

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	8 July 2020
Subject:	Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee - Extension of Operating Period
Report of:	Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Leader of the Council
Number of Appendices:	One

Executive Summary:

To consider a request from the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee to extend the operation of the Joint Committee for a period of eighteen months from 4 September 2020 together with agreement to waive the 12 months' notice period set out in the Inter Authority Agreement between the partner authorities, to enable the Joint Committee to continue.

Recommendation:

To RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:

- 1. That the Council approves that the notice period of twelve months, contained in the Inter Authority Agreement of the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee in respect of the extension of that agreement, is waived and removed.**
- 2. That the Council works in partnership with all Gloucestershire local authorities to enable the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Committee to continue to operate for a further eighteen months from 30 September 2020 until 31 March 2022, with Tewkesbury Borough Council as a member, under the terms of the existing Inter Authority Agreement.**
- 3. That authority is delegated to the Borough Solicitor to conclude the necessary legal agreements associated with recommendations 1 and 2 above.**

Reasons for Recommendation:

To enable the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee to continue to operate for a further eighteen months.

Resource Implications:

None associated directly with this report.

Legal Implications:

The proposal contained in this report, if approved, will extend the provisions of the Inter Authority Agreement until 31 March 2022.

Risk Management Implications:

There are no direct risks to the Council arising from the proposals in this report. However, if the GEGJC does not continue there will be no formal joint decision making governance arrangements to coordinate economic development in Gloucestershire and in particular coordinate the operation of the Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool and the associated Strategic Economic Development Fund from which this Council benefits.

Performance Management Follow-up:

All seven Councils will need to approve the request of the GEGJC in order for the Joint Committee to continue to operate as proposed.

Environmental Implications:

None directly arising from this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** At its meeting on 3 June 2020 the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) considered a report in respect of its overall governance arrangements. The report, which sets out the purpose of the Committee and the issues involved, is attached at Appendix 1 of this report.
- 1.2** The report included an update regarding the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) dated 4 September 2014 which all Gloucestershire local authorities entered into to establish the Joint Committee. The report to the Joint Committee confirms that the initial term for the GEGJC was for a six-year term which is due to end in September 2020.

2.0 PROPOSAL TO EXTEND THE FUTURE OPERATION OF THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE ECONOMIC GROWTH JOINT COMMITTEE

- 2.1** The GEGJC considered a proposal to extend its future operation for a further eighteen months following the end of the IAA in September 2020 and resolved to:
- Request the partner authorities to waive and remove the twelve months' notice period set out in the Inter Authority Agreement dated 4 September 2014, including removing the need for future notice periods, and to agree to the GEGJC continuing to operate from September 2020 for a period of eighteen months.*
- 2.2** The proposed eighteen months' extension will allow the Gloucestershire local authorities to continue to work together through an effective governance mechanism in respect of the development of the Gloucestershire economy, including economic recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this work the Committee's operation of the countywide Strategic Economic Development Fund, currently standing at £4.5million, will be vital.
- 2.3** There are currently several partnership bodies in Gloucestershire with economic development roles. Therefore, the extension of eighteen months will be used to undertake a review of economic partnership governance arrangements to determine the most effective structures to support the future economic success of the county. This may result in a recommendation to continue the GEGJC or an alternative arrangement.

2.4 The IAA included a notice period of twelve months to allow partner Councils to consider options for renewal. Unfortunately, this period has been passed and therefore partner Councils will need to agree waive and remove the notice period to allow the extension of the IAA to proceed.

2.5 It is therefore proposed that the Council proceeds as requested by the GEGJC resolution.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 Not extending the IAA. This will result in there being no formal joint decision-making arrangements in Gloucestershire, at this critical time, to support economic growth, coordinate local authority combined response to COVID-19 economic impacts and operate the Strategic Economic Development Fund.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 The GEGJC Senior Officer Group, which is chaired by this Council's Chief Executive, and includes senior officers from all local authorities and GFirst LEP, supported the proposal.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

5.1 The Council Plan and the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

6.1 None directly applicable.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 None directly associated with this proposal.

8.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

8.1 None.

9.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

9.1 None directly associated with this report.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 None.

Background Papers: None.

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Appendices: 1 – GEGJC Report 3 June 2020.