



COUNCIL

MEETING : Thursday, 20th July 2017

PRESENT : Cllrs. Morgan (Mayor), Toleman (Sheriff & Deputy Mayor), Watkins, Cook, Noakes, D. Norman, Organ, Pullen, Hilton, Gravells, Tracey, Lugg, Hanman, Lewis, Bhaimia, Williams, D. Brown, Dee, Taylor, Hansdot, Patel, Hampson, H. Norman, Pearsall, Brazil, J. Brown, Coole, Fearn, Finnegan, Hawthorne, Hyman, Melvin, Ryall, Smith and Walford

Others in Attendance

Jon McGinty, Managing Director
Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director
Anne Brinkhoff, Corporate Director
Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources
Tanya Davies, Policy and Governance Manager
Atika Tarajiya, Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. James, Stephens, Wilson and Haigh

12. MINUTES

12.1 RESOLVED- That the minutes of the meeting held on the 22nd May 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

13.1 Councillor Fearn declared an other interest in Agenda Items 12(1), a notice of motion from the Liberal Democrat Group concerning street cleansing and advised that she would take no part in the debate or vote on this item.

She declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 12(4), a notice of motion from the Labour Group concerning the public sector pay cap and advised that she would leave the meeting at this point.

13.2 Councillors Ryall, Watkins, Taylor, Patel, and Walford declared disclosable pecuniary interests in relation to Agenda Item 12(4), a notice of motion from the Labour Group concerning the public sector pay cap as they or their spouse/partner were subject to the public sector pay cap and advised that they would leave the meeting at this point.

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- 13.3 Councillor Pearsall declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 12(4), a notice of motion from the Labour Group concerning the public sector pay cap and advised that she would leave the meeting at this point.

14. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

- 14.1 Mr Critchard of Church Farm, Hempstead, thanked Members for the opportunity to address the Council. He advised that his detailed queries regarding the Council's procedure for dealing with planning applications(attached at Appendix 1) had been submitted in advance of the meeting and had been circulated to all Members. He requested that the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning (Councillor Organ) provide a written response to these queries prior to the Planning Committee meeting scheduled for the 1st August 2017, where he was planning to make detailed representations on application 17/00488/FUL.

- 14.2 Councillor Organ advised that he was unable to provide specific responses to any application due to be considered by Planning Committee, so as to not prejudice the process. He confirmed that Mr Critchard would be provided with a written response in a timely fashion.

- 14.3 Mr Gower addressed the Committee on behalf of a fellow resident of the City, who was currently street homeless and struggling with very complex personal issues. He questioned why the Council, which was committed to implementing the Gloucestershire Entrenched Homeless Social Impact Bond (SIB), to help tackle issues related to entrenched rough sleeping, had issued this resident with an enforcement order for street begging and were threatening to expel him from the City Centre area. He advised that he had a number of additional queries and requested a response to all his queries in writing from the relevant Cabinet Member.

He went on further to query the proportion of residential and commercial properties in the City owned by overseas residents and business, reflecting that a significant number of these properties were unoccupied and could be used to address the housing shortage.

- 14.4 Councillor Watkins (Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods) explained that the Council promoted engagement and support in dealing with such individuals and only used enforcement as a final option when all other options had been exhausted. She welcomed a private conversation with Mr Gower to discuss the personal circumstances of this case and confirmed that a response to Mr Gower's questions would be provided in writing.
- 14.5 Mr Hodges, of Kingsholm Square, questioned whether the Council thought it appropriate to borrow up to £80 million to develop a property investment portfolio, given the financial climate and past experience with Icelandic banks.

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- 14.6 Councillor Norman (Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources) reported that this item was due to be discussed as a substantive item later on in the agenda and encouraged Mr Hodges to remain and listen to the debate.

15. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

- 15.1 There were no petitions or deputations.

16. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor

- 16.1 The Mayor reminded Members that there were a number of key social and Civic events taking place over the next few months.

Gloucester Carnival- 22nd July 2017:

The Mayor advised Members that the Animal Kingdom had been selected for the theme for this year's Carnival. He noted that all those wishing to join the tour bus, departing from Westgate Coach Car Park would need to arrive by 3pm.

10th Anniversary of Gloucester Floods Commemoration Service- 25th July 2017:

The Mayor invited members of the public to attend the Service at Gloucester Cathedral that would begin at 5:30pm.

Sponsored Litter Pick at Robinswood Hill- 14th September 2017

The Mayor noted that a Dementia Awareness Session, led by Councillor Hawthorne, was also being organised with further details to follow. He concluded by encouraging all Members to attend the Dinosaur Exhibition at the City Museum and congratulated officers for their work in this regard.

Deputy Leader of the Council

- 16.2 Councillor Watkins congratulated the Leader of the Council, Councillor James and his wife on the birth of their daughter. She noted that this was first Council meeting that Councillor James had missed in 21 years.

She reported that the sale of the Kings Walk Shopping Centre to Reef Estates had completed on the 2th July 2017 and improvement works would begin shortly, with a planning application expected in the near future.

Councillor Watkins expressed disappointment at the damage sustained at the historic Fleece Hotel site as a result of fire earlier that day. She confirmed that the Edwardian block within the site had sustained significant damaged and advised that structural engineers were currently assessing the rest of the site. She assured Members that the recent developments would not deter the proposed regeneration of the area.

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She concluded by reminding Members that applications for the Community Youth Grants were now open and encouraged Members to put forward submissions for youth groups in their wards.

Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources

- 16.3 Councillor Norman wished the Head of Policy and Resources a happy birthday and thanked him for his continual support.

Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure

- 16.4 Councillor Noakes noted that the City was host to a number of exciting events over the summer months, including the Blues and Gloucester Goes Retro Festival. She explained that bookings for the History Festival would open on Monday 24th July 2017 and all Councillors had been provided with a programme of events in relation to this.

Councillor Noakes reported that Gloucester Culture Board had made its final three Trustee appointments and would continue the development of the Gloucester Culture Trust. She confirmed that following an interview and assessment process, Jill Shonk had been appointed to be Head of Cultural and Trading Services.

Cabinet Member for Environment

- 16.5 Councillor Cook announced that Barnwood Park and Arboretum, Robinswood Hill Countryside Park and Saintbridge Balancing Ponds and Allotments had been awarded Green Flag status.

17. MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

- 17.1 Councillor Pullen congratulated Councillor James and his wife on the birth of their daughter. He queried how long the transition period would be following the conclusion of the Together Gloucester project and the recruitment of staff into new roles and requested clarity in how the success of the project would be assessed.
- 17.2 Councillor Norman advised that the implementation of the proposals were ongoing and senior management were supporting staff in developing new ways of working. He noted that the Managing Director was providing Members with regular updates on the process and encouraged any Members who wished to discuss this further, to arrange a meeting with an appropriate Head of Service.
- 17.3 In response to Councillor Pullen's request for a guarantee that the organisation would not undergo a further restructure process, Councillor Norman advised that the Council had no current plans for a further restructure. He acknowledged that the Council was dependant on funding from Central Government and continued to face significant challenges and could not therefore make such a definite commitment.

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- 17.4 In response to Councillor Pullen's query regarding clarification of what services would be curtailed as a result of the Together Gloucester Process, Councillor Norman advised that discussions with officers were on-going. The principal aim was to deliver existing services in new and more efficient ways rather than reduce provision but this would remain an iterative process. He noted that the Council would continue to deliver the statutory services for which it was responsible.
- 17.5 Councillor Hilton referencing the three fires that had occurred in various parts of the City Centre, thanked Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service for their brave work in keeping people safe. Noting reports in the media that these fires had been started deliberately, he queried what actions were being taken to protect sites of local and historic importance.
- 17.6 Councillor Watkins confirmed that these fires were being treated as suspicious. She reported that officers were considering what additional security could be put in place to minimise the risk of a reoccurrence.
- 17.7 Councillor Hilton stated that the whole organisation should have been consulted on the proposed office move to Shire Hall. He queried whether City Council staff would be accommodated together at Shire Hall or whether they would be dispersed through the building, noting that the Council was at a very real risk of losing its identity.
- 17.8 Councillor Norman reported that discussions were at a very early stage and options around where staff would be located were still in their infancy. He advised that the Council would retain the use of the Civic Suite and the whole of the 3rd Floor, North Warehouse to protect its identity. He confirmed that all Members would be apprised on the proposals prior to any formal decision being taken.
- 17.9 In response to Councillor Hansdot's request for an apology for the grass cutting regime delivered by Amey this year, Councillor Cook stated that he had apologised to residents and Members for Amey's failures in delivering the trial in the way they had proposed. He noted that the Amey had now deployed additional resource and equipment in an attempt to remedy the situation.
- 17.10 Councillor Hansdot stated that the Cabinet Member was apportioning blame to an organisation that was being asked to undertake more work for a reduced fee.
- 17.11 Councillor Cook reported that it had been Amey that had suggested the 30 day grass cutting trial and had devised the proposed cutting regime and the savings schedule. He commented that the additional expenditure incurred by the City Council as a result of these failures would be charged back to Amey.
- 17.12 In response to Councillor Fearn's query regarding the decision to close the Gloucester Life Museum prior to consulting staff, Councillor Noakes advised that the proposals actually transferred the management of the Museum site to the Gloucester Civic Trust. She went on further to explain that there was

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no proposed reduction in staff, as those currently working in the Life Museum would be transferred to the City Museum if the proposals went ahead.

- 17.13 Councillor Fearn questioned whether a city aiming to become the City of Culture would consider closing one of its cultural venues, noting that a petition protesting against the transfer of the collection to one site had attracted 1,100 signatures.
- 17.14 Councillor Tracey reported that she had experienced very long waiting times when trying to get through to the main contact helpline and had additionally received complaints from residents. She queried what action would be taken to resolve this issue.
- 17.15 Councillor Norman acknowledged the issues with being able to contact the Council. He stated that he had requested a meeting with officers the following day to address these concerns and undertook to provide a written response to all Members with regards to this.
- 17.16 Councillor Coole expressed disappointment that the proposals for the Bus Station were being cut back, noting that the revised proposals contained fewer public toilets and no information point.
- 17.17 Councillor Watkins reported that the original proposals had to be revised after exploration works identified main sewer and gas lines near the site which were outside of the City Council's control. She acknowledged that the new proposals contained fewer public toilets commenting that the development would not compromise on quality of the provision that was delivered. With regards to the information point, she advised that the revised proposals now contained two retail units, any proposals to use one of these units as an information centre would be subject to a separate business case assessment. She welcomed the progress of the development, noting that construction and budgets were on schedule.

18. COMMERCIAL PROPERTY INVESTMENT STRATEGY

- 18.1 Council considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources seeking approval for the implementation of a strategy to enable further investment in property assets.
- 18.2 Councillor Norman highlighted key areas of the report and emphasised that the Council would not invest in any property unless there was a business case to do so. He noted that all local authorities were facing reduced funding from central government and the City had to transform itself into becoming more entrepreneurial. He concluded by reporting that a number of other local authorities had also diversified into similar areas.
- 18.3 Councillor Watkins advised that whilst the preference would be to invest locally, if deemed prudent the Council would look to make investments further afield to ensure a diverse portfolio.

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- 18.4 Councillor Hilton expressed concern with the riskiness of the strategy. He stated that the Council were already experiencing difficulties in letting retail units in the City Centre and such a venture required board members with the relevant expertise. He reported that a slight drop in the predicted yield as outlined in the report would put the enterprise into a deficit and expressed disappointment that Group Leaders and all Members of the Council had not been consulted on the proposals earlier.
- 18.5 Councillor Coole expressed concern that heavy investment from numerous local authorities would distort the market and was not sustainable.
- 18.6 Councillor Pullen also expressed concern at the level of risk the Council was exposing itself to. He commented that property deals tended to be complex in nature, noting the difficulties the City Council had faced with the sale of Kings Walk Shopping Centre and the continued market uncertainties regarding Brexit.
- 18.7 Councillor Smith queried the likelihood of the Council being able to achieve the optimum financial position as outlined in the report and went on further to question why detailed cost analysis and forecast projections had not been included within the report.
- 18.8 Councillor Hawthorne welcomed the proposals reporting that they would have a very positive impact on regeneration. He challenged the asset based community development statement contained within the report, stating that this was a key opportunity for the City Council to progress its aims in developing this further.
- 18.9 Councillor Norman assured Members that the Council would consider any investment carefully before making a final decision and were not intending to invest up to the maximum borrowing limit immediately.
- 18.10 Councillor Pullen, supported by a further four members of the Labour Group, requested a recorded vote, results of which were as follows:

For

Councillor Morgan
Councillor Toleman
Councillor Watkims
Councillor Cook
Councillor Noakes
Councillor D. Norman
Councillor Organ
Councillor Gravells
Councillor Tracey
Councillor Hanman
Councillor Lewis
Councillor Williams
Councillor Dee
Councillor Taylor
Councillor Patel

Against

Councillor Pullen
Councillor Hilton
Councillor Lugg
Councillor Bhaimia
Councillor D. Brown
Councillor Hansdot
Councillor Hampson
Councillor Brazil
Councillor J. Brown
Councillor Coole
Councillor Fearn
Councillor Finnegan
Councillor Hyman
Councillor Ryall
Councillor Smith

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Councillor H. Norman
Councillor Pearsall
Councillor Finnegan
Councillor Hawthorne
Councillor Melvin
Councillor Walford

(21)

(14)

18.11 RESOLVED that:

- (1) Authority be delegated to the S151 Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources to:**
 - a) amend the capital programme to create a Property Investment fund of £80m in order to acquire new investment property;**
 - b) borrow as required to fund property purchases in accordance with the prudential code ; and**
 - c) Amend the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators as necessary to reflect the Council's borrowing requirement.**

- (2) Subject to the approval of recommendation 1, the following delegations be approved to proceed with the acquisition of assets, subject to the acquisitions meeting the parameters of the Property Investment Strategy:**
 - a) Asset purchases of up to £15m to be approved by the S151 Officer in consultation with the Property Investment Board.**
 - b) Asset purchases in excess of £15m be referred to the Cabinet.**

19. LATE NIGHT LEVY

- 19.1 Council considered the consultation feedback on the proposal to introduce a late night levy and decide whether the Gloucester Business Improvement District was a more effective alternative to deliver city-centre based initiatives for reducing crime and disorder within the night-time economy.

- 19.2 Councillor Watkins highlighted key areas of the report, noting that the City's night time economy had under gone significant improvement since 2013, when the Council had originally considered implementing a late night levy. She reported that the successful ballot of the Business Improvement District had far wider impact than that of a late night levy and generated a much higher income for improvements to the City Centre.

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19.3 Councillor Pullen welcomed the recommendations as outlined in the report. He expressed disappointment at the consultation response rate, acknowledging that most were not in favour of the levy.

19.4 RESOLVED that:

1. The consultation feedback be noted and considered and

2. In light of the successful adoption of the Gloucester Business Improvement District (BID) from the 1st August 2017 until 2022, the late night levy is not applied in the City of Gloucester at this time.

20. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2016-17

20.1 Council considered the report of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the year 2016/17.

20.2 Councillor Coole thanked Councillors Ryall and Pearsall for their work on the Committee and welcomed Councillor Finnegan in her role as spokesperson. He welcomed the Committee's role in providing valuable oversight to the democratic process and shaping policy. He concluded by encouraging Members to submit topics for consideration.

20.3 RESOLVED that the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2016-17 be noted.

21. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE 2016/17

21.1 Council considered the report of the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee for the year 2016/17.

21.2 Councillor Gravells thanked the Members of the Committee for their work on the Committee. He reported that the Committee had taken an active role in assessing the Council services. He thanked the external auditors, finance team and the Team Leader for Democratic and Electoral Services for their work in supporting the Committee.

21.3 RESOLVED that that the Annual Report of the Audit and Governance Committee for 2016-17 be noted.

22. NOTICES OF MOTION

(1) Notice of Motion from the Liberal Democrat Group

22.1 Councillor Fearn retired to the public gallery for the debate and vote on this Motion.

22.2 Proposed by Councillor Hilton and seconded by Councillor Brazil:

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"This council agrees that the level of street cleaning could be much better than it is and that the level of cleanliness in Gloucester is not up to the standard we would expect for an historic city.

This council calls on the Cabinet Member to provide each city councillor with full details of the cleaning regime in their wards, with details of how often each street, open space and public footpath is cleaned.

This council calls on the cabinet member to provide a report on how he intends to improve street cleaning in Gloucester, looking at three zones; the city centre, edge of the city centre and the suburbs."

22.3 The motion was put to the vote and was lost.

(2) Notice of Motion from the Conservative Group

22.4 Moved by Councillor Watkins and seconded by Councillor Norman:

"Notes that the date of this Council meeting is exactly 10 years since the devastating floods of 2007 hit Gloucester, affecting over 1000 homes and leading to a loss of water supply;

Further notes the huge amount of work carried out by the City and County Councils, the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water, including dozens of flood alleviation schemes large and small, to guard against a recurrence;

Recalls the heroic work of the emergency services, military and volunteers in helping those in need at that time;

Believes that the positive legacy from this awful event was the great community spirit that helped the city through and that, especially in light of recent national events, the continuation of that spirit must be encouraged."

22.5 Councillor Hilton moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Hyman:

"Notes that the date of this Council meeting is exactly 10 years since the devastating floods of 2007 hit Gloucester, affecting over 1000 homes and leading to a loss of water supply;

Further notes the huge amount of work carried out by the City and County Councils, the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water, including dozens of flood alleviation schemes large and small, to guard against a recurrence;

Recalls the heroic work of the emergency services, **local council staff**, military and volunteers in helping those in need at that time;

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Believes that the positive legacy from this awful event was the great community spirit that helped the city through and that, especially in light of recent national events, the continuation of that spirit must be encouraged.

Agrees that the council's business continuity and emergency plans be reviewed to reflect on the new staff profile being introduced, to ensure that the plans remain resilient."

22.6 Councillor Watkins accepted the amendment.

22.7 The following motion, as amended, was put to the vote and was carried:

"Notes that the date of this Council meeting is exactly 10 years since the devastating floods of 2007 hit Gloucester, affecting over 1000 homes and leading to a loss of water supply;

Further notes the huge amount of work carried out by the City and County Councils, the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water, including dozens of flood alleviation schemes large and small, to guard against a recurrence;

Recalls the heroic work of the emergency services, local council staff, military and volunteers in helping those in need at that time;

Believes that the positive legacy from this awful event was the great community spirit that helped the city through and that, especially in light of recent national events, the continuation of that spirit must be encouraged.

Agrees that the council's business continuity and emergency plans be reviewed to reflect on the new staff profile being introduced, to ensure that the plans remain resilient."

(3) Notice of Motion from the Labour Group

22.8 Moved by Councillor Pullen and seconded by Councillor Fearn;

"This Council believes that a fully staffed, public front facing reception is a vital aspect of council services in meeting the needs of the residents of Gloucester. Integral to this service is a 'Drop In Service' that offers help advice and information to people when they need it.

This council recognises that people dealing with complex issues, facing an emergency or crisis situation need to speak to an advisor face to face in order to resolve issues. Such situations cannot be planned for or predicted and therefore need to be dealt with immediately and without the need to make an appointment.

This council will therefore always provide a drop in service for people in crisis, when they need it and in a way that meets their needs."

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- 22.9 Councillor D. Norman moved the following amendment and was seconded by Councillor Watkins:

~~“This Council believes that a fully staffed, public front facing reception is a vital an important aspect of council services in meeting the needs of the some residents of Gloucester. Integral to this service is a ‘Drop In Service’ that offers help advice and information to people when they need it.~~

~~This Council recognises that people dealing with complex issues, facing an emergency or crisis situation often need to speak to an advisor someone face to face in order to resolve issues. Such situations cannot be planned for or predicted and therefore need to be dealt with immediately and without the need to make an appointment.~~

~~This Council will therefore always provide a drop in service for people those residents in crisis, when they need it and in a way that meets their needs and work closely with our advice agency partners to ensure there is access to support when it is needed.~~

~~However, the recent Together Gloucester transformation project identified that many face to face contacts could be avoided if we were able to encourage our residents and customers to self-serve more online, allowing more capacity for complex cases and to focus on outcomes rather than handling contacts.”~~

- 22.10 Councillor Pullen did not accept the amendment.

- 22.11 The amendment was put to the vote and was carried.

- 22.12 The following motion, as amended, was put to the vote and was carried:

“This Council believes that a fully staffed, public front facing reception is a vital an important aspect of council services in meeting the needs of the some residents of Gloucester. Integral to this service is a ‘Drop In Service’ that offers help advice and information to people when they need it.

This Council recognises that people dealing with complex issues, facing an emergency or crisis situation often need to speak to an advisor someone face to face in order to resolve issues. Such situations cannot be planned for or predicted and therefore need to be dealt with immediately and without the need to make an appointment.

This Council will therefore always provide a drop in service for people those residents in crisis, when they need it and in a way that meets their needs and work closely with our advice agency partners to ensure there is access to support when it is needed.

However, the recent Together Gloucester transformation project identified that many face to face contacts could be avoided if we were able to encourage our residents and customers to self-serve more online, allowing

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more capacity for complex cases and to focus on outcomes rather than handling contacts.”

(4) Notice of Motion from the Labour Group

22.13 Councillors Watkins, Fearn, Ryall, Taylor, Patel, Pearsall and Walford retired from the meeting during discussion and the vote on this item.

22.14 Moved by Councillor Coole and seconded by Councillor Hampson;

“Council recognises the important contribution that Public Sector workers contribute to our society.

Council particularly acknowledges the vital work of our emergency services, both in Gloucester and across the Country, especially in light of recent tragedies where the emergency services have gone above and beyond.

Council believes that asking public sector workers to continue to accept declining living standards and differentials and to continue to fall behind the private sector is not fair or justifiable. Public sector workers deserve fair pay.

Council resolves to write to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, to lobby for the lifting of the Public Sector pay cap.”

22.15 Councillor D. Norman moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Melvin:

“Council recognises the important contribution that Public Sector workers ~~contribute~~ **give** to our society, **particularly the staff of Gloucester City Council.**

Council ~~particularly~~ acknowledges the vital work of our emergency services, both in Gloucester and across the Country, especially in light of recent tragedies where the emergency services have gone above and beyond.

~~Council believes that asking public sector workers to continue to accept declining living standards and differentials and to continue to fall behind the private sector is not fair or justifiable. Public sector workers deserve fair pay.~~

~~Council resolves to write to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, to lobby for the lifting of the Public Sector pay cap.~~

We believe the Government’s position in seeking fairness between public servants and those who pay for them is prudent at this time of continuing financial pressure.

The Council does, however, recognise and respect the role of pay review bodies and is ready to implement any salary uplift as advised.”

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22.16 Councillor Coole did not accept the amendment.

22.17 The amendment was put to the vote and was carried.

22.18 The following motion, as amended, was put to the vote and was carried:

“Council recognises the important contribution that Public Sector workers contribute give to our society, particularly the staff of Gloucester City Council.

Council particularly acknowledges the vital work of our emergency services, both in Gloucester and across the Country, especially in light of recent tragedies where the emergency services have gone above and beyond.

Council believes that asking public sector workers to continue to accept declining living standards and differentials and to continue to fall behind the private sector is not fair or justifiable. Public sector workers deserve fair pay.

Council resolves to write to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, to lobby for the lifting of the Public Sector pay cap.

We believe the Government’s position in seeking fairness between public servants and those who pay for them is prudent at this time of continuing financial pressure.

The Council does, however, recognise and respect the role of pay review bodies and is ready to implement any salary uplift as advised.”

23. WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS

23.1 As a supplementary to her question, Councillor Ryall reported that residents in her ward continued to experience refuse not being collected and queried why access had become such an issue, given that the vehicle and street sizes had not changed. She went on further to question whether the Council would be liable for any health and safety litigation, given that some residents were having to move their own waste and recycling containers to the vehicles to ensure they were emptied.

23.2 Councillor Cook reported that the waste and recycling vehicles struggled to gain access in some narrow streets within the City Centre and were further hampered by the increasing sizes of vehicles parked in those streets. He commented that the 7.5 tonne truck, which delivered a smaller payload than some of the other vehicles in the fleet was already over capacity. He acknowledged that the Council would need to consider whether a vehicle similar in size, but with a larger payload would need to be purchased for the future.

He stated that he was unsure if there were any liability concerns with residents taking their own waste and recycling bins to the vehicles but noted that this seemed a sensible approach in areas of the City where vehicle access was a significant issue.

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**Time of commencement: 7.00 pm hours
Time of conclusion: 10.38 pm hours**

Chair

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Questions submitted by Mr Critchard

- 1) How do the Council regard planning matters where they have previously denied planning approval and the application is approved on appeal by an Inspector.
- 2) What status is given to any conditions within the Inspectors report and attached to such approval.
- 3) What tolerances are applied to building dimensions specific to such approval before the Council consider this problem and what action would they take when such tolerances are exceeded. And what is the ultimate sanction that they would apply.
- 4) Is "Due Diligence" applied to checking that the ultimate building conforms to previously agreed criteria.
- 5) What arrangements are made within the Council to ensure that the planning department has someone capable of responding to urgent queries raised by the interested local residents, when staff are absent for leave or courses etc. and how long do the council consider is an acceptable delay, before a response should be given. Do the Council members expect the Officers to reply to all relevant queries or are some just treated as background comments.
- 6) What conditions are applied to developer to make good any damage done to roads local to any developments associated with the heavy vehicle traffic providing goods or services to that development.
- 7) How firmly are Newt Mitigation strategies enforced in areas where the crested newts have been found and have they any examples of this to demonstrate this action.
- 8) What criteria are used by the Council to authorise MPO for properties in the areas covered by the City Council
- 9) Can Councillor Organ provide the written replies before the next meeting of the planning committee

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