



CABINET

MEETING : Wednesday, 25th February 2015

PRESENT : Cllrs. James (Chair), Dallimore, Norman, Organ and Porter

Others in Attendance

Martin Shields, Corporate Director of Services and Neighbourhoods

Ross Cook, Corporate Director

Sue Mullins, Head of Legal and Policy Development

Jon Topping, Head of Finance

Lloyd Griffiths, Head of Neighbourhood Services

Andrew Cummings, Financial Management Accountant

Phillip Ardley, Asset Management Consultant

Atika Tarajiya, Democratic Services Officer

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

78. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 28 January 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

79. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no public questions.

80. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions and deputations.

81. MONEY PLAN 2015-20 & BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2015/16

Cabinet considered the report of the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources seeking to review the Council's Money Plan 2015-20 for recommendation to Council.

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Councillor Norman summarised the key areas of the report and commented that budget proposals had been subject to an extended period of public consultation.

Cabinet Members noted the high level of public engagement in the consultation process and use of the feedback in helping to shape proposals. They commented that savings made were as a result of greater efficiencies and had not resulted in a reduction in services. They were pleased to note the freeze in Council Tax rates for the fifth consecutive year and placed on record their thanks to Officers involved.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:

1. That proposals for the 2015/16 budget including Council Tax freeze for the fifth year included in the report be approved.
2. That the target budget reductions set in the Money Plan 2015/20 be implemented.
3. That consultation has been undertaken on budget savings proposals to achieve the level of further savings required in 2015/16 be noted.

82. FINANCIAL MONITORING QUARTER 3 REPORT

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources updating Members on the financial monitoring details including budget variances, year-end forecasts, and the progress made against agreed savings targets for the 3rd quarter ended 31st December 2014 and highlighting some key performance indicators.

Councillor James commented that the £150k earmarked reserve for regeneration represented a portion of the significant resources and commitment allocated to regeneration within the City. He noted that an improved forecast of the Guildhall was expected in the forthcoming year as result of expected changes to the service.

RESOLVED:

1. That the savings achieved in year total £833k be noted.
2. That the forecast year end position for 14/15 is to increase the Council's General Fund balance by £264k be noted.
3. That it be noted, that in addition to the general fund increase it is currently estimated that £150k will be transferred to an earmarked reserve for Regeneration as a result of surpluses generated by assets transferred to council ownership from the South West Regional Development Agency.

83. HOUSING STRATEGY

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure which updated Members following the consultation on the draft housing strategy, and which presented the final version for adoption and implementation.

Councillor Organ explained that the strategy in conjunction with the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the City Vision would enable the Council to comply with Government legislation and in particular assist vulnerable residents of the City.

Cabinet Members praised the strategy for addressing the housing needs for a wide ranging demographic and acknowledging the needs of the community of the future. They were pleased to note that the policy had been given cross party support following presentation at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 23 February 2015 where Members had requested a comprehensive summary guide.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:

That the Housing Strategy at Appendix 1 be adopted and implemented.

84. A PROPOSAL TO REVIEW THE WASTE & RECYCLING SERVICE

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Environment seeking Cabinet approval to undertake a review of the Waste & Recycling Service.

Councillor Porter summarised the current position and explained that a purpose of the review would be to identify cost savings and to simplify the process to encourage more residents to recycle.

In response to Councillor Norman's question regarding the early buy out charges, Councillor Porter explained that should the lease be terminated early, the Council would be subject to an early buy charge. However this would be set against the savings made from changes to the existing service.

Cabinet Members endorsed the proposed review noting that a change to co-mingled recycling would encourage residents to recycle and improve the services currently on offer. They noted that this decision reflected the high priority placed on this issue following public consultation and emphasised the need to cater to all residents' requirements.

RESOLVED:

1. That the contents of the report and the positive proactive work that has been carried out in respect of waste & recycling by The Environmental Projects Team, be noted.
2. That the review process as outlined in the report be approved.
3. That the implementation of a Members specific working group, to be set up and chaired by the Cabinet Member of Environment, be approved.

85. CULTURAL STRATEGY UPDATE

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture updating Members on the progress that has been made in achieving the Cultural Strategy's targets from July to December 2014.

Councillor James commented that in partnership with Marketing Gloucester Limited (MGL) the strategy aimed to stage a variety of creative events that catered to residents of all ages, some of which had attracted small amounts of funding from the Arts Council. He explained that in conjunction with MGL the Glos 2015 Brand was being used to promote the events taking place in the City, including the Rugby World Cup 2015, in the forthcoming year.

Cabinet Members were pleased to note that the programme of events catered for a wide range of the City's population across the year and would contribute to economic and residential benefit and develop Gloucester as a tourist destination.

RESOLVED:

That the achievements made in delivering the Cultural Strategy over the last six months (July to December 2014) be noted.

86. OFF-STREET CAR PARKING MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENTS

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture seeking approval to deliver improved off-street car parking management at Kings Walk, Eastgate Centre and Longsmith Street car parks to complement the ongoing regeneration of the City and to freeze the tariff for the year ahead.

Councillor James commented that the improvements would maximise City Centre visitors' stay and facilitate appropriate access for disabled people. He remarked that the cost of car parking had reduced from previous years to ensure visitors get best value for money.

Cabinet Members were pleased to note that the changes would result in greater efficiency and improve service for visitors especially those for those with mobility issues.

RESOLVED:

1. That the tariff for the 2015-16 financial year be held at 2014-15 levels.
2. That on-going car park improvements be noted.
3. That Subject to a detailed cost analysis being undertaken, and its recommendations, that the principle of Kings Walk, Longsmith Street and the Eastgate Centre car parks changing from pay and display to a Pay on Foot system supported by Automatic Number Plate Recognition with barrier be approved.

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4. That authority be delegated to the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development Service, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture, to implement the recommendation of the cost analysis for the three primary car parks subject to:
 - (i) A cost effective proposal being secured
 - (ii) Disabled parking accommodation being available
 - (iii) Compatibility and effective management of the remaining City Council car parks
 - (iv) Sufficient resources being available to implement and manage the preferred option

87. REVIEW OF CULTURAL SERVICES

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture updating Members of the work undertaken by Michael + Partners in relation to the City and Folk Museums and the Guildhall and to recommend to Members elements of the report to be taken forward.

Councillor James summarised the current position and explained that the focus would be on generating savings and reducing the cost to the taxpayer whilst maintaining all the current services. He commented that the decision had been taken not to implement the box office frontage, as this would not be cost effective and in line with public priorities.

RESOLVED:

1. That the contents of the Michael + Partners report be noted.
2. That the elements of the review referred to in paragraphs 3.7, 3.9 and 3.11 be approved for implementation with the exception of the first bullet point in paragraph 3.7 which reads: "Creation of a new frontage with box office and café bar".
3. That a Project Manager be appointed to oversee the implementation of the recommendations in paragraph (2) above.
4. That Councillors Chatterton and McLellan be thanked for their contributions to the cross-party working group.

88. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public are present during consideration of these items there will be

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disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended.

89. RETAIL-LED REGENERATION AT KINGS QUARTER

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture updating Members on the significant progress made on the Kings Quarter scheme.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:

The recommendations as laid out in the exempt report.

Time of commencement: 18:00 hours

Time of conclusion: 19:25 hours

Chair