

## GEGJC Updates

9<sup>th</sup> February GEGJC meeting key highlights:

### **Food and Farming in Gloucestershire**

- GEGJC received a presentation from the Gloucestershire Food and Farming Partnership as a result of GEGSC's recommendation. Members were receptive to the overall mission and a Food and Farming SEDF bid is being prepared for future consideration.

### **GEGJC Governance Arrangements**

- An update on developments for the transition to the Gloucestershire City Region board was given and this will also be given to the GEGSC as part of a separate item. The GEGJC was planned to be extended for 6 months till the end of September to cover the transition period.
- GEGJC members raised some concern over chairing arrangements and membership for the City Region board. It was explained that various details were yet to be finalised, but the plan was for the GEGJC membership and voting rights to be retained and for the County Council to have chairing authority.

### **Strategic Economic Strategy**

- The new Economic Strategy for Gloucestershire is also under development with full strategy documents being worked on from March. Some members raised questions as to how this would fit in with the 2050 vision and concern was expressed over the lack of addressing transport or town centres in the initial scoping.

### **Business Rates Pool**

- £179,000 was unallocated as of 9<sup>th</sup> February. All agreed commitments had been met.

### **Economic Dashboard**

- There was considerable discussion around economic inactivity in Gloucestershire which had risen to 38% of the population. This was slightly lower than the Southwest and National average. 18.3% of the economically inactive had never been in employment.
- Ways of approaching the economically inactive such as encouraging retirees to re-join the workforce and improve employer practices were considered.

15th March GEGJC meeting key highlights:

#### **GFirst SEDF Matched funding bid**

- The committee unanimously voted in favour of the second tranche of £125,000 SEDF funding.

#### **National Grid's Visual Impact Provision project in the Cotswolds National Landscape**

- Whilst this was seen overall as a good project, there was some debate from members and officers over the level of disruption that this project would create and whether this was a high priority project for funding given grid capacity issues currently being experienced in Gloucestershire.
- The committee members did welcome the project's plans of using local suppliers and providing apprenticeships, upskilling and development opportunities for the local community.
- The project would get physically underway in 2025/26 and would hopefully be complete by 2029.

#### **Cirencester-Kemble Transport Study Report**

- This report found that the most cost-effective solution to the lack of public transport connecting Cirencester-Kemble (and Tetbury) would be a bus provision.
- The study also contributed to other projects like the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan, the delivery of the Steadings development, bringing together the RAU's ambitions and driving decarbonisation commitments.

#### **LEP Update**

- The main headline from the LEP updates was that the £1 million that had gone into the inward investment project had driven £10.7 million of investment.

#### **Economic Dashboard**

- Vacant job postings had risen further and so had applications for benefits.
- A more detailed breakdown of the economically inactive was inbound and targeted approaches could be enacted with that data.
- The biggest gap in job postings were for those with a small amount of work experience and members considered what the Council could be doing to help residents meet those requirements (i.e., through the growth hub).