

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 22nd January, 2018
6.00 - 8.10 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Tim Harman (Chair), Jon Walklett (Vice-Chair), Colin Hay, Sandra Holliday, Chris Mason, Helena McCloskey, John Payne, Paul Baker and Max Wilkinson
Also in attendance:	Tim Atkins (Managing Director of Place and Economic Development), Councillor Matt Babbage (Chair of BSWG), Tracey Crews (Director of Planning), Richard Gibson (Strategy and Engagement Manager), Councillor Steve Jordan (Leader) and Councillor Paul McCloskey (Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee rep)

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Councillor Hegenbarth. Councillor Holliday had advised that she would be late and subsequently arrived at 6.50pm.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting had been circulated with the agenda.

Upon a vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 27 November 2017, be agreed and signed as an accurate record.

4. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS, CALLS FOR ACTIONS AND PETITIONS

None had been received.

5. MATTERS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

No matters had been referred to the committee.

6. BUDGET PROPOSALS 2017-18

Councillor Babbage, as Chair of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group (BSWG) explained that the BSWG were tasked with scrutinising the approach to the budget rather than the budget itself. Before outlining the discussion points raised by the BSWG, Councillor Babbage took the opportunity to thank Officers for their hard work on what was undoubtedly a huge undertaking and members of the BSWG for their input. Key points included:

- Members gave consideration the government announcement that councils could increase council tax by 3%. Comments from members included: the introduction of a 3% rise now would not contribute significantly to the budget, which at this stage was balanced, but it was felt that this could be considered in future years.
- Members were mindful that the budget had been balanced largely through the use of the budget strategy reserve and whilst this was acceptable, to both members and the council's auditors, the BSWG felt that this was not sustainable.
- The no-detriment clause meant that the business rates pool could potentially have a positive impact on the budget, with Gloucestershire having been selected to run a pilot.
- As in previous years, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was positively received.

Some members queried why the BSWG did not think it appropriate to increase council tax by 3% when it had commented that the use of reserves was not sustainable, and why it had not pushed for a focus on identifying additional savings. Councillor Babbage agreed that savings should form part of the future solution but stressed that existing initiatives were already seeing slippage and therefore it would be difficult to generate additional savings in the short term.

In response to a member question, Councillor Babbage confirmed that the council tax base did form part of the budget but did not have exact figures to hand.

Members of the committee who also sat on the BSWG took the opportunity to thank the Cabinet Member Finance for the support she offered the group and to commend the newly improved narrative within the budget papers which helped people to understand the intricacies of the budget.

No decision was required.

7. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLACE STRATEGY

Richard Gibson, Strategy and Engagement Manager, introduced the discussion paper and outlined what the Place Strategy set out to do. This was not a CBC document but rather a collectively owned, high profile document which set out a vision for Cheltenham. He talked through an updated PowerPoint presentation (Appendix 1) which summarised the progress that had been made since the Placemaking vision was agreed by Council in March 2017. This included a reminder of key strengths and challenges, proposed revisions to the outcomes and values, as well as summaries of the updated framework and key themes and ambitions for each outcome.

The Strategy and Engagement Manager gave the following responses to member questions;

- There was data to support the assertion that there was an exodus of young people and an influx of older people. The Gloucestershire 2050 Vision had also identified the demographic challenge as the number one challenge for the County but Officers working on the Place Strategy

acknowledged the risk of focussing on a particular demographic (young people).

- Although actual crime rates in Cheltenham were still relatively low, promoting community safety remained an important issue to ensure that people feel safe in their home and in their neighbourhood.
- It was widely accepted that there was a need to invest in education and skills so that residents could benefit from the highly skilled cyber related jobs that would be created as a result of new employers in Cheltenham. The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) had discussed the challenges associated with this and had been tasked with devising a possible solution.
- When referring to the 'local economy' this was in the context of Gloucestershire rather than simply Cheltenham.
- A number of actions would be developed to support themes and ambitions and Officers were due to meet with cultural partners in the coming week to discuss how festivals and culture could be supported.
- The Place Strategy was being developed alongside the Corporate Strategy and it was this document which would set out how the council would resource specific projects.

Comments from members included:

- In terms of affordable housing, this was relative to how much people earned and as such, a balanced housing market was key.
- Some members felt that consideration should be given to ensuring that Cheltenham retains a healthy mix of festivals.
- Could some reference be made to how Cheltenham fits within the context of Gloucestershire and the United Kingdom.
- Perhaps it should be articulated more clearly that there was a thriving business community within Cheltenham, which rather than being competitive in nature, was instead supportive of one another.

The Strategy and Engagement Manager explained confirmed that the draft Place Strategy would be tabled with the committee in February but members felt that this was something that affected all members and as such it would be more appropriate for a member seminar to be arranged, which would allow all members to feed into the process, ahead of Cabinet and Council.

No decision was required.

8. PUBLIC REALM PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT (PID)

The Director of Planning acknowledged that the condition of the public realm was an issue that had been raised by many different parties for some time now and the PID represented the start of a project to improve the high street public realm. With the total masterplan estimated to cost between £2.4m and £3.5m and a budget of only £725k, the whole masterplan area had been divided into six sections; with Rodney Road, along to Cambray Place being identified as a priority area. Three principal cost options were developed to gauge affordability which were: a lower cost option (using standard highway materials generally, with mid-range quality pre-cast concrete products); a mid cost option (using a mix of mid-range pre-cast concrete products and low cost natural stone products in pedestrian areas) and; a higher cost option (using UK sourced

Yorkstone natural stone with local Forest of Dean paving in highlight areas). She noted that the third option had been benchmarked against other local retail centres such as Gloucester, Hereford, Cirencester and Stroud.

The Director of Planning gave the following responses to member questions:

- It was hoped that the contract for the additional £197k match funding from the European Structural Investment Fund would be signed by next week but it was stressed that this was match funding linked to certain criteria.
- The difference in cost between the mid and high cost options came as a result of where the Yorkstone was sourced; UK or non-UK products. Products from India and China offered greater value for money and the council were being careful to ensure that suppliers had adequate policies such as child labour policies, etc. There was also an awareness that this approach had caused delays at the Brewery site and as such initial contact had been made with a number of UK companies that dealt with these suppliers, regarding whether they had a stockpile of appropriate product.
- The end result would be a higher level of finish than some areas had at the moment and in order to maximise what could be achieved within the budget, there would be a need to build transitioning of products into the design.
- The cost difference between the three options was sizeable, with the lower cost option being £500k, the mid cost option being £667 and the high cost option, using the same specification of products to the mid cost option but simply sourcing them from outside of the UK, was £787k. In the wider context (of the entire highstreet) the mid cost option came in under budget, allowing for work to other areas to be undertaken.
- Some highstreet properties did not have rear servicing and as such it would be necessary to continue to allow vehicles (including refuse and bullion vehicles) onto the highstreet. With the need for continued access for these vehicles, the products had been chosen on that basis, but consideration was being given to how the use of trees and street furniture might necessitate the use of light loaded vehicles and how properties with rear servicing could be encouraged to use it.
- There was a separate piece of work being undertaken regarding signage for key gateways and the town centre itself.
- The £725k was a confirmed budget, with £385k from CBC and the rest from GCC.
- A stakeholder engagement plan had been developed and apologies were given if the relevant GCC members were not being kept informed, as this should not have been the case.
- A copy of the plan, highlighting the phase 1 area would be circulated to members by email outside of the meeting.

The committee agreed that they would ask for general updates at key junctures in the project, as well as being given sight of any exemption reports that were tabled with the Project Board, as they felt that this would provide a sufficient overview of the project and progress.

9. WEST CHELTENHAM URBAN EXTENSION AND REGENERATION PROGRAMME DEFINITION DOCUMENT (PDD)

The Director of Planning referred members to page 42 of the agenda pack which detailed the various projects and activities which formed part of the programme. She explained that the programme had been established to oversee the number of projects, planning applications and council initiatives planned for the west of Cheltenham. A programme delivery team was formed, with a CBC Programme Manager taking responsibility for day-to-day co-ordination activities and a Programme Board would oversee delivery and provide audit over the risk register, which was a living document and as such, was regularly updated.

A member commended the approach that had been adopted, to facilitate and co-ordinate a variety of related projects but did comment that he had found some of the language that had been used in the PDD to be more complex than perhaps had been necessary.

The committee agreed that they wanted to be kept informed and therefore asked for updates at key junctures, as well as being given sight of any exemption reports. There was also a request that a presentation be arranged for all members at some point in the future, that gave an overview of all activities associated with this programme, though it was acknowledged that it would be some time before some of the projects within the programme, would come to fruition.

10. FEEDBACK FROM OTHER SCRUTINY MEETINGS ATTENDED

Updates relating to recent meetings of the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (9 January) and the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (29 November) had been circulated with the agenda. In the absence of Councillor Harvey, members were asked to contact him directly with any comments or questions relating to the HOSC update.

In addition to the update which had been circulated with the agenda, Councillor P McCloskey noted that Gloucestershire had now awarded the contract to address black spots in the town but queried who would be ensuring that these issues were addressed. He also expressed his support for the Strategic Planning Co-ordinator for Gloucestershire role, which he felt would be key to ensuring success.

A member, whilst pleased to see that 2050 had been on the agenda, was concerned about rumours regarding the suggestion that an international airport was being discussed when he had heard little about local interconnectivity. In relation to 'Education, Employment and Skills' he felt that there was real opportunity to get developers to pay to for young people to learn skills on building sites and noted that there were places in the world, which provided free tuition to those that agreed to remain in an area for a period of time and that kind of approach should be considered in Gloucestershire.

The Chairman reminded members that the official launch event for 'Gloucestershire 2050' was scheduled for Thursday 1 February and he hoped all members would be able to attend.

The Police and Crime panel had not met since the last meeting of this committee.

11. CABINET BRIEFING

The Leader referred members to the briefing that had been circulated separately to the agenda (Appendix 2). The Leader made the following comments in relation to discussions that had taken place earlier in the meeting and in addition to his written update:

- Concern had been raised about implications if ever any of the festivals in Cheltenham ceased running or moved elsewhere. He commented that while this is always a risk, 'Cheltenham Festivals Limited is specifically committed to run events in Cheltenham so they would not move out of the town. He also highlighted the great efforts that were being made to increase the number of festivals and fill any gaps throughout the year. For instance CBC were working with the BID which is proposing to fund new events such as 'Light Up Cheltenham' in February.
- The Strategic Planning Co-ordinator post was 50% funded by GCC, with the each of the six districts and LEP having committed £5k. He explained that the post was for an initial term of 3 years only, because this was considered a sufficient amount of time to be able to demonstrate whether it was useful or not, highlighting that a similar approach had been adopted when setting up the Cheltenham Development Task Force.
- There was nothing more to add in relation to the Airport.
- He was aware that a scrutiny task group had devised a list of proposed improvements for Cheltenham Spa Railway in 2015, which had been accepted by Cabinet and he was happy to include this within the council's response to the rail franchise consultation. He was aware that both the LEP and GCC would be making their own submissions and GCC had committed to sending through a draft so that they could compliment rather than contradict one another.
- Publica had posed the question of whether a Member Liaison Group, was still required given the many other arrangements that were in place to allow CBC to monitor performance. Publica, Cotswolds and West Oxfordshire did not feel it was necessary and the Forest of Dean had expressed the opinion that it could be useful. The Leader reminded members of the original proposal that each council could nominate 4 members to sit on the Member Liaison Group.

A member voiced his support for the continuation of a Member Liaison Group, however, another member queried how, given that only 10% of members would be given a place on the group, the remaining members would achieve any oversight or understanding. He noted that he had highlighted the provision within the constitution which allowed Joint Committees to report directly to council some time ago and had heard nothing more since. The Leader confirmed that the Constitution Working Group were going to look at the issue but noted that this was not relevant to Publica as this was no longer a Joint Committee and instead a separate company.

12. REVIEW OF SCRUTINY WORKPLAN

The work plan had been circulated with the agenda. The Democracy Officer noted that the CBH Masterplan had now been confirmed for the February meeting and that the Arle Nursery Strategic Review had also been added to the agenda for that meeting.

In response to a member question, the Democracy Officer also confirmed that the waste and recycling item would include lessons learnt in terms of the cancellation of kerbside waste and recycling collections during the adverse weather.

A member asked that another update from the Police and Crime Commissioner be scheduled for 2018.

Some members raised the issue of on and off street parking and suggested that this would be an interesting topic to discuss, with relevant officers from CBC and GCC, at a future meeting. The lead members would give consideration to this request and agree on an approach.

In terms of the request to add the review of scrutiny to the next meeting, the Chairman felt that this agenda was already

Councillor Wilkinson confirmed that his request at the previous meeting had related to private schools in Cheltenham. The work plan would be updated and the lead members would discuss if and how this matter would be progressed.

13. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXEMPT INFORMATION

Upon a vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining agenda items as it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public are present there will be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in paragraph 3, Part (1) Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Paragraph 3; Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

14. NORTH PLACE UPDATE

The Managing Director of Place and Economic Development gave a verbal update in relation to North Place.

15. APPROVAL OF EXEMPT MINUTES

The exempt minutes of the last meeting had been circulated with the agenda.

Upon a vote it was unanimously

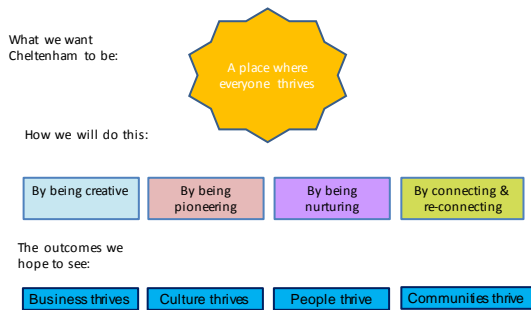
RESOLVED that the exempt minutes of the meeting held on the 27 November 2018, be agreed and signed as an accurate record.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for the 26 February 2018.

Tim Harman
Chairman

Placemaking vision – as agreed at Council March 2017



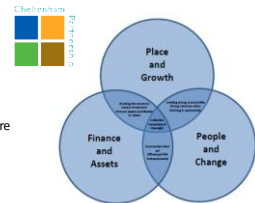
Place-making – what's happened since

New Communities Partnership launched in November to lead on a combined people and communities outcome

Civic Society Conference held in June

Proposed CBC Senior Management Structure

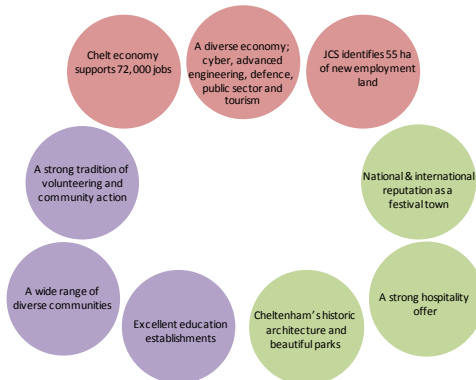
Launch of new 5 year tourism strategy for Cheltenham



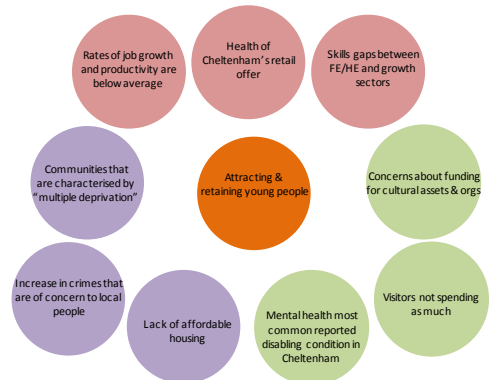
Cheltenham Plan Vision agreed by Council in December

- Cheltenham is a place where people live in strong, safe, healthy, well-served and well-connected communities....
- Cheltenham is a place with a prosperous and enterprising economy where education, skills and employment opportunities are increasing and diversifying...
- Cheltenham is a place where the quality and sustainability of our cultural assets and natural and built environment are valued and recognised ...

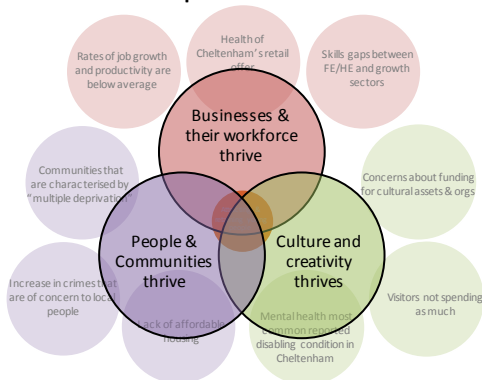
A reminder of some of our key strengths



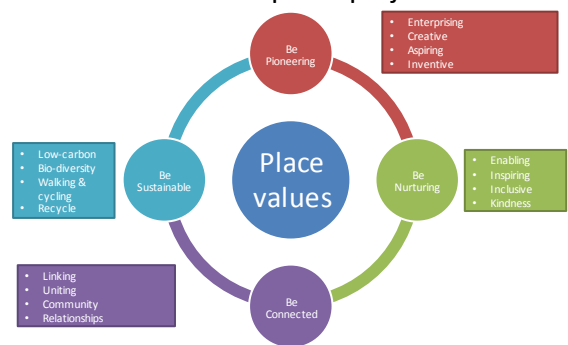
A reminder of some of our key place challenges



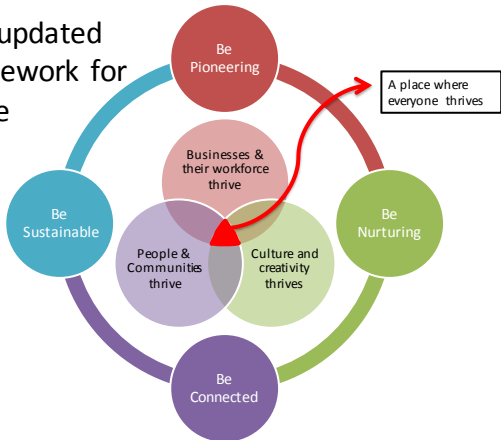
Revised place outcomes



Revised place values – how we could deliver our place projects

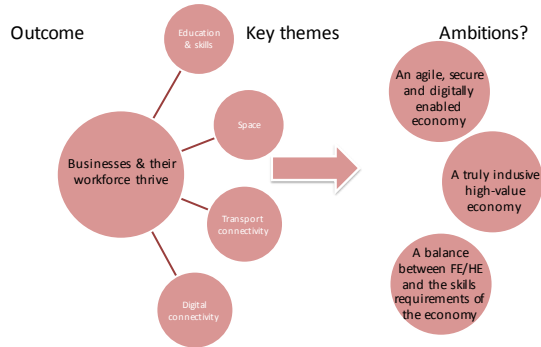


Our updated
framework for
place

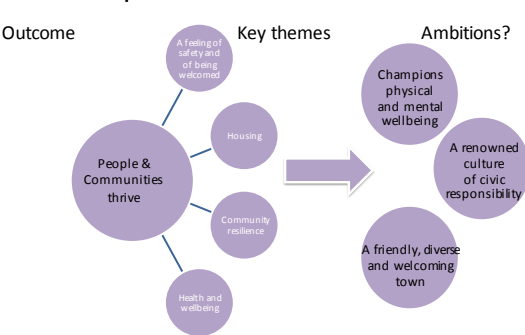


How we can use the framework to
develop our place priorities

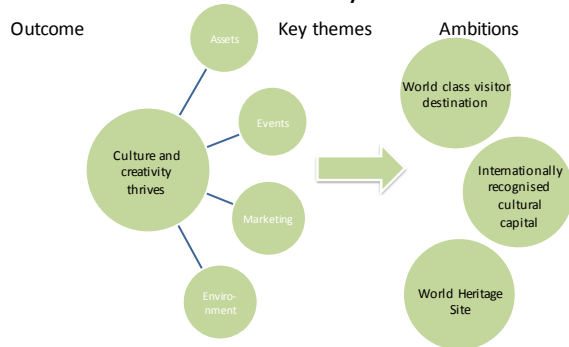
Businesses & their workforce thrive



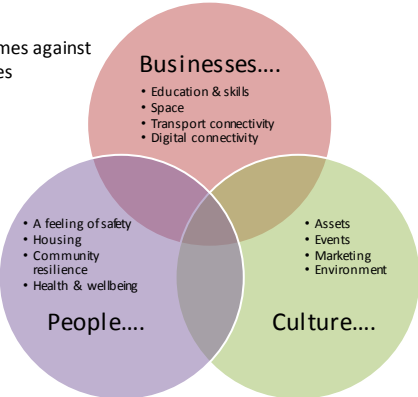
People & Communities thrive

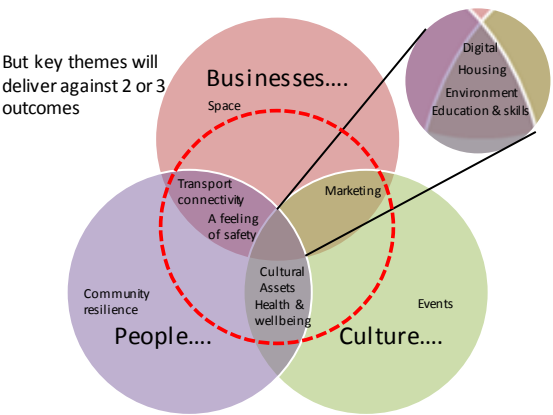


Culture & creativity thrives

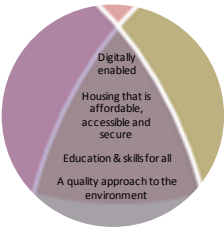


Key themes against
outcomes



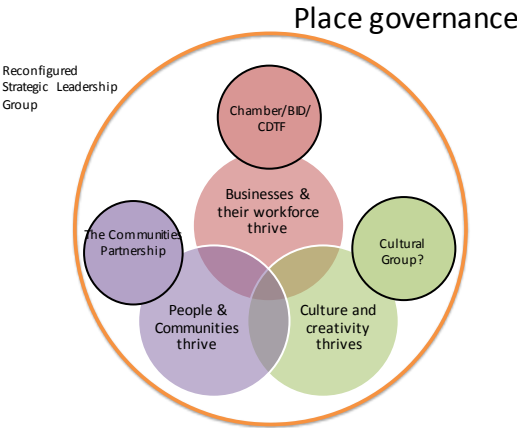


Are these our priority themes for the success of Cheltenham?



Possible Place actions

Place Outcome			Place theme	The possibility
Bus	Cult	Com		
✓	✓	✓	Education and skills	Create a pioneering cyber security pathway links the primary, secondary, FE and HE educational offer to the needs and resources of the new cyber security centre.
✓	✓	✓	Environment	Investment in public spaces with a focus on presenting Cheltenham as a world class destination
✓	✓	✓	Housing and homelessness	A review of options for a step change in the pace of delivery of housing (including housing that is affordable) and a collective approach to reducing homelessness
✓	✓	✓	Digital connectivity	Deliver UK Cyber business park
✓	✓	✓	Cultural assets	Secure a new vision for Cheltenham Town Hall
✓	✓	✓	Health and wellbeing	Increase opportunities for physical activities and community based health and wellbeing projects with the ambition of Cheltenham being a town that promotes physical and mental wellbeing
✓	✓	✓	Marketing	Create a Community Based Interest Company that supports collaborative action on how we best maximise the visitor economy
✓	✓	✓	Transport connectivity	Deliver a transport plan focused on increasing connectivity across the town, delivering modal shift
✓	✓	✓	A feeling of safety and of being welcomed	Commitment to put in place a joined-up approach to safeguarding that will nurture and support those that are most vulnerable
✓	✓	✓	Space & support a new supply of modern and flexible business space	Facilitate the delivery of new employment land as set out in IC3
✓	✓	✓	Enabling resilient communities	Commitment to creating sustainable communities in both new residential developments and in our existing communities
✓	✓	✓	Cultural events and activities	World War 1 centenary commemoration Tour of Britain 2018



Concluding remarks

- We need to use the new framework to determine what our place ambitions are and what the supporting projects should be
- We need to assess projects against our place values
- We need to consider the governance of the place strategy

Page 12

Place – key dates

- O+S 22.1.18
- Strategic Leadership Group 29.1.18
- Cultural providers 31.1.18
- Partnership workshop 6.2.18
- O+S 26.2.18
- Cabinet 6.3.18
- Council 26.3.18

Briefing for Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 22nd January 2018

The Forward Plan lists the reports expected to come to Cabinet in the next 3 or 4 months. This note supplements that with other issues that may be of interest to O&S.

Gloucestershire Airport

A Leader decision has been taken as council shareholder to confirm support for the new senior management structure which in addition to the Managing Director includes 3 posts - a Commercial Director, Financial Controller and Compliance & Operations Manager. Darren Lewington has decided to leave the company after over 25 years' service and recruitment to fill the 3 posts is underway.

As part of strengthening the company, the shareholders have agreed to reduce direct nominations of company directors to one each. This will need to be formally confirmed by decisions to change to company articles and shareholders agreement.

The shareholders carried out a recruitment process for Non-Executive Directors. There were 48 applications with 12 invited for interview. The interview panel was made up of councillors and officers from the 2 shareholders with HR support from Julie McCarthy from Publica. Lis Carter and Mark Ryan, representing the company, also met each candidate and fed back their views before decisions by the panel. The strength of applicants was such that the shareholders have proposed to appoint 4 new directors all of whom have accepted.

A special Shareholder Forum has been proposed for 31st January to make sure all the correct governance is in place enable everything mentioned above to happen.

Rail Franchise

The government have launched a consultation about what happens to the great western rail franchise (see link below) following the scheduled end of the current franchise in March 2019. The deadline for feedback is 21st February 2018 – is this something O&S want to get involved in?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/great-western-rail-franchise>

This page is intentionally left blank