



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING : Monday, 30th November 2020

PRESENT : Cllrs. Coole (Chair), D. Brown, Bowkett, Finnegan, Hilton, Hyman, Lewis, Organ, Pullen, Stephens, Taylor, Toleman, Tracey, Walford and Wilson

Others in Attendance

Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Cook;

Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, Councillor Hannah Norman;

Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure, Councillor Morgan;

Managing Director

Corporate Director, Transformation

Head of Cultural Services

Head of Policy and Resources

Climate Change Manager

CEO, Gloucester Culture Trust

Democratic and Electoral Services Team Leader

Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Ryall and Dee

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1.1 There were no declarations of interest.

2. DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIPPING

2.1 There were no indications that any Member was operating under a party whip.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Councillor Stephens noted that recommendations to Cabinet had been made at the last meeting and expressed his disappointment that these had not been taken up in their entirety.

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- 3.2 **RESOLVED that:-** The minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

- 4.1 There were no public questions.

5. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

- 5.1 There no petitions or deputations.

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

- 6.1 The Committee considered the Work Programme and Council Forward Plan. The Chair brought to Members' attention that scrutiny of the proposed budget and money plan would take place on 7 December.
- 6.2 The Chair highlighted that consideration of the Festival and Events Programme was scheduled for 4 January but that due to circumstances related to the Covid pandemic, it was likely to be delayed. Members considered that it should remain on the agenda for 4 January but to be presented in an outline form. This was agreed as was presenting a case study into the methodology of budgeting events.

7. GLOUCESTER RECOVERY PLAN - ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE RECOVERY

- 7.1 The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Cook, introduced the plan and placed it the context of the four recovery themes – Return, Retain, Resist and Reimagine. He stated that he would welcome any additions or changes suggested by the Committee.
- 7.2 In respect of action CC4B, Councillor Hilton sought clarification on the term 'sustainable' and potential use of the airport for housing which would affect jobs in the area. Councillor Cook advised that changes in policy in relation to the airport was a potential option but that the Council would not be pursuing the closure of the airport.
- 7.3 The Managing Director advised that the basis of the proposals was as a result of a consultation organised by the Local Resilience Forum. A number of recommendations were county wide but originated from an independent body and as such, it was incumbent on the Council to consider them. The airport was pursuing several research strands to examine how air travel could become more sustainable and wanted to place itself as a leader in such research. The Managing Director further advised that the Climate Change Manager was undertaking work with Cheltenham to assess whether, in the short term, the airport could become more sustainable such as installing solar panels on the airport estate.
- 7.4 Councillor Stephens shared his view that the Council, as a shareholder, should not pursue recommending that people use air travel less. He queried

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whether the airport counted towards the commitment to carbon neutrality by 2030. He further stated that he would have preferred to have seen other matters addressed such as converting the bus fleet and the licensed taxi trade to electric vehicles.

- 7.5 Councillor Cook and the Climate Change Manager confirmed that the airport did not form a part of the target of carbon neutrality by 2030. Regarding sustainable bus travel, Councillor Cook advised that he had had discussions with StageCoach on this matter. He advised that several routes were lengthy rural routes and the type of battery was not suitable. Other means such as hydrogen fuel could be considered.
- 7.6 The Chair asked if the Council might consider introducing low traffic neighbourhoods as some other areas had. Councillor Cook stated that it could be considered and that the County Council had mooted some areas which could no longer permit cars.
- 7.7 Regarding action CC4C, Councillor Pullen stated that he was supportive of 20 mph routes. He highlighted that the police could only enforce, however, at 30 mph and queried how the 20 mph limit could be enforced. Councillor Cook advised that such matters were under the jurisdiction of the County Highways Team and that the City Council would be working closely with them.
- 7.8 Councillor Tracey expressed her support for 20 mph zones and that uniformity would be preferable.
- 7.9 Councillor Stephens moved that it be recommended to Cabinet that the airport be included as part of carbon reduction targets to be carbon neutral by 2030. The recommendation was put to the vote and was lost.
- 7.10 Councillor Stephens moved that it be recommended to Cabinet that, as part of climate recovery planning to enter urgent discussions with the bus operator to a) move vehicles on inner city routes to be powered by non-fossil fuels; b) on rural routes to consider non fossil fuels and c) to make progress on using non-fossil fuels in the private hire and taxi fleet. The recommendation was put to the vote and was carried.
- 7.11 **RESOLVED that:-** The Overview and Scrutiny **RECOMMEND** to Cabinet that: as part of climate recovery planning to enter urgent discussions with the bus operator to a) move vehicles on inner city routes to be powered by non-fossil fuels; b) on rural routes to consider non fossil fuels and c) to make progress on using non-fossil fuels in the private hire and taxi fleet.

8. GLOUCESTER RECOVERY PLAN - VISITORS AND CULTURAL RECOVERY

- 8.1 The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure, Councillor Morgan, outlined the recovery plan and associated agreed actions.
- 8.2 Councillor Stephens expressed his view that forward planning be investigated further as part of the recovery plan alongside one-off events. He

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asked what work was being undertaken with the leisure centre to ensure such offers were sustainable. Councillor Stephens also asked if there had been any further discussions with both the King's Theatre and the new Olympus Theatre and what was being done to make them viable for the future.

- 8.3 Councillor Morgan advised that the Council had been working very closely with GL1 through the pandemic and have helped keep it solvent. He further advised that this support would continue. There had been discussions with the King's theatre and Councillor Morgan had offered to meet with them. As far as he was aware, there were no immediate issues but there may be long term viability questions. He further advised that discussions were ongoing. In relation to the Olympus theatre, he understood that a new company had taken out a new lease to bring it into use of the community. The Head of Cultural Services stated that there had been a recent approach from the Kings theatre and colleagues were liaising with the theatre about support and continuation of their lease.
- 8.4 Councillor Hilton congratulated all those involved in dealing with this area during the lockdown and pandemic more broadly. He asked what was being done, in light of imminent vaccines, to forward plan for the return of events and to take advantage of the prospect of the pandemic being over sooner than previously thought. Councillor Morgan advised that such matters would be addressed as part of what can be achieved through the festival and events programme. Other means of marketing events was being considered.
- 8.5 Counillor Tracey noted that Blackfriars was well ventilated and if events there could be considered. Councillor Morgan appreciated that the site had its advantages but it might not be appropriate in the winter.
- 8.6 **RESOLVED** :- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee **NOTE** the recovery plan.

9. CULTURAL STRATEGY UPDATE

- 9.1 The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure, Councillor Morgan, presented the report and thanked all involved for their contributions to the strategy. The Head of Cultural Services and the CEO of the Culture Trust shared a presentation outlining an update to the 2016-2026 strategy. The Head of Cultural Services advised that the public art principles document was available and it would be included in the update with a recommendation to approve the public art principles.
- 9.2 Councillor Wilson noted the good work done by Music Works at King's House and queried how musicians would know the facility was available in order to start creating. Councillor Morgan advised that the Music Works had been active for some time and had been looking for a centre for a considerable period. Those who were involved in music had contacts themselves. Music Works were very good at getting the message out and that there was a combination of performing and producing facilities available.

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- 9.3 Councillor Pullen stated that it was good to hear new manager for destination marketing had been appointed. He asked what was meant by 'good reach.' Councillor Morgan highlighted that two colleagues had been working on this and their findings on reach would be circulated.
- 9.4 Councillor David Brown stated that he had had contact from Gloucestershire Arts Council who had put a bid together to buy the Olympus theatre but was unsuccessful. He understood that it was now a registered asset of community importance and wanted to be sure that the new leaseholder was aware of the commitments that come with it. The Head of Cultural Services advised the relevant provision were in place.
- 9.5 Councillor Hilton thanked the Head of Cultural Services for raising the public art strategy and that a document might be useful. He queried whether consideration had been given to where the public art panels which had been moved from BHS might be situated in the future. The Head of Cultural Services shared his view that art was contextual in both time and space but that future storage and possible display would be considered. Councillor Morgan stated his desire to seek the public's views on the principles and for the public to be thinking about art. He agreed it would be useful to examine what was in storage and use where appropriate.
- 9.6 Councillor Tracey highlighted events which would be held at the Cathedral from 2 December to 5 January.
- 9.7 **RESOLVED that:-** The Overview and Scrutiny Committee **NOTE** the report.

10. FINANCIAL MONITORING QUARTER 2

- 10.1 The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, Councillor Hannah Norman, introduced the report and highlighted key elements.
- 10.2 Councillor Stephens stated it was a good position for the Council to be in as there had been better results from income generation such as a rates rebate from the disposal of the Herbert, Kimberly and Philpotts warehouses. Regarding there being an impact of £345k in relation to the Culture and Leisure budget, Councillor Stephens sought clarification on why this sum was regarded as an impact. Councillor Norman advised that the Council had been paying for Aspire's utilities and that these would not be recharged. The Head of Policy and Resources confirmed that reclaiming this would be examined and that other amounts were for loan or cash flow support if necessary. The Council would be looking to reclaim this from government also.
- 10.3 Following a query from Councillor Pullen regarding continued Covid costs in relation to IT, the Head of Policy and Resources confirmed that the recent server move had been budgeted for. There had been additional costs incurred as a result of insurance in respect of moving the server as well as further hardware and labour costs.

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- 10.4 Councillor Pullen asked if the government's position on who could claim in respect of sports and leisure facilities had changed. Councillor Norman advised that additional information had been released which indicated that it could be possible for the Aspire Trust to make a claim and that further discussions would take place as to how this could be achieved.
- 10.5 In response to a query from Councillor Wilson as to why additional homelessness spending had not been included, the Head of Policy and Resources advised that the forecast was based on what was expected and what was not known was whether there would be a significant increase in rough sleeping.
- 10.6 Councillor Hilton asked what adjustments for parking were being made for income generation in the next financial year and whether they would be adjusted downwards. Councillor Norman advised that parking was not considered commercial, so a claim was being made for this lost income. The Head of Policy and Resources further advised that there would be a proposal in the money plan to increase charges.
- 10.7 Councillor Bowkett asked what proportion was expected to be reclaimed for Culture and Leisure. The Head of Policy and Resources confirmed that 75% of spend was available to be claimed. As far as it was understood, the government had agreed to the claim in full.
- 10.8 **RESOLVED that:-** The Overview and Scrutiny Committee **NOTE** the report.

11. PERFORMANCE MONITORING QUARTER 1 AND 2

- 11.1 The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, Councillor Hannah Norman, presented the report and invited comment.
- 11.2 In relation to indicator CDG16, Councillor Stephens queried whether the projection received from the HARPS indicating that the outturn at the end of the year was likely to be in the region of 340 homes include the 37 as part of the Next Steps Affordable Programme. He also, with regard to indicator H1, asked what the figure was for move on accommodation available in order to assess whether there was a shortfall of what could be offered.
- 11.3 In regards of complaints, Councillor Stephens expressed his surprise that 87% were in relation to Amey and asked that further detail be provided as to what the complaints related to.
- 11.4 **RESOLVED that:-** The Overview and Scrutiny Committee **NOTE** the report.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 7 December at 6.30pm

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Time of commencement: 6.30 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 8.40 pm hours

Chair