



Notes of the meeting of Leadership Gloucestershire held on
24 January 2013

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies.

Name	Organisation	Substitute
Cllr Mark Hawthorne (Chair)	Gloucestershire County Council	
Cllr Carole Topple	Cotswold District Council	
Cllr Geoff Wheeler	Stroud District Council	
Cllr Paul James	Gloucester City Council	
Cllr Patrick Molyneux	Forest of Dean District Council	Apologies
Cllr Robert Vines	Tewkesbury Borough Council	
Cllr Steve Jordan	Cheltenham Borough Council	
Martin Surl	Gloucestershire Police & Crime Commissioner	
Dr. Helen Miller	Clinical Commissioning Group Chair, NHS Gloucestershire	Apologies
Jan Stubbings	NHS Gloucestershire	Mary Hutton
Chief Executive Advisers		
Pete Bungard	Gloucestershire County Council	
Mike Dawson	Tewkesbury Borough Council	
Secretariat		
Jane Burns	Gloucestershire County Council	
Visitors		
David Neudegg	Cotswold District Council	
Nigel Riglar	Gloucestershire County Council	
Paul Denny	Gloucestershire County Council	

2. Notes of the previous meeting held on 20 December 2012

The notes of the meeting held on 20 December 2012 were approved.

All matters arising had been pursued or were reported back elsewhere on the agenda.

3. Shared Services: Case Study

David Neudegg, Chief Executive of Cotswold and West Oxfordshire District Councils gave an up-date on the shared management arrangements between the two councils. The vision of the two councils was to retain their independence and identity, but working together and sharing resources to maximise mutual benefit leading to more efficient, effective delivery of local services.

There are currently many shared posts between the two councils including the Chief Executive, 2 Directors and 4 Heads of Service. The approach has been evolutionary – and deliberately so. Savings to date have been in excess of £1.4m.

Cotswold are also involved in other shared service arrangements in Gloucestershire e.g. GOSS and Audit.

Carole Topple added that there had been very little impact on customers. The main positives are better resilience and capacity, and financial savings. It can be quite challenging for staff and members have had to adjust to less frequent contact with senior officers. Success can also be attributed to going at a pace that suits both organisations.

Discussion focussed on the optimum number of councils which could share management, the pace of change, the over-arching vision and the importance of good communications.

Carole and David were thanked for their insights.

This completed the planned case studies. The overall picture of shared services and collaboration more generally was healthy. There were new opportunities which have also been explored. Leadership Gloucestershire wished to discuss “where next?” at the next meeting.

Action: (1) A summary of the key learning points and critical success factors from the case studies to be produced. **(Action: JB/MD).**

(2) Chief Executives to produce a report on “where next?” for shared services. **(Action: MD/PB).**

4. Economic Growth Up-date

(a) Local Transport Body (LTB)

The preferred size is 4 – 2 representatives from the Local Transport Authority (GCC), 1 from the LEP and 1 from Leadership Gloucestershire. It would be important to get a good geographical spread. The GCC representatives were likely to be the Cabinet Members for Communities and Resources, (Forest of Dean and Cotswold respectively) with the LEP representative from Cheltenham.

Paul James (Gloucester City) was agreed as the representative from Leadership Gloucestershire. **(Action: Nigel Rigar).**

(b) Borders Broadband Project - Communications

Paul Denny, Strategic Communications Adviser GCC, presented a report on the Borders Broadband project with Herefordshire. The project would cover 140,000 rural homes and businesses. GCC had invested £7.5m to help enable the project to happen. The contract had been awarded to BT. There would now be a nine-month period of

detailed planning and mobilisation. During this period, the joint communications team would be planning the community engagement activity. A stakeholder event and a new website would be launched in early March.

The Secretary of State at DEFRA, Owen Patterson, would be visiting on 4 February to attend an event with local MPs and Councillors.

Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Councils are the second local authorities to sign a contract and would have the advantage of a swift start-up and a good project team.

Discussion focussed on eligible areas, timescales, wider benefits and the need for good engagement with public sector partners as well as the public.

Actions: (1) A public sector briefing be arranged through the relevant communications officers (**Action Paul Denny and Dawn Thompson**).

(2) Reports be brought to alternate meetings of Leadership Gloucestershire. (**Action: Nigel Riglar**).

(c) Junction 10 Allways

Conversations have now taken place to identify relevant people to attend a meeting. Political input would be through MPs and Leaders. (**Action: Mike Dawson**).

5. Late Night Levy

Steve Jordan presented an up-date on the Late Night Levy and the largely unchanged position of Gloucestershire local authorities since the last report. Night time economies in rural areas were not strong. It appeared that only Cheltenham Borough Council was interested in pursuing the discussions. Steve also explained that the government guidelines have not yet been published.

Martin Surl explained that one of his priorities was “safe nights”. He felt that the industry was anticipating the introduction of the levy. He also felt that a consistent approach across the urban areas would be helpful.

Paul James felt that Gloucester City’s night time economy was under-developed and fragile. The introduction of a levy would need to be the subject of a consultation, once the guidelines were clear.

A further discussion would be held once the guidelines had been published. (**Action: Andrew North, Steve Jordan, Paul James and Martin Surl**).

6. Financial Settlements and Funding Implications

Members shared the key points from recent funding announcements.

- **Gloucestershire County Council**

As expected. The existing Meeting the Challenge Programme would generate £35m savings in 2013/14. Some additional money had been received in respect of adult services and public health. Spending on adult services would be protected. There would continue to be some additional investment to support economic growth. There would also be a Council Tax freeze for a third year.

- **Tewkesbury Borough Council**

As anticipated; a 7% reduction in grant in 2013/14 and a headline reduction of 15% in 2014/15. The budget would include £1.8m of savings and reduced costs, mainly in the back office and as a result of the organisational review. There was one-off support via the New Homes Bonus which would fund organisational change as well as community schemes such as business grants. There would be no increase in Council Tax. Tewkesbury has the lowest Council Tax in the county and the fifth lowest in the country.

- **Stroud District Council**

Slightly worse than anticipated. Savings would come from workforce planning. There were no drastic cuts in services this year. They were also benefiting from additional income from the New Homes Bonus. There would be some investment in promoting employment and alleviating the effects of the recession through Icelandic Bank deposits returned to the Council.

- **Cheltenham Borough Council**

Marginally worse than expected. There will be no frontline service reductions in 2013/14. They have a shared ICT service with Forest of Dean. They are also looking at the implications of a Trust for culture and leisure activities.

- **Gloucester City Council**

As expected. They had to find £1.8m of savings. The options put forward for consultation more than cover this. There is nothing particularly “nasty” in 2013/14.

- **Police and Crime Commissioner**

As expected. It is unclear whether the funding for Community Safety is comparable to last year. The GCC additional funding for police officers finishes in March 2013. The Constabulary is pursuing an aggressive cost cutting regime. Further plans will be developed for the medium term. Crime reduction and community safety are top priorities for him and the new Chief Constable. Draft plans will be discussed with the Police and Crime Panel.

- **Health**

Confirmed as an increase of 2.3% and 0.3% for adult social care. This is broadly what was expected. The savings plan is £30m in 2013/14 and £20m in 2014/15. They were focussing on integrating teams and significant changes in how services are delivered.

- **Cotswold District Council**

Slightly better than anticipated. The New Homes Bonus is helpful. They were also looking at a Trust for leisure and cultural services. Council Tax would again be frozen.

- **Forest of Dean District Council** (not present at the meeting but subsequently provided the following up-date)

Marginally worse than expected. Savings would be made in back office or management and admin. The New Homes Bonus and some investment to assist the economy would be taken into consideration. Council Tax would be frozen again. 2014/15 would be difficult, however they have not yet banked the New Homes bonus.

Everyone agreed that 2013/14 was manageable. 2014/15 posed significant challenges. It would be important to look at prevention/early intervention and more radical solutions.

7. **Progress Reports**

(a) **Asset Management Task and Finish Group**

Steve Jordan had circulated a list of successful schemes. He would bring back to the next meeting the Community Right to Bid and GIS mapping.

(b) **Countywide Strategic Planning Issues Group**

Paul James reported that the Group had not met since the last Leadership Gloucestershire. A paper had been circulated on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Delays in the production of the Infrastructure Delivery Plans had had a knock-on effect on the CIL. This aspiration had been to produce a joint CIL for Gloucestershire. This now appeared to be unrealistic given that there are four Joint Core Strategies. Officers are considering working to a common methodology. Leadership Gloucestershire would like the CILs to be as aligned as possible.

(c) **Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board**

Mark Hawthorne reported that the Board was due to meet on 29 January 2013 for a development day. The recent LGA Peer Review was helpful but lacked insight into the challenges for two tier areas. The Board had had positive feedback in term of it being in good shape to take on full responsibility from 1 April 2013. The terms of reference

would be considered by the County Council's Constitution Committee in February.

8. 2012/13 Third Quarter Review of Performance

Reports for quarters two and three had been rolled together. This was an overwhelmingly positive picture. The only milestone off target related to the Community Infrastructure Level (see 7(b) above).

9. Date of Next Meeting

As this clashed with Cheltenham Races, an alternative date would be found.

Action: Jane Burns

The meeting ended at 10.45 am.

Key Messages

- **Shared Services** – Leadership Gloucestershire was pleased to hear about the positive progress with the shared management arrangements between Cotswolds and West Oxfordshire District Councils. Chief Executives were commissioned to produce a report on key learning and critical success factors, as well as options for “where next?”
- **Local Transport Body** – Paul James was chosen as the Leadership Gloucestershire representative on the new body.
- **Financial Settlements** – all organisations represented on Leadership Gloucestershire had robust plans for 2013/14.