

VISION 2050 AND 'FUTURE AMBITIONS' WORK

AGENDA NO:

Meeting	Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee
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Background documents	(1) Local Government Association (LGA) Economic Growth Case Study; (2) Papers for GEGJC meeting of March 16 & July 8; (3) Final Gloucestershire Economic Growth 'Showcase' document; (4) Think piece – 'Gloucestershire – refreshing the ambitions: July 16'; (5) Gloucestershire Ambitions Roundtable – Workshop Report
Location/Contact for inspection of background documents	(1, 2, 3, 4) The paperwork for the GEGJC can be found on the County Council's website. (5) The document is attached at Appendix 1.
Main consultees	GEGJC and Senior Officer Group representatives, including gfirst LEP.
Planned dates	As indicated in the report
Purpose of report	To provide insight on various strands of devolution work that will inform future Economic Development / Growth Strategies of partners.
Recommendations	1. To note the report; and to, 2. Submit to the Vision 2050 Steering Group for their consideration.
Reasons for recommendations	At the last GEGJC meeting members highlighted the need to take a long term view, potentially out to 2050, of economic growth in the County in order to inform short to medium term discussions and decisions around for example devolution, future rounds of Growth Deal, future reviews of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and land use plans and business rates. A workshop of GEGJC members took place on September 30 th .
Resource Implications	Consultant fees – c. £2-4k.

CURRENT ECONOMIC GROWTH 'AMBITIONS' WORK

1. At the last meeting it was explained that there are currently 4 pieces of work commissioned by Leadership Gloucestershire or the GEGJC that will inform the thinking of local partner bodies on devolution, public sector reform and economic growth. These include:

- Following on from earlier work the GEGJC endorsed the County Council's proposal to commission '3rd Life Economics' to do a further piece of challenge work to stimulate debate amongst the Committee on economic growth ambitions with a particular emphasis on productivity, connectivity and a 'city-region' approach; and,
- 2050 Vision – commissioned by Leadership Gloucestershire, gfirst LEP and consultants JBP are taking this project forward with the aim of bringing together a number of subject experts to populate a list of challenging propositions that could provide options for future economic growth.

SEPTEMBER 30th WORKSHOP

2. The workshop report at Appendix 1 is the final outcome from challenge work done by the Committee. With members approval the report will now be submitted to the 2050 Vision Steering Group in order to inform their considerations.

Options

3. Clearly, many options for the future are likely to emerge as a result of the various strands of work commissioned by Leadership Gloucestershire and will be subject to separate decision-making processes.

Risk assessment

4. The main risk is that Gloucestershire does not successfully position itself in terms of its commitment to delivering economic growth and misses out on Government and private sector inward investment. The establishment of long-term ambitions and in due course realistic delivery plans will help mitigate this.

Officer advice

5. To note the Workshop Report and to submit it to the 2050 Vision Steering Group for consideration.

Equalities considerations

6. Not applicable – the outcomes from the further work will be needed before equalities can be considered. At this point in time it will be possible to identify whether the recommendations from the further work will be taken forward through existing policies and programme, which already have equalities processes in place, or whether further bespoke activity is required.

Consultation feedback

7. The Workshop Report provides the Committees input to the Vision 2050 process.

Performance management/follow-up

8. None at this stage other than to submit the Workshop Report to the Vision 2050 steering group.

APPENDIX 1 - Gloucestershire Ambitions Roundtable – September 30th 2016

Workshop report

Introduction and purpose: On September 30th 2016 Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) convened a Round Table/Workshop with a small number of partners and officers. This considered the case for refreshing Gloucestershire's economic ambitions, and the potential content of such an exercise. The workshop discussed the July 2016 Ambitions thought-piece produced by David Marlow (DM) of Third Life Economics (3LE). DM facilitated the workshop sessions.

Format and agenda: The workshop was opened and closed by Cllr Hawthorne, Chair of GEGJC. DM presented a summary of the Ambitions paper - focusing on Gloucestershire's productivity challenges and the risks of being 'stuck in the middle' of UK local growth debates. In particular DM invited the workshop to consider and discuss six potential big ticket productivity transformers:-

- Growing a 'top 25' global research university over the next twenty years
- Focusing enterprise, innovation and skills support single-mindedly on "frontier firms" from whom most business and economic growth is likely to be delivered
- Positioning Cheltenham-Gloucester as a leading UK 'metro' anchoring the Gloucestershire 'city-region', and putting in place policies to make this a reality
- Promoting radical improvements in connectivity to London and Thames Valley
- Adopting a more striking goal for public services reform and fiscal devolution
- Developing one or two flagship signature investments of undisputed international significance with which to enthuse and engage proactive government support

Thereafter the workshop participants developed the presentation in plenary discussions. There was good involvement from all delegates, and the contributions were largely relevant, positive and stimulating.

Developing the ambitions agenda: The major points of discussion included:-

- A. There is a wish to couple productivity-driven agendas with a strong commitment to **wellbeing** (and sustainable, inclusive growth). Any refresh of goals and priorities should adopt a broader basket of indicators of success.
- B. There is recognition that Gloucestershire needs an informed, intelligent '**internationalisation**' strategy as it faces the challenges of UK changes globally. The strategy might include proactive measures like encouraging Gloucestershire presences overseas and vice versa (e.g. in incubator spaces).
- C. There is an enthusiasm to look afresh at the concept of the Cheltenham-Gloucester '**metro**'. This has both virtual (networking and behaving like a connected city) and physical manifestations. There was considerable discussion of potential for a major **new flagship investment** in a C-G metro - e.g. research campus and Medical School - and other investments - e.g. rapid transit.

- D. Any refresh needs to **look outward** to the relationships of Gloucestershire to neighbouring 'metros'. In particular, Gloucestershire is in the middle of a quadrilateral - Oxford/Bristol/Cardiff/Birmingham. How can it position itself to leverage the potential of this location? In a related transport point, can it encourage investments on the Birmingham - Cornwall, London - South Wales, and Cotswold rail lines that will significantly enhance connectivity with neighbours, and also London and Heathrow?
- E. This is a period where there are opportunities to **deploy assets and raise finance** aggressively for 'big ticket' change. There are major housing sites, infrastructure (e.g. a further bridge to unlock Forest of Dean) and energy (e.g. Oldbury Power Station) ideas that might be transformational if they can be realised well.
- F. The **process** of blue sky thinking needs to be accompanied by a pragmatic breaking down of big ideas into bite-size deliverable component parts.

Possible next steps: Gloucestershire is currently undertaking a consultation on developing a 2050 vision. The Ambitions thought piece and workshop discussions should feed into and complement this. DM understands that Gloucestershire is continuing to discuss devolution with Government, and has also been a phase one pilot in the HEFCE/LGA Leading Places programme. The big ticket transformers might contribute to and be a component of those exercises.

More directly, there may be a case for undertaking further high level definition work on the six transformers identified in the thought piece. In particular, GEGJC and partners might reconvene to agree short term action plans. This would help to determine which to progress, and how to feed the propositions into emerging Government policy and programmes.

Concluding remarks: This Ambitions exercise was a timely and interesting piece of work for GEGJC to undertake. If nothing else, the type of open debate at the workshop is an important illustration of the growing maturity of the leadership team.

David Marlow
5th October 2016