



CABINET

MEETING : Wednesday, 15th July 2015

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

Others in Attendance

Jon McGinty, Managing Director

Ross Cook, Corporate Director

Shirin Wotherspoon, Solicitor

Atika Tarajiya, Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Noakes

19. WELCOME TO THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy (Councillor Paul James) welcomed Jon McGinty as the new Managing Director to the meeting.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

21. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 17th June 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to amendment of minute item 11:

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods updating Members on the progress of implementing Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) and Public Health interventions.

Councillor Dallimore reported that the focus of the report was on the progress made in the last 12 months, though the scheme had been in operation since 2012. She advised Members that the *Clinical County* Commissioning Group (CCG) had been successful in their bid to the Prime Minister's Challenge Fund and secured additional *funding* ~~£1 million~~ for the continuation of the Social Prescribing project.

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Cabinet Members endorsed the approach acknowledging that the City Council had adapted their approach around the ABCD model. They were pleased to note that Councillor Dallimore would be leading on this topic at the Local Government Association (LGA) conference, ~~as part of a peer review~~, later in the year.

22. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

Mr Steve Morgan congratulated the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy (Councillor Paul James) on the continuing success of the Regeneration Strategy which promoted economic growth and employment within the City. He questioned if the Cabinet Member agreed the importance of preserving open green spaces at a time when current regeneration schemes and future planned growth exerted additional pressures on the City's landscape, and queried if either a debate at full Council or a further report to Cabinet could be arranged demonstrating the reduction in the number of open green spaces within the City.

Councillor James agreed that the City's green spaces were valuable and should be safeguarded and explained that efforts were focussed on the development of brownfield sites. He explained that the adopted Open Space Strategy set out the City Council's plans in protecting and managing the City's open spaces. The Corporate Director reported that a component of the Open Space Strategy was an individual action plan for each of the City's wards outlining specific aims and issues. Councillor James remarked that this issue would be discussed with Officers further, and any pertinent information would be relayed in an appropriate manner.

Mr Roger Critchley asked the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning (Councillor Colin Organ) whether he acknowledged that although there had been significant housing developments in Hempsted over recent years there had been little improvements to existing facilities such as doctors' surgeries.

Councillor Organ acknowledged the need for developing facilities in line with new developments. He noted that Hempsted were working towards an adopted neighbourhood plan and questioned if appropriate representations had been made to other service providers such as the NHS.

Mr Critchley asked the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning if planning applications concerning Hempsted should not be determined until the emerging Neighbourhood Plan was formally adopted and asked for assurance that the City Council would not authorise permission for any more green field development until all brownfield sites were fully developed.

Councillor Colin Organ stated that it was outside the City's remit to not determine planning applications. He advised that brownfield sites were a preferred location for the new developments however this would be dependent on the Joint Core Strategy (JCS). He advised that the JCS was a strategic development plan for the City, which once adopted, would enable neighbourhood plans to be reviewed. He observed that if appropriate, a written response to the questions would be provided with more detail.

23. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions and deputations.

24. PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT FOR GLOUCESTER

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy seeking approval to establish a Business Improvement District (BID) Task group to consider the feasibility of setting up a BID in Gloucester.

Councillor James summarised key areas of the report, commenting that the principle aim of the BID would be a business led initiative that would fund additional resources and services to the City Centre without any extra costs to the taxpayer. He explained that the BID would be implemented following a ballot process and that the BID Task Group would represent, manage and steer the BID's activities towards a successful ballot. He reported that the Conservative manifesto pledged to support BIDs, noting that the City of Worcester had a successful BID in place and that Cheltenham Borough Council were also in the process of setting up a BID and were further along in this process.

In response to a query from the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources (Councillor David Norman) on the costs of setting up a BID, Councillor James explained that there were costs associated with the ballot process and the levy charge if the BID was successfully implemented. He reported that the exact costs of the ballot process were unknown at this point though a detailed business plan would be presented to Cabinet with more detail. He advised that although the Council were able to recuperate the costs of the ballot process back from the successful BID after a period of five years, this money would be re-allocated on BID programmes instead. He stated that Council would also be liable to pay the BID levy on properties they owned within the BID area though he anticipated that this would be a modest cost.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods (Councillor Jennie Dallimore) commented that this was an example of the City Council enabling rather than leading businesses. She observed that there could be other areas in the City that could benefit from similar schemes in future, recognising that this would have to be driven by business appetite.

Cabinet Members endorsed the approach acknowledging that a BID would promote growth in the City and would demonstrate the City Council's commitment to the City Centre Economy. They noted that all partners would need to work together in times of financial uncertainty to ensure success and welcomed the comprehensive business plan that would provide greater detail on the proposal.

RESOLVED:

1. That the principle of a Gloucester BID be supported.
2. That the establishment of a BID Task Group be supported.

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3. That authority be delegated to the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development Service, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy to co-ordinate and allocate staffing resources within the Economic Development Team to provide administrative support to the BID Task Group.

25. CITY CENTRE INVESTMENT FUND ALLOCATIONS AND UPDATE

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy updating Members on the projects within the City Centre Investment Fund delivery programme.

Councillor James highlighted key areas of the report commenting that the public toilets for Kings Square were scheduled for early September and the remainder of the fund would be allocated to the Tourist Information Centre (TIC). He stated that despite press reports, plans to improve the façades of Kings Walk Car Park and Eastgate Shopping Centre were not being scrapped, explaining that the upper levels of the car park would be painted as an interim solution and cladding on the lower half of the building would be piloted, a test panel of which could be inspected by Members in situ.

Councillor James commented that the plans for the Eastgate Shopping Centre could be delayed as the legal agreement had to be signed by five parties. He reported that the existing Christmas lights, which had been in operation since 2006, would be replaced as they became less efficient over time and public opinion on the final design would be sought.

Cabinet Members welcomed the proposals noting that they aimed to provide best value and long term viability.

RESOLVED:

1. That the good progress being made to deliver the City Centre Investment Fund be noted.
2. That £70,000 of the public toilet allocation be used to provide a new facility at Kings Square, the balance to remain allocated to the Tourist Information Centre, subject to the outcome of detailed feasibility studies.
3. That an interim solution of painting the façade of the Kings Walk Car Park be delivered in time for the Rugby World Cup, subject to the owner's approval pending the delivery of the permanent façade treatment.
4. That Officers deliver immediate improvements at the City Museum, as detailed in Section 4.3, and continue to work with the Heritage Lottery Fund to make a further bid.
5. That the prioritisation of Eastgate Street frontage of the Kings Walk Car Park and the Eastgate Shopping Centre, for the treatment of their facades be confirmed, subject to detailed costs and that the Eastgate Link Bridge be reconsidered in the light of the proposals for the Kings Walk car park frontage when fully developed.

26. REGENERATION OF GREATER BLACKFRIARS

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy updating Members on progress to deliver the successful Regeneration of the Greater Blackfriars area of Gloucester City Centre.

Councillor James reported that the project had secured £4.13M from the LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) and Growth Deal predominantly for the de-risking of the site and noted that the Master plan had been received remarking that it was indicative and could be subject to change. He commented that City and Country would be holding a public consultation on the former prison site and acknowledged that a mix of residential and commercial property would increase the attractiveness of the area.

Cabinet Members endorsed the proposals recognising that the site could develop to become an important tourist link and attraction between the dynamic Quays regeneration, Cathedral and future projects within the City.

RESOLVED:

1. That the good progress being made in the delivery of the regeneration of the Blackfriars area be noted.
2. To note that Governance arrangements, led by the Project Board, are in place.

27. RUGBY WORLD CUP UPDATE

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy informing on progress against the key issues for the delivery of the Rugby World Cup 2015 (RWC15).

Councillor James highlighted the key areas of the report noting the breadth of RWC and community events planned across the City. He commented that early pledges for the commemorative bench in Kings Square had been received and expressed his hope that these would continue.

Cabinet Members welcomed the update acknowledging that the event would be an important tourist attraction that was expected to generate £43M into the City's economy. They were pleased to note that the community events would attract a wide audience from across the City and that the tickets allocated to Members could be used to recognise individuals not affiliated with any particular group. Councillor Norman requested a further update on any grants and sponsorships awarded for the RWC15.

RESOLVED:

That the progress made so far regarding the preparations as part of Gloucester's Host City arrangements for the Rugby World Cup 2015 be noted.

28. MUSEUMS SERVICE EVENTS PLANNED FOR JULY – DECEMBER 2015

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure informing Members of forthcoming events planned for the City and Folk Museums from July to December 2015.

Cabinet Members were pleased to note the variety of events planned, observing that staff at the Museum had taken steps to make events more interactive and modern. Councillor Organ commented that staff were assisting in getting artefacts on display at the Retro Festival as the Museums were not in the direct vicinity of the gate streets and acknowledged that active promotion would increase residents' awareness of planned events.

RESOLVED:

1. That the schedule of events listed in paragraphs 3.1 – 3.12.1, which support the recommendations of the Cultural Services Review aimed at increasing footfall and revenue into the Museums be noted
2. That the report and the Appendix be widely distributed.

29. MARKETS STRATEGY UPDATE

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy updating Members on the City Council's progress with the Markets Strategy action plan and the options available for additional car parking at Hempsted Meadows Carboot site.

Councillor James explained that although the option to extend the car parking at Hempsted Meadows had not been pursued due to costs related to flooding and drainage issues, innovative new options were currently being explored. He advised that the location of the new purpose built indoor market could soon be confirmed as plans for Kings Quarter and Blackfriars projects continued to develop and noted that the City Council were trying to minimise the impact of service charges to traders associated with necessary repair works to the current indoor market.

RESOLVED:

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That the success of the Hempsted Meadows Carboot under new management be noted.
3. That the City Council will not proceed with the available options for additional parking at Hempsted Meadows Carboot site as listed in Appendix 1 due to the costs.
4. That commitment to the provision of a new indoor market in either Kings Quarter or Blackfriars be reaffirmed.

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30. HKP RECEPTION

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources updating Members on the new HKP (Herbert, Kimberly and Philpotts) reception design and processes.

Cabinet Members endorsed the changes and were pleased to note the 72% positive feedback from the Gov Metric System. Councillor David Norman reported that options to promote the large meeting room in the reception area were being explored as it was currently being underutilised.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

Time of commencement: 18:00 hours

Time of conclusion: 19:15 hours

Chair