

Executive Decision Making by an Officer with Delegated Powers

Decision to be taken by: David Owen, Director of Economy and Environment

Pursuant to an Authorisation from the Leader of the Council (08/03/2024):
Gloucestershire City Region Board

Report title: Gloucestershire City Region Board – Inter-Authority Agreement between the County Council and the six district authorities in Gloucestershire

The decision	<p>Having consulted with Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Leader of the Council, in accordance with the Cabinet Member decision dated 8th March 2023:</p> <p>DECISION:</p> <p>To execute the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) between the County Council and the six district authorities in Gloucestershire relating to the creation of the Gloucestershire City Region Board (GCRB) and the finalisation of the GCRB's terms of reference.</p>
Background documents	<p>ICM Decision 8th March 2024 – Gloucestershire City Region Board Decision - Gloucestershire City Region Board</p> <p>Gloucestershire Economic Joint Committee 9th February 2023: GEGJC Future Governance Update V2.pdf (gloucestershire.gov.uk)</p> <p>Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee 25th September 2023 GEGJC Pool Update Sept 2023.pdf (gloucestershire.gov.uk)</p>
Reasons for the decision	<p>In order to create the GCRB, Gloucestershire County Council and the six district authorities in Gloucestershire must formally agree the GCRB IAA and the GCRB terms of reference.</p> <p>Moreover, given that the County Council is content with the IAA in the agreed form and the GCRB's terms of reference incorporated therein, it wishes to demonstrate its support for the creation of the GCRB by entering into the IAA.</p>
Resource implications	<p>The County Council will act as the administering authority in the overall management of the new GCRB. This will involve Democratic Services and Legal Services supporting the GCRB's formation process and ongoing Committee Secretariat function. The County Council shall also provide lead officer input from its S151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and other Senior Officers to support the operational aspects of the Board.</p> <p>The IAA provides for an annual financial contribution from the fund identified in the Rates Retention Scheme as the 'Strategic</p>

	Economic Development Fund towards the costs of the County Council providing its administering authority role.
Who has been consulted?	<p>Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Leader of the Council</p> <p>The following Internal support services::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Legal Services ○ Strategic Finance
<p>What were their comments?</p> <p>Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Leader of the Council said it is important to progress with the formation of the City Region Board to enable full implementation of the Gloucestershire Economic Strategy. The initial focus is likely to be sustainable growth, development of a spatial plan and oversight of any agreed devolution deal.</p>	
<p>Background/Context</p> <p>Gloucestershire’s seven Local Authorities have worked jointly on several boards including Severn Vale, Rural Ambitions and Central Gloucestershire City Region, together with the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) for many years. Following a review of the joint working arrangements, Leadership Gloucestershire agreed that the Severn Vale, Rural Ambitions and Central Gloucestershire City Region Boards, together with the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee should be merged into a single forum under the name Gloucestershire City Region Board (GCRB), that will serve the whole of the county.</p> <p>The overall aims of the GCRB will be to develop and deliver a vision for future growth and economic success. The new GCRB will also provide an opportunity to establish the City Region as a nationally defined area covering a single economic functional area.</p> <p>The principles covering the operation of the GCRB were developed following consultation and engagement with Leadership Gloucestershire and all Gloucestershire authorities. They cover, amongst other things, membership, chairing arrangements, frequency of meetings, ongoing operational support by the Senior Officer Group and proposed Scrutiny arrangements.</p> <p>The future development of the GCRB will be dependent on any County Deal that is negotiated and agreed with Central Government.</p> <p>Operational arrangements for the GCRB are agreed between the seven participating local authorities under an Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA). The IAA needs to be approved by each of the constituent councils through their respective Governance and Decision-making processes. The IAA covers:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The establishment of the GCRB (as a Joint Committee). ● The agreed terms of reference for the GCRB. ● Operational arrangements in respect of the GCRB . ● Resourcing arrangements in respect of the GCRB. ● The County Council role as administering authority of the GCRB. ● Business plan formation. 	

For the County Council, the ICM Decision (8th March 2024) agreed the establishment of the GCRB and delegated authority to the Director of Economy and Environment, in consultation with the Leader, to finalise and complete an IAA.

This process of finalising the IAA has now been completed and a formal decision is therefore required to execute the Inter-Authority Agreement to enable the creation of the GCRB. It should be noted that all Gloucestershire Council's must formally agree to this in order for the GCRB to be formed.

The decision stated that the recommendations in the ICM report would not be effective until all Gloucestershire local authorities Councils pass equivalent resolutions for the IAA.

Alternative options considered and why they were rejected

If GCC does not agree to enter into the IAA, then the formation of the GCRB could not proceed, as all constitute councils need to approve the IAA. Without a collective decision-making forum to invest pooled business rates funding via the SEDF and Gloucestershire Authorities could then be significantly financially worse off without a joint forum in place.

This would also likely limit Gloucestershire's ability to proceed with and secure further devolution and county-wide powers given that GCC, as the Strategic Upper Tier Authority would be responsible for negotiating a County Deal with Government,

Risk Analysis

There is a risk that there will be no mechanism in place to take decisions on the investment in SEDF, and no countywide forum to support, drive and monitor the implementation of the Gloucestershire Economic Strategy if the IAA is not agreed and the GCRB not established.


It would also limit Gloucestershire's potential for future devolution given that GCC, as the strategic upper tier Authority would be responsible for negotiating a County Deal with Government.

Equalities considerations

There are no specific implications of the establishment of the Board and signing of the IAA, however, the Board will take individual decisions on a range of relevant matters, equalities considerations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been completed? No

If 'Yes', please see attached the signed Equality Impact Assessment.

<p>Has any conflict of interest been declared by any Cabinet Member consulted on the decision?</p> <p><i>The council's Monitoring Officer should be consulted, in the first instance, if any conflict of interest is declared by a Cabinet Member.</i></p> <p>If any conflict of interest declared, was a dispensation granted by the Audit and Governance Committee of the Council?</p>	<p>Yes/No</p> <p>Date of dispensation:</p>
<p>Does this decision report form or any supporting papers provided contain confidential or exempt information?</p> <p><i>(Refer to Democratic Services Unit for advice if necessary)</i></p>	<p>Yes/No</p> <p><i>If Yes, please provide details of document(s) that are confidential or exempt</i></p>
<p>Does this decision need to be published on the GCC website?</p> <p><i>(Refer to guidance on "Executive Decisions taken by Officers").</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>In coming to this decision I have given due and full regard to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ("the Act") by reference to the law itself.</p> <p>Having fully considered all available information, I have decided to reject any alternative options and take the recommended decision(s), for the reasons set out in this report.</p> <p>Signed </p> <p>Name David Owen</p> <p>Title Director of Economy and Environment</p>	
<p>Date 28 May 2024</p>	
<p>Contact details for further information:</p> <p>Officer: Angela Presdee</p> <p>Tel: (01452) 328309</p> <p>Email: angela.presdee@gloucestershire.gov.uk</p>	

