



CABINET

MEETING : Wednesday, 16th September 2015

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

Others in Attendance

Jon McGinty, Managing Director

Shirin Wotherspoon, Solicitor

Martin Shields, Corporate Director of Services and Neighbourhoods

Ross Cook, Corporate Director

Jon Topping, Head of Finance

David Pritchett, Interim Neighbourhood Services Manager

Adam Gooch, Senior Planning Officer

Mark Dix, Surveyor and Valuer

Atika Tarajiya, Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. James and Porter

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Noakes (Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure) declared a personal interest in agenda item 14 (Murray Hall, Tuffley Lane, Gloucester and Land at Colwell Avenue Hucclecote Gloucester) by virtue of her role as President of the Gloucester District Scouts.

32. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15th July 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

33. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no public questions.

34. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions or deputations.

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35. THE COUNCIL'S CULTURAL STRATEGY-REVISION 2017

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure (Councillor Lise Noakes) seeking approval to begin the process of updating the Council's Cultural Strategy, due for revision in 2017.

Councillor Noakes summarised the key areas of the report, noting that advancements within the City had led to the need for an updated strategy which was being developed with assistance from the interim Culture Board. She explained that the board uniquely included representation from the Arts Council, who were keen for improvements to the City's cultural offer and noted that without these necessary changes the City Council would not be eligible for funding from the Arts Council.

In response to a query from the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources (Councillor David Norman) regarding the feasibility of funding the proposals, Councillor Noakes reported that match funding would be a viable option and clarification had been sought from the Head of Finance with regards to this. She noted that options on utilising the Council's existing assets and services to reduce costs were also being explored.

Cabinet endorsed the approach acknowledging that representation from the Arts Council on the Board would be likely to broaden the proposals and were pleased to note the speed at which the interim Board were progressing forward.

RESOLVED:

1. That it be recorded that the Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure has set up an informal Interim Gloucester Culture Board to help shape the Council's Cultural Strategy.
2. That a revised Cultural Strategy and associated Business Plan come before Cabinet for endorsement in due course, before going on to full Council for approval and adoption.

36. CULTURAL STRATEGY UPDATE: JANUARY - JUNE 2015

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure updating Members on the progress that has been made in achieving the Cultural Strategy's targets from January to June 2015.

Councillor Noakes noted that the report showcased a cross section of the breadth of cultural programmes available within the City and commented that with the introduction of the new Cultural Strategy, future reports would be likely to focus on performance and monitoring.

Cabinet Members welcomed the update acknowledging that a strong portfolio of cultural and creative programmes whilst improving tourism additionally benefitted the health and wellbeing of the City's residents. They noted that Overview and Scrutiny Committee had endorsed the report.

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RESOLVED:

1. That the achievements made in delivering the Cultural Strategy from January to June 2015 be noted.
2. That it be noted that the planned activities by various stakeholders are recognised as contributing to the Cultural Strategy aims and objectives.

37. RUGBY WORLD CUP UPDATE

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

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods (Councillor Jennie Dallimore) reported that the final preparations for the events were underway and thanked Officers for their efforts in delivering the event. She explained that the project remained on track in terms of budget and execution and commented that the City Council had delivered a much greater package of events than was initially envisioned.

The Corporate Director advised Members that in addition to the main Fanzone in Orchard Square and Family Zone located in Mariners Square, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and Gloucester Rugby Football Union (GRFU) would be holding additional activities at Llanthony Priory in association with Gloucestershire College.

Cabinet Members placed on records their thanks to Officers involved in the organisation of the event and were pleased to note that the local community had been involved throughout. They acknowledged that the RWC15 was a culmination of a wide variety of events staged over the past few months and welcomed the high ranking attributed to Kingsholm Stadium's atmosphere in the national press.

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.

38. DRAFT GLOUCESTER PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning (Councillor Organ) seeking approval for the Draft Gloucester Playing Pitch strategy for the purposes of public consultation.

Councillor Organ highlighted the key areas of the report and advised Members that once approved the policy would act as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. He reported that the Strategy formed one of the key deliverables in the Council Plan 2014-2017 and linked in with the Joint Core Strategy (JCS).

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Cabinet Members endorsed the proposals remarking that partnering with local sporting bodies and educational establishments for dual use of sporting pitches could be mutually beneficial. The Senior Planning Officer advised the group that key stakeholders had been consulted in the preparation of the strategy.

RESOLVED:

That the final draft Playing Pitch Strategy, as provided at Appendix 1, and the Artificial Grass Pitch – Scenario Paper, as provided at Appendix 2, be approved for the purposes of public consultation.

39. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE – QUARTER 1 EXCEPTIONS

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources highlighting performance against the current agreed indicators for the period April 2015 to June 2015 in relation to the Council's Corporate Plan 2014-2017.

Cabinet Members noted the progress acknowledging the difficulty in making an accurate assessment this early in the financial year.

RESOLVED:

That the Council's current performance as outlined in Appendix 1 be noted.

40. FINANCIAL MONITORING QUARTER 1 REPORT

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources updating Members on financial monitoring details including budget variances, year end forecasts, and progress made against agreed savings targets for the 1st quarter ended 30th June 2015.

Councillor Norman summarised the key areas of the report commenting that action would be taken if the general fund balance were to decline further in quarter 2. He reported that in the absence of the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Porter) he had undertaken to working with Amey to continue to try and make savings where possible.

Cabinet Members endorsed the approach recognising that effective and careful monitoring was financially prudent. They noted that all Members were committed to make efficiencies and where possible increase income streams.

RESOLVED:

1. That it be noted that the savings achieved in year to date total £851k and a further £584k of savings are in progress.
2. That it be noted that the forecast year end position is currently for a reduction to the Council's General Fund balance of £554k.

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3. That the actual and expected levels of income for the Council shown at Appendix 3 be noted.
4. That the details of specific budgetary issues identified by Officers and the actions being taken to address these issues be noted.

41. ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT UPDATE

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure updating Members on the work done by Gloucester City Council to support current and ex-service personnel as part of the Gloucestershire Armed Community Covenant and to seek ongoing endorsement of such activity.

Cabinet welcomed the approach reaffirming their commitment to the Covenant. They acknowledged that Gloucester hosted personnel living in traditional army bases and individual homes and commented that it would be appropriate to request an opinion of their needs and involvement in any new proposals.

RESOLVED:

1. That activities to support current and ex-service personnel as part of the Council's ongoing commitment to the Covenant be endorsed;
2. That an annual update of achievements against the covenant be received and that this is timetabled into the Cabinet Forward Plan.

42. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (RIPA) SIX MONTHLY REPORT ON USE OF RIPA POWERS

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources updating Members on the Council's use of its powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).

Cabinet noted that the City Council had not been required to use their powers since the last report to Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

43. MURRAY HALL TUFFLEY LANE GLOUCESTER AND LAND AT COLWELL AVENUE HUCCLECOTE GLOUCESTER

Councillor Noakes (Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure) declared a personal interest in agenda item 14 (Murray Hall Tuffley Lane Gloucester and Land at Colwell Avenue Hucclecote Gloucester) by virtue of her role as President of the Gloucester District Scouts and took no part in the debate or the vote on this item.

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy seeking approval for the intended disposal of the freehold interests of

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Murray hall, Tuffley Lane and Land at Colwell Avenue, Hucclecote to the relevant Scout associations at market value.

Cabinet endorsed the proposals recognising that the properties would be sold at market value. They were pleased to note that the sale would allow the Scouts security for the future and continue to progress forward.

RESOLVED:

That the freehold interests in Murray Hall, Tuffley Lane, and land situated in Colwell Avenue Hucclecote, as marked out in Appendix 1, be sold at market value to the relevant Scout Associations

44. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public are present during consideration of this items there will be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended.

45. 23, 25, 27 AND 29 COMMERCIAL ROAD, GLOUCESTER

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy seeking approval to acquire and sell nos 23, 25, 27 and 29 Commercial Road, Gloucester.

RESOLVED:

The recommendations as set out in the exempt report.

46. 23, 25, 27 AND 29 COMMERCIAL ROAD, GLOUCESTER

RESOLVED: That the exclusion of the press and public be discontinued to allow members of the public and press to be present during consideration of agenda item 15.

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy seeking approval to acquire and sell nos 23, 25, 27 and 29 Commercial Road, Gloucester.

Cabinet Members welcomed the proposals acknowledging that the continued regeneration of the City would continue to enhance the City's visitor economy and provide an important link between the Quays and the City Centre.

RESOLVED:

1. That the freehold interest in 23/25 and 27/ 29 Commercial Road (including land to the rear) from the Canal and River Trust (CRT), edged red on the plan attached be acquired.

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2. That if so required to enable the proposal to proceed, that additional access rights over adjoining properties at a price the Asset Manager, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Economy, considers to be appropriate be acquired;
3. That the freehold and leasehold interests in the above-mentioned properties be disposed of, together with any access rights, to the bidder offering the most advantageous proposal in the opinion of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy, and in any event at not less than market value.
4. That any ancillary documents the Council Solicitor (following consultation with the Asset Manager) considers necessary or desirable to enable the transaction to proceed including (if so required by the purchaser) an Agreement restricting the Council's pre-contract negotiations to the purchaser for a period not exceeding 4 months be entered into.

Time of commencement: 6.00 pm
Time of conclusion: 7.15 pm

Chair