

**Cheltenham Borough Council**  
**Cabinet – 11 October 2016**  
**Place Strategy - Scoping**

<b>Accountable member</b>	<b>Leader</b>
<b>Accountable officer</b>	<b>Director of Planning</b>
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Key/Significant Decision</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Executive summary</b>	<p>The Place Strategy will deliver against the identified priority action of the Cheltenham Corporate Strategy (2016-17). ECON 1 sets out that the Council will work in partnership with key stakeholders to develop a longer term strategy for place making and growth. For this to be successful, the Council needs to be clear on the ambition for Cheltenham with a clear vision for future direction for growth in the context of defining place.</p> <p>This report establishes the scope, purpose and methodology for the Place Strategy and level engagement to develop the outcomes and action plan.</p>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>To agree the scope and purpose of the Place Strategy as set out at section 2, and</b></li> <li>2. <b>action the officer team to engage with key stakeholders and communities of the Borough to inform the preparation of the draft Place Strategy and supporting Action plan, to be considered by Council March 2017.</b></li> </ol>
<b>Financial implications</b>	<p>No direct financial implications arising from this report.</p> <p><b>Contact officer: Accountant, <a href="mailto:nina.philippidis@cheltenham.gcsx.gov.uk">nina.philippidis@cheltenham.gcsx.gov.uk</a> , 01242 264121</b></p>
<b>Legal implications</b>	<p>No legal implications arising at this stage</p> <p><b>Contact officer: Solicitor, <a href="mailto:tessa.yates@tewkesbury.gov.uk">tessa.yates@tewkesbury.gov.uk</a> , 01684 272690</b></p>
<b>HR implications (including learning and organisational development)</b>	<p>No direct HR implications arising from the content of this report.</p> <p><b>Contact officer: HR Manager, <a href="mailto:julie.mccarthy@cheltenham.gov.uk">julie.mccarthy@cheltenham.gov.uk</a> , 01242 264355</b></p>
<b>Key risks</b>	<p>There are no direct risks arising in respect of the recommendations of this report.</p>

<b>Corporate and community plan Implications</b>	<p>The Place Strategy is an output of the Corporate Strategy 2016-17</p> <p><b>ECON 1</b> – We will work in partnership with key stakeholders to develop a longer term strategy for place making and growth.</p>
<b>Environmental and climate change implications</b>	
<b>Property/Asset Implications</b>	<p>No property implications arising at this stage, but may do in the future upon implementation of the Place Strategy.</p> <p><b>Contact officer: Head Of Property Services</b>  <a href="mailto:david.roberts@cheltenham.gov.uk">david.roberts@cheltenham.gov.uk</a>, 01242 264151</p>

## 1. Background

- 1.1 During winter 2014 the Council commissioned a report to examine Cheltenham's role as a business location. This report, prepared by Athey Consulting Ltd, published in 2015 was a trigger for focussing resources on how the Council looks to support and facilitate economic growth and regeneration, it also helped develop thinking around Cheltenham as a place within the context of economic growth.
- 1.2 The Athey report together with a wide range of other reports (see appendix 1) help us identify the strengths and challenges for the borough. What we can see from the evidence is that there are key work streams with interconnected objectives together with an agenda to want to deliver change for Cheltenham. Whilst the evidence is generally based around themes e.g. economic growth, tourism, communities etc., all in some way inform and influence place shaping.
- 1.3 Place shaping in towns and cities has been ever increasing over the past decade, stemming from Sir Michael Lyon's Inquiry into local government (2007) which challenged government to "take on its full place shaping role" defining the task as "creatively using their powers and influence to promote the general well-being of a local community and its citizens". Over time this thinking has further developed recognising the importance of 'liveable towns and cities'. Cheltenham has all the key ingredients for a liveable town, for example, extensive cultural offer, attractive built and natural environment, wide ranging job opportunities. But this offer is not consistent for all nor does it necessarily reflect the preferences of our communities, businesses and visitors.
- 1.4 The objective of the Place Strategy is to draw together the strands which impact on defining Cheltenham as a place, acting as a vehicle to help join-up resources for investment and change, but also act as a leadership and influencing tool to help co-ordinate the activities of a range of partners and agencies to focus on the outcomes that will support economic growth and the wider well-being of our communities. The Strategy will provide the framework to evolve Cheltenham's placemaking agenda to deliver the unique vision emerging for the town.
- 1.5 The output of a Place Strategy is identified in the 2016-17 Corporate Strategy for the Council which through priority action ECON 1 sets out that "*We will work in partnership with key stakeholders to develop a longer term strategy for place making and growth*". The objective of this action is to ensure a consistent and joined-up approach across economic development, tourism, marketing, regeneration and cultural activities through a longer term strategy for placemaking and growth.
- 1.6 A working vision has been developed to start the conversations around what type of place we want Cheltenham to be. This will be tested with stakeholders and wider communities over the coming months.

***We want to unlock the ambition of our communities to achieve their promising future – recognising Cheltenham's history whilst refocussing on innovation, vibrant cultural experiences, economic growth and growing our talent pool.***

***We will be a regional leader, well connected and have delivered a sustainable legacy.***

## 2. What is the scope and purpose of the Place Strategy?

- 2.1 The starting point for this has been to understand the many and varied influences of what define Cheltenham as a place and destination; whether that be around the quality of the public realm, the opportunity to bring new business/expand businesses within the borough, attracting visitors, protecting our heritage, opportunities for education, skills and creative enterprise, access to open spaces, the town's attitude and vibe etc. A fundamental output of this is understanding what makes Cheltenham unique, by establishing Cheltenham's USP, whether that be around economic

aspiration or expanding cultural opportunities, it will help define a vision for the Place Strategy. Work on this baseline is continuing and Cabinet are asked to support the resource to engage with key stakeholders and our communities to harness the ambitions for success held by residents, businesses, partner organisations and agencies. The scope of the Place Strategy is proposed as follows;

- A collective assessment of the challenges that the town faces, and the strengths we can build on. What are the key risks for the town in the future and what are the key opportunities?
- A shared vision for Cheltenham – setting out our ambitions for the kind of town we want Cheltenham to be in the future. What will make Cheltenham stand out in the future, why is it special?
- The development of a framework for action to deliver these ambitions – using commissioning principles to identify the key supporting outcomes and then working in an entrepreneurial way to facilitate delivery of the vision, and with a clear sense of the priority projects that will make the biggest impact.

**2.2** In considering the purpose of the Place Strategy it is proposed that this is set within the context of 4 broad outcomes; these being;

- **A place where businesses choose to invest, where skills, innovation and talent are sought and fostered**

<b>Supporting Outcomes</b>
A vibrant economy with a supply of modern and flexible business space with excellent digital infrastructure
A vibrant and attractive town centre with a diverse and appealing retail, cultural and leisure offer
Excellent linkages and being able to get around safely both within and out of Cheltenham
A place where we develop and nurture talent to make sure that local businesses have access to the right skills to enable them to grow

- **A place where tourists choose to visit and return – recognising the vibrancy of the town, its offer and relevance to different age groups**

<b>Supporting Outcomes</b>
A diverse and internationally successful range of cultural assets and events
A clear and appealing marketing brand with excellent digital presence
A sense of arrival
An excellent leisure offer with a strong food and drink offer and a vibrant and well managed night time economy

- **A place where young people study and prosper; and linked to the vibrancy of the town and its job opportunities, wish to stay after their studying is completed**

<b>Supporting Outcomes</b>
A wide range of excellent schools, FE colleges and HE in all sectors
Linkages and opportunities with local employers to engage with graduates and support them in

<b>Supporting Outcomes</b>
their careers
All young people have the opportunity to thrive and benefit from Cheltenham’s social, cultural and civic life
Young people feel involved in in the process of place making and they have opportunities to have their ‘say’ about the future of Cheltenham.

- **A place where people live in thriving communities**

<b>Supporting Outcomes</b>
Investment is secured to make sure that existing communities (and new planned communities) are socially sustainable, where there is equality of opportunity, and a reduction in the extremes in life chances.
A wide range of affordable housing options
A feeling of safety and of being welcomed
A high quality environment that is clean and well maintained

**2.3** The challenge for the Place Strategy will be to ensure that the broad outcomes relate directly to Cheltenham; setting out what makes Cheltenham unique, how this can be built upon and the focus for future ambition. Part of the engagement work of the Strategy will be to test the outcomes and as such it is likely that these will be amended as work with stakeholders and communities progresses.

**2.4** With these outcomes as a guiding framework it is proposed that an action plan is developed to co-ordinate projects and outcomes of the Place Strategy. This action plan will be worked up with key stakeholders with a focus on;

- Defining the ambition for Cheltenham, as informed by the vision
- Building and shaping the local identity of Cheltenham – place branding
- Working together to make the local economy more successful and dynamic
- Facilitating the delivery of strategic infrastructure
- Creating opportunities for innovation and creativity
- Master planning for key sites
- Embedding community networks
- Development of promotional and branding exercises

**2.5** The key thread throughout the action plan will be aligning activities to deliver outcomes on economic growth, regeneration and tourism together with emerging commercialism agenda of the Council.

### **3. Methodology**

**3.1** As outlined above, placemaking is informed by different activities and experiences and in response to this will need to be delivered through diverse approaches responding to the particular issues arising through engagement and partnering. The table below identifies five different placemaking approaches proposed to support the development of the Place Strategy and action

plan – guiding which has the greatest potential to assist with the delivery of the outcomes identified above.

<b>Type of Placemaking</b>	<b>What will success look like</b>	<b>Local examples of this type of placemaking</b>
<p><b>Strategic placemaking</b> We will work collectively through our strategic plans and structures to ensure Cheltenham is a place that embraces growth and investment.</p> <p>By so doing we will create the circumstances for further job creation and income growth. This process requires identifying and understanding the needs of potential partners from the private and public sectors.</p>	<p>Cheltenham's rate of economic growth exceeds national rates, the rate of jobs growth and productivity rates increase above those of comparator areas.</p>	<p>Allocation of new employment land through Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core strategy to help facilitate a 'Cyber Hub' and wider employment growth in key sectors where Cheltenham has a strong position.</p> <p>Collaborative working with LEP and support for Growth Bid 3.</p>
<p><b>Creative placemaking</b> We will work to ensure that Cheltenham has a unique creative atmosphere and environment that is attractive to young people, families and talented workers so that they want to live here.</p> <p>We will do this by supporting partners from the cultural and creative sectors to lead in the building of Cheltenham's wider cultural offer, both strategically and at a grass-roots level.</p>	<p>Cheltenham is successful in attracting and retaining young people, families and talented higher income workers to keep the town's economy vibrant</p> <p>Cheltenham puts on a range of high profile festivals and events that attract national and international attention.</p> <p>We will also look to create more opportunities for Cheltenham to host more nationally focussed events.</p>	<p>Supporting our commissioned partner the Cheltenham Trust to deliver a wide set of ambitious cultural outcomes for Cheltenham</p> <p>Our enabling work with Cheltenham Festivals to ensure their festivals are integral to the town's cultural offer</p>
<p><b>Strength-based and restorative placemaking</b></p> <p>Strengths-based working is about identifying and harnessing existing or undiscovered skills and resources within our communities, very much seeing them as part of the solution to some of the challenges we face. Alongside strengths-based working, we are also committed to working restoratively with individuals and communities; we know that people are more likely to make positive changes when those in positions of authority do things with them,</p>	<p>We have worked collectively to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a culture of utilising opportunities and our collective assets</li> <li>• Create knowledgeable communities that are more resilient;</li> <li>• Work with communities to identify local needs and how these might be better met using new or existing partnerships.</li> </ul>	<p>St. Peters and the Moors Big Local - a resident-led project working to make the St Peter's and The Moors area of Cheltenham an even better place to live through the careful investment of £1m secured from the Local Trust. Over 10 years, local residents will have the opportunity to develop their skills and confidence to identify what matters most to them and to take action to change things for the better, now and in the future. This strength-based approach to improving the area will build on local opportunities and assets to create lasting long term solutions and that will make best use of the scarce resources.</p>

<p>rather than to them or for them. This is a high support, high challenge approach.</p>		<p>Lower High Street Project, public engagement to identify key issues for residents and the local business community and how CBC can support actions to address these.</p>
<p><b>Marketing-based placemaking</b></p> <p>Through our strategic tourism work and the work of the Business Improvement District, we are committed to work collectively to develop the branding and marketing of Cheltenham. These messages will communicate the ambitions we have for the town, its unique characteristics and selling Cheltenham as a place that people want to invest, visit, live, and study in.</p>	<p>We have developed a collective message to tell the outside world that Cheltenham is the best possible place to start and run a business from and to visit and enjoy as a tourist.</p>	<p>Through Cheltenham Tourism Partnership, there was a collective approach to defining a set of outcomes for a new approach to tourism and marketing; these included:</p> <p>Working environments - Cheltenham's visitor economy is strategically and sustainably developed and supported.</p> <p>Working partnerships - Partnerships are active and dynamic in driving the vision and delivery for tourism in Cheltenham.</p> <p>Product development - Refine and enhance Cheltenham's offer for visitors.</p> <p>Market development - Grow the visitor economy through targeted marketing communications programmes &amp; systems.</p>
<p><b>Project-based placemaking</b></p> <p>We are committed to taking a project management approach to ensure the projects we deliver are well-managed. This may include testing concepts before making substantial political and financial commitments through small scale temporary interventions. May also be described as 'Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper', low risk, low cost options well suited to places in transition, helping to build public consensus before fixing commitments.</p>	<p>The projects that we commit to deliver to support our place-making ambitions are well-managed</p>	<p>Cheltenham Transport Plan, - delivered through a series of trial phases before the borough commits to the associated public realm improvements.</p> <p>Lower High Street pocket parks, - small scale, community supported environmental improvements.</p>

## 4. Consultation and feedback

- 4.1 Early discussions have taken place. A core officer team has been established and through this team conversations have started to develop the thinking around the Place Strategy, including Informal Cabinet, Executive Board, Cheltenham Trust, Cheltenham BID, Civic Society and Gloucestershire University. The purpose of this report is to gain agreement to proceed with wider



engagement. An engagement plan is provided at appendix 2; this plan will develop further as work on the Place Strategy progresses. It is linked to the Placemaking approaches set out in the table above which will help scope the type of conversations and stakeholders. Future reports on the Place Strategy will detail the consultation and feedback arising.

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<b>Appendices</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Place Strategy Influences</li><li>2. Engagement plan</li><li>3. Risks</li></ol>
<b>Background information</b>	None

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	Impact 1-5	Likelihood 1-6	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transferred to risk register
	If current staff contracts are not addressed within the Planning Division, then there will be insufficient suitable staff resource available to deliver the Place Strategy to quality or to timetable.	TA	Oct 2016	5	3	15	Reduce	Review current staffing arrangements within the Planning Division as part of the review of the Townscape Team	Dec 2016	TA	Divisional
	If the Council does not structure its strategy-strands within an overarching Place Strategy, then there is a possibility of a divergence in strategic approaches with the potential to impact on economic growth.	TA	Oct 2016	4	2	8	Reduce	Produce Place Strategy	Summer 2017	TA	Corporate
	If the Council does not effectively engage with its communities in the preparation of the Place Strategy, then it runs the risk of failing to bring with it organisations and communities vital to the Strategy's delivery and isolating parts of its community.	TA	Oct 2016	5	2	10	Reduce	Undertake engagement as set out in the main report and appendices	Spring 2017	TA	Corporate
<b>Explanatory notes</b>											
<b>Impact</b> – an assessment of the impact if the risk occurs on a scale of 1-5 (1 being least impact and 5 being major or critical)											

**Likelihood** – how likely is it that the risk will occur on a scale of 1-6

(1 being almost impossible, 2 is very low, 3 is low, 4 significant, 5 high and 6 a very high probability)

**Control** - Either: Reduce / Accept / Transfer to 3rd party / Close