Cheltenham Borough Council

Council – 23 July 2018

Gloucestershire 2050 Consultation

Report of the Leader of the Council

Accountable member	Leader of the Council, Cllr. Steve Jordan
Accountable officer	Strategy and Engagement Manager, Richard Gibson
Accountable scrutiny committee	All
Ward(s) affected	All
Key Decision	No
Executive summary	A range of partners across the county have come together to start a conversation, called Gloucestershire 2050, to identify key challenges and explore ambitions and ideas that could shape the county's long-term future. The consultation on these ambitions and ideas is open to 31 July 2018. Given the potential significance to Cheltenham's future, and the fact that Council agreed a place vision for Cheltenham in March, Council is asked to consider submitting a formal response to the Gloucestershire 2050 consultation.
Recommendations	**Council welcomes the Gloucestershire 2050 consultation.** **Council agrees to submit a response to the Gloucestershire 2050 consultation using the draft consultation response attached at appendix 3 as the starting point for the response.** **Council requests the Leader, in consultation with the two other political group leaders, to agree the final wording of the response and to submit this response by 31 July 2018.**
Financial implications	None as a direct result of this report. **Contact officer: Paul Jones, Chief Finance Officer.** **E-mail: paul.jones@cheltenham.gov.uk** **Tel no: 01242 775154**
Legal implications	None as a direct result of this report. **Contact officer: Peter Lewis** **E-mail: Peter.Lewis@tewkesbury.gov.uk** **Tel no: 01684 272012**

HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	None as a direct result of this report. **Contact officer: Julie McCarthy** **Strategic HR & Client Manager** **E-mail: julie.mccarthy@cheltenham.gov.uk** **Tel no: 01242 264355**
Key risks	
Corporate and community plan Implications	The interim corporate strategy action plan 2018-19 contains the commitment that "*The council will contribute to shaping the Gloucestershire 2050 Vision.*"
Environmental and climate change implications	A number of responses have highlighted the need for the Gloucestershire 2050 project to fully embrace the principle of sustainable development.

1. Introduction

1.1 In 2016 Leadership Gloucestershire, comprising the Leaders and Chief Executives from the county and district councils together with other key public sector leaders, led a programme of work to negotiate a devolution deal with Government for the county. Although the deal was not successful, the programme generated alignment around areas of common interest such as community safety and strategic planning, and this collective working has formed the foundations of Gloucestershire 2050.

1.2 In 2017 Leadership Gloucestershire decided to commission a piece of work to look at the longer term challenges facing the county, and to consider what changes might be needed to address those challenges to deliver improved outcomes for future generations. The feeling was that if it were possible to create a vision for the county around which the various interested parties could align, this could be used with Government and agencies such as Homes England, Highways England, to inform national level investment funding and strategic policy formulation.

1.3 Whilst 2050 may seem and feel a long way off, Leadership Gloucestershire felt that such a timeframe would create the right conditions for a more frank debate and open exchange of views. Also when it comes to thinking and planning strategically, with regard to both people and place, we are more accustomed to longer-term, time frames. For example, in terms of spatial planning, our own JCS runs till 2031, and a 2050 time horizon in strategic infrastructure terms is not an unrealistic one.

1.4 In addition, the county needs longer-term solutions to address some of our people-based challenges such an ageing population, health inequalities, access to housing that is affordable, and access to appropriate education, training and skills. Gloucestershire 2050 provides an opportunity to focus thinking on what we need to do, collectively, as a whole system, to address these longer term challenges.

2. Gloucestershire 2050 big conversation

2.1 Leadership Gloucestershire commissioned the University of Gloucestershire to facilitate a study which could then be put out for wider public consultation. The "Big Conversation" is a result of this initial study. The consultation was launched in February this year and closes on 31 July. In order to prompt a dialogue, the University sought the assistance of an expert panel from which the six projects "ideas" and eight "ambitions" (Appendix 2) emerged which the panel felt would best address the future challenges that the county faces.

2.2   The university has also commissioned Demos Localis to undertake an analysis of the options for creating delivery vehicles for implementing large-scale transformational projects such as those represented by the 6 project ideas. Their final report will be considered by Leadership Gloucestershire in September.

2.3   The Council's political group leaders have agreed that Council should have an opportunity to debate the Vision 2050 consultation and decide whether or not to submit a response on behalf of the Council.

2.4   As far as possible, they wish any such response to be based on a cross-party consensus, and to be reflective of the views of the people of Cheltenham. In order to inform Council's deliberations, invitations have been sent to the following organisations to ask that they share any responses that they make to the 2050 consultation.
  - Cheltenham Business Improvement District – response received
  - Vision 21 - response received
  - Place Governance Group –response received
  - Cheltenham Borough Homes - response received
  - Cheltenham Development Task Force –response received
  - Cheltenham Chamber of Commerce - response received
  - Voluntary and Community Sector forum – meeting on 10 July – response awaited

2.5   In addition, there has been a meeting with our Joint Core Strategy district partners to formulate a response.

2.6   In terms of member engagement; two member seminars were held. The first one on 9th January was attended by eight members. The second one, held on 28th June was attended by 20 members.

3.   Summary – partner views

3.1   In terms of responses from our partners; the following issues have been raised:

3.2   Cheltenham Business Improvement District (BID) welcomed the Cyber-city project as this international-scale project will make a real difference both to the town and the county and will appeal to young professionals both inside and outside the county and will help tackle the age-group imbalance.

3.3   In terms of the super-city, the BID were concerned that what should be a positive attempt for Cheltenham and Gloucester to work more closely together would be side-tracked by the emphasis on creating a "third centre". Instead the BID felt that the emphasis should be on improving transport links between the two centres so that residents are able to move seamlessly between the two. The BID would encourage investigations into a new light rail link alongside improved bus lanes and services between Cheltenham and Gloucester– but would also support 4-way working at junction 10.

3.4   The BID were also concerned that investment into a third centre could be at the expense of the current city and town centres with the fear that any new development would detract from them potentially leading to them losing their own identities.

3.5   The BID supports additional investment into Gloucestershire Airport which is ideally placed to service both urban areas and the wider-county, rather than the creation of a new Cotswold Airport. In addition, the BID recognised the need for potential industrial development close to the M5 between the two centres. There is scope for further business parks in addition to the Cyber Park, which could accommodate both related and alternative industries.

3.6   Vision 21 felt strongly that by identifying 8 ambitions Glos 2050 fails to appreciate the overarching

need to create a sustainable county. V21 feels that there should be only one ambition and that is to become sustainable. The other ambitions are merely goals to achieve along the way to becoming fully sustainable by 2050.

3.7 V21 felt that the people magnet ambition should be replaced by an ambition to develop a low carbon economy with particular emphasis on the growth of energy from renewable sources and recycling.

3.8 V21 also wants to see an integrated approach that is based on sustainable development principles, rather than investment in a series of loosely related unrealistic ideas or projects. The focus should be on growing existing communities by servicing their needs and developing their aspirations in line with good sustainable development practice.

3.9 The Place Governance Group (PGG) supported the concept of Cheltenham and Gloucester continuing to thrive as separate but inter-connected urban centres that together have sufficient economic and cultural power to be considered as one of the UK's most thriving urban areas.

3.10 The PGG felt that the Glos 2050 proposals should offer a compelling future for our young people; and that partners should be working with education settings to ensure our young people are inspired to get the best possible education. At the same time, more investment is needed to make sure our most vulnerable young people are not left behind and that new forms of youth work and alternative education provision might need to be developed to ensure that all young people thrive.

3.11 The PGG also wanted to see more emphasis on sustainable development that seeks the highest environmental and social standards from new developments to ensure that fresh thinking is brought to the challenge of building urban extensions.

3.12 Cheltenham Borough Homes held a board way day at which an officer from GFirst LEP facilitated a session about Glos 2050. These are some of the comments made:
   ● There should be a wide spectrum of residential properties in different tenures available at a range of prices.
   ● Young people's expectations and aspirations are different now. The inherited desire to own their own home could change and young people may prefer to invest in their job and social life.
   ● How do we reconfigure what has already been planned and built to meet their future needs of the population?
   ● We need to consider new forms of home construction where the pieces are delivered by crane and these homes may also be more adaptable to meet future needs.
   ● Some people might leave Gloucestershire if it changed too much
   ● Creating a Super City could also protect the things that add value to Gloucestershire now.

3.13 Gloucestershire Airport Ltd (GAL) supports the inclusion of an airport within the vision but feels that this should be located on the Gloucestershire Airport site. GAL understands that Cotswold Airport's location, its limited facilities and services would require substantial investment to bring it up to a standard needed to achieve the 2050 vision. GAL believes that any investment should be directed at the county's already established airport. This is predicated on the fact that the airport is already at the heart of a growing aerospace and technological cluster; is recognised within the GFirst Strategic Economic Plan as an enabler for growth within the wider economy, and the fact that there is a longer-term commitment shown by the two shareholding authorities, CBC and Gloucester City Council to the airport securing its future on the basis of its significant economic impact.

3.14 Cheltenham Development Task Force felt that the six project ideas require further investigation with careful attention to their benefits for people, communities and sustainability with a priority

given to those projects that can deliver better public transport and affordable housing. CDTF felt that the Cyber Park appears the most deliverable but this 'game changer' needs effective resourcing and focused leadership. It is essential that strong links are created with world-class research and HE bodies.

3.15 CDTF suggested that the 'super-city' idea should be rethought, recognising the separate identities of Cheltenham and Gloucester, while improving synergies between the two urban areas including appropriate opportunities new development based on the 'garden city/village' model. Planning should be developed around integrated public transport including rapid transit for commuter routes and regional economic linkages, both to the Bristol area and to others such as Oxford and Birmingham.

3.16 In term of governance, CDTF felt that whilst unitary local government may be appropriate, the growth agenda will require new forms of partnership for effective delivery. For instance, the task force model based on developing common aims and mutual trust may be appropriate for initial work on the Gloucester/Cheltenham area.

3.17 Cheltenham Chamber of Commerce takes the view that insufficient work on the 2050 concept has been undertaken for an opinion to be expressed. Instead the Chamber believes that a comprehensive holistic approach should be taken to the whole county and people with the right skill sets should be engaged to provide a wider perspective in areas such as infrastructure, education, employment, accommodation, leisure, culture and retail.

3.18 The chamber believes that constructive dialogue is required with sixth form schools in the county and also the general population through parish and borough councils and that a time period of three years be set to formulate a vision and appropriate ways forward.

4.   Summary - JCS leaders and chief executives informal discussions

4.1 We should work more closely with our JCS partners to achieve ambitious economic growth outcomes, including greater connectivity with the potential to act as a "city region"/virtual city to spur on sub-regional growth in the context of the M5 corridor being an economic unit.

4.2 The JCS partnership provides a basis for future working and an opportunity to build on that informal public/private aspect to feed into the formal decision making process, for example, building on Cheltenham Development Task Force (and the Gloucester equivalent).

4.3 Some form of improved mass transit (e.g. light rail/tram) system, linking the two urban centres via the airport has potential.

4.4 A "green corridor/linear park" between Cheltenham and Gloucester could provide a more efficient movement of people between the urban centres through, for example, safer cycling.

4.5 Acknowledgement that the cyber park project is already underway and therefore may be seen through the consultation as the least controversial of the key projects.

5.   Summary of elected member views – 9th January

5.1 Members who attended the seminar raised the following points:

- The scale of ambition is critical to getting national investment.
- Transport connections and links with key destinations need to be improved e.g. Bristol, Birmingham, Oxford, Cambridge, Milton Keynes, Reading. Train journey times are important.
- The supply of housing, of all tenures but with a focus on housing that is affordable is key, but there is recognition of the need to be innovative in how we increase the supply.
- Do we need to give consideration to changes in the way we lead our lives?

6. Summary of elected member views – 28th June

6.1 Cyber-park

6.2 Members were generally in favour but recognised that it requires significant investment into transport infrastructure to make it successful. Members in particular highlighted the need for 4-way working at jct 10 to unlock the potential and to reduce impacts on residential roads. Members felt that transport infrastructure needs to go in first before any residential development.

6.3 Alongside road improvements, members also recognised the need for a focus on sustainable travel – walking, cycling, public transport not just cars.

6.4 Members felt that the cyber-park and associated residential development needs to be properly planned in order that it reaches the highest possible standards and therefore should not be developer-led.

6.5 Members also wanted to see a link between the cyber-park and the education and skills offer of our local educational establishments, from primary schools to our university. They felt that there is a good opportunity to use the cyber-park idea to excite children about future careers.

6.6 Super-city

6.7 For CBC members, the super-city project idea remains contentious – particularly in any sense that this would lead to a physical merger of Cheltenham and Gloucester which members are particularly against.

6.8 Instead members identified the following key elements that will enable the two urban centres of Cheltenham and Gloucester to thrive which is of much greater interest:
- Connectivity both in terms of transport links but also digital / broadband
- Enabling a vibrant cultural and sporting offer;
- Governance of place with focus on democratic leadership
- Being inclusive and ensuring that investment benefits those that are most disadvantaged.
- Based on research we need to learn from Europe's most successful cities about what makes a thriving urban area

6.9 Regional Park

6.10 Members were interested in how we encourage more sustainable living in our rural areas; eg with an equal focus on connectivity.

6.11 Cotswold airport

6.12 Members felt that a new airport is generally not really achievable and that there is a sense that we need to reatin Gloucestershire Airport.

6.13 Development of project ideas

6.14 Members suggested that the project ideas felt rather sterile and unimaginative with a focus on big capital projects. They were interested in encouraging fresh thinking and ensuring the voices of young people are heard in the development of project ideas.

6.15 Consultation

6.16 Members wanted to make sure that the voices of young people were being captured and given appropriate weighting to reflect their importance to the future of Gloucestershire.

6.17 Members also wanted to ensure that the voice of local businesses were captured.

6.18 Young people

6.19 In terms of attracting and retaining young people, members felt that the collective effort should be focused on providing high quality education from early years to FE/HE, affordable housing, access to jobs and vibrant cultures. They wanted Leadership Gloucestershire to test whether all our planning, policies and systems were aligned to enable this to happen.

6.20 Strategic links

6.21 Members wanted to ensure that the 2050 proposals align with CBC's outcomes as set out in the place vision and our corporate strategy. They suggested that the strategic fit needs to be tested. They also felt that the 2050 proposals should be worked up within the parameters set by the JCS (or its successor).

7. Next Steps

7.1 The draft response is attached as appendix 3. Members are invited to discuss the draft response and amend it accordingly. Authority is sought from Council for the Leader, in consultation with the two other political group leaders, to agree the final wording of the response and to submit this response by 31 July 2018.

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Appendices	1. Risk assessment 2. Summary of Gloucestershire 2050 ideas and ambitions 3. Draft CBC response

Risk Assessment **Appendix 1**

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk			
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	I	L	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer
	If CBC does not agree to submit a response to the 2050 consultation, the council's reputation might be at risk as it will be viewed as not representing its partners, businesses and residents views in the development of the next phase of the Gloucestershire 2050 project.	Cllr Steve Jordan	11.7.18	4	3	12	Reduce	Work with council to agree s suitable response that reflects local opinions	31.7.18	Pat Pratley