

Community and Infrastructure
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Dear Katie

The Draft Local Industrial Strategy for Gloucestershire Consultation Feedback from Gloucestershire County Council

Thank you for consulting Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) on the above matter. Having consulted with Members and officers of the Council, I have the following comments to make:

The Draft Gloucestershire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) has been well received by GCC and we would like to thank GFirst LEP for the opportunity for GCC officers, from our Communities and Infrastructure Team, to work with you on the preparation of the LIS and for the wider GCC departments to have the opportunity to comment on this first draft.

Whilst the Council Leader and LEP Board Member, Cllr Hawthorne, has openly expressed the view that the Local Industrial Strategy could be even more aspirational, in general, Members are pleased to see how our own GCC Strategic Plans and Policies are embedded into the LIS, as an important foundation. For example:

Gloucestershire Looking to the Future 2019-2022 Council Strategy

Zero Carbon versus push for Growth and a Green Gloucestershire. Ultimately, we want all of our residents to have the best start in life and go on to become engaged and active members of their communities.

However, we are also fully committed to the climate change agenda and duly recognise the need for balance in delivering services and forward planning future investments, hence the aim is to enable this in as sustainable a way as possible. To this end, the Council has already reduced its own carbon emissions by 60%, in the last few years and will continue to challenge itself and work collaboratively with key stakeholders to take further steps towards becoming carbon neutral.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

GCC has an obligation to work to raise living standards for all, but especially our more deprived dependent and isolated residents. Consequently, the Council remains fully committed to securing the benefits of sustainable, high quality inclusive economic growth for local people and communities, enabling local people to build and nurture strong social networks and vibrant communities and improve the quality, affordability, availability and suitability of housing. To this end, a consultation response from the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board has been submitted directly, reinforcing such aims and highlighting opportunities for collaboration in delivering the LIS, including an interesting 'anchor institution offer'.

Fastershire Strategy 2019-2022

With significant GCC capital investment and a forward thinking strategy we will continue to strive to ensure we have the best digital connectivity across the County. As a result, Gloucestershire is particularly strong and distinctive in its full fibre coverage across the County, particularly in our more rural areas, which is a valuable platform for the future and for enabling delivery of the digital aspirations of the LIS, especially. To date, Phase 1 of the Fastershire strategy has provided approximately 90% of the homes and businesses across Herefordshire and Gloucestershire with access to superfast broadband and speeds of 30Mbps or above. Over the next two years, Phase 2 of the project's strategy will increase total superfast coverage to around 98%, as it seeks to provide faster broadband to premises that were not covered by Phase 1 or commercial rollout.

Commitment on Employment and Skills

Over the next ten years there will be significant growth in new housing and associated infrastructure. It is vital therefore that we have a local workforce that can respond to the needs of our local businesses with particular focus on skills in STEM, Construction, Design, Teaching, and the Public Sector workforce in particular for Health and Care to support our growing County. Businesses and young people need the right opportunities and skills in order

to create and retain jobs. Working with local partners, Gloucestershire County Council has been aspiring to raise the level and increase the range of skills available to young people and help young people develop the skills employers are looking for with a particular commitment to increasing apprenticeship opportunities.

Energy Strategy and Emerging Climate Change Strategy

A key focus for GCC, echoed by the County's residents, is to maintain and enhance our natural environment. GCC has committed to safeguard the County's natural landscape and environment for future generations with a pledge to embed local green infrastructure into thinking and planning for future development and regeneration with a pioneering Action Plan that:

- Commits the Council to working towards an 80 per cent reduction in the council's corporate carbon emissions no later than 2030, striving towards 100 per cent with carbon offsetting by the same date.
- Commits the council to following the scientific advice of the Committee on Climate Change, and deliver a carbon neutral county by 2050, and work with partners to identify what measures would be needed to deliver a stepped target of 80 per cent carbon reduction by 2030 to reflect the intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report on climate change.
- Following public consultation we are refining our emerging plans to support a major commitment to plant one million trees over the plan period, a commitment to a reduction in emissions targets and working with partners to ensure we embrace a circular economy.

As part of our work to ensure we have the evidence to support our claims within the Glos LIS, some very innovative and groundbreaking evidence of "green" local businesses, particularly in construction, has been discovered. It would be good to see some of these used as case studies within the LIS.

Local Transport Plan

Ensuring our residents can be well connected to access places they need to, whether for work, services or leisure, we want to ensure strong connectivity across our County. We envisage that the next generation will want highly responsive transport – Mobility As A Service (MaaS). They will want clean air and streets that aren't congested with motorised vehicles. We are on the cusp of a profound transport revolution. Gloucestershire will grasp this challenge as embedded in the LTP and seek evidence of this through how and where it develops and the innovations it enables, in order to transform how and why we travel.

The LTP Review aims to influence how and when people choose to travel so that individual travel decisions do not cumulatively impact on the desirability of Gloucestershire as a place to live, work and invest.

The strong correlation between these LTP ambitions and those outlined in the LIS is welcomed and this will strengthen Gloucestershire's position to secure infrastructure funding and implement our ambitious transport vision.

Vision 2050

Gloucestershire's local environment including quality countryside, towns and cities, and built heritage, is important. There is widespread appreciation of the local environment and concern for its protection.

GCC's Vision 2050 has set out a number of ambitions that we see strongly embedded within the draft LIS:

A magnet County - attracting more 18-40 year olds with high level qualifications, who want to live and work in the county.

An innovative County - with more businesses starting up, growing, and investing in research and innovation.

A skilled County - more people with high-level skills and jobs in skilled occupations.

A prosperous County - rising productivity and household income, offering higher living standards.

An inclusive County - economic and social benefits of growth to be felt by all.

And finally **A healthy, happy County** - people to have a good work/life balance and to see improved health and wellbeing.

All of these vital GCC strategic aims embedded within the LIS will ensure that our Gloucestershire residents can be confident of a place to Live, Work, Learn and Enjoy our County. It is also vital that all Gloucestershire residents are supported in the aims and ambitions of the Gloucestershire LIS and as stated in the National Industrial Strategy:

"We need to ensure that everyone, no matter what their background or level of skill, has an opportunity to enter into and progress at work and through the education and training system. Barriers that prevent under-represented groups from realising their full potential need to be broken down"

As a result it is recommended that 'due regard' considerations are given greater attention by the LEP consistent with the objectives/duties of the Equalities Act 2010, within the overall strategy.

Accordingly and in terms of our detailed feedback, please find enclosed the completed LIS Consultation pro-forma, together with a paper of suggested technical amendments, the contents of which are a collective response provided from officers across several departments within the Council including, Public Health, Integrated Disabilities Commissioning, Adult Education and Communities and Infrastructure.

These responses were approved by the Council's Cabinet on 13th November 2019.

If you would like to discuss any of the points raised in the completed consultation response, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Finally, as regards next steps, whilst it is duly recognized that, at the clear request of government, the LIS is not intended to be a bidding document, the Council welcomes GFirst's ongoing efforts to develop an Investment Plan in parallel to the strategy and would be keen to continue to work alongside the team to substantiate and refine such a plan to ensure the LIS moves on into its implementation phase effectively and with clear intent and purpose.

Yours faithfully

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