



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING : Monday, 27th November 2017

PRESENT : Cllrs. Coole (Chair), Ryall (Vice-Chair), Finnegan (Spokesperson), Hilton, Lewis, Wilson, Dee, Melvin, Smith, Patel, Pullen, Taylor, Hanman, Morgan and Stephens

Others in Attendance

Councillor D. Norman MBE, Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources

Councillor Jennie Watkins, Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods

Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director

Jon Topping, Head of Policy and Resources

Ruth Saunders, Community Wellbeing Manager

Lloyd Griffiths, Head of Communities

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Hampson, Hawthorne and Pearsall.

61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

61.1 Councillor Melvin declared an interest in agenda item 12 and advised that she would take no part in the discussion.

62. GOVERNANCE REVIEW: GLOUCESTERSHIRE AIRPORT

71.1 The Committee considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, Councillor D. Norman, – an update on the work undertaken following consideration of the Treasury Management Matter by the Council in April 2017. Councillor Norman informed the Committee that an action plan was being developed as a result of the governance review.

71.2 Councillor Hilton, who stated that he had served on the board previously, queried why, under the new structure, would the number of councillors be reduced and the number of non-executive directors increased. He also asked what the level of redundancies was. Councillor Norman stated that the board required more professional knowledge and support to take the board forward. He advised that the decision had been taken by both Cheltenham Borough Council and Gloucester City Council. He further stated that a

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greater level of expertise (in, for example, planning and investments) was necessary. The Head of Policy and Resources, Jon Topping, advised that the board had recommended this as well as the recent governance review. In relation to redundancies, he advised that he was not aware of redundancies. Councillor Hilton suggested it would be helpful to receive feedback on the airport's performance.

71.3 Councillor Morgan queried the level of financial exposure for both councils to which Jon Topping responded that £200k had been drawn down from both Cheltenham Borough and Gloucester City. Councillor Wilson questioned whether this was the previously anticipated position. Jon Topping advised that it was, in fact, less than was previously thought.

71.4 Councillor Dee shared his view that it was evident that the airport was developing and highlighted, by way of example, the air-traffic control school. Councillor Stephens suggested the new Managing Director of the airport could give an update on its performance.

71.5 The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and the Head of Policy and Resources for their time and presentation.

71.6 **RESOLVED** – That the GAL Governance Review be noted.

63. DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIPPING

62.1 There were no declarations of party whipping.

64. MINUTES

63.1 That the minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd October 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

65. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

64.1 Mark Wallace, a Gloucester resident, in relation to agenda item 10 asked:

- Whether the Council had considered a number of missing behaviours from the draft Order. He highlighted his knowledge of other Councils including such matters as spitting and urinating;
- If there would consideration of pavement parking;
- Why the area to be covered by the Public Spaces Protection Order did not include Kingsholm; and
- Whether the 'Direction to leave' element of the draft Order would be reconsidered given the inability to delegate to civilians.

64.2 Councillor Jennie Watkins (Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods) highlighted that it was a consultation and it was possible other elements could be agreed. She further advised that the question on pavement parking could be looked at as part of the consultation.

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- 64.3 Councillor Watkins acknowledged that displacement could present a challenge with regard to the non-inclusion of Kingsholm in the draft Order although did advise that an element of the area was included. She stated that she would be happy to discuss this with Members. She further advised, in response to Mr Wallace's final question, that the Council did have the ability to delegate powers to City Officers.

66. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

- 65.1 There were no petitions or deputations.

67. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

- 66.1 The Committee considered the Work Programme and the Council Forward Plan.
- 66.2 The Chair updated the Committee that ASIST training had been arranged for February.
- 66.2 Councillor Stephens advised the Committee that the introduction of Universal Credit to Gloucester had been discussed at the Audit and Governance Committee. He stated that he felt that it would be appropriate for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to examine the roll-out of Universal Credit and questioned whether it would be brought onto the Work Programme given that the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources confirmed at Council that it would be.
- 66.3 The Chair advised that discussions had taken place with Officers and that a session would be organised in time to make recommendations. Councillor Patel asked for clarification as to what the session would report. In response, the Chair advised that by January 2018 a plan would be in place and that the scrutiny work would be working with partner organisation to reduce the impact on residents.
- 66.4 Councillor Stephens stated that while he was grateful for the report at the Audit and Governance Committee, he believed that a briefing would be insufficient and suggested calling Officers from Gloucester City Homes, the Law Centre, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Citizen's Advice Bureau and others.
- 66.5 Councillor Hilton suggested it would be advisable to schedule a discussion in six months' time on the progress of the City Plan and the Joint Core Strategy. Councillor Stephens concurred adding that the Joint Core Strategy required a review of retail policy which had begun.
- 66.6 The Chair raised the fact that it would be advisable to examine proposed changes to the charging structure for Shopmobility which was agreed by the Committee.
- 66.7 **RESOLVED** –To amend the Work Programme as follows:

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- Include Shopmobility in the meeting scheduled for 8th January 2018;
- Add a special meeting to scrutinise the roll-out of Universal Credit in the City; and
- Add Progress on the City Plan and Joint Core Strategy to a Committee Meeting in June 2018.

68. QUARTER 2 FINANCIAL MONITORING

- 67.1 The Committee considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources concerning Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring.
- 67.2 The Chair welcomed the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, Councillor D. Norman and the Head of Policy and Resources, Jon Topping to the meeting. Councillor Norman provided an overview of the report and invited discussion.
- 67.3 Councillor Stephens questioned how the saving of £230k had been made as there had been no prior indication. He further queried what the current vacancy rate was. Jon Topping advised that the saving was a result of overachievement in the Together Gloucester process and that vacancies were not held permanently. He advised that there was a small number of vacant posts and would provide this information to Members.
- 67.4 Councillor Stephens raised the fact that frontline staff had left posts and questioned whether necessary work was not being done due to staff savings. By way of example, Councillor Stephens reported that when he had enquired about fly-tipping, he was told that there was a lack of staff. Councillor Norman responded that between six and nine months into the process, there would be an opportunity for the senior leadership team to assess progress going forward.
- 67.5 Councillor Pullen expressed concern that the Regeneration and Economy portfolio forecasted an increased deficit. Jon Topping advised that the change was forecasts for markets and street trading but further advised that it was approaching full occupation. The Corporate Director, Jonathan Lund, advised that six were unoccupied but that four of those had been let and were awaiting occupation.
- 67.6 Councillor Stephens stated that he was concerned that Members had not been informed of measures to mitigate a deficit increase. Jon Topping advised that this work was going and, as part of the whole Council, wished to achieve a balanced position.
- 67.7 With regard to the underspend in Democratic Services, Councillor Hilton queried whether it would be useful for the General Purposes Committee to report on preparedness for an election and to review electoral procedures. He further shared his view that skilled staff were required and the Council needed to be sure an election could be delivered.

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- 67.8 Councillor Norman stated that the recruitment process was in progress. He advised the Committee that there had been a number of applicants, that other members of the team would be trained and he was confident in senior members of the team. He further stated that, in order to conduct a review of the kind Councillor Hilton had suggested, it would have to be agreed by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the General Purposes Committee.
- 67.9 **RESOLVED** – That the Chair liaise with the General Purposes Committee to review electoral procedures and processes.
- 67.10 In response to a question from Councillor Smith regarding whether Performance and Resources budgets were to facilitate the restructure or were to come out of the restructure, Jon Topping advised that the restructure had saved more than targeted.
- 67.11 Councillor Stephens noted that customer services were forecast to overspend and asked that the Committee be informed, when the Customer Services Transformation Manager had completed his work, what changes would be made. He further noted that the number of apprentices was less than had been budgeted for, that this was unfortunate and asked how many apprentices the Council employed.
- 67.12 Councillor Norman advised that the Customer Service Transformation Manager had started his work recently and would be looking at how the service moved forward. With regard to apprenticeships, Jon Topping stated that he would circulate the number of apprentices employed at the Council. He further advised that there would be an increase in this number and that the process was in train.
- 67.13 In relation to the Culture and Leisure portfolio, Councillor Hilton questioned what plans there were to deal with the overspend and requested a response on the storage of collections i.e. whether it was in a controlled environment and if it was being funded properly.
- 67.14 Councillor Norman advised that there was a new team of staff in place which would need time going forward to reduce the costs of the service and that he was confident that this would happen. With regard to the collections, he stated that Cabinet colleagues could provide an answer to this.
- 67.15 In response to an intervention from the Chair that the Culture and Leisure portfolio was a persistent offender in terms of overspending, Jon Topping suggested that there was a need to see the new Culture team bed in. He added that if it was not realistic, then it would be natural to revise it.
- 67.16 With regards to the Planning and Housing portfolio, Councillor Stephens expressed a great deal of concern about homelessness and the spending of close to £1m. He suggested that much of this was the increasing numbers of homeless people being placed in hotels and outside the Council area. He held that it was necessary to look at solutions to this in greater detail. Council Norman stated that this had been considered at Council and that his Cabinet colleague was examining it.

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67.17 Councillor Hilton stated that the planning overspend of £65k appeared to be a heavy cost and queried how this was the case. He further shared his view that retaining staff should be a priority as stability was needed at the top of the planning department. Councillor Pullen also asked if the Council had the capacity to realistically deliver major projects. In response, Jon Topping advised that there had been a period where it was necessary to employ specialist temporary consultant staff who had technical knowledge. He also advised that the projects to which Councillor Pullen referred were in progress and that a new Head of Place had been recruited.

67.18 **RESOLVED** – That the Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring report be noted.

69. MARKETING GLOUCESTER PERFORMANCE MONITORING

68.1 The Chair welcomed Jason Smith, Chief Executive of Marketing Gloucester (MGL), to the meeting who provided an overview of the Marketing Gloucester Performance Monitoring report.

68.2 He informed the Committee that the articles of association had been refreshed and that a Contract for Services between the City Council and MGL had been drawn up. He further restated MGL's purpose of generating income and delivering both Civic and public events.

68.3 The Committee was advised that MGL was paid £464k by the City Council last year; that this had been reduced by £100k in the year 2017/18 and the next year would see the same further reduction. Mr Smith stated that he expected MGL to deliver the same level of service with the reduced funding. Comment and discussion from the Committee was then invited.

68.4 With regard to an intervention from Councillor Hilton on how to solve potential conflicts between the culture board and MGL, the Corporate Director Jonathan Lund stated that such a perceived conflict did not materially exist. By way of example, he highlighted the fact that the culture board's function was not to deliver events.

68.5 Councillor Pullen shared his view that the City events programme had a number of good events but highlighted his belief that the performance management report required more detail and the measurement of tangible outcomes. Councillor Stephens shared Councillor Pullen's thoughts and suggested that a performance management framework be put in place with associated Key Performance Indicators. He stated that there had been movement on this but more was required.

68.6 Mr Smith confirmed that there were plans to produce more in terms of performance monitoring while the current report had highlighted some detail such as footfall. He stated that some matters were more difficult to measure given the intangible nature of much of MGL's work. With regard to the level of tourism brought to the City, Mr Smith advised that there would be independent consultants to measure the impact of tourism and numbers of

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people entering Gloucester. He also informed the Committee that MGL had been successful in bidding for promotion of the City in the US market.

68.7 Councillor Patel shared his view that MGL's comprehensive programme and report was impressive and that it had offered a great deal to the local economy. In response to Members' queries on performance management, Councillor Patel questioned whether this was realistically possible given the diverse nature of MGL's work.

68.8 The Chair thanked Mr Smith for his presentation.

68.9 **RESOLVED** – That the Marketing Gloucester Performance Monitoring Report be noted.

70. PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS

69.1 The Committee considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods, Councillor Jennie Watkins, concerning the introduction of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs).

69.2 Councillor Watkins advised that there had been calls by some businesses for PSPOs to be introduced for some areas. She confirmed that no decision had yet been taken and that a consultation process would take place in early 2018. Councillor Watkins confirmed that there was no proposal to include rough sleeping under the PSPO and that she would welcome feedback from Members.

69.3 Councillor Pullen shared his belief that the consultation should engage young people of Gloucester, a number of which go to the City centre for positive reasons. Councillor Watkins agreed that this was a point worth noting.

69.4 Councillor Hilton stated that he was pleased that this matter was progressing but that he was keen to see something done in his Kingsholm ward as it had, in his, view similar issues to the City centre. The possibility of displacement from the centre into neighbouring areas was also raised by Councillor Hilton. He highlighted there being issues in the Rose Garden where young people were causing problems and shared his view that this warranted special attention.

69.4 The Head of Communities stated PSPOs are evidence based and therefore, in order for it to be implemented in a particular area, it would have to be justifiable. Councillor Watkins welcomed feedback from Members and confirmed that she did recognise the question of displacement from the City centre. With regard to community engagement Councillor Watkins stated that other wider social issues must be looked at but that a PSPO with the ability to disperse would help. In response to a query from the Chair, the Community Wellbeing Manager, Ruth Saunders confirmed that the area would include the Rose Garden and that the exact boundary was to be agreed. It was recommended by the Committee that the Cabinet member

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liaise with Members for Kingsholm to confirm the boundary prior to the consultation. Councillor Morgan further suggested that some of the land off Worcester Street be included given there had been issues with street drinking.

- 69.5 Councillor Patel informed the Committee that there had been issues with street drinking close to Barton Street. Additionally, he asked whether PSPOs can be used in relation to sex workers. The Head of Communities suggested that a different PSPO would be required to cover sex work.
- 69.6 In response to concern from the Chair that there may not be sufficient time to include recommendations to Cabinet, Councillor Watkins reiterated the fact that Members were welcome to take part in the consultation themselves.
- 69.7 Councillor Smith queried what clear evidence had been gathered to form the basis of the PSPO proposal as opposed to anecdotal accounts and raised the difficulties with interpretation of such terms as nuisance, alarm, distress etc. The Head of Communities agreed that Councillor Smith's point on interpretation was a valid one and that the training of Officers will be of paramount importance. With regard to the query about the evidence base, Councillor Watkins informed the Committee that evidence had come from the police and work around the day and night time economy.
- 69.8 Councillor Pullen stated that he was pleased that the PSPO would not directly target rough sleepers although he did bring point 8 of the draft order to attention of the Committee. He questioned whether this would result in the belongings of rough sleepers such as blankets being inhumanly taken. Councillor Watkins said she would investigate a facility whereby belongings could be collect after a note being left.
- 69.9 Councillor Lewis highlighted the evidence based nature of such a proposal. He further acknowledged that displacement was inevitable but that the Council did have to start somewhere.
- 69.10 In response to a question from Councillor Finnegan regarding staffing levels, the Head of Communities stated that this would be covered through partnership across various agencies.
- 69.11 The Chair thanked Members for their contributions and encouraged all to feed into the consultation process.

71. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

- 70.1 **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 item there will be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended.

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72. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

72.1 4th December 2017 at 6:30pm in the Civic Suite, North Warehouse.

Time of commencement: 6.30 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 8.20 pm hours

Chair

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