

Meeting	GLOUCESTERSHIRE ECONOMIC GROWTH JOINT COMMITTEE (GEGJC)
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Background documents	Gloucestershire County Council Road to Recovery
Location/Contact for inspection of background documents	At Issue details - Gloucestershire Economic Recovery Plan 2021-24
Main Consultees	This report has been produced following the last meeting of the GCC Transition Group.
Purpose of report	To update the Committee in respect of the County Council's Covid-19 economic recovery planning.
Recommendations	The Committee notes the content of the paper and comments on progress so far.
Reason for recommendations	To endorse the next phase of recovery planning for the county and build on the progress made in the first 9-months of the plan delivery. To consider the updated economic landscape as Coronavirus Job Retention Schemes close.
Resource Implications	There are no further resource implications.

1.1	<p>Background</p> <p>This paper seeks to highlight progress against the Gloucestershire County Council Covid-19 economic recovery plan, and to share the latest economic growth dashboard as the government’s Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme comes to an end.</p>
1.2	<p>Context</p> <p>In January 2021, Cabinet approved Gloucestershire’s Road to Economic Recovery plan. This brought together core priorities for the local economy which would support its recovery. It identified the challenges expected as a result of the pandemic and set out actions that needed to be delivered to encourage positive outcomes.</p> <p>The three themes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People, place and connectivity – resetting how our communities interact with business and education • Skills and employment – encouraging resilience through skills and employment • Infrastructure, economy and growth – accelerating infrastructure to promote sustainable development and growth <p>This plan is monitored through the Transition Group which meets on a bi-monthly basis.</p>
1.3	<p>Progress against the COVID recovery plan</p> <p>Employment and Skills Hub</p> <p>The Employment and Skills Hub for the county went live in shadow form on 1st September with an official launch on 21st September. The hub is open to all residents and provides a single front door for all of the county’s offer. It draws together an offer across inclusive employment, adult education, and connects residents and businesses with job opportunities and career development.</p> <p>As at 31st July, 12,600 employments in Gloucestershire were still drawing down furlough payments and there were 6,200 claims against the self-employment scheme. In relation to employment demand, there were 36,644 job postings in August and reports from key sectors such as hospitality that they were not able to recruit a workforce with the right skills. These challenges will be addressed by the hub through client management, a refreshed offer and referrals to partners with an appropriate offer.</p> <p>Social Value</p> <p>Progress against delivering social value ambitions has progressed over the past few months with a visioning workshop to understand what can be delivered through social value. There were also 2 workshops held in November to deep dive into the ambitions, targets and outcomes of social value and to understand the start point of the council.</p> <p>Anticipated benefits from social value can be far reaching. They can deliver benefits for residents locally and encourage a localised supply chain bringing jobs and wages</p>

to local people. The roll out of social value across council contracts is likely to take several months but there are opportunities to run pilot projects against large contracts in a learning phase.

Anchor institutions

Linked to social and economic ambitions is the work focused on anchor institutions which has been established to address health inequalities. A set of draft principles have now been developed to deliver a shared understanding of what anchor institutions in Gloucestershire are and how they can support the local economy. These include:

- 1) Commit to target **voluntary, training and employment** opportunities for local residents, especially in underrepresented and disadvantaged communities.
- 2) Support **staff development and career progression**, targeted at groups who are underrepresented in senior positions.
- 3) Maximise the social, economic and **environmental benefits to the local community** by being a fair and ethical partner.
- 4) Consider the implications for **social value** in all relevant decision-making processes.
- 5) Adhere to the highest **ethical standards in our operations and supply chains**.
- 6) **Support local community action and mutual aid** groups by being an active community partner, focusing in areas with greater need.
- 7) Consult with local community groups to **co-produce policy solutions**.
- 8) Protect the **local environment** and minimise negative impacts on places and spaces.
- 9) Develop culture, policies and practices that support staff health and wellbeing, **promote healthy lifestyles** and support the **health and wellbeing of the community**.
- 10) Act as a positive example of **ethical and effective leadership** to encourage innovation and action across the community.

Innovation Labs

Gloucester Innovation Lab is now up and running with a lab technician in place. The building works in respect of the lab at Tewkesbury are underway and are expected to be completed within the next couple of weeks. Orders for the works to Stroud Innovation lab have been placed. Chipping Campden is being planned but is on track.

The lab technical kit has now been agreed and orders are to be placed imminently. There has been a delay to both the recruitment of the technicians for the Stroud, Tewkesbury & Chipping Campden lab due to issues with Success Factors but Tewkesbury and Stroud posts will be advertised soon. There is additionally a delay with the sourcing of furniture as the procurement steps are proving challenging.

2.5

Wider strategic activity to support the plan and further opportunities

The county also had three successful bids under the Levelling Up Fund. These include:

- Investment for Gloucester City Centre
- Gloucester Docks Sustainable Travel Improvements
- Levelling up the Future of the Forest (of Dean)

Gloucestershire has also been shortlisted as one of five sites within the STEP Fusion project at Berkeley and Oldbury. If successful, could deliver significant investment while addressing global sustainability ambitions.

Furthermore, the county is beginning to identify opportunities that may arise through the future of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Expected to launch in 2022, the county is keen to ensure it has a pipeline of priorities against which partners can develop bids.