

Appendix B – Possible draft Gloucester City Council response to the consultation

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Vision 2050 big conversation consultation. This response is sent on behalf of Gloucester City Council, following a resolution at its meeting of 13th July. Gloucester City Council is the democratically elected council representing the people of the City of Gloucester, 125,000 residents and thousands of businesses and employees.

The Council welcomes and supports the aim of developing a long-term vision for the county of Gloucestershire, and has been a keen and active contributor to Vision 2050. As well as engaging internally with councillors and officers, we have also worked with local community groups, school and youth forums, business groups and other stakeholders to encourage them to engage in the big conversation and to express their views. This response captures where possible the views they have expressed back to us.

In summary, key messages from Gloucester City are as follows (with apologies that these do not fit neatly into the online consultation form structure):

- The Big Conversation has been a very worthwhile exercise, and communities are keen that it is the start of an ongoing open dialogue.
- July should not be seen as the end of discussion, and we should take enough time as is needed to develop a shared vision that will endure for thirty years.
- Whilst information on new delivery vehicles is helpful, form should follow function, and decisions on new delivery vehicles should await a clear, widely supported strategy.
- The eight proposed ambitions for the county are generally unarguable and were supported by all.
- In contrast, a number of the six projects tended to split opinion. It would be better to develop strategic plans around the eight ambitions, rather than singling out a few projects.
- Deliverables in these strategic plans need to address both social goals and key physical infrastructure.
- The ability to achieve employment aspirations was identified as the greatest positive influence on young people wanting to stay in the county. This requires a supportive industrial strategy, supportive local planning policies, underpinned by a primary/secondary/tertiary education system and skills strategy.
- A secondary identified driver to keep more young people in the county was '[fun/social] things to do'. An initiative that would help deliver this would be Gloucester's bid to become UK City of Culture 2025.
- The City Council does not support the idea within the super city project description of creating a 'new third centre' between Gloucester and Cheltenham.
- However, the City Council wants to work more closely with its JCS partners and others to achieve more ambitious economic growth outcomes, including greater connectivity and acting as a focus for sub-regional growth.
- The JCS provides a sound basis for a governance framework to take this idea forward.

- The City Council would support some form of improved mass transit (e.g. tram) system for the city region hub. It would also support improved safer cycle routes between the two places, and consideration of an accessible quality green linear park (for walking and cycling) between the two.
- The City Council supports the idea of focusing on 'cyber security' as an industrial strategy focus for the county.
- Gloucestershire Airport at Staverton will continue to be a key economic asset for the county and is a key enabler of the city region growth hub. The City Council does not believe that Gloucestershire could or should develop its own international airport.
- Improved connectivity with the Oxford-Cambridge growth arc is a key priority, and improved rail connectivity with other parts of the country would be supported.
- The City Council would support an ambition to increase physical activity and tackle obesity. To this end, we would support something akin to an extension of the current Gloucestershire Moves programme.
- Whilst the City Council has no issue with the expansion and development of the Cotswold Water Park, any large conferencing facility/hotel would be better placed near the urban core of the county.

Gloucester City Council looks forward to working with all of its partners and communities to help refine and take forward delivery of the Vision 2050.