

## UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PLANNING IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

<b>Meeting</b>	Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) 3 June 2020
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<b>Background documents</b>	GEGJC Papers 29 November 2017 and 18 May 2018
<b>Location/Contact for inspection of background documents</b>	Gloucestershire County Council Democratic Services Shire Hall
<b>Main Consultees</b>	District Chief Executives Group
<b>Planned Dates</b>	N/A
<b>Purpose of report</b>	To recommend arrangements for the continuation of the Gloucestershire Strategic Planning Coordination Project
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>To consider:</b>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. The current position in respect of the strategic spatial planning coordination project is noted.</b></li> <li><b>2. The proposals set out in section three of this report are approved.</b></li> </ol>
<b>Reason for recommendations</b>	To allow the spatial planning project to continue the work to produce a Statement of Common Ground as an agreed long term spatial planning strategy for Gloucestershire.
<b>Resource Implications</b>	As set out in the body of the report.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 At its meeting on 18 May 2018, the committee resolved that:

1. Point Consultancy Ltd are appointed by Tewkesbury Borough Council acting as the contracting authority for the GEGJC to undertake the tasks associated with the Strategic Planning Coordinator. The contract was for a two year fixed term with the ability to extend the contract and
2. Supervision, location, and cost sharing arrangements associated with this contract remain as agreed by the GEGJC on 29 November 2017. The cost sharing agreement agreed by the GEGJC at its meeting was on the following basis:
  - 50% Gloucestershire County Council and
  - Remainder shared equally between the district councils and the GFirst LEP.

1.2 Work in respect of strategic planning coordination across the county has been led by Point Consultancy since May 2018 through the Leaders Board and associated officer group established for the task. It has been agreed by the Leaders Board that the best approach to set out an agreed long term, i.e. to 2050, spatial planning strategy for Gloucestershire is through a Statement of Common Ground document (SoCG) adopted by all the relevant local planning authorities and endorsed by the GFirst LEP.

- 1.3 Recent developments in respect of local spatial plans, climate change response and integration with transport infrastructure mean strategic spatial planning will need to be considered across more than a single local plan period. Therefore, the importance of the SoCG project is perhaps more significant than ever.

## **2.0 THE CURRENT POSITION**

- 2.1 The next stage is to move to an adoption of the SoCG. Work to date has produced a basic draft of the SoCG, but further work is needed to finalise the document in order that it can be adopted by partners. Point Consultancy is unlikely to be in a position to proceed with concluding this piece of work in the short term and before the end of the fixed term contract in May 2020. Therefore, the district chief executives, including director level representation from Gloucestershire County Council and the lead senior planning officers have explored options to progress the development of the SoCG and the proposal is to put temporary arrangements in place to take the project forward.
- 2.2 It has been agreed that the Strategic Planning Manager from Cheltenham Borough Council will take on the Spatial Planning Coordinator's role and lead the Senior Planning Officers Group set up for the project. The aim of the temporary arrangements will be to produce a draft SoCG.
- 2.3 It should be noted that this draft of the SoCG will set out the general direction of travel of the document for consideration by the committee and further more detailed work will be needed to complete the final document. It is not possible at this stage to indicate when the final draft of the SoCG will be available for consideration, but it is intended that this is completed within 2020 or early 2021. Once completed, the SoCG will be a dynamic document subject to amendment over future years as required.
- 2.4 The work to develop the SoCG will require the support of strategic planning officers from all local authorities and the chief executives have indicated their support for this approach. Cheltenham BC senior officers have stated that the leadership provided by the Strategic Planning Manager will be provided without cost until end May 2020.

## **3.0 PROPOSALS**

- 3.1 The proposal is for the project lead provided by the Cheltenham BC Strategic Planning Manager to continue until the end of the project. Under this arrangement, from 1 June 2020 Cheltenham BC will require reimbursement of the salary costs for the officer time committed to the project in order that the Cheltenham Strategic Planning Manager post can be backfilled as required.
- 3.2 It is proposed that the costs to be reimbursed to Cheltenham BC be shared using the same arrangements agreed by the committee on 29 November 2017 as set out above. This cost will be less than the arrangement with Point Consultancy Ltd and it is anticipated that the total cost will not exceed £15,000.