



## **CABINET**

**MEETING** : Wednesday, 10th February 2021

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

### **Others in Attendance**

Cllr. Hilton

Managing Director

Corporate Director

Corporate Director

Head of Place

Head of Communities

Head of Policy and Resources

Head of Cultural Services

Tourism and Destination Marketing Manager

Policy and Development Officer

Solicitor

Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

**APOLOGIES** : None

### **77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **78. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 are confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chair in due course.

### **79. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)**

There were no public questions.

### **80. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)**

There were no petitions or deputations.

**CABINET**  
**10.02.21**

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

Concerning the special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the supplier for the Waste, Streetscene and Grounds Maintenance Service (3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021) Councillor Hilton asked which of the potential contractors who had made presentations to Councillors the Leader of the Council would recommend. The Leader of the Council noted that the papers for that committee had not yet been published and stated that he would leave the discussion to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and take a position later.

**82. MONEY PLAN 2021-26 AND BUDGET PROPOSALS 2021/22**

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

The Leader of the Council summarised the plan and placed it in the context of the challenges and uncertainty of COVID-19 and central government spending. He commented that it looked to place the Council in a strong position to support the recovery in the city and thanked the Head of Policy and Resources and his team for their work towards it. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources advised Members that the proposed budget and money plan were devised with best assumptions and prudent principles. She noted that although COVID-19 pressures had necessitated savings to be sought in the 2021-22 and 2022-23 cycles nonetheless Gloucester remained in a better position than other second tier authorities. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources further advised that the impact of the pandemic on Council Tax and Business Rates returns may have to be managed over the lifetime of the plan. She drew Members' attention to the budget consultation (Appendix 7) and the priorities identified by the respondents.

**RECOMMENDED** to Council that:

- (1) the proposals for the 2020/21 budget included in the report be approved
- (2) it be noted that consultation has been undertaken on budget proposals.

**83. CUSTOMER SERVICE TRANSFORMATION UPDATE**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that sought to update Members on the success of Customer Service due to the transformation work.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources outlined the key changes since 2018 that have led to an enhanced service and noted the importance of using customer feedback to drive improvement. She advised that the increase in online enquiries and decrease in telephone calls recorded in the report (3.16) was anticipated to continue. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources reminded Members that officers had accomplished the transformation amid the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and having to work at home as required by

**CABINET**  
**10.02.21**

government guidance. She thanked the Customer Service Manager and the entire team for their professionalism and positive ethos. The Cabinet Member for Environment made clear how striking he found the improved responsiveness as demonstrated by the performance statistics in the appendices to the report including a dramatic reduction in customer average waiting times. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure commented on the impressiveness of the improvement achieved through investment combined with the hard work of officers. He expressed his own gratitude to not only the Customer Service Team but also the Corporate Director who had steered the complex project to success.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report are noted.

**84. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY UPDATE**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods that updated Members on the work council officers have undertaken regarding equalities, as well as the work the Equality and Diversity Working Group has completed this year.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods reminded Members of the discussion of the report by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021, the actions taken and that it had been driven forward by the passion of individual officers and elected members of all parties for equality and diversity. She emphasised the importance of demonstrating action as well as taking it. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods commented that it was appropriate that the report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Race Equality Week when Members were especially mindful of longstanding issues recently highlighted by the Black Lives Matter movement. She stressed that all opportunities to consider the impact of decisions and to take positive action must be seized and reassured Members that they would continue to receive updates into the future.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy advised Members to recall the quotation that 'the sum of minorities is usually the majority' and be proud to be part of a relatively tolerant city. He however reminded them that even in 2021 there was still racism and homophobia to be challenged and it was everyone's duty to do so. The Cabinet Member for Environment stated that he was particularly interested in what the independent commission established to review race relations in Gloucester might find when it reports (Cabinet 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020 minute 45). The Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth congratulated everyone, including partner organisations, who had contributed to the update and commended its breadth, openness and the tone it set for how people conduct themselves in the city. She reiterated the point that there should be no bystanders when it came to challenging inequality and promoting diversity.

**RESOLVED** that the work undertaken by council officers, the Equality and Diversity Working Group, elected members and council partners regarding equalities be welcomed.

**CABINET**  
**10.02.21**

**85. EVENTS AND FESTIVALS REPORT ON 2020 & PLAN FOR 2021-22**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure that sought Members to agree the programme for Proposed Civic and Cultural Events & Festivals 2021 and provided a review of Festivals and Events activity 2020 and overview of the Events process including a sample analysis of an event in 2020.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure advised that the report reflected positive progress despite the challenges of the past year and listed some of the significant events that had been successfully delivered. He commented that the events team and partner organisations, including the Gloucester Culture Trust, had exceeded expectations through innovation, enthusiasm and imagination with the city-wide strategic events group, 'Of Earth and Sky' event and 'Strike a Light' festival being notable examples. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure informed Members that the proposals for the 2021 Tall Ships Festival were under review with an announcement expected on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. He expressed his gratitude to officers and all partner organisations including, but not exclusive to, those referred to in the report. The Cabinet Member for Environment noted that uncertain circumstances will make the coming year difficult to plan but he gave assurance that as many festivals and events would be supported as possible. The Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth commented on how impressive she had found the programme despite the COVID-19 pandemic and reminded Members that no one should underestimate the importance of arts, history and culture to economic recovery.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the proposed Civic Events Programme for 2021 set out in the table 1 Appendix 1 of the report be approved to be managed by the City Council Cultural Services team
- (2) approval be given to support key city festivals and events programme 2021 as set out in table 2 Appendix 1 of the report.

**86. TOURISM AND DESTINATION MARKETING REPORT**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure that presented the Tourism and Destination Marketing Plan 2021 and Forecasted Budget to Members.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure commented that a small team had done terrific work promoting the city in difficult circumstances which was reflected in the report. He reassured Members that they would work closely with partner organisations and towns to further promote Gloucester's history and heritage which had been identified as a key unique selling point (USP). The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure drew attention to the proposed appointment of a high-level Gloucester Marketing Steering Board (appendix 4) which he believed would provide invaluable assistance and act as a critical friend. He thanked the Head of Cultural Services, the Tourism and Destination Marketing Manager, their team and not least the consultant whose report ignited present progress. The Cabinet Member for

**CABINET**  
**10.02.21**

Culture and Leisure emphasised the importance of supporting the tourism and destination marketing team to maximise the benefits of Gloucester's position as a superb destination for tourists both local and from further afield.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods reiterated the thanks for such a clear forward plan and stressed the importance of working with partners and especially residents. She further commented on the improving outlook for the city in terms of its regeneration and economy as well as its attractions for local people and visitors.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the Tourism and Marketing Plan 2021 in Appendix 1 of the report be noted and the recommendations accepted
- (2) the forecasted budget identified in Appendix 5 of the report be approved to allow for the work to commence.

**87. COVID-19 SUPPORT TO ASPIRE SPORTS & CULTURAL TRUST**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure that sought to enable the continued provision of leisure services for all residents of the city with short term financial support for Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure reminded Members of the importance of Aspire for the health and wellbeing of residents. He expressed gratitude towards the Chief Executive and staff of Aspire for keeping facilities available in extremely difficult circumstances and advised Members to support them to continue. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources commented that Aspire had been nothing but transparent and open with officers about the challenges they faced and recommended that they be supported to return to the level of success maintained before lockdown. She further apprised Members that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair and Group Leaders were aware of the situation. The Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth reiterated that thanks was due to Aspire staff who had demonstrated their vocation in what has been such a harrowing time. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods commented that it would be right and consistent for the administration to back a partner organisation in tough times and stressed the importance of the facilities remaining available to people who might have no alternative.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) cashflow support up to a maximum of £290k be provided to The Trust as a revolving credit facility
- (2) the Head of Policy & Resources be authorised (in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Performance & Resources and Culture & Leisure and the Council Solicitor) to take such actions and make such arrangements as are necessary for the implementation of the above

**CABINET**  
**10.02.21**

recommendation including such legal processes and agreements as are necessary.

**88. OPEN SPACE STRATEGY FOR GLOUCESTER 2021-2026**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Environment that presented for approval an updated Open Space Strategy for the period 2021-2026 which set out a robust assessment and strategic framework for managing open space resources in Gloucester.

The Cabinet Member for Environment outlined the key features of the report. He stressed the benefits of green spaces and children's play areas to health and wellbeing and that the strategy would further central government environmental objectives. The Cabinet Member for Environment reminded Members that Green Flag status had already been achieved for some parks and drew their attention to the public consultation (appendix 2) which had shaped the strategy and would steer the direction of future development. The Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth commented that the influence of the public comments on the strategy demonstrated that the council listened to residents. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure noted that it was an impressive benchmark from which to move forward and especially to advance the good progress made to develop children's play areas over recent years.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the contents and conclusions of the Open Space Strategy Consultation Response Report, following public consultation in Summer 2020, be noted
- (2) the Open Space Strategy for Gloucester 2021-26 (including updated Allotment Strategy) be adopted
- (3) authority be delegated to the Head of Place and Cabinet Member for Environment to develop a calculator setting out the levels of open space provision and financial contribution that the Council will seek from developers.

**89. GLOUCESTER COMMUNITY BUILDING COLLECTIVE**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods that updated Members on the work of the Gloucester Community Building Collective (GCBC) and sought approval of GCBC's Business Plan for 2021-2026, changes to the Board of the GCBC and that the City Council becomes a strategic investor for a period of 3 years.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods placed the GCBC in the context of the council's transformation towards being an enabler of services shaped by residents as part of the asset based community approach championed by the current administration which she hoped would continue. She expressed confidence in and excitement for the future of the collective and thanked the Corporate Director and Head of Communities for getting it to this stage. The

**CABINET**  
**10.02.21**

Cabinet Member for Environment commended its performance across the city during the COVID-19 pandemic with the delivery of food, prescriptions and information direct to the community. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources reiterated that the pandemic had proved the worth of the community centred approach and reflected on how much more challenging it would have been without partners drawing together and the leadership of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods. She noted that this model of working had been recognised as an exemplar of good practice across the country.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the role of the Gloucester Community Building Collective in the response to the current Covid-19 pandemic be welcomed
- (2) the Gloucester Community Building Collective Business Plan for 2021-2026 be approved
- (3) the appointment of four Directors to the Board of the Gloucester Community Building Collective be approved
- (4) the reduction of the number of City Council Directors from currently two to one be approved and for this to come into effect in June 2021
- (5) the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods be authorised to sign the Written Resolution in respect of recommendations 2 – 4
- (6) Gloucester City Council make a strategic investment in the Gloucester Community Building Collective of £5,000 in 2021/22 and £15,000 per annum in 2022/23 and 2023/24
- (7) the City Council's work to become a centre of excellence in strengths based approaches is formally noted and commitment is given to continue the Council's strengths based work in cooperation with Gloucester Community Building Collective and other organisations, groups and stakeholders in the City.

**90. 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 view of the nature of 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.

**91. SERVE A COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER**

**RESOLVED** as per the recommendations in the confidential report.

**Time of commencement: 6.00 pm**

**Time of conclusion: 7.05 pm**

**CABINET**  
**10.02.21**

**Chair**