



## CABINET

**MEETING** : Wednesday, 11th November 2020

**PRESENT** : Cllrs. Cook (Chair), H. Norman, Gravells, Melvin, Morgan and Watkins

**Others in Attendance**

Cllrs Hilton and Wilson

Managing Director

Corporate Director

Corporate Director

Head of Place

Head of Communities

Head of Policy and Resources

Head of Cultural Services

Meyrick Brentnall, Climate Change and Manager

Multi-Skilled Officer

Street Scene Strategy Officer

Transformation and Commercialisation Manager

Democratic and Electoral Services Team Leader

Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

**APOLOGIES** : None.

### 40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 41. MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020 are confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chair in due course.

### 42. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no public questions.

### 43. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

Councillor Hilton presented a petition completed online, mostly by residents of Kingsholm and Wotton. Under the title 'Save Our Family Homes' it expressed

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concern over the number of residences in Kingsholm being converted into Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and demanded that the council begins immediately the lengthy application process for an Article 4 Direction of the General Permitted Development Order so that all new HMOs would require planning permission. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods noted that a copy of the petition had been received by email and stated that it would be considered and discussed in due course with the Kingsholm and Wotton ward councillors. She further commented that she recognised both the impact of HMOs and level of concern among residents having had discussions with residents and others to develop the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-25.

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

Councillor Hilton referred to the confirmation given (Council 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020 minute 30.1) that the Gloucester Business Improvement District's (BID) investigative report into Marketing Gloucester Limited (MGL) had been shared with the Gloucestershire Constabulary. He asked if the Leader of the Council had met with the Constabulary since and if they were to bring charges. The Leader of the Council replied that although a virtual meeting had taken place and the matter was on-going, it would not be appropriate to give details in the public domain. Councillor Hilton sought assurance that charges would be brought if probable fraud had been revealed. The Leader of the Council stated that only the Constabulary and Crown Prosecution Service could determine if any charges were warranted.

Councillor Hilton informed Members that he perceived both BID and MGL to have been infected by the same elements of poor management and attention to financial matters at the time the report was prepared. He asked if the Leader of the Council agreed that the many businesses who had contributed financially to BID had been badly let down by its transactions with MGL. The Leader of the Council commented that if he had been one of those businesses, he would be asking the people in charge to account for what happened. Councillor Hilton sought reassurance that the council would help the Gloucester BID to introduce robust financial and governance measures as had been done with MGL. The Leader of the Council made it clear that it was not up to the council to tell the BID how to run their affairs but nevertheless he had told officers to offer ongoing assistance and even consider taking a place on the governing board if requested to do so.

Councillor Wilson asked if more information had come to light since an initial review by the consultants Grant Thornton of MGL which had failed to identify the detail of payments, including a £400,000 grant from the Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (Gfirst LEP), made by MGL in setting up its subsidiary the UK Digital Retail Innovation Centre Limited (UK:DRIC). The Leader of the Council answered by quoting from the MGL liquidator's report to the effect that the grant appeared to have been spent on UK:DRIC transactions discharging the refurbishment costs of MGL's premises which retain a value and concluding with the statement that Gfirst LEP was *'largely satisfied that the £400k was properly spent, and that officers within the LEP had seen documents supporting the expenditure as the project advanced. Accordingly, we have not investigated this further at this stage.'*

Councillor Wilson noted firstly that the liquidator's report also found that these transactions were not recorded in as much detail as others and secondly that there

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were potential conflicts of interest with a person having been both a Director of Gfirst LEP and MGL and a Director of each being partners. He queried why assurances from the LEP were relied upon rather than the detail being shown. The Leader of the Council reiterated that sufficient detail was not present in the MGL or UK:DRIC books despite examination by the council finance team. He further commented that the County Council appeared satisfied with the Gfirst LEP account.

**45. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL MOTION ON 'BLACK LIVES MATTER'**

Cabinet considered the report of the Leader of the Council that outlined progress and plans with the implementation of the 'Black Lives Matter' motion that was approved by Council at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

The Leader of the Council highlighted the actions taken and proposed in the report. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure noted that the points made in the Council motion had been taken seriously. He further commented that it should be left to the proposed commission to take on the enquiries in earnest and report back to Members and the public on a timescale of sufficient length for proper consideration given the breadth and gravity of the subject matter. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy referred to the suggestion that differences in educational attainment between white, black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) children be a topic in the work programme (Appendix 2 paragraph 4) and hoped that it would as he believed the commission could add value in this key area.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the correspondence between the City Council and the Ambassador of the United States of America be welcomed
- (2) the Terms of Reference for the Gloucester Commission to review Race Relations be endorsed
- (3) the Terms of Reference for the review of monuments, statutes and plaques within Gloucester be endorsed
- (4) a budget of up to £5,000 to be approved to support this work.

**46. RESPONSE TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION GROUP'S REPORT**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Environment that sought Members to adopt or otherwise the recommendations contained in the Environment and Climate Action Group (ECAG) report to the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) on how to best recover from the COVID-19 pandemic while taking on board wider environmental and climate change goals.

The Cabinet Member for Environment summarised the background to the report and stated that he broadly supported the ECAG recommendations and that many of them would be incorporated into the forthcoming City Council Climate Change

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Strategy. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy reminded Members that some of those recommendations were already being carried out having been addressed in the City Plan. He particularly drew attention to the assessment of the Gloucester City Homes (GCH) social housing stock as being 'too efficient' to qualify for government retrofit funding (7.5) for which he paid tribute to GCH. The Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth informed Members of her own enthusiasm for the progress already made and aimed for. She thanked the City Climate Change and Environment Manager and his team for their hard work.

**RESOLVED** that the actions identified in section 7 of the report are taken forward by the City Council as its response to the ECAG report.

**47. WASTE, STREET SCENE AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SERVICES OPTIONS REPORT**

Cabinet considered the report of the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment which recommended the next steps for the delivery of Waste, Street Scene and Grounds Maintenance services beyond the current contract end date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, and provided a Best Value Review and detailed assessment of options in line with the Cabinet decision of 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020 (minute 24).

The Leader of the Council highlighted the key features of the report and went through each recommendation in detail. He thanked the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their recommendations (November 2020 minute 8.14) and advised that these not be adopted as they would incur additional expense and the loss of an opportunity for the new owners of the current contractor (Amey) to make an improved offer. The Corporate Director informed Members that he had just been notified that the new owners would honour the existing Amey offer so that the details of their proposal could be further examined if Members chose to keep that option open. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure reminded Members of the impact of the contract on all residents and apprised them of his opinion that it made sense at this time for the Amey and Ubico options to be the only ones to be considered henceforth.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the Options Appraisal and Best Value Review is received and noted
- (2) the option to commence a formal procurement on the open market is not taken forward for the reasons set out in 2.0.6 through 2.0.9 of the Options Appraisal and Best Value Review, in line with Cabinet Resolution (6) of 15 July 2020
- (3) the option to bring services back in-house is not taken forward for the reasons set out in 2.0.10 of the Options Appraisal and Best Value Review and elsewhere in this report
- (4) the option to extend the Amey contract is deferred until 31 January 2021 at the latest to provide the opportunity for an offer to be finalised by the new owners

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- (5) the option to have the services delivered by Ubico from 1 April 2022 is maintained as a preferred option, subject to further developing and refining of the detailed cost model and mobilisation plan
- (6) a full financial and legal appraisal of the remaining model(s) is undertaken
- (7) delegated authority be given to the Corporate Director (after consultation with the Cabinet Lead for the Environment) to implement these decisions.

**48. ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods that sought Members to review and agree the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Policy.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods placed the policy in the context of the council's track record of success implementing ABCD practices across its work and the national recognition it has achieved for having done so. She advised Members of the need for the policy document to make the principles of ABCD clear to people joining the organisation, partners and others. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources paid tribute to the Head of Communities, Corporate Director and especially the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods who had championed the ABCD ethos as inspirational women. She reminded Members that ABCD had achieved much with relatively little financial cost for the city and been particularly effective in helping vulnerable residents during the initial COVID-19 lockdown. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure commented that the ABCD approach was the way to move forward so the council would continue to seek ways of helping communities to help themselves far into the future. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy pointed out that Gloucester had already accomplished a level of success with this approach more popularly associated with much larger metropolitan authorities.

**RESOLVED** that the Asset Based Community Development Policy be adopted.

**49. COMMUNITY WELLBEING ENGAGEMENT UPDATE**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods that updated Members on the community engagement work of the Community Wellbeing Team.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods emphasised the importance of the ABCD approach embedded within the team to the positive outcomes for residents described in the report. She commented that she considered them to be like the '*beating heart*' of the council due to their influence on all departments. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods gave examples of where vulnerable people and communities had been supported by officers and thanked them for it. The Cabinet Member for Environment added his own praise for officers and drew Members' attention to further incidences of

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community engagement generating real benefits such as the food supply arrangements set up during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**RESOLVED** that the community engagement work undertaken by the Community Wellbeing Team, particularly using Asset Based Community Development and strengths-based working, be noted.

**50. ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT UPDATE**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods that provided an update on the support offered to current and former members of the armed forces, reservists and their families as part of our commitment to the Gloucestershire Armed Forces Community Covenant.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods stated that it was apt that this report be considered on Armistice Day when Members were particularly mindful of the sacrifices made by the armed forces community. She further reminded them of those communities' continuing importance to the city, not least how they stepped forward in the COVID-19 pandemic to support the wider community. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods advised that the measures outlined in the appendix often made a great difference to the lives of individuals. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure commented that pride should be taken in the commitment to help veterans of the armed forces and that although progress had been made, there could never be enough to repay those who had served their country. The Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth informed Members how impressed she had been by the contributions of both serving and retired members of the armed forces to the city when she had been the council Armed Forces Champion in 2016 and 2017.

**RESOLVED** that work undertaken to support current and ex-service personnel as part of the Council's ongoing commitment to the Covenant be endorsed.

**51. PROPOSALS TO SET UP LOCAL GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS TO DISTRIBUTE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) NEIGHBOURHOOD FUNDING IN GLOUCESTER**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy that sought to secure Members' approval to set up a governance body to administer expenditure of the Neighbourhood Fund element of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts and to obtain Members' views on the preferred approach to the allocation of the Neighbourhood Fund.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy advised Members that Gloucester would be the first of the 3 Joint Core Strategy authorities to bring forward plans to allocate the funding in question. He summarised the key features of the report and made clear the need for a flexible approach to the allocation criteria so as not to restrict opportunities for community groups and to properly address the social sustainability pillar underpinning Gloucester's Social Value Policy (appendix 2). The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure reiterated the importance of flexibility given the uncertainty of future events.

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**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the establishment of a Member led Task and Finish Group be approved to establish the criteria for allocating the Neighbourhood Funding element of Community Infrastructure Levy to be chaired by the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy, and
- (2) authority be delegated to the Head of Place in consultation with the Head of Communities and the Cabinet Members for Planning and Housing Strategy, and Communities and Neighbourhoods to approve individual allocations in accordance with the criteria identified at (1) above.

**52. REVOCATION OF PLANNING BRIEFS AND SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy that requested Members to revoke several Planning Briefs, Supplementary Planning Guidance notes and Supplementary Planning Documents.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy described the background to the report and noted the benefit of removing irrelevant material to users of the council's planning systems. He thanked the relevant officers, especially the Principal Planning Officer.

**RECOMMENDED** to Council that the documents as set out in Table 1 of the report are revoked and withdrawn from publication.

**53. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (RIPA) - SIX MONTHLY REPORT**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that reported to Members on the Council's use of its powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources introduced the report and confirmed that the powers had not been used.

**RESOLVED** that the six monthly update on the use of RIPA powers be noted.

**Time of commencement: 6.04 pm**  
**Time of conclusion: 7.03 pm**

**Chair**