

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Group Report for O&S 11 September 2017

March & September meetings

Procedural Matters

I'm just starting my second year on the scrutiny group. With hindsight, it is clear that the old group was winding down before the May elections, and we have now had the first two meetings of the new regime. So, far so good.

At the June meeting, the scrutiny group reviewed its terms of reference and identified possible topics to go into the work plan for 2017/2018.

Lynton Stowe is the new chair of the Steering Group, and Steve Jordan is the deputy chair. David Morgan is the new chair of the Scrutiny Group. In a radical move, the Steering Group has agreed to a proposal from the new Scrutiny Group that the chair of the Scrutiny Group will attend Steering Group meetings and report on the work of the Scrutiny Group (and this happened for the first time on 6th September).

At the September meeting of the Steering Group, they agreed revised (widened) terms of reference for the Steering Group. [This change still needs to be ratified by the Constitution Committee, but in practical terms it appears to be a done deal.]

Revised Terms of Reference:

- 1) Review the ***economic plans and policies*** [changed from 'decisions'] of the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee, and
- 2) Review the overall impact and delivery outcomes of the Gloucestershire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and make recommendations to the GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership Community Interest Company (GFirst LEP) and Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee on issue and improvements.

In an even more radical departure; the two chairs will meet periodically to discuss the work plan of the Steering Group. The Scrutiny Group's work plan will follow that of the Steering Group, but it has the flexibility to identify additional topics that it may wish to explore. A key ambition of the Scrutiny Group is to be in a position to influence emerging policy, rather than simply criticising after the event. Time will tell whether this happens.

Items of interest

Vision 2050: This will be launched in the New Year. It will have the effect of forcing early decisions on what sort of infrastructure we want (e.g. Light Rail?, Cycleway from Tewkesbury to Slad Valley?)

M5 Motorway: A meeting is to be arranged with Highways England to ensure Glos has a clear understanding of the bigger picture, and that Highways understands the Glos

priorities. M5 Junction 10 is top priority, followed by Junction 9. Next is Junction 12 Hunts Grove where infrastructure improvements are needed before the 2,500 houses can be built. It was noted that Junction 14 is at capacity, but there is no proposal on the table. Junction 10 is vital to all strategic allocations in the JCS, particularly the Cyber Park/West Cheltenham. At Junction 9 the issue is the A46 corridor. One outcome should be better coordination of MP lobbying along the length of the M5.

Cllr Paul McCloskey
Cheltenham District Representative