



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING : Monday, 23rd March 2015

PRESENT : Cllrs. Lugg (Chair), S. Witts (Vice-Chair), Gravells (Spokesperson), Haigh, Hanman, Lewis, Wilson, Field, Dee, Taylor, Beeley, Hansdot, Toleman and Pullen

Others in Attendance

Mr R Cook, Corporate Director
Ms G Ragon, Head of Public Protection

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Ravenhill

93. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

94. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

95. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no questions from members of the public.

96. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions or deputations.

97. GLOUCESTER CITY MARKETS STRATEGY

The Chair welcomed Mr R Cook, Corporate Director, and Ms G Ragon, Head of Public Protection, to the meeting.

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Members were presented with a report which set out the results of a 12 week consultation exercise on the 5 year Draft Markets Strategy. The document sought approval for the adoption of the Gloucester City Markets Strategy and Action Plan and asked Cabinet to endorse the investigation of options for a new ground floor indoor market.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee was asked to note the report, subject to any recommendations Members wished to make to Cabinet.

Members discussed the following matters:-

1. A Member queried whether the indoor market might be relocated close to the new bus station. Ms Ragon replied that this was one of the options which would be explored. The Member advised the Committee of her discussions with the manager of Preston Market, where the market was regarded as an anchor store and promoted as a key retail attraction, and queried whether the same approach was intended for Gloucester's new indoor market. Ms Ragon responded that when the indoor market was relocated it would be able to have more stalls and would be more attractive. The Member replied that the indoor market's current location was poorly signposted and requested that this be addressed in the Strategy.
2. A Member referred to the future closure of the BHS store in Eastgate Street and suggested that this could be added to the list of possible locations for the new indoor market.
3. A Member commented that the overpowering PA system used by the butcher in the King's Square Cherry and White market was a deterrent to shoppers. Another Member disagreed and said that the trader was popular and that customers enjoyed his performance.
4. A Member asked if it would be possible to have a dual site in the Eastgate Shopping Centre for the indoor market so that shoppers could walk between the two areas. Ms Ragon replied that there were no vacant units available.
5. A Member questioned if the City Council was still subsidising the City Centre Partnership specialist market. Ms Ragon indicated that a small sum of money was being paid to support the market, but that this was being tapered with the intention that the market would become self-supporting at the end of a set period.
6. Three Members commented that they were unaware of the existence of some of the specialist markets and suggested that they could be better advertised and could include the use of banners. Ms Ragon said that a full marketing plan would be drawn up as part of the Strategy.
7. A Member considered that the Night Market should be held more frequently.
8. A Member noted that the Strategy would be out of date by the time King's Quarter and Blackfriars had been developed. Ms Ragon replied that the Strategy would be refreshed at the end of the 5 year period.

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9. A Member asked how this Strategy differed to previous strategies. Ms Ragon said that she was not familiar with any previous strategies, but that this Strategy was unique because it would be driven by the Action Plan.
10. A Member referred to the 50% take up rate on Farmers' Market stalls and asked what initiatives were being carried out to attract more stallholders. Ms Ragon replied that the contract for the market had been re-tendered and that this had led to an improved offer.
11. A Member remarked that Ward based markets could stimulate interest in markets by allowing local people to sell their produce in their own neighbourhood.
12. A Member suggested that Gloucester Quays could be approached with a view to holding their Wine and Food Festival in the City Centre. Another Member stated that there was no evidence that such themed events in the Quays drew customers away from the City Centre and considered that the City Council should work with Gloucester Quays.
13. A Member suggested that charity stalls could be encouraged such as the W.I. Another Member agreed that social enterprise should be welcomed.
14. A Member asked if the indoor market could be extended into the Greyfriars area. Ms Ragon replied that this had been explored with traders who had indicated that this was not a viable option because of the current lack of footfall in the area. Members noted that the position might change in the future with the development of the Greyfriars scheme and accompanying linkages.
15. A Member commented that outdoor food stalls in the City Centre could be held on different days to celebrate Gloucester's diverse food offer. Ms Ragon said that discussions were being held with the Asset Management Team on the feasibility of having an indoor market with a combination of outdoor stalls.
16. A Member queried plans for the vacant bowling green to the side of the current indoor market. Ms Ragon agreed to investigate this point.
17. A Member suggested that Gloucester Services could be contacted with a view to them holding a one-off market to promote their business.
18. A Member commented on the current lack of stalls in the Cherry and White market on a Saturday. Ms Ragon said that the market, in common with others, suffered a reduction in trade after Christmas. Members were advised that discussions with stallholders had resulted in stalls being concentrated together rather than being scattered over King's Square and that this was deemed to be an improvement.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO CABINET

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1. That the Gloucester City Markets Strategy and Action Plan should include proposals for better signposting for the current Eastgate Indoor Market.
2. That the report be noted.

98. RUGBY WORLD CUP UPDATE

Members were presented with a report which informed them of progress against the key issues for the delivery of the Rugby World Cup 2015.

Mr Cook advised Members that information regarding the location of the 'Fanzone' was embargoed until Thursday when England Rugby 2015 would be issuing a press release.

Mr Cook briefed Members on the outcome of a meeting held with the Kingsholm and Wotton Neighbourhood Partnership on 14 March 2015. The main issues discussed at the meeting had centred on road closures, parking and disturbance to residents. Mr Cook said the discussions had been helpful and that the meeting had received positive press coverage. A further meeting was planned for June or July.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee was asked to note the progress made so far regarding the preparations as part of Gloucester's Host City arrangements.

Members discussed the following matters:-

1. A Member requested regular emailed Member briefings on the project. Mr Cook agreed to provide these.
2. A Member commented that some of the car parking spaces identified in the transport plan were unlikely to be available during the week as they would be in use. Mr Cook replied that people who came to the ground every week would try to park in their usual places and that discussions were taking place on whether match goers could be diverted to particular car parks. Gloucester Rugby would use its database to communicate messages about parking. Mr Cook said that the transport plan was also about alternative methods of transport such as walking and cycling.
3. A Member commented that visitors familiar with Gloucester were unlikely to go to the Fanzone and said that it was important to have clean streets and good signposting. Mr Cook said that 2 walking routes would be established and that the intention was to encourage visitors to walk to the Fanzone and other parts of the City and not just to the Ground. Meetings had taken place with Amey regarding cleansing. A Member enquired if buses would be provided between the Fanzone and the Ground. Mr Cook said there were no plans for buses and explained that road closures would mean that buses could only get to either end of Kingsholm Road. He added that there would be special measures for those match goers with disabilities.
4. A Member noted plans to install semi-permanent toilets in King's Square and pointed out that the lack of public toilets outside the Ground posed a serious

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issue. The Member asked if portable toilets could be positioned in the car park in Kingsholm Road. Mr Cook said that there were no plans for additional toilets outside the Ground as the number of people expected to attend was no greater than on significant match days during the season. Mr Cook agreed to pass the Member's concerns to England Rugby. Another Member remarked that foreign tourists would not know where pubs and restaurants were located where toilets could be used. Further concern was expressed by another Member who regularly received complaints about people urinating in alleyways in his Ward. The Member stated that the situation would be worse during the tournament as those people without tickets were likely to hang around outside the Ground hoping to be able to purchase one and that this would put further pressure on the infrastructure.

5. A Member commented that rugby fans might have wider interests beyond rugby and stated that the website should reflect this. Mr Cook responded that he had met with Marketing Gloucester to explore ways of promoting the City's attractions. Another Member suggested that events such as the History Festival and Heritage Open Days should be publicised.
6. A Member queried the level of Police cover for the matches. Mr Cook indicated that England Rugby perceived the tournament as being a non-policed event. Mr Cook pointed out that Police were represented on the steering group. Mr Cook advised the Committee that Ms Ragon would be carrying out a table top emergency planning exercise which would rehearse various scenarios.
7. A Member asked if vacant land at St Oswald's Park had been identified for potential parking and highlighted that charities could organise the parking and benefit from the proceeds. Mr Cook advised the Member that all available parking at St Oswald's Park had been included in the plans. Another Member suggested that traders in St Oswald's Park could sponsor car parking. Mr Cook replied that as there were time limits on parking in the retail park this had been discounted.
8. A Member sought clarification on sponsorship in the Fanzone. Mr Cook explained that this was strictly regulated by England Rugby within the zone, but that there would be other sponsorship opportunities across the City.
9. More detail was requested on road closures by a Member who emphasised the need to inform Ward Councillors so that they could brief their residents. Mr Cook replied that road closures were proposed for 3 hours before, and up to 2 hours after the match and that local residents would be provided with the information.
10. A Member looked forward to receiving details on the 'Spectacular' and said it was important that the legacy brought the community together. He suggested that after the event there should be a 'thank you' to Kingsholm residents. Mr Cook indicated that it was hoped that communities would stage their own events to celebrate the tournament and commented that the aim of the legacy was to encourage the take up of all sports.

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11. A Member requested that the Welcome Ceremonies should involve as many local people as possible and that they should reflect the culture of the City. Mr Cook commented that information was being sent out to local schools and that there would be pre-match entertainment. He anticipated that the tournament would engender the same community spirit and celebration as had been experienced during the 2012 Olympics.
12. A Member had received an email advising that schools wanting to take part in music and singing should submit a video by 22 March and queried if the deadline could be extended. Mr Cook advised the Member to respond to the email and request an extension to the deadline.
13. A Member questioned the reference to the 'heavy' control imposed by England Rugby and asked if the levels of bureaucracy were impacting on the City Council's ability to get key messages out and was hampering its influence on the Project Board. Mr Cook replied that the City Council had to abide by the Host City agreement and reassured the Member that despite the protocols that were in place that the City Council was in regular contact with the Communications Team and were able to put messages out through the portal once they had gone through the proper channels.
14. A Member pointed out that the legacy had stressed the importance of working with partners and sought confirmation that there had been involvement with partners in the health service. Mr Cook agreed that the aim of the legacy was to inspire individuals to take up physical activity and said he would find out which health service partners had been contacted.
15. A Member commended the Leader and Cabinet for their efforts in obtaining Host City status. Another Member reminded the Member that the success of the bid had been as a direct result of all political parties working together and the excellent work of Officers.

The Committee requested a further update at their meeting on 15 June 2015.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO CABINET – That the report be noted.

99. WASTE AND RECYCLING UPDATE

Members were presented with a report which updated them on the progress that had been made on the recommendations set out in the Final Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Recycling Task and Finish Group published in October 2013.

Overview and Scrutiny was asked to note the contents of the report and the positive proactive work that had been carried out in respect of waste and recycling by the Environmental Projects Team and to make any further recommendations to Cabinet that it considered appropriate.

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A Member queried whether the charge for garden waste fully covered the cost of providing the service. Mr Cook confirmed that it did.

The Committee thanked Mr Cook for providing the update report.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

100. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP ON THE MANAGEMENT OF PARCELS OF UNADOPTED GREEN LAND

The Chair of the Task and Finish Group introduced the report to Members. She commented that the Group had uncovered some complicated issues and explained the rationale for the Group's recommendations. She thanked her fellow Task and Finish Group Members, the Democratic Services Officer, and the other Officers who had assisted with the study.

Another Task and Finish Group Member highlighted the agreement reached with Amey to tackle dangerous sites on a case by case basis by adjusting their work schedules in order to avoid the City Council incurring any extra costs.

The Committee was asked to endorse the report prior to its presentation to Cabinet on 25 March 2015.

A Member, who was also Chair of the City Council's Planning Committee, welcomed the report and complimented the Group on its content.

A Member queried whether the Group was aware of the passing of land to Crown Estates. The Chair of the Task and Finish Group replied that the Group had not come across this as an issue during the study.

A Member noted that the Group had concluded that enforcement action was resource intensive and sought assurance that Officers would robustly pursue owners of the parcels of land. The Chair of the Task and Finish Group confirmed that this was the case.

The Committee welcomed the report.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

101. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 15 June 2015 at 18.30 hours.

Time of commencement: 19:00 hours

Time of conclusion: 21:03 hours

Chair

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