectors.
 - (v) Raise skill levels at all levels and meet the changing skill and workforce needs of employers.
 - (vi) Encourage local job and training opportunities that meet the needs of the South Gloucestershire resident workforce.
 - (vii) Increase overall employment rates and the employment rates of disadvantaged groups including sick and disabled people, 18-24 year olds, lone parents and the over 50s.
 - (viii) Support and promote the purchase of local products and services.
 - (ix) Promote the regeneration and diversification of the rural economy.
 - (x) Improve the vitality and economic vibrancy of town and district centres
 - (xi) Support and promote opportunities for businesses to contribute towards a low carbon economy.

2 Terms of Reference of the Partnership

- 2.1 Within the context of the West of England Vision 2026 and the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership priorities:
- 2.2 To promote and guide the sustainable economic development of South Gloucestershire.
- 2.3 To oversee, co-ordinate, inform and influence the development of policies, strategies and action plans relating to all of the work of the Partnership.
- 2.4 To secure, on behalf of the Local Strategic Partnership, the implementation of those aspects of the South Gloucestershire Sustainable Community Strategy that relate to Economy and Skills.
- 2.5 To monitor progress of the Partnership and its strategies and action plans and ensure equality of opportunity has been addressed.
- 2.6 To ensure effective liaison and working with other strategic partnerships to achieve shared or related objectives, including working links within the West of England Functional Economic Market Area such as the Local Enterprise Partnership.

- 2.7 To be responsible for securing co-ordination between partner agencies and resolution between of potential disputes regarding the various strategies, funding and service delivery issues, to enable objectives to be secured.
- 2.8 To promote an understanding of the contribution and responsibilities of individual organisations based on the shared commitments and aims of the Partnership.
- 2.9 To make recommendations to the Local Strategic Partnership, the Council and other partner organisations on matters relating to the achievement of the Sustainable Community Strategy and other Economic Development priorities.
- 2.10 To influence local, national and regional funding allocation decisions that help to secure the sustainable economic development of South Gloucestershire and the West of England.
- 2.11 To co-ordinate economic development activities in South Gloucestershire so as to secure additional resources, synergy and added value.
- 2.12 To advise and support the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership with regard to the economic development of the West of England.

3 Legal Status and Decision Making

- 3.1 The Partnership shall not make executive decisions or exercise executive authority over constituent members. Neither the Partnership nor any Partnership sub-groups shall have the power to take decisions that bind member organisations.
- 3.2 The Partnership may make recommendations to the South Gloucestershire Local Strategic Partnership, or where executive decisions are needed, to the Council or partner organisation that has responsibility for the function or activity concerned.

4 Membership of the Partnership (see appendix 1 above)

- 4.1 The Partnership shall have the power to co-opt other members as appropriate.
- 4.2 Each member of the Partnership can nominate a relevant substitute to attend any meeting of the Partnership on their behalf.
- 4.3 Officers from the Partnership will be available to offer support, guidance and advice as required.

5 Life of the Partnership

- 5.1 The Partnership shall be subject to review after three years.

6 Convening and Conducting Meetings

- 6.1 The Partnership shall aim to meet at least 4 times a year with additional meetings to be arranged as agreed by Members.
- 6.2 The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected by the Partnership and serve for one year. For the purpose of electing a chair or vice-chair, each partner representative has a vote, the outcome being achieved by simple majority of those present at the meeting.

6.3 Partnership meetings shall have a quorum of a minimum of eight partner organisations being represented.

6.4 The Partnership should aim to reach its conclusions by consensus. Conclusions reached are not binding on partner organisations in respect of their own executive functions and responsibilities. Conclusions will be referred to the relevant partner organisations for consideration and decision. Outcomes will be reported back to the Partnership.

6.5 Secretariat and legal support will be provided by South Gloucestershire Council Legal and Democratic Services, to include:-

- Co-ordination of agenda preparation
- Convening of meetings
- Publication and circulation of agendas and supporting papers at least five clear (working) days prior to a meeting
- Taking of minutes
- Procedural and legal advice
- Monitoring and progressing actions agreed by the Partnership.

6.6 Partners shall have the right to submit agenda items as long as they are received at least seven working days prior to the despatch of the agenda.

6.7 Meetings will be open to the public and the agenda and minutes of meetings will be published.

7 Partnership Relationships and Linkages

7.1 The South Gloucestershire Economy and Skills Partnership are responsible to the South Gloucestershire Local Strategic Partnership. Subject to the agreement of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) the Economy and Skills Partnership will have primary responsibility for representing the view of the LSP on economic development and related issues.

7.2 The Partnership will maintain links with other appropriate partnerships and organisations relating to Economy & Skills across the West of England.

7.3 South Gloucestershire's Sustainable Community Strategy identifies high level strategic aims focused within themed blocks covering:-

- Health and well-being
- Place
- Economy and Skills
- Communities.

7.4 The Partnership will ensure that it supports work towards the related outcomes of the high level strategic aims across all the themes as appropriate.

8 Probity and Accountability

8.1 The Partnership will meet in public, with the same opportunities for public participation as apply to Council meetings generally. Meeting arrangements and agendas

will be published so that the public may be aware of the Partnership's activities and the opportunities to engage with them.

8.2 In the interests of transparency and to ensure probity and public confidence in partnership working, all partner representatives at partnership meetings are expected to commit to the seven principles of public life as required by the Localism Act 2011 as follows:

- Selflessness
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Leadership
- Objectivity

and to abide by the Members' Code of Conduct of South Gloucestershire as amended from time to time (copies are available from DemocraticServices@southglos.gov.uk)

8.3 Partners who consider that they have an interest to declare are asked to: a) State the item number in which they have an interest, b) The nature of the interest, c) Whether the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest, non-disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest. Any Partner who is unsure about the above should seek advice from the South Gloucestershire Council Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting in order to expedite matters at the meeting itself. This is dealt with through standard agenda item 5 Declarations of Interest under the Local Government Act 1972

9 Scrutiny of Partnerships

9.1 The activities of the Partnership will be subject to scrutiny by the relevant overview and scrutiny committee of South Gloucestershire Council. As a minimum, an annual report of the Partnership (to all partner organisations) will provide a basic opportunity for the scrutiny of partnership work to take place. However, individual overview and scrutiny committees may wish to pursue additional and specific areas of scrutiny as they consider appropriate.

10 Risk Management

10.1 Good risk management is integral to the delivery of successful partnership working. The Partnership will be guided by and take account of the document "Guidance for Managing Risk and Opportunities in Partnership" in developing aims and Objectives and in all its activities.