



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING : Monday, 2nd July 2018

PRESENT : Cllrs. Ryall (Vice-Chair), Hawthorne (Spokesperson), Dee, Finnegan, Haigh, Hampson, Lewis, Morgan, Taylor, Walford and Wilson

Others in Attendance

Councillor Watkins, Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods

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

Corporate Director (Partnership Working)

Corporate Director (Service Transformation)

Community Wellbeing Officer

Democratic and Electoral Services Team Leader

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Coole, Hilton, Pullen and Toleman

70. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

70.2 Councillors Brown, Gravells and Haigh declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 – Shire Hall Accommodation Move – by virtue of their being Members of the County Council.

71. DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIPPING

71.1 There were no declarations of party whipping.

72. MINUTES

72.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 4th June 2018 confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Chair.

73. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

73.1 A Gloucester resident expressed concern that the PSPO proposal was for a minimal order and only dealt with a small number of behaviours. He asked why public consultation responses asking valid questions had been disregarded.

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73.2 The Vice-Chair advised that the question would be put to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods as part of her delivering the relevant report.

74. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

74.1 There were no petitions or deputations.

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

75.1 The Committee considered the Work Programme and the Council Forward Plan.

75.2 Councillor Hawthorne, shared his view that the Aspire Trust should be invited to a future meeting as it continues to be one of the Council's principal contractors delivering a significant public facing range of leisure related services. Councillor Stephens stated that this would be advisable as, when Aspire was initially set up, there were obligations with regard to access for the whole community and that it was important to monitor this.

75.3 Councillor Gravells queried the scarcity of matters on the work programme. The Vice-Chair advised that as well as being a dynamic document that changed with events, it was important that items were given the rigorous scrutiny they deserved.

75.4 RESOLVED: - That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the work programme and the Council Forward Plan.

76. PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER CONSULTATION REPORT AND PROPOSAL

76.1 Councillor Watkins, Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods, provided an overview of the report and thanked the Community Wellbeing Officer for her endeavour in putting the proposal together. She stated that there had been a great deal of engagement with the consultation with regard to the proposed Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) through a number of media..

76.2 Councillor Watkins informed the Committee that, as part of the consultation process, the enforcement of existing provisions and its efficacy was examined. She further advised, in response to the question from a member of the public, that, in some matters raised during the consultation process such as littering and spitting, the Cabinet would be looking separately at more appropriate ways to tackle these types of environmental crime. She also stated that the digital survey was but one aspect of the consultation process. Councillor Watkins also noted that the inclusion of the alcohol free zone across the city had been met with a very positive response.

76.3 Councillor Wilson queried whether existing orders (which would be subsumed by the PSPO) would automatically expire unless they were under

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review and, if they were reviewed, who was this to be conducted by. Councillor Watkins advised that action would need to be taken prior to and that this was done on a case by case basis. The Community Wellbeing Officer stated that reviews would be scheduled over a period of a year.

- 76.4 Councillor Stephens welcomed much of the report but shared his view that the public's expectations had been raised and would be disappointed. He stated his belief that the public expected littering, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and the abuse of psychoactive substances to be included in the PSPO. He also queried what existing legislation had been enforced to tackle these issues.
- 76.5 Councillor Watkins advised that littering, among other matters, would be addressed by separate proposals and that, while there may have been anecdotal accounts, there was insufficient evidence to show that the use of psychoactive substances was having a significantly detrimental effect in the City. She stated that a PSPO was appropriate for some matters but not for all.
- 76.6 In response to a query from the Vice-Chair regarding how responsive to the public the consultation had been, Councillor Watkins stated that one of the biggest issues raised during the consultation was alcohol harm which the Cabinet had responded to. She further stated that the consultation was about everyone having an input and that faith groups, by way of example, had had a good deal of input. In response to a query from Councillor Lewis regarding enforcement of the PSPO, Councillor Watkins advised that both the alcohol free zone and measures related to dogs would be enforced across the City and reiterated that environmental crime proposals were forthcoming. She stated that if Members were keen, enforcement could be examined.
- 76.7 Councillor Haigh queried whether the Equality Impact Assessment's focus had been limited to the impact of restrictions placed on people without considering the beneficial equality impact on the community by virtue of the controls being proposed. She also stated that she was disappointed because she felt that people in the City had believed they could expect more from the PSPO proposals.
- 77.8 With regard to the use of psychoactive substances in the City, Councillor Lewis suggested that their prohibition be included in the PSPO as a message that their use was not acceptable. The Community Wellbeing Officer advised that such substances were previously legal but were not now and that there was not sufficient evidence that they had a detrimental impact on the City. Further, the Community Wellbeing Officer, in response to a query from the Vice-Chair regarding what could be classified as sufficient evidence, stated that whilst there may have been anecdotal evidence, there was no objective data.
- 77.9 Councillor Morgan suggested that the Cabinet Members for Communities and Neighbourhoods, and Environment should work jointly on environmental crime. Councillor Watkins stated that both approaches were joined up and

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that the reason the work was forthcoming was because of their inter-connectedness. .

- 77.11 Councillor Taylor queried whether the reason that some matters were not included in the draft PSPO was due to a lack of evidence. Councillor Watkins advised that there were also issue around the practicalities of enforcement and that the Council was attempting to address what the issues were and how best to do this. She further advised that the PSPO would always be reviewed. In response, Councillor Taylor suggested that the Committee examine the PSPO again in a year and identify any issues that arise. This was agreed by the Committee.
- 77.12 The Vice-Chair asked what provision there was for collecting data. Councillor Watkins advised that there was the day to day work of monitoring behaviours. She further advised that establishing a 'Day Safe' forum was being examined with a similar remit to that of Night Safe. Councillor Gravells stated that that the police should be thanked for their work and for their contribution during the consultation process.
- 77.13 Councillor Stephens proposed that the Committee recommend that Cabinet include provisions to deal with littering, nuisance and ASB and aggressive charity collection. This recommendation was put to a vote and was lost. And it was
- 77.15 **RESOLVED:** - That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee **RECOMMEND** (1) That the Cabinet reconsider providing for Aggressive Charity Collection, Littering and Nuisance and anti-social behaviour within the PSPO and (2) That the efficacy of the PSPO be reviewed in one year's time including as much data as possible from partner organisations and, based on evidence gathered as part of the review, that scope be permitted to add/or remove provisions contained within the PSPO.

77. SHIRE HALL ACCOMMODATION MOVE

- 77.1 Councillor D. Norman MBE, Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, presented the report. He thanked the Corporate Director for his and his colleagues' work in the report's preparation and advised that the target for achieving the accommodation move was February 2019.
- 77.2 Councillor Wilson expressed concern that the Council's occupation of the new premises would be under a three year licence and that this did not secure the City Council's accommodation needs in the longer term. He queried whether the projected business rates savings was a net figure and further, whether the projected savings (given the transformation costs) from the move provided for a good level of savings.
- 77.3 Councillor Norman advised that there was an initial three year agreement and that the County Council would need good reason to have the City

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Council vacate the premises. He also stated that it gave the City Council flexibility in the medium term.

- 77.4 The Corporate Director advised that the projected business rates savings were not a net figure and that the intention was that the warehouses would be repurposed and the business rates would become the responsibility of the new occupiers
- 77.5 Councillor Stephens stated that he was pleased that the business case had been presented. He expressed concern that services provided to Members and Political Groups such as access to IT, meeting spaces and car parking facilities would be reduced. Councillor Stephens shared his view that reducing the size of the reception required rethinking. He further stated that there had been nothing to suggest that building new Council premises had been considered.
- 77.6 Councillor Norman advised, with regard to facilities for Members, that some had approached their political equivalents at the County Council to share space and suggested that others do the same. He further advised that the City Council would, as an evening authority, keep its meeting facilities and North Warehouse. The same would be the case with regard to Members' car parking.
- 77.7 In relation to the new reception at Westgate Street, Councillor Norman stated that the exact specification had not been finalised and this would encourage and allow for new ways of working. With regard to new premises he stated that it was never the belief that the Council's future would not necessarily be confined to Shire Hall and options were being kept open but now would not be the right time to consider new premises.
- 77.8 In response to a query from Councillor Lugg in relation to service user confidentiality in an entirely open plan office space, Council Norman advised that all staff were aware of the clear desk policy which would be employed. He also stated that there would be flexibility in terms of access to Shire Hall. The Corporate Director further advised that the City Council's occupation of the fifth floor at Shire Hall would mean through traffic would likely be minimal.
- 77.9 Councillor Gravells stated that there were many good reasons to move and requested more detail on the new reception. Councillor Norman stated that he did not have such detail at this stage but that there would be a fundamental redesign of the reception.
- 77.10 Councillor Lewis highlighted the need for the City Council to maintain its identity and that the Council needed its own place upon the expiry of the 3-year licence. Councillor Norman concurred that the sovereignty of the City Council was paramount.

77.11 SUSPENSION OF COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 6

On the motion of the Vice-Chair, and in accordance with the Constitution, the Committee resolved that the meeting be extended beyond two hours.

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77.12 Councillor Hampson asked whether the Cabinet Member was confident that the services the Council would deliver would be enhanced by the move. Councillor Norman advised that he was confident that, as the authority continued to evolve, it would be able to do as well, if not better, as it had done.

77.13 **RESOLVED:** - That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee **RECOMMEND** that all councillors receive a briefing on the design and operating methods to be employed in the new Customer Contact Centre at 92-96 Westgate Street once the details had been finalised.

78. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

78.1 3rd September 2018 at 6.30pm in the Civic Suite, North Warehouse.

Time of commencement: 6.30 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 8.40 pm hours

Chair