



CABINET

MEETING : Wednesday, 20th July 2016

PRESENT : Cllrs. Dallimore (Chair), Noakes, D. Norman and Organ

Others in Attendance

Jon McGinty, Managing Director

Shirin Wotherspoon, Solicitor

Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director (Service Transformation)

Anne Brinkhoff, Corporate Director (Transformation)

Jon Topping, Head of Finance

Atika Tarajiya, Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. James and Porter

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

13. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2016 be confirmed and signed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

14. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

Councillor Haigh, referring to agenda item 7, Safe and Attractive Streets Policy, commented that the policy made no mention of the Vagrants Act 1924 and queried whether this legislation had been fully considered when drafting the policy.

Councillor Dallimore advised that the legislation had been taken into account acknowledging that the drafted policy was intended to go further into tackling anti-social behaviour within the City Centre, including street drinking and the use of legal highs.

15. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions or deputations.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP ON ACTIONS TO IMPROVE HOUSING CONDITIONS IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

Introduction from a Member of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Kate Haigh summarised key achievements of the Task and Finish Group advising Members that work undertaken by Officers had achieved an estimated £25,000 in savings. She reported that partnership working had developed closer working relationships with Trading Standards and Fire Service to continue to improve living conditions and lives of residents within the City.

She stressed that continuing enforcement action by the City Council, in addition to working with landlords utilising an asset based community development approach was required to ensure that standards around the City were of the level expected.

Councillor Haigh expressed hope that Cabinet continued to fund the work undertaken by the Private Sector Housing Officer and encouraged the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning (Colin Organ) to pursue the outcome of the public consultation on extending mandatory HMO licensing undertaken by Central Government approximately six months ago.

In response to Councillor Organ's query regarding Members attending site visits, Councillor Haigh reported that Members did not participate in site visits but were given copies of inspection reports and photos taken of the site to gain a clear understanding of the living conditions experienced.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources (Councillor David Norman) advised in the current economic climate, the City Council would be able to provide funding until April 2017 and thereafter a full review would need to take place.

Response from Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning

Councillor Organ thanked the Task and Finish Group for the excellent work and agreed that all the recommendations had been accepted. He stressed the importance of managing the degeneration of the City and noted that this piece of work delivered a strong message to landlords within the City.

Cabinet Members welcomed the findings of the Task and Finish Group and thanked Members and Officers for all their efforts. They acknowledged that there were areas of the City that suffered from poor living conditions and noted the direct link with poverty of its residents.

RESOLVED:

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That the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group, as set out in Appendix 2 to this report, (and summarised in 2.2) be addressed and the opportunity be taken to action these matters at the earliest opportunity.

17. SAFE & ATTRACTIVE STREETS POLICY

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods (Councillor Dallimore) which sought approval for the introduction of a “Safe & Attractive Streets” policy which covers begging, street drinking, rough sleeping and so-called “legal highs”.

Councillor Dallimore acknowledged that there had been complaints from visitors and business regarding the anti-social behaviour within the City Centre. She explained that the policy aimed to create a working balance between finding support and engaging for vulnerable people and enforcement action against those who consistently refused to engage.

She advised that the policy had been met with wide spread support, and noted that policy would be implemented beginning tomorrow. She commented that the option for a public space protection order would be fully explored and a 12 week consultation period would be required.

In response to the query from the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure (Councillor Lise Noakes) regarding enforcement action on street drinkers in the City Centre, Councillor Dallimore advised that a designated public place order (DPPO) was in place and allowed the Police to move street drinkers on. She encouraged Members and residents to continue to report incidents to help aid enforcement action.

Cabinet Members expressed disappointment that the anti-social behaviour was affecting tourism within the City. They acknowledged the difficulties in identifying genuine cases of vulnerability and welcomed the pro-active policy aimed to tackle these issues.

RESOLVED:

1. The “Safe & Attractive Streets” policy outlined in Appendix 1 be adopted.
2. Awareness campaigns to help tackle street nuisance and raise awareness of support for rough sleepers be used
3. That the lead Cabinet Member delegates authority to the Head of Public Protection to sign off public space protection orders (PSPO)
4. Consideration be given to exploring Making Every Adult Matter that reviews local services and can develop co-ordinated interventions that can transform lives.

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18. CITY CENTRE INVESTMENT FUND ALLOCATIONS AND UPDATE

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy (Councillor Paul James) updating Members on the projects within the City Centre Investment Fund (CCIF) delivery programme and which sought approval to reallocate funds to maximise the benefits of the CCIF to the City.

Councillor Dallimore summarised key areas of the report, reporting that funds had been reallocated once it had become clear that the final cost of the projects was less than anticipated. She welcomed funds allocated to Kings Walk Bastion, which recognised the City's Roman history and the allocation set aside for the re-paving for Eastgate and Westgate Street as promised in the 2015 Conservative Manifesto.

Councillor Noakes commented that the monies allocated for the delivery of Cultural Strategy would partially be used to fund improvements to the Kings House Cultural hub, in addition to the delivery of other projects within the Cultural strategy.

RESOLVED:

1. That the following new projects be allocated resources:
 - a) Opening of Kings Walk Bastion, £20,000
 - b) Contribution towards developing the capital components of the cultural strategy, £30,000
 - c) £20,000 be allocated for commissioning economic profiling of the city centre to support the delivery of the Business Improvement District and Kings Quarter.

2. That the following projects receive additional allocations:
 - a) £50,000 be allocated for business support and authority be delegated to the Head of Regeneration & Economic Development, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Economy, to develop a policy that enables the Council to secure a financial return where appropriate
 - b) £30,000 be allocated for the delivery of a city centre public realm masterplan
 - c) Targeted Historic Grants scheme £40,000 to include £3,000 towards the refurbishment of building plaques

3. That the following be noted:
 - a) The final cost of the ANPR will be met through the contingency sum
 - b) The success of the relocated Gloucester Antiques Centre at 26 Westgate Street has meant that this important heritage building is now occupied and a

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review of the format and location of the Tourist Information Centre will take place following the completion of the Visitor Information Strategy.

19. COUNCIL ADVERTISING NETWORK

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources which sought approval to continue with the advertising on the Council's website via the Council Advertising Network for another year.

Councillor Norman highlighted key areas of the report, acknowledging that whilst the income generated was less than anticipated, the service did not cost the Council any money. He advised that he had asked for regular meeting to monitor this arrangement.

Cabinet welcomed the proposals, noting that the approach was sensible and contributed towards the Council's savings target.

RESOLVED:

1. A twelve months extension of the term of the contract from October 2016 advertise via the web site through CapacityGrid be approved.
2. The contract be monitored on a regular basis with a report produced at the end of the contract with proposals for the future.

20. GCH GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE & RULE AMENDMENT

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning which sought approval for an amendment to the Rules of Gloucester City Homes in order to implement governance improvements.

Councillor Organ advised Members that the changes were as a result of statutory guidance issued by the Homes and Community Agency. He explained that the makeup of the new board would ensure that the relevant skills and expertise was available to ensure that Gloucester City Homes were able to manage the organisation and diversify their business.

RESOLVED:

That the GCH Rules as appended to this report be approved.

Time of commencement: 6.00 pm

Time of conclusion: 6.34 pm

Chair