



DECISION RECORD

Gloucester City Council

Publication Date

10/11/16

Decision Of

Cabinet

Date of Decision

09 November 2016

Item No.

6

Title

Playing Pitch Strategy- Progress Update

Report Of

Cabinet Member for Environment

Report Author

Adam Gooch, Senior Planning Officer

Wards Affected

All Wards

Key Decision

No

DECISION:

RESOLVED

- (1) That the progress that has been made in delivering the Gloucester Playing Pitch Strategy and Artificial Grass Pitch Strategy as set out in this report and at Appendix 1 – Action Plan Update (September 2016) be noted; and
- (2) That the draft priority list for playing fields and ancillary facility improvements as set out at Appendix 2 be endorsed.

REASON FOR DECISION:

As agreed by Council in January 2016, officers will report to Cabinet at least on an annual basis, progress in relation to the delivery of the PPS and AGPS. This is the first of the delivery updates.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

None – this report provides an update to Members on the delivery of the delivery of the PPS.

OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS CONCERNING THE DECISION:

None

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (including any dispensations granted):

None

SCRUTINY (including details of call-in procedure where applicable):

This decision will come into force at the expiry of 5 working days from the date of the publication of the decision.

Call-in Deadline: 17 November 2016

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE RECORD:

We certify that the decision this document records was made in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 and is a true and accurate record of that decision:

Decision Maker:

Councillor Paul James

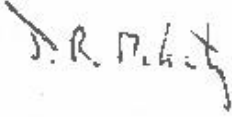
Date: 09 November 2016

Leader of the Council



Proper Officer:
Jon McGinty
Managing Director

Date: 09 November 2016





DECISION RECORD

Gloucester City Council

Publication Date

10/11/16

Decision Of

Cabinet

Date of Decision

09 November 2016

Item No.

7

Title

Flood Improvement Works Update

Report Of

Cabinet Member for Environment

Report Author

Wayne Best, Environmental Protection Service Manager

Wards Affected

All Wards

Key Decision

No

DECISION: RESOLVED

- (1) That the contents of this report are noted.
- (2) To authorise the Corporate Director to work in partnership with relevant agencies and landowners to recognise the importance of all flood alleviation works within the City in minimising the risk and impact of flooding events.
- (3) To recognise the importance of the ongoing partnership working to secure the best possible outcomes for residents and businesses in Gloucester in reducing flood risk, including bidding for external funding and entering into appropriate agreements on terms approved by the Council Solicitor.
- (4) To support officers in investigating and utilising additional resources to maximise opportunities to reduce flood risk.
- (5) To recognise the continued importance of information, education, consultation and signposting as funding reduces.

REASON FOR DECISION:

1. To reduce the risk of future flooding to residential properties and business premises through continued investment in flood alleviation schemes/works, the promotion of self-resilience, advice and information, community flood plans and drop in sessions.
2. Reducing flood risk to homes and businesses will continue to support regeneration and further investment into the City which will be communicated to developers through planning policy.
3. To meet the requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 in respect of flood risk management including working with partners to resolve flooding issues.
4. The ongoing Capital Works Schemes and Maintenance Programme in 2015/2016 is still proving to be effective in reducing flooding incidents however we have been

fortunate and not experienced the same intense weather events as those in 2012 and early 2014.

5. Continue to investigate and utilise additional sources of funding and resources to deliver schemes and improvement works to further reduce flood risk to homes, businesses and critical infrastructure throughout the City.
6. To investigate improving the effectiveness of our resources with the aid of technology, better signposting for customers and building community resilience

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

1. Do minimum; only carry out maintenance works currently on contract and no further submission of bids in relation to funding of Capital Schemes and additional maintenance works resulting in minimal costs and resources.
2. Doing the minimum would increase the flood risk to residential and businesses premises in addition to important infrastructure and assets. Given Gloucester City's geographical location and history of flooding events this would be seen as unacceptable and would increase anxiety for residents and business owners. There is the expectation that works to reduce flood risk will continue attracting investment and employment into the City. Flood schemes are politically supported in Gloucester and the City Council has built up a good reputation which could be affected if works do not continue.
3. To put all maintenance works on contract, however there is not the capacity or funding to put all maintenance works on contract and resources are therefore focused on those areas at greatest risk.
4. The City Council could consider making funds available to fund Capital Schemes however given the current economic climate this is an unlikely option.

OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS CONCERNING THE DECISION:

None

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (including any dispensations granted):

None

SCRUTINY (including details of call-in procedure where applicable):

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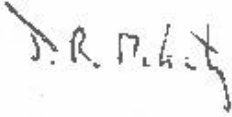
Decision Maker:
Councillor Paul James
Leader of the Council

Date: 09 November 2016



Proper Officer:
Jon McGinty
Managing Director

Date: 09 November 2016





DECISION RECORD

Gloucester City Council

Publication Date

10/11/16

Decision Of

Cabinet

Date of Decision

09 November 2016

Item No.

8

Title

Changes to City Life Magazine

Report Of

Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources (Councillor David Norman MBE)

Report Author

Anne Brinkhoff, Corporate Director

Wards Affected

All Wards

Key Decision

No

DECISION:

RESOLVED

- (1) That changes to the format and distribution of City Life Magazine are introduced as outlined in section 5 of this report.
- (2) That the New Style City Life Magazine will be introduced from April 2017.
- (3) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director, Partnerships, in conjunction with the County Council communications team, and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources, to take all necessary steps to introduce a new-style City Life Magazine.

REASON FOR DECISION:

The proposal is recommended in order to make improvements and efficiencies to provide better value for money for tax payers and meet the savings requirements under the Council's Money Plan for 2017/18.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

No change to the current product

The first step was to review the cost and format of the existing magazine, including the frequency, distribution, and delivery and assess effectiveness and value for money.

Ultimately, the feedback from residents is that they do want some form of direct communication from the council. If anything, they would like to see more so reducing the frequency of the magazine would have a negative effect on engagement.

No comments were made on keeping the current format, while many asked for more online and on social media, which is ultimately the way communications is moving. Many of the council's peers have already moved to an online format for their magazines and newsletters.

With regards to cost, a review of current pricings shows that the council is paying the

going rate for printing. However, if efficiencies need to be made, a sensible question to ask is to whether we should continue printing or whether we should follow other authorities and go down the online route.

Following concerns raised by residents in both the survey and in person, it is clear that the current distribution of City Life to households is not working well. After carrying out initial investigations with the current distributor, it would appear that there are particular issues with gaining access to flats or multiple occupancy homes resulting in many people not receiving a copy. That said, it is also clear that people are happy to pick up their own copy from council and public buildings as collection rates are consistently high.

Ultimately, City Life in its current format is not as effective as it could be. It is also expensive and not good value for money, especially where the delivery is concerned.

Inclusion of advertising

One of the ways of generating efficiencies is to incorporate advertising into the magazine to offset some of the costs. This is being done by other local councils in both printed and online format and is a nationally recognised way of raising money.

Charges for advertising vary however, most of those who do charge are charging similar amounts based on distribution.

Appendix 1 sets out a sample of some local councils who currently charge for advertising with their associated prices.

Given that our pagination is currently only 16 pages, giving over double or four page spreads for advertising would limit the amount of council content significantly so is not recommended for consideration.

Using the figures in appendix 1, it is reasonable to assume circa £3,000 per edition could be raised through selling adverts, based on selling one quarter page ad on each page. This would address the required savings targets and reduce costs by 33%.

However, a strict protocol would be needed to ensure that all advertising was appropriate and acceptable within a council publication.

In addition to this, serious consideration would have to be given to the extra time and expertise required in selling the adverts as this is not covered under the contractual arrangement with Gloucestershire County Council and the additional resource required is currently not available.

Opting for more paid-for advertising

One of the options is to use more paid for advertising in place of the traditional City Life magazine. To understand the cost implications, appendix 2 outlines The Citizen's current prices. The Citizen is the city council's main newspaper and would therefore be likely to carry the majority of the required advertising.

This type of communication is much more cost effective than the current format. Content would still be controlled by the city council and can be targeted at relevant audiences by pairing with specific news stories using demographic data held by the media company. It also has a well-known, well-visited website and has strong social media presence which could help promote the council to new audiences.

However, it is important to note that circulation figures for local printed media continue to drop year on year. Currently The Citizen has a less than 10,000 readership and this is rapidly falling as more and more people turn to online formats for their news.

In addition, this would dilute the council's brand and reputation if it relied on a media organisation to manage its relationships with residents.

Changing the format

As already outlined in various aspects of this report, many local councils have opted to change the format of their residents' magazine in order to make savings. Options include:

(i) Changing to an e-newsletter:

The council already has software for creating newsletters. Work would need to be done to determine if it could host and issue a magazine-style newsletter and may include paying for a new template. Putting aside any initial investment that is needed to set up the template, this option would generate £36,000 per year ongoing savings as e-newsletters are free to issue. It also makes the production simpler and quicker, reducing resource and time spent on issuing as it would be smaller and more targeted.

Promotion would be through media releases, possible paid for adverts and social media. However, as this method relies on residents subscribing to receive the newsletter, this may put people off.

In addition, this could discriminate those who don't have access to regular emails and those who are not technologically savvy, for example some older people do not find email an effective form of communication.

We may also find that it is those who are already engaged with council business who do subscribe, meaning the residents we'd like to target are still not engaging. In addition it limits the amount of content as e-newsletters tend to be no more than one page with click through links.

(ii) Changing to an online web-hosted magazine:

To a certain extent this is already happening. City Life is hosted on www.gloucester.gov.uk in pdf format which is readable online and downloadable for printing and storing. Currently, residents only have the option to read the pdf as any other document.

Early next year, the council is looking to upgrade its website. The new site will be able to host more creative and interactive material. City Life could be hosted on the new site

and viewed like a magazine with the facility for videos or vlogs included. Residents would also be able leave feedback and comments on what they're reading making the product easier to evaluate and improve in future.

The cost of developing this function would be met within the website redevelopment and hosting online is free. This method would also generate £36,000 of savings per year. However, it would not reduce the amount of time or resource spent in producing the magazine as the size, style and content would remain as it is now.

Promotion would be through media releases, possible paid for adverts (which would need budgeting for), social media, on the website and on posters and display boards throughout the city.

However, as with the e-newsletter, this could discriminate those who don't have access to the internet and those who are not technologically savvy. Similarly we may also find that it is those who are already engaged with council business who do visit the website to read it.

(iii) Cutting down the number of pages

Reducing the size of the magazine would reduce printing costs. For every two pages dropped, the cost drops by around £900 depending on print provider.

This would generate the savings required without the need to change the format significantly. However, this would be a missed opportunity for reviewing the product and creating a channel that is fit for the future.

(iv) Stop delivering to households direct

We already know the delivery process needs reviewing as it is not effective. Concerns over the number of flats and multi-occupancy homes in the city may mean that delivery is never at the standard it should be.

Residents do appear happy to pick up their copy of City Life at the TIC or Guildhall so wider promotion of collection points may encourage more people to do so. Locations and dates could be promoted in the media, on social media, on the website and on posters and display boards throughout the city.

This would save more than £12,000 per year.

Making better use of other existing channels

This option involves stopping City Life altogether and not replacing it with anything new. Instead, we would rely on existing channels of communications with residents.

This would immediately generate £36,000 per year savings and would significantly reduce the amount of resource used up as part of the contractual arrangement with Gloucestershire County Council.

However, simply removing this channel of communication without any form of

replacement is risky. As set out in section 1, satisfaction levels tend to be higher when there is direct communication with residents using things like the council magazine.

Reputationally, there is a risk that people are resentful of the withdrawal and disengage even further. Equally, it could be seen as a smart move by a council trying to balance its books.

Research shows that most councils are trying to adapt and do things differently rather than simply cutting their magazine before trying other methods first.

OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS CONCERNING THE DECISION:

None

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (including any dispensations granted):

None

SCRUTINY (including details of call-in procedure where applicable):

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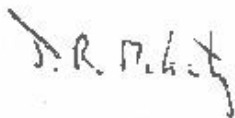
Councillor Paul James
Leader of the Council



Date: 09 November 2016

Proper Officer:

Jon McGinty
Managing Director



Date: 09 November 2016