



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING : Wednesday, 26th July 2017

PRESENT : Cllrs. Coole (Chair), Ryall (Vice-Chair), Finnegan (Spokesperson), Pearsall, Lewis, Wilson, Dee, Hampson, Melvin, Smith, Stephens and Taylor

Others in Attendance

Jon McGinty, Managing Director
Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director
Tanya Davies, Policy and Governance Manager
Atika Tarajiya, Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Hilton, Hawthorne and Patel

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

23.1 There were no declarations of interest.

24. DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIPPING

24.1 There were no declarations of an existence of a party whip.

25. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

25.1 Mr Wallace of Kiln Close, thanked the Committee for the opportunity to attend and put forward a question to the Cabinet. Referring to the Council values as outlined in the report he expressed disappointment that the City Council had deleted the Street Warden posts in previous years. Referencing the Council's commitment to introduce City Centre Wardens, he asked for assurance that the Council would commit to fund these posts permanently and authorise wardens to issue fixed penalty notices when appropriate.

25.2 The Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Cook, advised that the Gloucester Business Improvement District (BID) would fund four City Enforcement Officer posts who would have the power to issue fixed penalty notices. He explained that these officers would provide a visible presence in the City Centre with an aim to improve and maintain its appearance.

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26. DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2017- 20

26.1 Councillor Coole congratulated the Leader of the City Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy (Councillor James) on the birth of his daughter. He advised the Committee that the discussions would be guided by the four Council priorities as outlined in the Draft Council Plan 2017-2020.

26.2 Councillor James thanked the Chair for his kind words. He reported that the Council Plan aimed to provide a guide to the allocation of resources within the City and was informed by the Conservative Manifesto 2016. He noted that the plan was currently in the drafting stages and encouraged Members of the Committee to provide their comments and feedback. He welcomed suggestions on the Key Performance Indicators acknowledging that consideration would need to be given to resources available.

He concluded by reporting that the consultation on the draft plan would take place over the summer period, with the aim to begin the final draft to Council in September 2017.

26.3 Councillor Haigh addressing the Committee from the public gallery, queried the level of detail included within the draft plan. She expressed concern at the lack of SMART objectives and questioned how the administration aimed to identify how these objectives had been achieved.

26.4 Councillor James reported that the Cabinet were keen to hear and reflect on the views of the Committee and had therefore intentionally presented a draft version of the plan.

26.5 Councillor Haigh suggested that the final version of the Council Plan be bought back to the Committee prior to approval.

26.7 Councillor Stephens referring to commentary on page 10 of the report, reported that there were considerable issues with the transport links in the City and in particular the A417, A419 and Railway links, that needed to be addressed in order to continue to promote development and investment within the City.

He went on further to comment that the plan focussed heavily on the City Centre and stated that due consideration needed to be given to the rest of the City. He concluded by advising that the commentary on the City's economic landscape did not make reference to the increasing shortage of affordable homes.

26.8 Councillor James thanked the Member for his helpful comments. He acknowledged that whilst the City had access to good transport links, there were areas for improvement. He confirmed that commitments to the delivery of affordable homes and estate regeneration of the wider City area would be included within the final version of the plan.

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- 26.9 Councillor Watkins reported that the Council were working with its partners to link physical regeneration of the City with social regeneration of its most disadvantaged communities and committed to exploring this further within the Council Plan.
- 26.10 Councillor Lewis welcomed the plan and the aspirations contained within it. Referring to the public question on City Centre Wardens, he suggested that this resource be expanded to cover additional areas of the City in order to improve the lives of all the City's residents.
- 26.11 Councillor Coole suggested expanding the role of the Community Rangers working in Matson and Robinswood to cover additional areas of the City.
- 26.12 Councillor Cook advised the Committee that should the City Enforcement Officers employed by the BID prove successful than the Council would consider negotiating with Amey to deploy a similar resource across the wider city area.
- 26.13 Councillor Watkins noted that community lead solutions delivered the most effective results, reporting that the community rangers had been a proposal suggested by the community.
- 26.14 The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning, Councillor Organ, reported that best results were achieved when organisations and agencies shared information and communicated effectively with each other.
- 26.15 Councillor Wilson referring to the poor air quality referenced in the report queried why the Council were not aspiring to improve this. Councillor Cook reported that the three air quality management areas in the City remained areas of concerns. He advised that whilst the Council had taken positive steps to improve the situation there were room for improvement.
- 26.15 In reference to Councillor Wilson's suggestion to include air quality management within the KPIs, Councillor James advised that this would be considered.
- 26.16 Councillor Haigh, addressing the Committee from the public gallery reported that the commentary within the document did not include the achievements of the Task and Finish Group on Private Sector Housing. She asked for assurance that this work would continue to ensure that the Council aimed for the highest standard in this sector.
- 26.17 Councillor Organ welcomed the suggestion and the inclusion of the progress made by the Task and Finish Group in achieving standards, commenting that landlords had an obligation to raise standards across the sector. The Managing Director explained that task of enforcement fell to the multi generic housing team who responsibilities included the private rented sector.
- 26.18 Councillor Stephens welcomed the regeneration of the City and in particular the Kings Quarter Development. He queried whether the development would contain provision for a new Civic Centre. He went on further to note that

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whilst the document referred to online interaction and channel shift, it did not consider the impact on vulnerable residents and hard to reach groups. He welcomed a commitment to involving residents in the design and monitoring of Council services and concluded by reiterating the importance of defining clear outcomes and objectives in order to measure success.

- 26.19 Councillor Norman advised the Committee that the Council aimed to provide quality accommodation and offices within the Kings quarter Development to meet the expanding needs of the City.

In reference to Councillor Stephen's comments regarding access to services, Councillor Norman assured Members that options for individual contact would continue to be provided to those most vulnerable and emphasised the importance of progressing with alternative digital channels as the authority continued to transform itself.

- 26.20 In response to Councillor Stephen's comment regarding community engagement, Councillor Watkins advised that the Council were exploring various means of progressing this further, including the Rising Gloucester project group and Social Enterprise Partnership. She acknowledged that whilst these had not been specifically referenced she would be happy to look into the matter further.

- 26.21 In response to the Chair's query on how ways in which communities within the City could benefit from Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) and tools available to measure success, Councillor Watkins advised that Community Builders had now successfully been employed in various wards within the City and the positive impact within the Podsmead ward had led to the community employing their own Community Builder post. She reported that the Council worked heavily in partnership with partners and stakeholders, including the Clinical Commissioning Group, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Health and Wellbeing Board to progress the agenda forward.

- 26.22 In response to the Chair's queried what support was provided to Communities to assist them with asset mapping process, Councillor Watkins advised that whilst there was not currently a huge demand for these services, the Council did direct resident to partners and relevant individuals to assist with the process.

- 26.23 In response to Councillor Hampson's query regarding providing a decent standard of transitional accommodation for homeless people and in particular families, Councillor Organ confirmed that this was a priority for the Council, noting the issue of homelessness was complex and welcomed suggestions from Members.

- 26.24 Councillor Hampson queried whether the Council were intending as part of the Property Investment Strategy to invest in quality residential accommodation to be utilised as temporary accommodation. Councillor Organ confirmed that this proposal was currently being explored.

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- 26.25 In response to Councillor Ryall's query regarding the lack of reference to proposals related to technological infrastructure of the City, Councillor James agreed that successes of the digital high street project would be included within the Plan.
- 26.27 The Chair queried what proposals were in place to broaden the Cultural offer for the whole of the City and more specifically the role of the Culture Trust with regards to this.
- 26.28 The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure reported that the Council were already working to develop the cultural offer in various parts of the City, noting that the organisers of the Strike a Light Festival were currently from within the Matson area.
- 26.29 Councillor Hampson expressed concern for the Museums' Collection service reporting that there was a significant backlog in cataloguing artefacts stating that the Museums risked losing their accreditation and any potential funding streams.
- 26.27 The Corporate Director acknowledged the importance of the Museums' Accreditation, reporting that proposals were currently in place to develop a stable environment for the service. He explained that the large scales tasks would be broken down into their smaller components noting that the newly recruited Head of Service would lead on this. Councillor Noakes noted that the service was currently working with other agencies and professionals in an effort to improve the service and acknowledged that this was an area for development.
- 26.28 RESOLVED that the Draft Council Plan 2017-2020 be amended to:**
- 1. Include reference to commitments to the delivery of affordable homes and estate regeneration of the wider City area.**
 - 2. Link physical regeneration of the City with social regeneration of its most disadvantaged communities and committed to exploring this further within the Council Plan.**
 - 3. Monitor the performance of air quality management within the KPIs.**
 4. Include reference to proposals related to technological infrastructure of the City.

27. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7th September 2017 at 6:30pm in the Civic Suite, North Warehouse.

Time of commencement: 6.00 pm hours

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Time of conclusion: 7.27 pm hours

Chair