

## Cotswold District Council Green Economic Growth Strategy Consultation Results and Comments

1. The District Council has outlined as one of its priorities “to enable a vibrant economy” and has put in place resources to support this objective. Do you think it is right to have it as a priority? YES/NO

a) If no, why? (Please give your reasons/provide appropriate evidence)

**Responses: Yes 18 No 2**

Comment	Response
A vibrant economy isn't well defined in your vision. A "balanced" economy is to me a better priority as it implies reasonable, measured approach to development rather than one that is driven purely by market growth.	The Strategy is very clear that the Council wishes to see high value, highly-skilled, low environmental impact growth and the Strategy specifically references the aim of a balanced economy.
I think vibrant is good but also green economy should be top priority.	As above. As a Green Economic Growth Strategy, we are clear that we wish our economic activity to have environmental concerns at its heart.
Very happy to support a vibrant economy, but given our rural nature I think you are conflating it with a “green” Economy and transport first, green concerns (which almost always involves more burden to the taxpayer for no tangible result) very much last.	As above.
I particularly like the stress on developing high-value, high skilled roles and finding ways for local people to access these. I also like the stress on a balanced economy.	Support noted.
However, whilst having a vibrant economy can be directly linked to the health and well-being of individuals the strategy needs to acknowledge the negative planetary impact that economies can have. In the context of the Cotswold district, this objective should be clearer in declaring that our local	The Council fully recognises the importance of the environment and has declared both climate and ecological emergencies. The environment is a key priority in the Council’s Corporate Plan.

economy must reduce this risk, and mitigate against, our changing climate.	
--	--

2. The Council’s Draft Green Economic Growth Strategy has the following priorities. Do you think they are the correct ones? YES/NO (For more information on each, please see the strategy document). Please feel free to answer individually or as a whole.

- |           |   |        |   |
|-----------|---|--------|---|
| <b>A.</b> | Growing key sectors like agritech, cyber & digital and green technologies | YES/NO | <b>Responses: Yes 20 No 0</b>           |
| <b>B.</b> | Enabling town centres to thrive   | YES/NO | <b>Responses: Yes 20 No 0</b>           |
| <b>C.</b> | Supporting the visitor economy  | YES/NO | <b>Responses: Yes 20 No 0</b>           |
| <b>D.</b> | Improving infrastructure - both digital and transport                     | YES/NO | <b>Responses: Yes 19 No 1</b>           |
| <b>E.</b> | Improving skills and training   | YES/NO | <b>Responses: Yes 20 No 0</b>           |
| <b>F.</b> | Attracting inward investment  | YES/NO | <b>Responses: Yes 20 No 0</b>           |
| <b>G.</b> | Supporting businesses   | YES/NO | <b>Responses: Yes 20 No 0</b>           |
| <b>H.</b> | Encouraging innovation  | YES/NO | <b>Responses: Yes 20 No 0</b>           |
| <b>I.</b> | Delivering housing growth   | YES/NO | <b>Responses: Yes 6 No 13 Abstain 1</b> |
| <b>J.</b> | Ensuring growth is inclusive  | YES/NO | <b>Responses: Yes 17 No 3</b>           |

a. If no, please suggest other priorities and provide a brief explanation of why you think they should be priorities.

Comment	Response
The infrastructure question is simply too broad. I support improving digital infrastructure so that every house and business in the Cotswolds has FTTP. I support improving public transport and local walking and cycling networks. BUT I do not support the government spending £450 million on the A417. On housing I support delivering more social housing but I do not support endless housing growth in the district, particularly at the scale envisaged by central government through their revised planning legislation.	<p>The in-principle decision on the A417 has been taken by the Government and there is a process to go through before the project can start on site. The District Council recognises the environmental concerns but believes these are on balance outweighed by the improvements to safety and reduction in congestion.</p> <p>The Council has responded to the Government’s White Paper on Planning setting out its opposition to the level of housing proposed for the Cotswold District.</p>

<p>Delivering housing growth could be redefined as "delivering low-impact, affordable, environmentally efficient housing in partnership with the best-in-kind community-driven developers and placemakers".</p>	<p>These are laudable aims and the comments are duly noted. The council's Corporate Plan describes and explains the actions it will take to deliver on the suggested comments. For example, the Council has committed to update its Local Plan and include new policies to secure net-zero carbon housing in new developments; and the Council is investigating partnership arrangements to increase the supply of social rented accommodation.</p>
<p>Housing I think you need to be careful, the countryside is being ripped up and important habitats lost due to building works. There had to be a balance, the empty shops in the high street and cities should first be turned into housing before important countryside is lost forever to housing.</p>	<p>The Strategy makes clear its support for more housing in our town centres, particularly in Cirencester through the Town Centre masterplan, as part of the overall mix of uses needed to generate a vibrant environment.</p>
<p>Housing is already too much - Fairford primary is full, and almost impossible to get a doctor's appointment within three weeks. Fairford and Lechlade are at capacity - no more housing.</p>	<p>The Council has responded to the Government's White Paper on Planning setting out its opposition to the level of housing proposed for the Cotswold District.</p>
<p>We need affordable housing for young people and key workers but nowhere near as much as Chesterton and def not what the government says we need.</p>	<p>As above. The Strategy makes clear the importance of affordable housing.</p>
<p>Housing growth must be defined. We do NOT need masses of houses in a County which is very largely classified as AONB. Additional houses should be aimed at enabling young people to get onto the housing ladder and NOT simply building so-called executive homes which young people cannot begin to afford. I don't know what is meant by "inclusive" growth. It sounds like a meaningless sound bite.</p>	<p>As above. The Strategy makes clear the importance of affordable housing.</p> <p>Inclusive growth is defined in the strategy document as "a concept that advances equitable opportunities for economic participants during economic growth with benefits incurred by every section of society."</p>
<p>Re sectors- if digital is a sector then yes but of course all sectors will need to be digital. Cyber certainly although investment will gravitate to Cheltenham. Agri tech is interesting but it is more likely that Hartpury will emerge as the Glos Centre. Something broader to encompass science (Campden BRI to Corin) might be more easy to realise and more likely to create local jobs. It is also an area where innovation is moving so fast that it would be foolish to</p>	<p>It is agreed that most if not all sectors will need to be digitally-enabled in order to succeed. We believe, and our conversations with partners confirm this, that there will be sufficient growth in the cyber sector for Cheltenham and other parts of the county.</p> <p>We also believe that the District has an important role to play in the agritech sector, building on the strengths of the RAU and Farm 491, working</p>

<p>insist on a 2020 view of what might be future industries. Who would have predicted Neon Play or Corin? Green, yes but again, as it moves beyond PVs and power (specific local investment will go to Glos, Berkeley and Swindon) it is likely to become an aspect of most sectors. There is a really interesting section in the strategy about the number of micro businesses and the number of people working from home pre-Covid (what sector are they in?). IS there something here about entrepreneurship- creating conditions for the germination and then growth to SME of new companies? Re housing growth, it really depends. Certainly not what is being proposed by HMG. That would devastate the environment and the market towns in Cotswold district. It depends what. Homes for local people and for key workers who currently have to commute in by car everyday (I can show you the postcode plots of all the staff at our College, Deer Park and RAU as an example) or more second homes and retirement villages. While we are not a city, there are opportunities for low rise flats on brownfield sites which are exactly the sort of places young people are living in Leeds, Manchester etc and which would help boost spend in our town centres.</p>	<p>collaboratively with Hartpury. The point about the broader science and innovation sectors is well-made it is right that we should not be too fixed on what sectors we seek to attract as innovation is indeed moving fast and we need to retain flexibility to respond to opportunities. The point about creating the conditions for growth to SMEs of new companies is also well-made. The Council has responded to the Government's White Paper on Planning setting out its opposition to the level of housing proposed for the Cotswold District. The Strategy makes clear its support for more housing in our town centres, particularly in Cirencester through the Town Centre masterplan, as part of the overall mix of uses needed to generate a vibrant environment.</p>
<p>Much improved cycle paths. This will improve the parking issue, be much better for the environment, and individuals' health.</p>	<p>Improving cycle paths will be an important part of the District Council's proposed Sustainable Transport Strategy.</p>
<p>Whilst these are all components of a successful economy reference to infrastructure should include improving cycling and public transport infrastructure and in respect of delivering housing growth, this should be more explicit in referencing local need such as delivering affordable and social-rented housing.</p>	<p>Agreed. This will be picked up in the Council's Sustainable Transport Strategy but the importance of cycling and public transport is referenced in the document.</p>
<p>The Organic Research Centre (ORC) is the UK's leading independent organic research organisation. Over the last forty years, our research and knowledge exchange has helped to change the future of food and farming. The organic sector has made huge progress in this time but it offers great potential for future sustainable food production. The Cabinet Member's introduction makes reference to a "green growth revolution" but although</p>	<p>Agreed. The wording has been changed to make reference to the organic sector and the role of the ORC.</p>

<p>this vision incorporates agriculture within it, it does not include reference to the organic sector and its increasing influence.</p>	
<p>Housing growth must include a strong inclusion of affordable housing to allow keyworkers to live locally and young people to get on the housing ladder.</p>	<p>Agreed. The importance of affordable housing and the Administration's commitment to it is stressed in the Strategy.</p>
<p>1) There is also potential for expanding tourism, especially in the sense of spreading it more widely.</p> <p>2) We don't need housing growth per se. What we need is the right housing in the right places to support an integrated plan for all areas of the District.</p>	<p>Agreed. This is consistent with the comments in the Strategy on the Visitor Economy.</p> <p>This is what the Local Plan seeks to achieve.</p>

3. Do you think the growth sectors we have identified (agritech, cyber/digital, green technologies) are the correct ones? YES/NO

**Responses: Yes 15 No 5**

Comment	Response
<p>I think we need a wider scope than just these three, particularly as cyber and green technologies are usually very "clustered" industries that tend to clump together. I think an emphasis on encouraging growth of the numerous micro-businesses into larger scale enterprises could be a better strategy than specifying sectors.</p>	<p>The point about not just concentrating on these sectors is well-made and the strategy does specify several others including medical equipment. It is right that we should not be too fixed on what sectors we seek to attract as innovation is indeed moving fast and we need to retain flexibility to respond to opportunities, but we also need to be clear what are our potential strengths and growth areas.</p>
<p>The Arts &amp; Culture sector is a crucial component of keeping your communities engaged as well as driving inward tourism. Now that creatives are having to work from home, more needs to be done to harness their skills for the District, encouraging them to participate online and create locally relevant content, artworks, books, online events. This can be achieved through RAU partnership as well as with private trusts and groups.</p>	<p>Agreed. The importance of the Arts &amp; Culture sector is referenced in the strategy document but the wording has been strengthened, including adding a specific action related to it.</p>

<p>In particular green technologies and to create a balance so that we can help our animals and habitat that they needs alongside humans. Not humans over animals and their habitat. We can both live and work together. And it's really important we think like that. Not as them 2nd. Without the natural world humans will not survive. We have to change our ways of thinking. And look to people like David Attenbrough to see how easy it is to make these small but so important changes and way of thinking.</p>	<p>The Council fully recognises the importance of the environment and has declared both climate and ecological emergencies. Tackling climate change is a key priority in the Council's Corporate Plan.</p>
<p>Depends, what do you mean by agritech? How does this relate to your role in our community? There is much funding in agritech via universities/colleges etc so I am not sure how your plans for this sector will benefit us locally while spending our money usefully. Perhaps use that money to invest in another sector and use findings of agritech from current research groups to address local issues.</p>	<p>The reference to Agritech is about building on the strength of the RAU and Farm 491 rather than the District Council being involved in delivery of it directly.</p>
<p>Cyber and tech - yes, green no.</p>	<p>Noted, but disagree regarding the importance of green industries.</p>
<p>Partly. Digital and cyber yes but there are few jobs in agritech and the RAU doesn't actually teach it. Finance like St James's Place and money.co.uk brings far more jobs and income.</p>	<p>The importance of St James's Place and the finance sector more broadly is noted in the strategy.</p>
<p>The digital world offers almost unlimited scope for future growth and small start-up companies in this sector are the key to future growth. This will require that training is available to provide the necessary skills which will be needed. The fostering of SMALL businesses in ALL sectors is fundamental and a policy of helping here will yield far larger benefits in the long term than any large industry will ever provide.</p>	<p>Agreed. The overwhelming majority of businesses in the District are micro-businesses employing 9 people or fewer. Supporting them and enabling them to grow is vital to the health of the local economy. The Applied Digital Skills Academy will be important in providing the necessary digital skills.</p>
<p>Mainly yes but also no- see answer above. The section in the Strategy around hi tech manufacturing around Cirencester is interesting. Why has this happened and what might accelerate it? In the LEP LIS it references AI and Data. This will be the next big wave after Cyber. How do we position the Cotswolds to be attractive to cutting edge companies? The strategy makes</p>	<p>Agreed. A supportive local authority, available land and a skilled workforce should all contribute to making the District attractive to cutting edge companies. Agreed that we want to make the Cotswolds a year-round destination and encourage spend across the District. The refreshed Destination</p>

<p>some interesting points around the visitor economy and there is a challenge here to make it more entrepreneurial, more year round and encouraging more spend in more places. I had hoped that the LEP would have made more of the Cotswolds (one of 2 international assets in Glos- the other being GCHQ) perhaps in tandem with the desire to make Gloucester a tourist destination- a sort of town and country/all weathers destination.</p>	<p>Management Plan will work towards those objectives.</p>
<p>In general terms, the ORC supports the identification of the key growth sectors. However, page 6 of the draft strategy references the role of Agritech but this only specifically identifies the RAU and the Food Innovation Centre as principal actors in this sector. In view of ORC's significant track record in agricultural research and recently established formal partnership with RAU, the strategy should acknowledge this as part of its baseline information. Pages 16 and 17 of the strategy lists the District's economic assets; this includes the RAU but does not include reference to ORC. While ORC is not a major employer in numerical terms it is recognised as having an important role in agricultural research and development which should be more explicitly recognised within the strategy.</p>	<p>Agreed. Amended the text to reference the ORC and its role specifically.</p>
<p>There should also be a strong focus on tourism. Cirencester has a huge amount to offer and is on the Stratford to Bath via Bibury, Avebury and Castle Combe tourist route. Development of a brand, promotion and additional quality hotel accommodation is required.</p> <p>Cirencester has a high number of micro businesses and start-ups. Policies should build on this and encourage them, in particular allocating space that suits their needs at different stages in their growth.</p> <p>Cirencester and its hinterland has a high number of businesses operating from homes and homeworkers. These need support e.g. meeting space, specialist services. One idea would be to find space for homeworkers to use the Cirencester College Digital building and the Growth Hub at the university</p>	<p>The strategy does mention the Visitor Economy. The specific points can be picked up in the refresh of the Destination Management Plan and the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan.</p> <p>Agreed. Text amended to include the importance of grow-on space for businesses.</p> <p>Agreed. The reference to flexible workspace has been amended to reflect this.</p>

Another growth sector for Cirencester is the Aero industry Cotswold airport at Kemble is a successful home to a growing general aviation community and a host of successful businesses. This 520-acre site has tremendous potential to grow.	Agreed. Cotswold Airport is identified as a key local asset, which we agree has great potential.
'Cyber/digital' needs to be recognised as something which facilitates other industries. For the Cotswolds, this should include the Arts and media.	Agreed. Text amended to reflect this.

4. The District Council has stated that it is prepared to invest its own financial resources to support the local economy where it can deliver a return for the council taxpayer and meet the Council's wider objectives. Do you think it is correct to use the Council's money in this way? YES/NO.

a. If no, please explain why. (Please give your reasons/provide appropriate evidence)

**Responses: Yes 15 No 5 Abstain 1**

Comment	Response
I don't understand what this means and what support it's suggesting?	This question refers to the Council's Recovery Investment Strategy through which it will invest in local projects where they meet the approved criteria.
I am concerned about the phrase "the Council's wider objectives". There is no clarity on this and I fear it mean more house building and green policies.	This means the wider objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy, including delivering affordable housing, environmental projects and supporting the local economy.
It should enable and attract but not try to pick winners like 1960s governments.	Agreed. The Council is not proposing to "pick winners".
The CDC is not there to invest in businesses. Get the climate right for business and everything will come together without any need for direct CDC investment--which will certainly end in tears.	The Council is not proposing to invest directly in business but in the infrastructure supporting them, which will help to create the right



	climate.
The district is poorly served by council services, they should be the priority spend - rural villages have very poor services.	This is capital investment, which is designed to produce a return to support the provision of services.
<p>While supporting this approach, it can have great dangers and risks. Many councils who invested in commercial property are suffering from the downturn in values. More detail is required.</p> <p>It is important to say that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Council "seed funding" for start-ups or to bring new businesses to the Town could be very helpful</li> <li>- This approach could be very helpful in delivering the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan, the development of which needs to be expedited in view of the collapse of retail which is being accelerated by the impact of the pandemic</li> <li>- Council funding to support the establishment of a Business Improvement District would be very appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>Noted. The Council is well-placed not having invested at previous high values.</p> <p>Noted. The Council will work with its partners to identify potential funding streams.</p> <p>The Council could investigate a Business Improvement District but it is questionable whether Cirencester on its own would be of sufficient scale. The process leading up to a ballot for a BID takes quite some time and is quite costly. It is also doubtful whether now is the right time. However, the Strategy recommends establishing a Cirencester Town Centre Commission which could be a stepping stone to a BID if that was supported.</p>

5. The Strategy suggests a number of measures by which to judge the health of the local economy as below. Do you think these are the right ones? YES/NO

<b>A.</b>	Employment levels & job adverts	YES/NO	<b>Responses: Yes 20 No 0</b>
<b>B.</b>	Business start-ups	YES/NO	<b>Responses: Yes 19 No 1</b>
<b>C.</b>	Business failures	YES/NO	<b>Responses: Yes 13 No 7</b>
<b>D.</b>	Value of the local economy (GVA)	YES/NO	<b>Responses: Yes 18 No 1 Abstain 1</b>
<b>E.</b>	New commercial space built/let	YES/NO	<b>Responses: Yes 13 No 7</b>
<b>F.</b>	Town Centre vacancy rates	YES/NO	<b>Responses: Yes 20 No 0</b>
<b>G.</b>	Town centre car park occupancy	YES/NO	<b>Responses: Yes 12 No 7 Abstain 1</b>
<b>H.</b>	Council direct investment in local economy	YES/NO	<b>Responses: Yes 12 No 8</b>
<b>I.</b>	Delivery of new and enhanced infrastructure	YES/NO	<b>Responses: Yes 15 No 4 Abstain 1</b>
<b>J.</b>	Delivery of housing growth	YES/NO	<b>Responses: Yes 5 No 14 Abstain 1</b>
<b>K.</b>	Delivery of affordable housing	YES/NO	<b>Responses: Yes 14 No 6</b>

a. If not, what else would you suggest? (Please give your reasons/provide appropriate evidence)

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
As above I don't think endless housing delivery is the answer and if there was good investment in public transport the car park occupancy could go down. Finally I don't think that measuring council direct investment is a good metric for the strength of the economy even though I agree with doing it.	As above, the Council has made clear its opposition to the Government's proposed increased housing delivery numbers for the District. Delivery of new housing, particularly affordable housing is important and is a measure we are required to report on anyway. Direct Council investment is not a measure of the health of the economy but a reflection of the Council's support for it.
1) Number of new patents registered locally	Accepted.
Delivery of housing growth and all of the above also needs to be carefully analysed with the environment too, as the health of the economy can't be measured without this being considered among side it, they have to go hand in hand. If it is not nurtured, it's very simple, humans and the economy will	Agreed that new housing must be delivered in a green way, which is at the core of our plans.

not last long.	
Car parks would be full anyway. Young people finding local work	Car park occupancy is one measure of the vibrancy of town centres but agreed it does not give the full picture. Agreed that a measure around young people and employment would be helpful.
Some of these measures may be desirable but are of activity or spend (which create short term ripples for construction) but might not be indicative of sustainable long-term growth. Commercial property let-yes but just built-no. average earnings for people in employment productivity (I know) Visitor spend % jobs going to people living in the Cotswolds already Numbers of apprenticeships A skills measure- not simply degrees. Perhaps measuring the ability of firms to recruit to high skilled roles (locally).	These suggestions are noted and further work would be needed to understand fully which of these would be readily measurable. Visitor spend figures are collected on behalf of Cotswold Tourism. The number of apprenticeships would certainly be a valuable indicator.
These are all valid measures but they need to be backed up with clear and transparent benchmarking and what constitutes a healthy local economy. For example, outlining current employment levels and number of job vacancies/adverts and what the level of this needs to be in say 4 years' time to demonstrate successful delivery of the strategy and positive impact on creating growth.	The need for benchmarking is accepted and further work will need to be done on this.
Value of inward investment.	Agreed.
We don't need housing growth per se. What we need is the right housing in the right places at the right time to support an integrated plan for all areas of the District.	This is what the Local Plan seeks to achieve.

6. Are there any other comments that you would like to make that will help to inform the development or delivery of this strategy and our economic priorities?

Comment	Response
<p>I urge you greatly to protect the local environment, what we have left of it, its not too late! We can make a change now, more help should be given to encourage greener business, no matter what sector you are in we can all help, having dedicated areas for wildlife, to help nature restore the balance that we have taken away. Planting more trees, letting verges grow wild and creating green corridors, protecting our birds that are dropping in numbers, and turning commercial buildings that are no longer used by business to turn in flats and apartments for new homes which are needed and means no loss of habitat in the countryside,</p>	<p>The Council fully recognises the importance of the environment and has declared both climate and ecological emergencies. The environment is a key priority in the Council's Corporate Plan.</p>
<p>I think this sounds a great idea and hope you can get it to work and deliver local benefits, but I have some concerns it is greenwashing or doesn't achieve the aims so money is wasted.</p>	<p>The Council is genuine in its desire to deliver a truly green economic recovery and will be held to account for it.</p>
<p>Why no employment land in Cirencester and South Cerney which you mention? Rumour has it that the university gate could be a hotel or a petrol station</p>	<p>The Council has Local Plan policies in place to protect employment sites. There is 9 hectares of employment land allocated in the Chesterton/Steadings development in Cirencester. The University Gate/Triangle site has an allocation in the Local Plan consistent with the wording of the Green Economic Growth Strategy. We will work with the RAU to deliver it. The determination of any application is a matter for the planning process.</p>
<p>Allow town centre shops to be converted for housing, given the sharp rise in on-line shopping and the consequent drop in footfall. Also the CDC MUST ensure that good standards of design are observed when house building is permitted. There are too many examples of past bad planning decisions which have resulted in Cirencester itself being impaired by totally unsightly buildings--which are NEVER pulled down. eg the Police Station and the appallingly designed houses built by Camerons in the 1960s/70s on the edge of the Abbey Grounds.</p>	<p>Agreed that housing in town centres is important, as part of the overall mix to enable a vibrant town centre environment, and that good standards of design should be adhered to.</p>
<p>I think the emphasis upon sustainable travel is important- especially a</p>	<p>Support noted regarding sustainable transport and also the importance of</p>

<p>reliable and rapid bus service. It is also important to look at the wider impact of high house prices. The report mentions that the Cotswolds is one of the least deprived areas in the country. But are we importing (at environmental and financial cost to them) low to medium-wage workers from Swindon etc?</p>	<p>affordable housing.</p>
<p>An immediate priority ought to be to significantly increase the provision of electric vehicle charging stations to help support the move to EV. This needs to be done right across the community as not everyone has access to off street parking. This move would vastly improve air pollution.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Council is currently formulating an Electric Vehicle Charging Policy.</p>
<p>The strategy provides a good overview and assessment of the state of the economy; whilst “green to the core” is an important message which underpins the response to social, economic and environmental needs, the strategy is fundamentally about economic growth and therefore should consideration be given to the title being clearer about this. Within the introduction, there is reference to “promoting a living growing exciting economy based on community-based commercialism there are other similar statements which are valid and which should form an important part of the delivery vehicle for change but these are not referenced or defined in the main body of the strategy. Equally, whilst the actions are all valid, assurance is sought that they will be backed up with clear benchmarking measures and monitoring to assess strategic outputs and success in delivering the strategy in meaningful and practical ways such as addressing the issue of unsustainable income and zero hour contracts. It is not so much about jobs but the quality and type of jobs which provide career opportunities within the district. Specific comments: 1. Page 16 - Key Local Assets: other assets, not listed, which are important to the wider-district and located in Cirencester are the Growth Hub and Cirencester College. 2. Page 19 Weaknesses: There is reference to young people leaving the area due to lack of activities, in what way is this evidenced and is the primary reason for young people moving out of the area due to other factors such as furthering education, lack of career opportunities, limited access to affordable housing to rent and/or purchase and poor transport links/access</p>	<p>The need for benchmarking is accepted.</p> <p>Agreed that the quality and type of jobs/career opportunities is important, hence the focus on “high value, high skill, low environmental impact jobs.”</p> <p>The Growth Hub is listed as a key partner. Cirencester College is also listed as a key partner, but in view of its scale and importance it has been added as a key local asset as well.</p> <p>It is recognised that young people leave the area for a variety of reasons and not just due to a lack of activities. Text amended to reflect this.</p> <p>The point about recognising and promoting Cirencester’s broad heritage, rather than just its Roman connections, is acknowledged. Text amended to reflect this.</p> <p>Support for the Town Centre Commission is welcomed.</p>

<p>to public transport. 3. Page 19 “ Weaknesses: More consideration must be given to the negative impact second home ownership and holiday rentals, such as AirBnB have on housing affordability, community viability and employment. 4. Page 19 “Opportunities: Whilst Cirencester’s roman heritage is important it is not the sole or primary reason for visiting and when the Town Council has consulted on this in the past, the public and key stakeholders have supported a much broader branding and promotion of Cirencester as a visitor destination including the strong Saxon, medieval and 17th century history. 5. Page 34 omission of designated employment sites in Cirencester. 6. Page 36 lack of direct support to businesses and retail, referenced in “Action” section. On behalf of CTC, thank you for the opportunity to comment; we welcome the strategy and look forward to establishing an effective working relationship in partnering with CDC towards delivery of the strategy. We also support setting up a town centre commission which builds on the Cirencester Futures recommendation that a partnership be established which has the remit and ability to deliver change and facilitate growth.</p>	
<p>Pages 19 and 20 of the strategy provides a SWOT analysis of the existing economy and the factors that may influence it in the future. Within the “threats” section, the Agriculture Bill (now 2020 Agriculture Act) is listed. While there may be elements of the new legislation that place additional requirements on farmers, the initiative that farmers will be given financial support to support the delivery of “public goods” such as clean water and environmental improvements should not simply be viewed as a threat to the agricultural sector. ORC has worked with DEFRA to develop the concept of public goods as part of Environmental Land Management Systems. Page 24 of the strategy identifies Agritech as one of its key sectors for future development which is generally supported. One of the strategy’s key aims is to secure the recovery and growth of the economy to redress the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic; this has seen an increase in awareness of local and sustainable food production across the country. These concepts are a core part of ORC’s principles and it would seem appropriate that the role of</p>	<p>Noted that the Agriculture Bill has now become an Act and that there are benefits to its provisions as well as potential threats. Removed from ‘Threats’ section of SWOT analysis. Text also amended to reflect the role of the ORC in innovation around food production.</p>

<p>organic farming in supporting more sustainable food systems should be recognised. Page 26 identifies the growth of a green economy as another objective; however, while this section includes reference to transport, green technologies and energy consumption, there is no mention of organic agriculture as a means of securing more environmentally sustainable food production. Page 36 highlights the role of innovation in the success of the District's economy. There is mention of the RAU as a contributor to innovation but little additional detail is provided and additional emphasis could perhaps be given to ORC's role in researching and promoting sustainable food production in the Green Development Strategy.</p>	
<p>The strategy focuses on electric cars but the availability of the required generating and network capacity may not be available. There is no mention of hydrogen which may well be the fuel of the future both for transport and home heating.</p> <p>The strategy mentions the Cirencester/Kemble Light Rail project. Improved connectivity with Kemble is essential. However, there is a need for a business plan as there is no data on the likely demand nor any rudimentary cost comparison with a dedicated bus service that, if justified by passenger numbers, could be implemented very quickly using a green energy solution.</p> <p>The strategy highlights Cirencester as a hinge between the M4 and M5 corridors and identifies why it is a popular site for firms. However, the document does not propose to develop this, although there is potential employment land at Chesterton and Kemble. Instead the strategy focuses on the North and East Cotswolds where it has identified development land. This is understandable as it is CDC with a desire to spread out employment but from a Cirencester perspective, this does not help our Town.</p> <p>The Cirencester-South Cerney link is mentioned as something to focus on</p>	<p>Electrification of heating and transport is set to be the most important technology change that will help deliver reduced carbon emissions in the near term. Other low or zero carbon fuel options may become viable within the time horizon of this strategy, notably hydrogen.</p> <p>A detailed business plan will clearly be needed if the Light Rail project is to attract funding.</p> <p>The Council wishes to promote economic activity across the District, but it is recognised that Cirencester is by far the largest settlement. There is 9 hectares of employment land allocated as part of the Chesterton/Steadings development and the Council is working with Bathurst Developments to bring this forward.</p> <p>Noted. This is something the Council's Sustainable Transport Officer may</p>

<p>as the Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan team has discussed links for cycling, tourism and boosting Cirencester's visitor economy. It is also where a relief road will eventually have to go when the expansion of the Town gridlocks the Cirencester Ring Road.</p> <p>There was commendable commitment to an inclusive approach but nothing really on how this might happen.</p> <p>As the major town in the Cotswolds, Cirencester is a highly sustainable community and with further investment has the potential to have the necessary infrastructure to support a thriving economy. It should become a priority in the District Council's Growth Strategy. The Town's Neighbourhood Plan will lay out a series of policies, objectives and aims for Cirencester 's economy which should be integrated with the Growth Plan.</p> <p>It is particularly important that the identity and image of the Town, which is already positive in many respects, is strengthened. To do this requires a planned and sustained marketing and promotion programme.</p>	<p>wish to consider when in post.</p> <p>Further detail will be added as the delivery of the strategy progresses.</p> <p>The Council wishes to promote economic activity across the District, but it is recognised that Cirencester is by far the largest settlement and as such is a sustainable location.</p> <p>Agreed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building large numbers of new homes here for commuters to employment in Gloucester, Cheltenham and the M5 corridor (or the M4 corridor) is not a sustainable strategy in Climate Change terms.</li> <li>• The housing strategy needs to be much more 'local', incremental to support the development of local economies and implemented sensitively to avoid damaging the very character that makes the area attractive.</li> <li>• It is unfortunate that the Green Economic Growth Strategy appears to be built around the Gloucestershire 'Industrial Strategy', which fails to take adequate account of (among other things) the proximity of Fairford, Lechlade and Kempsford to industries and commerce in</li> </ul>	<p>Agreed, which is why we wish to see good quality jobs created locally.</p> <p>The District Council is opposed to the increased housing delivery numbers for Cotswold District proposed by the Government. Housing and planning policy is set out in more detail in the Council's Local Plan and Housing Plan. The Strategy concentrates on the economic impact of housing.</p> <p>Alignment with the Gloucestershire Local Industrial Strategy is in itself positive but we recognise that some areas of the District look to Swindon for industry and employment. The text has been amended to reflect this.</p>



<p>Swindon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport connectivity, particularly for heavy commercial traffic, is a key issue for Fairford and Lechlade because of highly constrained layouts in their historic town centres and the apparent lack of viable bypass routes – Significant investment may be needed to upgrade existing routes if a local industrial development strategy is to be pursued.</li> <li>• There is clearly a niche for ‘Cyber’ in what is an attractive area with relatively low capacity transport links locally, although this means that high speed broadband connectivity is likely to be extremely important.</li> <li>• [I/We] agree strongly that “The Visitor Economy also needs to evolve, to be more geographically spread out, to be an all-year-round destination, to convert day visits to overnight stays and to link better with local industry such as food &amp; drink”, although the potential for the last of these is limited. The arts should also not be forgotten, in an area where many significant figures from this ‘industry’ have settled. There is a significant link with ‘Cyber’ for this.</li> </ul> <p>A comprehensive strategy needs to be developed for the visitor/leisure economy, recognising that there are a variety of distinct elements to this and the mix may need to vary between different settlements and areas of the District.</p>	<p>Noted. This is something the Council’s Sustainable Transport Officer may wish to consider when in post.</p> <p>Agreed.</p> <p>Agreed. The refreshed Destination Management Plan will provide the comprehensive strategy referred to.</p>
<p>Thank you for giving Gloucestershire County Council the opportunity to comment on Cotswold District Council’s Consultation Draft of Green Economic Growth Strategy. I am fully behind the vision of “a dynamic vibrant and balanced economy in the Cotswolds, growing high value, highly skilled, low environmental impact commerce” and agree enabling a vibrant economy should be continue to be a district priority. I am pleased to see close alignment with existing strategies, particularly with the priorities set out in the county council’s corporate strategy “Looking to the Future” and with Gloucestershire’s Local Industrial Strategy. I look forward to the county council playing its part in delivering this strategy.</p>	<p>Support welcomed.</p>

<p>There are two areas where I would like to see the strategy's message reinforced.</p> <p>Firstly, Cotswold has a remarkable local economy. While the strategy does acknowledge this on page 19 where it identifies the "strong underlying economy", this message is undermined by the repeated stress on there being more to the economy than tourism (pages 4 and 5) and the emphasis placed on Cheltenham for cyber without pulling out what sits behind Cotswold's extraordinary performance – the strength of entrepreneurship and the small business orientation of the economy only emerges on page 8. The ONS's latest Regional Accounts report Cotswold's productivity as being 17% about the national level and comfortably the highest in Gloucestershire, behind only Swindon in the South West, while the at 1.09 the district's jobs density is again in the South West, this time to Exeter.</p> <p>Secondly, as is a green economic growth strategy, I think the green emphasis could be made stronger, for example there is no mention of natural capital, recycling or the circular economy. The statement on page 16 that this strategy is "using the climate crisis imperative to inform choices that will both tackle the changing climate and deliver the exciting priorities of the strategy" needs to sit right at the front of the strategy in the Vision section to reinforce the comments in the Introduction. The sentence on page 21 that "this recovery section is written with our climate change objectives at the front of our mind" could be used early in reference to the whole strategy – similarly on being "green to the core" on page 26. Inclusive growth would also benefit from a move to a more prominent position from its current place on page 37. Where the Key Assets are listed (page 16/17), there is an opportunity in each description to link how cleaner and greener initiatives could be supported. For example Agri –tech and RAU, and Campden BRI's R &amp; D and academic institutions are leading in research into food production in the future, plant based, packaging etc. A green strategic approach could be evidenced for each of these. Green measures ought to feature in the Measures of Success, including but not</p>	<p>The reference to there being more to the Cotswold economy than tourism is intended to highlight its strengths beyond what can be a stereotype of the District. The text has been amended to make this clearer.</p> <p>In terms of cyber, the wording was intended to acknowledge that Cheltenham, through GCHQ and the Cyber Park, were leading on this sector but that there were opportunities for other parts of the County including Cotswold District. The statistics highlighted are helpful and will be added to the document.</p> <p>Natural capital has been added to the document as a result of internal consultations.</p> <p>Due to this being a late representation it has not been possible to make all of the amendments suggested but these will be considered after the Cabinet meeting.</p>
---	---

necessarily limited to the list on page 6: “The green revolution offers opportunities for the District including in delivering Zero and Low Carbon Homes, renewable energy, retrofitting energy efficiency measures to homes and sustainable transport”.

More specifically

- There’s suggestion in the strategy that Cotswolds lag behind other districts with broadband connectivity? This conflicts with our evidence. The Fastershire programme, together with commercial investment is already providing excellent fibre connectivity with further plans for delivery.
- There is a clear mobility and connectivity issues still in the district, with heavy reliance on car use given the rurality, so sustainable travel and transport requires attention and tackling through LTP and other plans. Whilst the significant investment to complete the A417 missing link is welcomed, the issues around air quality from car usage and mitigation may need to be addressed
- The link to social value is welcomed
- It would be helpful if the actions identified throughout the strategy were gathered in an appendix as the beginning of an action plan for delivery.

The Strategy makes clear that Cotswold is the “best digitally connected district in the country” but acknowledges that further improvements are needed.

These points will be picked up by the Council’s Sustainable Transport Officer when in post.

Noted.

An comprehensive action plan and work programme will be put together following adoption of the Strategy.