



COUNCIL

MEETING : Thursday, 21st March 2019

PRESENT : Cllrs. J. Brown (Mayor), Hyman (Sheriff & Deputy Mayor), James, Watkins, Cook, Noakes, H. Norman, Organ, Pullen, Hilton, Tracey, Stephens, Lugg, Hanman, Lewis, Morgan, Wilson, Haigh, D. Brown, Dee, Taylor, Hansdot, Toleman, D. Norman, Hampson, Brooker, Brazil, Coole, Derbyshire, Finnegan, Hawthorne, Melvin, Ryall, Smith and Walford

Others in Attendance

Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director
Anne Brinkhoff, Corporate Director
Ian Edwards, Head of Place
Ruth Saunders, Head of Communities
Greg Maw, Accountancy Manager
Tanya Davies, Policy and Governance Manager
Tony Wisdom, Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Gravells, Bhaimia, Williams and Patel

68. MINUTES

68.1 That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record by the Mayor.

69. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

69.1 Councillor Ryall declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 12(1), a Notice of Motion from the Liberal Democrat Group concerning policing in Gloucester as her spouse was a serving member of the Police.

70. CALL OVER

70.1 The Mayor invited Members to indicate whether they wished to reserve agenda items 9, 10 and 11 for discussion. No items were reserved for discussion.

70.2 **RESOLVED** – that the recommendations of all reports on the agenda be approved.

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71. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

71.1 There were no public questions.

72. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

72.1 There were no petitions or deputations.

73. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor

73.1 The Mayor advised that she was touched by the number of Gloucester people who came out to show unity and support in response to the shootings in Christchurch, New Zealand. She had sent a letter to the Mayor of Christchurch on behalf of Gloucester offering sympathies and condolences to the families of the individuals who lost their lives. She stated that her thoughts and prayers go out to them as well as members of the emergency services.

73.2 The Mayor also remembered the people who had lost their homes in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi due to the recent flooding. Her thoughts and prayers went out to them.

73.3 The Mayor and Sheriff thanked fellow Councillors who had attended the recent Civic Service. She had passed on the thanks of the Council to the Catholic Polish Children's Choir and the Barnwood Park Glee Club who had provided fantastic musical performances.

73.4 The Mayor stated that those Councillors who had been following Jamie McDonald, "Adventureman", would be aware that he would be finishing his 210th Marathon across America in Gloucester, Massachusetts on Wednesday, 27th March. She would be recording a message of congratulation on behalf of the City of Gloucester to be played to him upon his completion and she hoped Councillors would join her in congratulating him. She noted that the adventure would not finish there as Jamie was going to attempt to set a World Record for the greatest distance covered on a treadmill and would start on Monday, 29th April at midday at Merchant Road, Gloucester Quays.

The Leader of the Council

73.5 The Leader of the Council advised that as part of the Discover De Crypt initiative an open day would be held at St Mary de Crypt Church on Saturday 23rd March. The project had been supported by the Prince's Trust and the Council.

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Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods

- 73.6 Councillor Watkins advised that together with her daughter Ruby she would be undertaking a Charity Sleep-over on Friday 22nd March and she had sponsorship forms available should colleagues wish to support her.

Cabinet Member for Housing Strategy and Planning

- 73.7 Councillor Organ advised that the City Council was working with other Gloucestershire authorities and Gloucester First LEP to produce a Statement of Common Ground which would provide a broad vision for the County and assist with co-ordination between districts and with the duty of co-operation. He stated that the initiative had been approved by the Planning Policy Members' Working Group and the Cabinet and would be presented to Members for approval in due course. He urged all Members to support the initiative.

Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 73.8 Councillor Coole advised that Councillors had until 29th April to suggest new topics for task and finish groups.

74. MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

- 74.1 Councillor Pullen asked the Leader of the Council whether he had confidence in the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure given the overspend in her portfolio.
- 74.2 Councillor James replied that he had absolute confidence in the Cabinet Member. He noted that there were particular challenges in her portfolio including the Guildhall, the Museums and the Tourist Information Centre and advised that admission charges had been abolished for the Museum of Gloucester and the Folk Museum was being handed over to the civic trust. He was confident that the budget situation would improve and cited the £1.5 million funding obtained from the Great Place fund as an example.
- 74.3 Councillor Pullen stated that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been given a range of excuses yet the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources had said Cabinet Members worked together and all portfolios were within budget.
- 74.4 Councillor James confirmed that the Cabinet did work as a team and were responsible for ensuring that the overall budget balanced.
- 74.5 Councillor Pullen asked the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources how members of the public would access the services provided by Green Square as they would not be able to operate out of the new reception.

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- 74.6 Councillor Hannah Norman advised that three options were being considered and would be discussed with Green Square in the first instance and she undertook to share consensus with Members.
- 74.7 Councillor Pullen hoped there would be no deterioration in the service provided.
- 74.8 Councillor Hannah Norman stated that was the intention.
- 74.9 Councillor Hilton asked the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods for an explanation why work on the garden in Wellington Square, which Officers had stated would be completed by April, had not yet been started.
- 74.10 Councillor Watkins stated that part of the reason was due to changes to the plans following public consultation and work would start as soon as was possible.
- 74.11 Councillor Hilton had not been made aware of or received any amended plans and noted that the funding of £6,000 proved from Members' allocations remained in place.
- 74.12 Councillor Watkins stated that Councillors had been made aware of the consultation. She could understand the Councillor's frustration and suggested he speak to the Officers involved after the meeting and to contact her if he still had concerns. Councillor Hilton indicated that he would prefer a written report.
- 74.13 Councillor Hilton asked the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure for information on the funding for the proposed Modern Creative Art Centre.
- 74.14 Councillor Noakes replied that the funding bid had not been successful but it was one of only two bids from the South West which had been put forward. The bid had received a great deal of support including from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.
- 74.15 Councillor Hilton asked if it was true that the current users had been given notice to quit King's House.
- 74.16 Councillor Noakes stated that the Creative Entrepreneurs Hub remained a key aim and a vital part of the King's Quarter development.
- 74.17 Councillor Wilson asked the Leader of the Council if the Gloucestershire resilience Forum were considering Brexit.
- 74.18 Councillor James that the Forum was meeting on a weekly basis although the situation still remained as green. The Forum would correspond with daily telephone calls from Friday.

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- 74.19 Councillor Haigh asked the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy what progress was being made with the City Plan which had been intended to run from 2016.
- 74.20 Councillor Organ stated that information and policies were being presented to the Planning Policy Members Working Group and it was intended to present the draft City Plan to Council in July.
- 74.21 Councillor Morgan asked the Leader of the Council if he could work with developers to ensure that the Copeland Play Area was adopted before another school holiday.
- 74.22 Councillor James stated that he had been in touch with both Bovis and Robert Hitchins and the transfer documents had arrived at the Council that day.
- 74.23 Councillor Morgan asked the Leader of the Council if he would instruct Officers to expediate the matter
- 74.24 Councillor James stated that the Cabinet Member for Environment had assured him that he would expediate the matter.
- 74.25 Councillor Hansdot asked the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods if premises used for housing the homeless complied with food and hygiene standards.
- 74.26 Councillor Watkins stated that she was not aware of any issues. She noted that Officers ensured the quality of the accommodation which received regular inspections.
- 74.27 Councillor Hansdot asked if hotels and bed and breakfast establishments had to meet a minimum star rating.
- 74.28 Councillor Watkins confirmed that Officers worked with premises to ensure that they reached the required standards.
- 74.29 Councillor Derbyshire noted that people in Coney Hill had expressed concerns that local shops were closing. She recognized that this was a national problem but asked the Leader of the Council if the Council had a strategy to address this issue.
- 74.30 Councillor James stated that there was a strategy and noted initiatives to reduce business rates by a third for two years, a bid to the Future High Street Fund for £10 million, the investment in Kings Walk. He noted that there had been an update by Reef and an announcement would be made soon. He noted that Reef considered Gloucester to be the most exciting of all their portfolios. He also noted the opening of a new Chinese Restaurant, a Games Shop and a new Menswear Store.

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74.31 Councillor Coole noted the initiative to provide free sanitary products in schools and he asked the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods if the Council would follow suit.

74.32 Councillor Watkins replied that the issue was still on the agenda and she was looking at alternative ways to provide these items.

74.33 Councillor Lugg asked the Cabinet Member for Environment if he would join her in welcoming Worcester City Council on joining the City Council and other local authorities who had supported the 'Send a Message in a Bottle' campaign to reduce plastic waste in the River Severn.

74.34 Councillor Cook indicated that he was pleased to join Councillor Lugg in congratulating Worcester City Council on resolving to support the campaign.

75. CAPITAL STRATEGY

75.1 Council considered a report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources seeking approval for the Capital Strategy 2019-20.

75.2 **RESOLVED** - that the Capital Strategy at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

76. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

76.1 Council considered a report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources seeking approval for attached Treasury Management Strategy, the prudential indicators and noting the Treasury activities.

76.2 **RESOLVED** – That:

(1) The Treasury Management Strategy at Appendix 1 be approved;

(2) The authorised borrowing limit be approved at:-

a) 2019/20 £145m

b) 2020/21 £145m

c) 2021/22 £145m

(3) The prudential indicators set out in section two of the strategy be approved.

77. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2019-20

77.1 Council considered a report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources seeking approval for the Pay Policy Statement 2019-20.

77.2 **RESOLVED** - that the Pay Policy Statement for 2019/20 attached as Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

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78. NOTICES OF MOTION

NOTICE OF MOTION BY THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP

78.1 Council Hilton moved and Councillor Wilson seconded the following motion:-

“This Council agrees that a strong presence of police officers walking the beat in the city of Gloucester would be good for reducing crime and disorder.

This Council notes that around 300 police officers have been lost throughout the county in recent years, as well as a reduction in the number of police and community support officers.

This Council expresses concern about the rising incidence of violent crime in Gloucestershire and also the noticeable increase in anti-social behaviour seen in public places in the city of Gloucester.

The Council agrees to lobby the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable, the city MP and the Home Secretary to increase funding for Gloucestershire Constabulary to allow for expansion of neighbourhood policing and to put more bobbies on the beat.”

78.2 Councillor Watkins proposed and Councillor Finnegan seconded the following amendment:-

“This Council agrees that a strong **visible** presence of police officers ~~walking the beat~~ in the city of Gloucester ~~would~~ **can** be good for reducing crime and disorder **and provides reassurance for residents and visitors.**

This Council also notes that patterns of crime have changed, with cyber crime, child sexual exploitation, County Lines drug gangs and serious organised crime all providing an increasing challenge.

This Council notes that **there has been a reduction of** around 300 police officers ~~have been lost~~ throughout the county in recent years, as well as a reduction in the number of police and community support officers.

This Council expresses concern about ~~the rising incidence of violent crime in Gloucestershire and also the noticeable increase in~~ anti-social behaviour seen in public places in the city of Gloucester **and acknowledges the role the Council plays in tackling this through the provision of enhanced CCTV, part funding of the City Protection Officers and the Street Aware initiative.**

The Council **welcomes the additional funding made available to Gloucestershire Constabulary for the 2019/20 financial year** and agrees to lobby **write to** the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable, **and** the city MP ~~and the Home Secretary to increase funding for Gloucestershire Constabulary to allow for expansion of~~ **to express our support for** neighbourhood policing and ~~to put more bobbies on the beat for~~

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any lobbying they wish to undertake in relation to funding for Gloucestershire Constabulary.”

78.3 Councillor Hilton indicated that the amendment was acceptable and it became the substantive motion.

78.4 **RESOLVED that**

This Council agrees that a visible presence of police officers in the city of Gloucester can be good for reducing crime and disorder and provides reassurance for residents and visitors.

This Council also notes that patterns of crime have changed, with cyber crime, child sexual exploitation, County Lines drug gangs and serious organised crime all providing an increasing challenge.

This Council notes that there has been a reduction of around 300 police officers throughout the county in recent years, as well as a reduction in the number of police and community support officers.

This Council expresses concern about violent crime and anti-social behaviour seen in public places in the city of Gloucester and acknowledges the role the Council plays in tackling this through the provision of enhanced CCTV, part funding of the City Protection Officers and the Street Aware initiative.

The Council welcomes the additional funding made available to Gloucestershire Constabulary for the 2019/20 financial year and agrees to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable and the city MP to express our support for neighbourhood policing and for any lobbying they wish to undertake in relation to funding for Gloucestershire Constabulary.

NOTICE OF MOTION BY THE LABOUR GROUP

78.5 Councillor Hampson moved and Councillor Stephens seconded the following motion:-

Protection of the environment and safeguarding the planet for future generations is one of the greatest challenges facing all of us. Whether it be climate change, pollution or the ever-increasing use of the earth's finite resources we must all personally reflect on the effect we are having on our fragile planet.

The City Council can be proud of the many environmental accomplishments it has already achieved. These include our high levels of waste recycling, the decision to limit the plastics we use and the energy efficiency measures that have been implemented.

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However, we cannot be complacent. Our minds should always be focused on how we can all do more.

To this end Council RESOLVES that:

1. All policy documents and decisions made by the Council should formally consider the impact they will have on the environment.
2. This should include a paragraph on all reports detailing any environmental implications
3. The Council will produce an annual progress report which will be presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to measure and suggest any recommendations for the continuing reduction in negative environmental impact.

78.6 RESOLVED that protection of the environment and safeguarding the planet for future generations is one of the greatest challenges facing all of us. Whether it be climate change, pollution or the ever-increasing use of the earth's finite resources we must all personally reflect on the effect we are having on our fragile planet.

The City Council can be proud of the many environmental accomplishments it has already achieved. These include our high levels of waste recycling, the decision to limit the plastics we use and the energy efficiency measures that have been implemented.

However, we cannot be complacent. Our minds should always be focused on how we can all do more.

To this end Council RESOLVES that:

All policy documents and decisions made by the Council should formally consider the impact they will have on the environment.

This should include a paragraph on all reports detailing any environmental implications.

The Council will produce an annual progress report which will be presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to measure and suggest any recommendations for the continuing reduction in negative environmental impact.

NOTICE OF MOTION BY THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP

78.7 Councillor Brazil moved and Councillor David Brown seconded the following motion:-

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This Council notes that Debenhams PLC has recently announced a profits warning and that throughout the UK its stores are suffering from poor trading conditions.

This Council notes that Debenhams PLC is planning to close possibly 50 stores around the country.

This Council also agrees that the Debenhams store in Gloucester is a focal point in Kings Square and provides an anchor for the Kings Quarter regeneration project.

This Council agrees that the Leader of the Council should work closely with all interested parties to secure the long term future of the Debenhams Department Store in the city centre.

This Council confirms that Gloucester must continue to benefit from a department store trading at the location where Debenhams is today.

78.8 Councillor James proposed and Councillor Melvin seconded the following amendment:

This Council notes that Debenhams PLC has recently announced a profits warning and that throughout the UK its stores are suffering from poor trading conditions, **but further notes that the company has recently secured additional financing.**

This Council notes that Debenhams PLC is planning to close possibly 50 stores around the country, **but believes the company can have a long term future in Gloucester.**

This Council also agrees that the Debenhams store **building** in Gloucester is a focal point in Kings Square and ~~provides an anchor for the Kings Quarter regeneration project,~~ **but acknowledges that it is larger than the modern requirement for such a store; believes that Debenhams is an important retailer in the city centre and urges local people to support them.**

This Council agrees ~~notes~~ that the ~~Leader of the Council should work closely with all interested parties to secure the long term future of the Debenhams Department Store in the city centre and~~ **officers are in the regular contact with Debenhams and Aviva, as landlords of the building, to encourage them to find a way to enable Debenhams to continue to trade in the city for the long term.**

This Council resolves to write to the Chief Executive of Debenhams to express its support for the future of their store in the City and to write to Aviva, as landlords, to seek their co-operation in enabling this to happen.

~~This council confirms that Gloucester must continue to benefit from a department store trading at the location where Debenhams is today."~~

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78.9 Councillor Brazil indicated that the amendment was acceptable and it became the substantive motion.

78.10 **RESOLVED** that this Council notes that Debenhams PLC has recently announced a profits warning and that throughout the UK its stores are suffering from poor trading conditions, but further notes that the company has recently secured additional financing.

This Council notes that Debenhams PLC is planning to close possibly 50 stores around the country, but believes the company can have a long term future in Gloucester.

This Council also agrees that the Debenhams building in Gloucester is a focal point in Kings Square but acknowledges that it is larger than the modern requirement for such a store; believes that Debenhams is an important retailer in the city centre and urges local people to support them.

This Council notes that the Leader of the Council and officers are in the regular contact with Debenhams and Aviva, as landlords of the building, to encourage them to find a way to enable Debenhams to continue to trade in the city for the long term.

This Council resolves to write to the Chief Executive of Debenhams to express its support for the future of their store in the City and to write to Aviva, as landlords, to seek their co-operation in enabling this to happen.

NOTICE OF MOTION BY THE LABOUR GROUP

78.11 Councillor Haigh who had proposed the motion on the agenda advised that she had withdrawn the motion as all the terms therein had been met.

NOTICE OF MOTION BY THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP

78.12 Councillor Toleman moved and Councillor Finnegan moved the following motion:-

This Council recognises the harm that drug misuse and drug related crime can have on individuals and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.

Notes the positive work undertaken by many agencies, organisations and charities in Gloucester who support people with substance misuse.

Furthermore, notes the commitment of Gloucestershire Constabulary and other agencies in trying to tackle the growing problem of organised criminal networks (county lines), a major cross-cutting issue, involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery and cuckoo-ing of properties.

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Recognises that County Lines is something law enforcement can't tackle alone, and they need to work together with other agencies to disrupt this activity and safeguard vulnerable victims. This must be the priority for everyone.

Believes these issues are best tackled through better collaboration between police forces and other agencies, including local authorities.

This Council resolves to:

Work closely in partnership with other key agencies to share information and to promote awareness of organized criminal networks in our communities.

Asks the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods to write to the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities at Gloucestershire County Council to share our concerns about the level of drug misuse in Gloucester, requesting priority is given to the safeguarding of vulnerable people from exploitation, particularly those who are involved in drug use.

78.13 RESOLVED that this Council:

Recognises the harm that drug misuse and drug related crime can have on individuals and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.

Notes the positive work undertaken by many agencies, organisations and charities in Gloucester who support people with substance misuse.

Furthermore, notes the commitment of Gloucestershire Constabulary and other agencies in trying to tackle the growing problem of organised criminal networks (county lines), a major cross-cutting issue, involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery and cuckoo-ing of properties.

Recognises that County Lines is something law enforcement can't tackle alone, and they need to work together with other agencies to disrupt this activity and safeguard vulnerable victims. This must be the priority for everyone.

Believes these issues are best tackled through better collaboration between police forces and other agencies, including local authorities.

This Council resolves to:

Work closely in partnership with other key agencies to share information and to promote awareness of organized criminal networks in our communities.

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Asks the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods to write to the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities at Gloucestershire County Council to share our concerns about the level of drug misuse in Gloucester, requesting priority is given to the safeguarding of vulnerable people from exploitation, particularly those who are involved in drug use.

79. WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS

- 79.1 The question of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods from Councillor Haigh and the response detailed on the agenda were noted.
- 79.2 Councillor Haigh stated that the response demonstrated that the Council should provide its own temporary accommodation.
- 79.3 Councillor Watkins replied that sourcing quality accommodation was a key aim and negotiations were underway for 45-50 units of temporary accommodation.

Time of commencement: 6.30 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 8.30 pm hours

Chair