

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**AGENDA
ITEM NO**

12 OCTOBER 2017

12

Report Title	LEADERSHIP GLOUCESTERSHIRE UPDATE
Purpose of Report	To outline the Council's approach to Leadership Gloucestershire and key issues affecting its members.
Decision(s)	To approve the approach being taken by the Leader and Chief Executive to the Gloucestershire wide agenda and the application of resources accordingly.
Consultation and Feedback	Group Leaders receive feedback from the Leader of Council and Chief Executive at their meetings. Feedback is also provided to this committee on a regular basis. Leadership Gloucestershire papers are published on the GCC website http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/joint-ventures/leadership-gloucestershire-working-together-for-you/
Financial Implications and Risk Assessment	The Council is contributing £10,000 as a one-off payment to the work commissioned by Leadership Gloucestershire. It has been made very clear to Leadership Gloucestershire that the Council will not countenance an annual payment of this nature. Leadership Gloucestershire business can impact indirectly on SDC's strategic risks e.g. reputation, partnership actions. The £10,000 contribution to Leadership Gloucestershire highlighted in the report will be funded from the contingency budget. David Stanley – Accountancy Manager (Section 151 Officer) Email: david.stanley@stroud.gov.uk 01453 754100

Legal Implications	No significant legal implications to report. (Ref: kt/d2809/rc2909) Karen Trickey Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer karen.trickey@stroud.gov.uk 01453 754369
Report Author	David Hagg Chief Executive david.hagg@stroud.gov.uk 01452 754290
Options	The Council could withdraw from Leadership Gloucestershire, though this would inhibit inter-agency working and mean that the Council would find it more difficult to influence and work with other public sector organisations. The Council could identify an on-going budget for Leadership Gloucestershire projects. However, this presumes these projects have a degree of priority over SDC ones. As the Leader of Council and Chief Executive have made clear at Leadership Gloucestershire meetings, this will not always be the case. Indeed, the status and priority of some projects coming before Leadership Gloucestershire have been challenged by the Council.
Performance Management Follow Up	Leadership Gloucestershire business will continue to be reported to the committee.
Background Papers	No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

1. **LEADERSHIP GLOUCESTERSHIRE (LG)**

The terms of reference, membership and business agenda are available on GCC's website (details above). GCC administer its business and the County Council Leader chairs the meetings.

2. **ISSUES**

The Leader and Chief Executive have recently made suggestions about how LG conducts its business in the future. In summary these are;

- **LG Terms of Reference**

We have proposed that it would be good practice to ensure there is a decision each year on who takes the chair. Currently it is 'assumed' the Leader of the County Council takes on this role. We have also suggested that, if GCC would find it helpful, LG should look to other partners to provide the secretariat from time to time. When there was a Gloucestershire Local Government Association, this function moved from member to member over time.

- **LG Membership**

We have proposed that the University of Gloucestershire is invited to join LG. The Vice Chancellor is joint leader for an important project 'Leading Places' that involves all LG members. One of only six projects across the UK, it seeks to establish how Gloucestershire's future should be considered and the supporting governance arrangements.

- **Work Programme**

We have asked that LG establish a clearer work programme. We have become increasingly concerned that 'ad hoc' requests for funding are presented to LG and this makes it difficult to assess priorities. There is also some concern as to what items are put on the agenda and others that do not appear. We have put forward the following;

- **Children services** – this needs to be collectively owned following highly critical inspection reports from Ofsted and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Police. Both reports identify failings within the County Council and Gloucestershire Constabulary. Whilst many of the issues require single agency improvement plans, we also consider wider partnership contributions can help. We consider LG has a responsibility to look across the public services in Gloucestershire.

We have made offers to the County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable and further discussions are taking place to consider how we can support and help.

- **Leading Places/Vision 2050** become a key part of LG business. Originally quite separate initiatives sponsored in isolation by different LG members, we maintain they should become a standing item now there is a programme and budget.
- A discussion about **budget prospects** for all LG members – bringing together the overall public service position in Gloucestershire. We need to be better at understanding the implications of cuts on other parts of the 'public service system' and working together/supporting one another.
- We need to improve the way we discuss and decide to use **finances** available to LG. We have had a run of 'ad hoc' requests for funding and seemingly an **LG 'pot'** is available. Because of the ad hoc nature there is no identification of priorities by LG, merely a response to the bids which are allowed onto the agenda.
- **Bids to Government** e.g. Business Rate Pilot need proper LG consideration and co-ordination.

- A review of **countywide partnerships**, looking at membership and business agendas. There is concern that duplication exists and, at a time of constrained resources, it is ever more essential that efficient and effective arrangements are in place.

3. **STRATEGIC PLANNING CO-ORDINATOR**

Leadership Gloucestershire has agreed to commission a 2 year fixed term role of Strategic Planning Co-ordinator. This post will draw together the separate and disparate approaches by district councils to core strategies and local plans and work with GFirst LEP and other agencies on countywide strategy for housing and employment. This work has added urgency in the light of the Government's recent consultation 'planning for the right homes in the right Places' which contains proposals for a standard methodology for calculating 'objectively assessed need' and a requirement for planning authorities to have and maintain an agreed 'Statement of common ground'. The purpose of the Statement of common ground is to encourage all LPAs 'to co-operate effectively and seek agreement on strategic cross-boundary issues, including planning for the wider area's housing need'. The Leader and Chief Executive will comment on the latest position at the committee meeting.

We are the only local planning authority in Gloucestershire to have an adopted Local Plan under the National Planning Policy Framework. Approved in November 2015, it has subsequently won national and regional commendation. The Joint Core Strategy, covering Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury, is at the 'examination in public' stage.

We are now conducting a review of our Local Plan and therefore once again well ahead of other districts. It may well be that the expertise and experience of our planning staff can help drive this new approach.

All districts have agreed to contribute £5,000 towards this function and £5,000 to the Vision 2050/Leading Places public consultation that is likely to take place in 2018. Full details of partner funding for both projects is shown in the LG notes

<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/17752/lq-notes-270717.pdf>