



## **CABINET**

**MEETING** : Wednesday, 13th June 2018

**PRESENT** : Cllrs. James (Chair), Watkins, Noakes and Cook

**Others in Attendance**

Cllrs Hilton, Stephens, Haigh and Coole  
Managing Director  
Corporate Director  
Corporate Director  
Head of Policy and Resources  
Head of Place  
Head of Cultural and Trading Services  
Solicitor  
Democratic Services and Elections Officer

**APOLOGIES** : Cllrs. D. Norman and Organ

**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**2. MINUTES**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th May 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair

**3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)**

A member of the public drew the Leader of the Council's attention to a series of cases where increases in the numbers of homeless and vulnerable people seeking assistance, apparent reductions in assistance available and perceived failings have been reported. He asked which of these the Leader was most proud of and sought reassurance that responses to the points raised would be made public. The Leader of the Council answered that many of the cases were not under the control of the Council. He informed the questioner that these matters required a more detailed response than could be made without having seen the question in advance. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods commented that she would welcome a more detailed discussion on these points and stated that although some matters were outside of the remit of the Council nonetheless Members recognised

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its influence and that she was working with Cabinet colleagues to address issues underlying the statistics presented.

A resident asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure if a clear policy controlling noise from planned events would be implemented to incorporate the Noise Council Code of Practice. The Cabinet Member for Environment replied that Members were aware of the importance of keeping down excessive noise to all residents and were keen to work with them in tackling the issue. He gratefully accepted the resident's offer to supply his personal log of intrusive noise from Gloucester Park, copies of industry guidance and the example of a successful policy from another local authority.

**4. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)**

There were no petitions or deputations.

**5. LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)**

Cllr Stephens expressed concern that Amey PLC may have breached its contract with the Council to provide environmental and waste services; in particular an allegation reported by the media on 13<sup>th</sup> June that materials collected for recycling had been sent to landfill and asked the Cabinet Member for Environment if the matter would be referred to the police and the agreement terminated. The Cabinet Member for Environment replied that evidence was being gathered and if it proved strong enough then it would be referred to the police. He confirmed that if there had been a clear breach then the contract would be terminated.

Cllr Hilton sought reassurance that Amey's performance was being monitored as closely as possible in the light of the reported failings. The Cabinet Member for Environment commented that he was prepared for more meetings if they would be beneficial. The Corporate Director informed Cllr Hilton that in addition to Members' meetings officers met Amey at least monthly and a monitoring team was now in place within the Eastern Avenue Depot. He referred to an increase in failure notices issued and an enhanced performance management regime introduced in April allowing penalties which will be imposed when the team has gathered the necessary data. Cllr Hilton noted that the contract was in place until 2022 and enquired if it would be better to terminate early risking financial penalties rather than a failing service. The Cabinet Member for Environment cautioned against early termination at this stage as the scale and duration of litigation costs were unknown and could be substantial.

Cllr Hilton asked when the introduction of Public Space Protection Orders would be considered by Members. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods confirmed that a report was being drafted and gave assurance that plenty of opportunity would be given for members to comment.

Concerning the closure of the Council's reception area on the last Wednesday of every month Cllr Coole informed Members that he had encountered vulnerable members of the public at the entrance unable to gain immediate access to services and asked if the policy would be reconsidered. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy clarified that the closure enabled the training essential

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for an improved service to take place and that an alternative means of access, via telephone, was available. He further commented that there had only been one Wednesday closure to date giving too short a period to properly judge the impact of the policy on the public. The Managing Director stated that the new arrangements were being kept under review and that Members would in time receive a written briefing.

In relation to agenda item 7 (Local Delivery of Grass Cutting in Podsmead) Cllr Haigh questioned the statement in the report (3.5) that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee gave broad cross party support to the project. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods responded that it had been her understanding that the concept had been approved of and favour given to taking it forward. Cllr Haigh asked if extensions to other locations would receive Cabinet Member and Council consideration first. The Cabinet member for Communities and Neighbourhoods emphasised that although interest had been shown by other communities, this project related to Podsmead alone.

**6. LOCAL DELIVERY OF GRASS CUTTING IN PODSMEAD**

Cabinet considered the joint report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods and the Cabinet Member for Environment that sought to update Members on the implementation of a local grass cutting trial being undertaken in Podsmead via a Social Enterprise Model and the positive impacts it aimed to deliver.

The Cabinet Member for Environment described the background to the project and highlighted the benefits to and support from the local community. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods emphasised the pioneering nature of devolving such powers to communities, commented on the enthusiasm with which the Podsmead community has engaged with the opportunity and looked forward to how it may develop especially as other communities have shown an interest. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy expressed the desire to see the model rolled out to other communities that want it.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the implementation of the trial scheme for the 2018 grass cutting season and its potential positive impacts as set out within the report be noted;
- (2) delegated authority be provided to the Head of Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities & Neighbourhoods and the Cabinet Member for Environment to formally implement such an arrangement in 2019, subject to a review of the trial period, which will be undertaken following the close of the 2018 grass cutting season, and
- (3) the approach of devolving the delivery of public open space management for the benefit of our communities (as set out within this report) and actively engage our communities through conversations to explore potential interest be endorsed.

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**7. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP ON SALES OF HIGH STRENGTH ALCOHOL**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods that presented the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group on the sale of high strength alcohol products in Gloucester and sought a formal response to the Committee.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods thanked the Group for their valuable contribution to an issue that was so important to community wellbeing but difficult to tackle. She commented on the timely nature of the report as similar issues were being addressed by the Night-time Economy Agreement and Public Space Protection Orders currently subject to consultation.

**RESOLVED** that the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be addressed and matters that can be actioned without the need of a further report be implemented at the earliest opportunity and that those recommendations requiring more detailed consideration be the subject of a further report to Cabinet as necessary.

**8. BANNING THE RELEASE OF CHINESE LANTERNS AND BALLOONS FROM COUNCIL OWNED LAND & PROPERTY AND LICENSED EVENTS**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Environment that informed Members of the issues relating to the release of Chinese lanterns and balloons to wildlife, the environment, property, land and aviation and sought that their release be prohibited.

The Cabinet Member for Environment summarised the report and stressed the harm caused to the environment, wildlife and safety. He drew Members' attention to the range of organisations promoting such a ban and the 72 local authorities that have already done so. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods reminded Members that the ban would be another step towards making the Council as green as possible.

**RESOLVED** that banning the release of Chinese Lanterns & Balloons from Council owned land and property or at any licensed events be approved.

**9. GLOUCESTER CULTURE TRUST ANNUAL REPORT**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure that presented the first Annual Impact Report prepared by the Gloucester Culture Trust and sought that the Trust be invited to outline its future plans and intended developments to Members at a future meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure reminded Members of the strong progress the city has made through ambition and empowering communities. She highlighted recent achievements such as successful bids to the Great Place Scheme, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and creative partnership with the Roundhouse, a record described by the Chair of Arts Council England as 'Gloucester leading the way'. The Cabinet Member for Environment informed Members of improvement he

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had noticed over the last five years with events such as the History Festival bringing visitors into the city. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods drew attention to the broad range of social benefits cultural projects were bringing to communities across the city not just in the centre. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy commented on the economic as well as quality of life benefits from culture and looked forward to continuing progress.

**RESOLVED** to welcome and endorse the first Annual Impact Report and invite the Trust to outline its future plans and intended developments to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

**10. TREASURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that provided a review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2017-18.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy highlighted the key features of the report.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

**11. FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2017-18**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that informed Members of the final Council position against agreed budgets, key savings targets and key performance indicators for the 2017/18 financial year. It sought for the final outturn position to be noted and approval for movement to and from earmarked revenue reserves.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy summarised the principal features of the report and reminded Members that not having internal re-charging impacted some portfolios disproportionately. He commented that the finance team had worked hard to achieve the improvement recognised by the recent Peer Review Challenge and that this journey would continue.

**RESOLVED** that:

(1) it be noted that:

- i. The savings achieved in year total £1.849m
- ii. The year-end position for the financial year 2017/18 is a decrease of the General Fund balance by £19k
- iii. The General Fund balance has decreased from £1.655m to £1.636m at the end of 2017/18.
- iv. That the level of earmarked reserves has reduced by £64k to £4.205m.

(2) The transfers to and from earmarked reserves as detailed in the table in section 6 of this report be approved

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**12. YEAR END PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2017-18**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that informed Members of the Council's performance against key measures in 2017-18 and set out the next steps towards implementing a new performance framework.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy introduced the report as a work in progress that would be refined over time with quarterly reports to provide the information by which the authority can be judged. He further commented that on this occasion the picture presented was mixed. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods welcomed the report as a useful tool for Cabinet and members and praised the level of detail in the presentation.

**RESOLVED** that the Year End Performance Report for 2017-18 at Appendix one of the report be noted.

**Time of commencement: 6.00 pm**  
**Time of conclusion: 6.55 pm**

**Chair**