



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING : Monday, 19th October 2015

PRESENT : Cllrs. Lugg (Chair), H. Norman (Spokesperson), Haigh, Gravells, Lewis, S. Witts, Dee, Beeley, Hansdot, Pearsall, Randle, Toleman, Etheridge, Dallimore and Porter

Others in Attendance

Councillor Jennie Dallimore, Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods

Councillor Jim Porter, Cabinet Member for Environment

Mr Jon McGinty, Managing Director, Gloucester City Council

Mr Ross Cook, Corporate Director, Gloucester City Council

Mr Meyrick Brentnall, Environmental Planning Manager, Gloucester City Council

Ms Sadie Neal, Head of Business Improvement

Mr Jeff Thomas, Shopmobility Manager

Mr Steve Elway, Chief Executive, Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust

Ms Jacquie Douglas, Business Development Director, Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Hampson and Field

44. SHOPMOBILITY SERVICE OPTIONS APPRAISAL

The Chair welcomed Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods, Councillor Jennie Dallimore; Mr Ross Cook, Corporate Director; and Mr Jeff Thomas, Shopmobility Manager; to the meeting.

Members were presented with a report which outlined the options for the future of the Shopmobility Service and which recommended that a procurement exercise be undertaken.

Councillor Dallimore acknowledged Mr Berry's comments during public question time and agreed that it was an excellent service and that the Cabinet wanted to protect it. She explained that it was not sustainable to continue to operate Shopmobility in its existing format and that it was necessary to review it in order to protect its future. Councillor Dallimore stated that she was committed to examining this matter in an open and transparent way. Councillor Dallimore concluded her presentation by asking Members for their feedback.

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee was asked to consider the information contained in the report and to make any recommendations it considered appropriate to Cabinet.

The Committee discussed the following matters:-

1. A Member expressed concern that the Council was not able to continue supporting Shopmobility and referred to the Members' Allocation Fund which was provided to all Gloucester City Councillors for spending in their Wards. The Member suggested that this money could be better spent by diverting it to Shopmobility. The Member also reflected that the Council should be doing more to enable disabled residents to fulfil their lives. Councillor Dallimore acknowledged the Member's comments and stated that the Members' Allocation Fund could not be used in its entirety to support the project, but that the Member was welcome to donate their proportion of it to the service.
2. A Member referred to the recommendations in the report which sought the granting of delegated powers to the Head of Public Protection in order to progress the procurement exercise. The Member requested that a decision of this importance should be referred to full Council. Mr Jon McGinty, Managing Director, advised the Member that in accordance with the Council's constitution, this was an executive function which was delegated to Cabinet to determine and that it was not appropriate to refer it to full Council. The Member requested that recommendations 2.2 (2) and 2.2(3) be removed from the report and that any decisions relating to the procurement process be made by Cabinet.
3. The Chair referred to paragraph 3.10 of the report and queried whether any approach had been made to the NHS. Councillor Dallimore replied that the Head of Public Protection had contacted the County Council and also referred to an email from the County Council's Cabinet Member in this regard.
4. A Member voiced the opinion that only Options 2 and 3 were suitable which looked at increasing costs and reducing operating hours. Councillor Dallimore referred the Member to the consultation with users on these two options which had resulted in them not being chosen and reminded the Member the reasons why Option 5 was the preferred option. Another Member agreed that Options 2 and 3 should be combined to make a new Option 9. Councillor Dallimore said that the hours and charges could be examined alongside Option 5, but that she was conscious of the views already expressed by Shopmobility users during the recent consultation.
5. A Member sought clarification on the pre-market engagement exercise mentioned in paragraph 6.1. Mr Ross Cook, Corporate Director, advised that the three organisations referred to might not necessarily express the same interest during an open procurement exercise.
6. A Member referred to the small public health grant given to the City Council by the County Council each year and noted that the City Council had

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discretion on the use of this funding. The Member also placed on record the Committee's gratitude to Councillor Dallimore for bringing the report before them. Turning to paragraph 3.11 of the report, the Member suggested that the wording in this section should be 'tightened up'. The Member also commented on comparisons between the Gloucester and Cheltenham services.

7. A Member asked the Cabinet Member to consider the social element of the service and expressed doubt that the proposed procurement would enable delivery of the required savings. Councillor Dallimore responded that the Council had a good track record of putting services out and attracting partners.

RESOLVED:

1. That paragraphs 2.2(2) and 2.2(3) be removed from the report.
2. That any decisions relating to the procurement process be made by the Cabinet and not by the Head of Public Protection.
3. That the wording in paragraph 3.11 be reviewed.

Time of commencement: 6.30 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 8.40 pm hours

Chair