



CABINET

MEETING : Wednesday, 6th February 2019

PRESENT : Cllrs. James (Chair), Cook, Noakes, H. Norman and Organ

Others in Attendance

Cllrs Hilton, Stephens, Wilson and Pullen

Managing Director

Corporate Director

Head of Policy and Resources

Head of Place

Solicitor

Major Projects Consultant

Democratic Services and Elections Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Watkins

78. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy declared a personal interest in agenda item 11 (Events and Festivals 2019) as Chairman of the Board of Marketing Gloucester Ltd. (MGL) and advised that he would not take part in the discussion or vote on this item.

79. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9th January 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

80. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no public questions.

81. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions or deputations.

82. LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

Cllr Stephens asked for confirmation, as a matter of urgency in the light of the approaching Brexit deadline, that the Council had been awarded Central

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Government money to address post-Brexit issues. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy responded that £35,000 was to be made available over two years and commented that spending plans were being discussed with other Councils. He reassured Members that they would be advised when a decision would be taken as it was important for the matter to be debated.

Concerning agenda item 7 appendix 3 (Budget Savings Programmes) Cllr Stephens enquired if contracts had been signed that would generate the £100,000 income identified as coming from property investment so that Council can consider the report with confidence. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy stated that although no deals had been done, the level of income had been devised to be as achievable as possible. He further commented that the Property Investment Board would be meeting soon and that he would welcome a debate on the matter at Council.

Cllr Hilton referred to agenda item 14 (Gloucester Railway Station) and the importance of improving the subway under the station linking Kingsholm and the City Centre. He asked if Wessex House, a property in obviously poor condition on the approach to the subway, was actively being addressed. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy replied that the site was key to the subway and that options for demolition or restoration were still under consideration. Cllr Hilton sought clarification on the whether any closure of the subway during building works would be minimised given its heavy use, especially by vulnerable people. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration gave assurance that any necessary closure would be kept to a minimum and that the relevant ward councillors would be consulted with beforehand.

83. FINAL BUDGET PROPOSALS (INCLUDING MONEY PLAN AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME)

Cabinet considered the report of the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that sought review of the Council's Money Plan for recommendation to Council.

The Leader of the Council summarised the report and advised Members that the proposed savings did not include reductions in staffing or services. He informed them that a potential bid to the Future High Streets Fund (5.9) would be brought for consideration in due course. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources stated that the closing balance (Appendix 1) was different to that presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 November 2018 due to changes in the Council Tax base and New Homes Bonus. She further reminded Members of the importance of prudence, that Central Government's Fair Funding Review would have an impact and assured them that both officers and Council Group Leaders had been lobbying the Government on the expected reduction in funding for lower tier authorities (5.4).

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure advised Members that the fees and charges relating to Culture and Trading Services in Appendix 6 were not fully up to date but assured them that these would be corrected before the report is considered by Council.

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RESOLVED to recommend to Council that:

- (1) the proposals for the 2019/20 budget included in the report be approved.
- (2) the implementation of the target budget reductions set in the Money plan 2019/24 be approved.
- (3) it be noted that consultation has been undertaken on budget proposals to achieve the level of savings required in 2019/20.

84. BUSINESS RATES - RETAIL DISCOUNT

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that proposed a discount scheme commensurate with the Government Budget announcement of October 2018 for retail discounts on business rates.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources highlighted the key features of the scheme. The Cabinet Member for Environment welcomed the assistance for small businesses in the current challenging retail environment. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy commented that while this scheme addressed one issue in the retail sector, Central Government needed to look at wider issues such as whether business rates were a barrier to empty properties being let.

RESOLVED that the Business Rates Retail Discount scheme (attached at appendix A of the report) be the approved scheme for Gloucester City for 2019/20 and 2020/21.

85. COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT FOR CARE LEAVERS

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that sought Council Tax payable by Gloucestershire Care Leavers between the ages of 18 and 21 residing in Gloucester be reduced by determining a class of case under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources outlined the background to the report whereby Councils were working together to deliver a positive outcome at relatively low cost. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy commented on the importance of considering the needs young people.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) Care Leavers are determined as a class for the purpose of Section 13A(1)(c) of The Local Government Finance Act 1992
- (2) the Council Tax Discount Scheme for Care Leavers is approved and effective from 01 April 2019

86. DIGITAL STRATEGY FOR GLOUCESTER CITY

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Members for Performance and Resources and Regeneration and Economy that sought to identify a digital strategy for the City of Gloucester and the Council.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources thanked officers and Marketing Gloucester Ltd. (MGL) for the vision document that she commented would become the basis for a robust action plan to benefit the city long into the future. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy noted the five strategic digital priorities for Gloucester proposed in the report (3.9) and the importance given to digital inclusion for all people in Gloucester. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure drew Members' attention to the importance of a good digital strategy to culture.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) Marketing Gloucester Ltd's vision document (Appendix 1 of the report) be welcomed as a starting point upon which to develop a comprehensive digital strategy for Gloucester and the Council;
- (2) the priorities for a digital strategy for Gloucester, as set out in paragraph 3.9 of the report be agreed; and
- (3) Officers are asked to work up a more detailed draft Digital Strategy (including a supporting action plan), with colleagues from Marketing Gloucester Ltd, Gloucestershire County Council and elsewhere, for consideration by Cabinet.

87. FESTIVALS AND EVENTS 2019

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy declared a personal interest in the agenda item as Chairman of the Board of Marketing Gloucester Ltd. (MGL) and withdrew from the meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy chaired the meeting during the discussion on this item.

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure that sought review of the City Events Programme for 2018 and the consideration and approval of the Programme for 2019.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure summarised the successes of the past year. She noted that these had been made possible through the Council working in partnership with a range of organisations, an approach she believed essential to achieving future ambitions and continued success. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure drew Members' attention to the funding allocated for 'Gloucester Carnival' in the report (11.3) and clarified that this related to the whole Carnival fortnight. She announced that there would be a summer/autumn Festival of the Moon marking the 50th anniversary of the lunar landing to include iconic exhibits in the Museum of Gloucester and Cathedral as part of a particularly

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exciting programme of events for 2019. She further advised everyone to subscribe to the Marketing Gloucester Events Calendar at www.marketinggloucester.co.uk to keep informed of coming activities.

The Cabinet Member for Environment commented that the programme of festivals and events was a great asset that brought people into the City contributing to its social and physical regeneration. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy noted the breadth and inclusive nature of the activities and reminded Members of the importance of tourism as an economic driver. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources asked that outcomes, such as footfall, be recorded in future reviews. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure gave assurance that they would be.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) Approval is given to the Civic Events Programme for 2019 set out in the table at paragraph 6.4 of the report to be delivered by the City Council Cultural Services Events and Marketing Team based at Gloucester Guildhall.
- (2) Approval is given to the City Events Programme for 2019 set out in the table at paragraph 11.3 of the report to be delivered by Marketing Gloucester Ltd.
- (3) Approval is given to directly fund the following City Events: Three Choirs Festival (£5,000), Gloucester History Festival (£10,000) and Kings Jam (£16,500)
- (4) Approval is given to retaining the budget and delivering the Lantern Procession and Tree of Light by the Cultural Services Events and Marketing Team.

88. TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE RELOCATION

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure that highlighted how public access to visitor information services is changing and how the challenges of those changes may be met by relocating the City's 'walk-in' Visitor Information Service to Gloucester Guildhall and the Museum of Gloucester.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure advised Members that the proposal to utilise both the Museum of Gloucester and Guildhall had been the direct result of discussions at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 28th January 2019. She further advised that the transition would be staggered with appropriate training and signage provided to ensure the award-winning service continues to develop.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy commented that the proximity of the proposed sites to the Transport Hub and railway station was beneficial. The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy emphasised the importance of the service remaining resilient and the opportunity to bring the upper floors of the site currently occupied by the Tourist Information Centre on Southgate Street to be brought back into use given its prominent location.

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RESOLVED that Gloucester's Tourist Information Service relocates to Gloucester Guildhall and the Museum of Gloucester at the earliest practical opportunity.

89. GLOUCESTER PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY DELIVERY

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Environment that sought to update Members on progress in the delivery of Council's adopted Playing Pitch Strategy, seek resolution on an alternative delivery mechanism for onsite improvements to playing pitches and ancillary facilities in City Council ownership in the future, and agreement to the continuation of the Delivery Group.

The Cabinet Member for Environment highlighted the key achievements since the previous annual report. He informed Members that Sport England had requested that the Planning Policy Team Leader give presentations on what had been accomplished in Gloucester and he thanked him for his work. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure noted the development of the priorities and stated that she looked forward to coming progress, especially that at Blackbridge. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy commented that the strategy fitted well with current health agendas.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) progress made in delivering the Gloucester Playing Pitch Strategy (Appendix 1 of the report) be noted;
- (2) the updated Action Plan (Appendix 1 of the report) be approved;
- (3) the updated Gloucester Artificial Grass Pitch Strategy (Appendix 2 of the report) be approved;
- (4) an alternative approach to delivering onsite pitch and ancillary facility improvements be approved, delegating authority to the Head of Place to appoint a suitable third party (Section 5); and
- (5) the continuation of the Playing Pitch Strategy Delivery Group for a further three years until January 2022 be approved.

90. GLOUCESTER RAILWAY STATION

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy that sought approval to enter an agreement with First Greater Western Limited (GWR) in the sum of £425,000 to progress the required design work at Gloucester Railway Station.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy underlined the importance of proceeding quickly after the award of GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership funding so that work will commence on site next year. The Cabinet Member for Environment commented that it represented a good way to push the pace of regeneration in the city. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy observed that linking with the bus station to complete the Transport Hub as quickly

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as possible was essential, especially given the increasing numbers of visitors for festivals and events.

RESOLVED that the Council enter in to an agreement with First Greater Western Limited (GWR) to deliver the necessary GRIP 1 - 5 stages of project design including the provision of £425,000 funding to GWR in the form set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

91. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business (Agenda item 16) on the grounds that it is likely, in the view of the nature of the 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 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended.

92. KINGS WALK AND KINGS QUARTER LEASE REVIEWS

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy that sought approval for the granting of new leases for properties in Kings Walk Shopping Centre.

RESOLVED that the recommendations in the exempt report be approved.

Time of commencement: 6.00 pm

Time of conclusion: 6.50 pm

Chair