

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Steering Group (GEGSG) and GEGSG Scrutiny Group – Report to O&S

As of today, GEG Steering Group has a new chair - Cllr Lyndon Stowe, whose cabinet portfolio is ***Economy Skills and Growth***. (I get the impression that this is one of a new set of portfolios, so it would be good have a sheet, if such a thing exists, explaining the new arrangements.)

Steve Jordan has been appointed vice chair of the Steering Group.

A number of topics were discussed at the Steering Group, but all were shrouded in uncertainty. It didn't help that the meeting coincided with the belated Queen's speech. The Scrutiny Group reviewed its Terms of Reference and confirmed that 4 times a year they would meet the same day as the Steering Group to give members the opportunity to listen to the Steering Group in the morning.

They also agreed that twice a year they would meet in a district, on rotation. So, the big question is: **would Cheltenham like to avail itself of this opportunity, and if so, what local topics might be of interest and how should Cheltenham go about organising such a meeting?** I assume that the Scrutiny Group would hold its meeting in a sufficiently large room for as many members and officers to attend as so wished. I further assume there would be an opportunity for questions.

The three dates for these away days in the calendar are:

- 19th October (provisionally taken by Cotswolds)
- 22nd February 2018
- 31st October 2018

My recommendation would be to see if either the February or October date would do, and to make a pitch for it as soon as possible. It's beyond my pay grade to determine how an exercise like this should be approached. I'll know more after the 19th October meeting in Cirencester. But, I'd be inclined to grab a slot as quick as possible. O&S would seem an appropriate body to organise this, if so minded.

Topics that might be pertinent could include:

- The cyber hub
- Employment & Skills Board (and how local people are to acquire the skills to apply for jobs in the cyber hub)
- Fastershire, plus other local infrastructure issues

There is loads of background information that would give members an appreciation of the scope of work being undertaken across Gloucestershire. The timescale is up to 2050 (though how to engage with these future stakeholders is far from clear!)

The indented text below is quoted in full as it distils the essence of some strategic Government thinking. In particular, '**inclusive growth**' is to be '**place**' based. But '**place**' is as yet undefined. The concern for Gloucestershire is that the Govt may be thinking about a larger area than just Gloucestershire, and we may struggle to make ourselves heard when competing with larger groupings (the Northern Powerhouse,

for instance). We also want to make linkages with other parts of the country and not just the South West. (Oxford, Milton Keynes, Cambridge etc.)

Inclusive growth is a term that has been gaining traction significantly over a number of recent years. In defining inclusive growth, the findings from the recent Inclusive Growth Commission, chaired by Stephanie Flanders has concluded the following requirements to progress:

- ***Place-based industrial strategies:*** Delivering business-led productivity and quality jobs through lifelong learning to develop sectoral coalitions linking industry sectors and places and the creation of new institutions to connect business and industry
- *A fundamental reset of the relationship between Whitehall and the town hall, underwritten in new social contracts: Allowing flexibility of budgets to support co-commissioning for health and social care and other public service areas such as education, skills and employment support to maximise impact and reduce silo spending*
- *Inclusive growth at the heart of public investment: Basing funding models on expected impact on broad based 'quality GVA', the establishment of regional banks and an independent UK Inclusive Growth Investment Fund overseen by a multi-stakeholder board.*
- *Making inclusive growth our working definition of economic success: Understanding social infrastructure gap and defining inclusive growth metrics which would be developed alongside social contracts.*

Members may wish to consider background information provided at the links below:

Strategic Economic Plan for Gloucestershire
http://www.gfirstlep.com/doc_get.aspx?DocID=168

Strategic Economic Plan for Gloucestershire (Business Case)
http://www.gfirstlep.com/doc_get.aspx?DocID=169

Building on Success – Gloucestershire Growth Deal 3
http://www.gfirstlep.com/doc_get.aspx?DocID=380

All three documents are very readable, containing a number of good info-graphics. If you are interested in the Business case underpinning the A417, Junction 10 of the M5 etc etc, they are all there in the second document.

The third document itemises the strategic projects that have been initiated under phases 1,2 & 3 of the Growth Deal. The emphasis now is on completing these projects. There is no expectation of a further tranche of Growth money.

Cllr Paul McCloskey
21st June 2017