



Public Document Pack STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 25 NOVEMBER 2021

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at next 25 November 2021 meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No	Item
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| b) | <u>Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC)</u> (Pages 3 - 6) |
| c) | <u>Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (GEGSC)</u> (Pages 7 - 8) |
| d) | <u>Regeneration and Investment Board</u> (Pages 9 - 10) |

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STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MEMBER REPORT

NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY	Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee
DATE OF LAST MEETING ATTENDED	17 November 2021
BRIEF REPORT:	
<p>1. Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Cllr Matt Babbage reported back on meetings held including one on the Local Transport Plan. He flagged that there would be a report coming to GEGJC on Future High Streets funding.</p> <p>2. Employment and Skills</p> <p>Pete Carr, Director of Employment and Skills at the GFirst LEP updated the meeting on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The skills landscape and emerging policy changes</u> Business West is leading on a Local Skills Improvement Plan, a trailblazing pilot to put employers at the heart of the skills system, which is concentrating on the health and social care and highly skilled manufacturing sectors. Education recovery funding is still a priority, helping young people catch up, and the Lifetime Skills Guarantee provides opportunities for courses for others. Green skills – there is a lack of translation into new apprenticeships and qualifications, and work to do with colleges. • <u>The Gloucestershire Employment and Skills strategy</u> The structure has been shared and a draft is due in December. • <u>The upskilling and employment of local people, and how this is being achieved</u> Information is being pulled into one place on the Skills Portal, with up to date access links from training providers. Careers advice is being delivered in 49 schools and organisations, and support being given to them in the form of a career coaching tool linked to live local job opportunities. In addition the Employment & Skills Hub, a joint enterprise between GCC and the G First LEP is up and running. • <u>An analysis on the shortage of delivery / HGV drivers in Gloucestershire.</u> There are currently 580 job postings. The Gloucestershire driver testing centre closed 10 years ago meaning the nearest centres are in Swindon and Bristol, and training providers link with those centres – pressure is being put on the DVLA to provide additional testing capacity by reversing that decision or making additional provision. <p>3. Review of Gloucestershire Covid-19 Economic Recovery Plans</p> <p>Colin Chick of GCC led an update in respect of collaboration across Covid-19 economic recovery plans in the county, with each District, the County and the GFirst LEP giving a verbal update on progress. Headlines included:</p>	

- All three county Levelling Up Fund bids had been successful, totalling £52.8m; Gloucester City and Forest of Dean are both priority 1 areas and had received £125,000 funding to help prepare their successful bids for city centre regeneration and employment-ready skills development respectively, and GCC's Sustainable Travel Improvements bid was also successful (Stroud District is a priority 2 area and did not receive any funding, and is working on a second round bid).
- Berkeley and Oldbury is in the shortlist of 5 for the UK Nuclear Fusion project, which is expected to be whittled down to the top 3 by next June
- The county is becoming part of the Patent Library Network this month which will help SMEs and others with Intellectual Property rights
- Forest of Dean DC is working on a directory for remote workers, places they can work away from the home
- The GFirst LEP has awarded 117 digital recovery grants and is considering a second scheme focusing on sustainable grants
- SDC updated on the new Council Plan and its links back to the Recovery Plan, the emerging Economic Development Strategy and Canal Strategy, Market Towns initiative and LGA One Public Estate Zero Carbon project funding.

Kate Martin of GCC gave an update on GCC's Covid-19 Recovery Dashboard. Headlines included:

- The Gloucestershire economy is recovering more quickly than the national average
- The claimant count is falling after rising during the pandemic, during which existing trends had been magnified, with the biggest increase in claimants 18-24 year olds
- There are high numbers of job vacancies
- When furlough ended in September, 8,500 workers (down from 10,000) had been furloughed, with the numbers of workers in wholesale and retail being the highest, a switch from accommodation and food services earlier in the pandemic.

4. Forest of Dean Biosphere Reserve proposal

Forest of Dean DC is consulting on a proposal to make the Forest of Dean a UNESCO biosphere reserve. The inclusion of the Severn estuary may have implications for riverside development proposals in Stroud District in future years if it goes ahead.

5. Strategic Planning in Gloucestershire

An annual report on the status of the county's plans was given.

6. GFirst LEP Update

Dev Chakraborty gave an update, the highlights of which were:

- The LEP is promoting a Made in Gloucestershire campaign
- There is still no news on the Government's LEP review, and the LEP will have unknown core funding from April 2022.

7. Business Rate Pool update

Andrew Cummings gave an update on the Business Rate Pool covering the 2020/21

<p>financial year and early projections for 2021/22. GEGJC was asked to note the forecast position of the Business Rates Pool and estimated balance for the Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF). The growth in business rates pool is estimated at just over £4m.</p> <p>The Committee supported a request for £65,000 from the SEDF to fund a feasibility study for a multi modal transport link between Kemble and Cirencester.</p>	
FUTURE MEETINGS	16 March 2022 with an additional meeting likely to be arranged for January 2022 to discuss the GEGJC's future, as currently it will end in March 2022
REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Kathy O'Leary
DATE	19 November 2021

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STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MEMBER REPORT

NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY	Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
DATE OF LAST MEETING	20 October 2021
ATTENDED	17 November 2021
BRIEF REPORT:	
<p><u>20 October 2021:</u></p> <p>The principal agenda item was a detailed review by Luisa Senft-Hayward, GCC Transport Planning Team Manager, of current work under the Local Transport Plan 2020-2041 (adopted March 2021) – this was a joint session with GCC Environment Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>Sustainable travel choices came very high on the list of public concerns in the consultation carried out for the Plan, and low carbon infrastructure is therefore reflected throughout the Plan's goals. However, large parts of Gloucestershire are rural, and as such represent the biggest emitters of transport-related CO2 emissions, with the longest trips and the journeys hardest to switch to other modes. Performance indicators for the Plan objectives for increasing cycling and bus usage show that these are not yet on track (as at March 2021).</p> <p>Luisa set out the opportunities in active travel, demand responsive travel and homeworking in rural areas, along with mass rapid transport for urban areas and the importance of transport hubs for integration with other services. There have been some successes in the improvement of rail services. Funding opportunities are being pursued wherever possible.</p> <p>Neil Hopwood from GFirstLEP presented a paper on the Getting Building Fund Programme and a case study on the Gloucestershire Renewable Energy, Energy & Nuclear Skills (GREEN) Centre at Berkeley. The LEP successfully bid for £11.3m under the GBF which has been allocated to five projects – all are on track for delivery by April 2022. The GREEN project has attracted £25m of further investment, and companies such as Active Building Centre, Green Fuels, Cavendish Nuclear, as well as the UoG and Gloucestershire Constabulary, are moving/have moved onto the site.</p>	
<p><u>17 November 2021:</u></p> <p>Presentations on Modern Methods of Construction were received from a number of industry operators – Bromford, Ilke Homes, Beattie Passive and Forest Homes. This was the second of three sessions (the first being an introduction to MMC, the final one being a future session with property developers). All of the speakers were focussed on delivering zero carbon homes by 2030, responding to upcoming changes in building regulations and (from 2025) a no-gas approach.</p> <p>There are challenges around cost, both in land value and materials, plus the huge development costs incurred in developing the new MMC approach, but ultimately there are savings available because the build is so much quicker with a modular approach.</p>	

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Technology is moving fast, and new jobs are being created, pulling workers into the modular build market from factory-based industries. Test homes are costing around 80p per day to run and should be cheaper than traditionally built homes within three years. There are also health benefits to be had from living in warm homes with clean ventilation.

Pete Carr and Neil Hopwood from GFirstLEP presented on the Gloucestershire Infrastructure Investment Fund and on the Employment & Skills agenda.

Colin Chick, Executive Director of Economy, Environment & Infrastructure presented an update on economic growth issues in the county.

FUTURE MEETINGS	19 January 2022 16 March 2022 31 May 2022 22 September 2022
REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Cllr Chloe Turner
DATE	17 November 2021



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STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MEMBER/OFFICER REPORT

NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY	Regeneration and Investment Board
DATE OF LAST MEETING ATTENDED	3 November 2021
BRIEF REPORT:	
<p>The Regeneration and Investment Board (RIB) discussed the following main items at its last meeting, on 3 November 2021:</p> <p>Levelling up Fund (LUF). Work continues on the development of a Stroud Town Centre 'package' bid that will bring benefits to the whole district, creating stronger gateways to the Town Centre, boosting tourism, creating jobs and improving walking and cycling. The partners' task force continues to meet on a monthly basis and includes representation from the Town Council, GFirst LEP, County Council, Stroud MP, Network Rail, Chamber of Commerce and others. Further details about the package of projects will be shared in the New Year and as the bid develops, for an anticipated submission in Spring 2022.</p> <p>One Public Estate (Zero Carbon Project). The board received an update on this SDC led multi-partner project, which had received £200k funding from the Government's One Public Estate programme. The funding will enable the design and feasibility of regeneration schemes at Beeches Green and the Railway Station (Stroud) to be established. The funding will also be used to review identified public buildings in Stroud, such as Ebley Mill, the Old Town Hall and the Subscription Rooms, and make recommendations on their future usage. The drive towards a carbon neutral district will be a priority throughout the programme, alongside traditional OPE objectives of building new homes, generating savings and promoting the more efficient use of the public estate.</p> <p>Pipeline Schemes. The Council has established a pipeline of regeneration schemes and future meetings will prioritise five in particular, where the Council is the identified lead: Stonehouse Canalside, Brimscombe Port, May Lane (Dursley), Levelling Up Bid (see above) and Zero Carbon Public Estate.</p> <p>Strategy Development. There was an update on progress with the Economic Development and Canal Strategy, both of which would be coming through S&R Committee shortly.</p> <p>Tricorn House – The current situation with Tricorn House was discussed and the efforts that the Council and others are making to encourage the owners to bring forward their redevelopment plans.</p> <p>The next meeting of RIB will be in December 2021, where the main focus will be on the Canal Strategy and steering the development of the Levelling Up Fund bid.</p>	
REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Brendan Cleere – Strategic Director of Place
DATE	18 November 2021

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