



COUNCIL

MEETING : Thursday, 26th January 2023

PRESENT : Cllrs. Hyman (Mayor), J. Brown (Sheriff & Deputy Mayor), Cook, Norman, S. Chambers, Lewis, Padilla, Hilton, Pullen, Gravells MBE, Tracey, Morgan, Wilson, Bhaimia, Williams, D. Brown, Taylor, Field, Toleman, Brooker, Finnegan, Melvin, Bowkett, Ackroyd, Castle, A. Chambers, Chambers-Dubus, Conder, Dee, Durdey, Evans, Hudson, Kubaszczyk, O'Donnell, Radley, Zaman, Sawyer and Campbell

Others in Attendance

Managing Director
Monitoring Officer
Director of Communities
Director of Policy and Resources
Head of Culture
Head of Place
Policy and Governance Manager
Democratic and Electoral Services Team Leader

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Patel

38. MINUTES

RESOLVED that: - the minutes of the Council meeting held on 17 November 2022 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

40. CALL OVER

40.1 The Mayor invited Members to indicate whether they wished to reserve agenda items 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 for permission. Members indicated that they wished to reserve item 9 and 12 for discussion.

41. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

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There were no public questions.

42. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

Councillor Zaman presented a petition on behalf of residents of Barton and Tredworth in opposition to a planning application in the area.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy, Councillor S. Chambers, advise that she would pass it on to the planning team.

43. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor

The Mayor informed Members of the passing of former Councillor Leslie Jones who had been the High Sheriff of Gloucester from 1968 until 1969 and the Mayor of Gloucester from 1969 until 1970. Members who knew him paid tribute to him as a Councillor who was hardworking and was always willing to provide advice. His funeral was due to take place on Tuesday 7 February at 12.30pm at Gloucester Cathedral.

The Mayor drew to Members' attention that 27 January was International Holocaust Memorial Day which was to encourage remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust. He stated that he would be attending a memorial event at the Guildhall on the day and encouraged Members to attend also.

44. MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

Leader and Cabinet Members' Question Time

- 44.1 With regard to question 1, Councillor Hilton asked the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy, Councillor S. Chambers, if Members could be provided with a full list of s.106 agreements over the past ten years. Whilst she could not be certain how far such records went back, Councillor S. Chambers stated that she would speak with officers regarding what could be provided. Councillor S. Chambers also informed Councillor Hilton that recruiting to the role of a dedicated s. 106 officer would commence upon the conclusion of the review currently underway.
- 44.2 In response to Councillor Pullen asking whether under-represented groups would be targeted to encourage applications for a Voter Authority Certificate, the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, Councillor Norman advised that Voter ID was a new process. She highlighted that there were no scheduled elections in Gloucester in May 2023 and that the elections team (in whom she had the greatest confidence), would be liaising colleagues in other authorities post-May in order to learn lessons in order to better implement the changes.
- 44.3 Councillor Pullen asked, in relation to question 4, why it had taken two years to get to the point of engaging consultants to draw up the Climate Change Action Plan and how much would it cost to engage the consultants. The

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Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment stated that it was right that it would take time, that the Climate Change Manager had been working on multiple strands and that the cost would be reflected in the budget.

- 44.4 With regard to question 6, Councillor O'Donnell asked whether the Council would explicitly support the Billies chips scheme. Councillor S. Chambers advised that the Council adhered to strict statutory obligations with regard to homelessness, worked with numerous partner organisations and that businesses are themselves open to support the scheme.
- 44.5 Councillor Wilson noted, in respect of question 7, that Government guidance encouraged greater engagement with residents regarding applications to erect 5G masts. He asked if how residents are made aware of such proposals could be further examined. Councillor S. Chambers highlighted that it was a Government priority to improve connectivity infrastructure and that Councillor Wilson's suggestion would be looked at.
- 44.6 In respect of question 9, Councillor D. Brown asked if reopening the King George V playing fields could be treated with some urgency. Councillor Norman advised that the facility was previously maintained by Amey but that the new provider did not offer such a service. She encouraged any groups who may wish to make use of it and would be willing to be involved in its maintenance approach the Council.
- 44.7 Councillor Chambers-Dubus asked why there was not a wider campaign (similar to Streetlink) such as on bus stops to highlight the support available to assist with the cost of living crisis. Councillor Padilla advised that he would speak with officers regarding what could be achieved.
- 44.8 Councillor Bowkett asked in respect of question 13 whether the short term initiatives to reduce carbon emissions had been started or were planned. Councillor Cook advised that measures involving the crematorium were under consideration. The procuring of 'green gas' was being examined.
- 44.9 With regard to question 21, Councillor Hilton asked if the local press was incorrect in reporting that the cost of building the new Wellington Parade Garden was approximately £49k. Councillor Padilla stated that the figure was exclusive of VAT and that he did not recognise the reported figure.
- 44.10 In respect of question 22, Councillor Cook advised Councillor Bhaimia that the cameras that were operational were being used.
- 44.11 Councillor D. Brown asked if there was a possible timeframe for when floodlights could be installed at playing pitches. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure, Councillor Lewis, advised that he would like to see this as soon as was possible but that it would require planning permission.
- 44.12 In response to Councillor Bowkett's supplementary question to question 25, Councillor Cook advised that he was committed to the Climate Change Strategy being completed within six months.

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- 44.13 Councillor Hilton asked would the housing stock survey results be published prior to the Annual Meeting of the Council. Councillor S. Chambers advised that the response rate had been very good but that only once the survey was fully complete could options be considered.
- 44.14 Councillor D. Brown stated that he had been given conflicting advice regarding Legionella certificates and asked for this to be explained. Councillor Norman advised that all active buildings managed by the Council did not present Legionella concerns and, as such, the Council was fulfilling its obligations.
- 44.15 In respect of question 30, Councillor Hilton asked if it was time to seek other partners to progress the regeneration of the Fleece Hotel, Councillor Cook advised that dialogue was ongoing and that he would not rule out any partner at this early stage unless absolutely necessary.
- 44.16 Councillor D. Brown asked when a local accreditation scheme for bars and clubs might be launched. Councillor Cook shared his hope that it would be this year.

Questions to Chairs of Committees

- 44.17 In respect of the number of applications considered by the Planning Committee, Councillor Hilton asked the Chair of the Planning Committee, Councillor Taylor, if the Committee should be more forthright in bring applications to Committee. Councillor Taylor advised that numerous applications could be (due to their nature) determined by officers. The scheme of delegation could be examined at any point.
- 44.18 Councillor Hilton asked the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, Councillor Wilson, if he would ensure discussions would be in public. Councillor Wilson advised that he would always consider the advice of the Monitoring Officer. As far as was possible, he wished to see as much discussed in public but that this would be determined on a case by case basis.

45. ADOPTION OF THE GLOUCESTER CITY PLAN

- 45.1 Councillor S. Chambers moved and Councillor Cook seconded the motion. Councillor S. Chambers highlighted key elements of the report, advising that it was the first City Plan to be adopted since 1983. She praised and thanked the planning policy team and noted the conservable work which had gone into producing the plan over a number of years. Councillor S. Chambers also thanked her predecessors, Councillor Gravells and the late Councillor Organ for, not only being forces behind the plan but their advice to her also. In moving the City Plan for approval, Councillor S. Chambers highlighted that the plan would ensure the homes and jobs the City needed would be delivered whilst enhancing the natural and built environment.

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- 45.2 In concluding her remarks, Councillor S. Chambers noted that the Planning Policy Members' Working Group had proved a good example of cross-party working and of putting party politics aside.
- 45.3 Councillor Hilton conveyed the thanks of the Liberal Democrat Group to all that had worked on the plan over the years and particularly the planning policy team who had seen it through to its conclusion. He stated that he was particularly impressed with the adoption of three particular policies – making tall buildings safe from falling, a degree of restrictions on homes in multiple occupation and restrictions on the number of hot food takeaways within certain distances of each other. He praised the practical decision making which had enabled the plan to come to fruition and that he was pleased to be voting in favour of its adoption.
- 45.4 Councillor Morgan echoed the praise of Members with particular regard to the challenge of the planning policy team having to navigate often complex legislative change. Further, he praised the political goodwill which had been on display throughout the process.
- 45.5 Councillor Pullen welcomed the plan and congratulated all those involved in its preparation. Of particular note, he stated, was the considerable time, commitment and professionalism displayed by the planning policy team. He shared his view that it was a very good document and that he looked forward to it being implemented.
- 45.6 Councillor Taylor stated that the Planning Committee looked forward to implementing the plan over the coming years.
- 45.7 Councillor A. Chambers praised the document, in particular the inclusion of safety measures atop tall buildings – a matter he stated architects often did not consider. He further praised the work of all those who had been involved in its preparation.
- 45.8 Councillor Gravells congratulated both Councillor S. Chambers and the planning policy team in their preparation and realisation of the plan. He highlighted that it was impressive that agreement had been reached in bringing the plan before Council.
- 45.9 **RESOLVED that: -**
- (1) The Gloucester City Plan 2011 – 2031 (Appendix 5) be adopted, incorporating all of the Main Modifications recommended by the Inspector (Appendix 2), together with the Additional Modifications (Appendix 6), as a part of Gloucester City Council's statutory Development Plan.
 - (2) The correction of any minor errors such as spelling, grammar, cross-referencing, typographical and formatting changes (including the addition of a foreword), that do not affect the substantive content of the plan be delegated to the Head of Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning; and to finalise and publish an updated and consolidated version of the Policies Map as it relates to the Gloucester City Plan.

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46. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme, as the approved scheme for Gloucester City in 2022/23, be adopted for 2023/24
- (2) the scheme approved at 2.1 (1) above be updated to align with any legislation changes in January 2023 and to be implemented from 01 April 2023;
- (3) any urgent amendments to the scheme at 2.1 (1) above, in the event of a national emergency and authorised by the government, be adopted and implemented immediately.

47. REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2023

RESOLVED that the recommendations contained in the Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Appendices 1 and 2) be approved.

48. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS, MAY 2023-APRIL 2025

- 48.1 Councillor Norman moved and Councillor Cook seconded the motion.
- 48.2 Councillor Hilton noted that the proposed programme of meetings indicated that there would be three meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Januarys – one of these being reserved for consideration of the budget following the announcement of the local government settlement. He queried whether this was too much for one Committee in a single month. It was highlighted that this was a proposal from the Committee itself and that it was within their gift to reconsider their work programme.
- 48.3 **RESOLVED** that the two-year programme of ordinary meetings of Council and other meetings for the period of May 2023 to April 2025 be approved subject to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considering whether to hold three meetings in Januarys.

49. DESIGNATION OF MONITORING OFFICER

RESOLVED that Alice McAlpine be designated as the Council's Monitoring Officer.

50. NOTICES OF MOTION

- 50.1 Councillor Chambers-Dubus proposed and Councillor Bhaimia seconded the following motion:

“There are many streets of terraced houses in inner city wards of Gloucester that have no front gardens and who's front doors open straight onto the

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footpath. Such houses have no external access to the rear of the property. This makes it impractical to use conventional black refuse bins and instead residents are provided with black sacks as an alternative. Whilst the black sacks solve one problem, they actually create another as refuse spills out from the sacks causing litter which gets blown up and down the street. This is a health hazard, is unsightly and can attract vermin. It also results in extra street cleaning costs.

This is not solely a Gloucester problem and other councils with similar terraced streets have adopted alternative methods to the black sacks. These include communal bins, large wheelie bins and some councils have installed large underground bins.

In order to address the problems with black sacks this council resolves to::

- Review the effectiveness of black sacks in terraced streets.
- Initiate discussions with Ubico to consider alternative methods including those used by other councils as mentioned above.
- Consult with residents in affected streets to fully understand the problem and seek their views on realistic and workable alternatives.”

50.2 The motion was put to the vote and was lost.

50.3 Councillor Wilson proposed and Councillor Field seconded the following motion:

“Council is extremely concerned by the recently announced cuts to BBC local radio programming.

The changes will cut local programming after 2pm – with most shows after this point being broader regional or national broadcasts.

Council notes the announcement has met fierce criticism from across the political spectrum.

BBC Radio Gloucestershire is a vital service for people in **Gloucester**. It helps residents stay connected to their local community, providing local news, culture, sport and weather updates, and gives residents an opportunity to have their say and participate in local debates through phone-ins. BBC Local Radio does this in a unique way that commercial radio cannot quite match.

In the last couple of years, during the Coronavirus pandemic, the station was able to help spread important information, while also in many ways being the only source of company for those residents cut off from the rest of society. During the cost of living crisis local radio will play a similarly crucial role in spreading information about support services, warm banks and a number of other important lifelines for residents.

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BBC local radio also does a great job of holding decision makers to account – both local and national – as was demonstrated by the round of local interviews conducted with former Prime Minister Liz Truss on 29 September 2022.

Council recognises the BBC is being forced into cuts by successive Government freezes to the license fee and the withdrawal of funding for free licenses for over 75's. Council calls on the Government to fund the BBC properly so it can continue to deliver a full schedule of local radio programming across the UK – in addition to its planned expansion of digital radio services.

Council instructs the Managing Director to write to the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport, Rt Hon Michelle Donelan MP, to express our dismay at these proposed cuts to BBC local radio and to demand that the Government find a solution to cover the BBC's predicted £295 million funding shortfall by 2027.

Council further requests that the Managing Director write to the Director General of the BBC to celebrate the irreplaceable local service **Radio Gloucestershire** 5 provides to residents in **Gloucester** and stresses our desire for its local programming to be protected and retained."

50.4 The motion was put to the vote and was carried.

50.5 **RESOLVED that:** - Council is extremely concerned by the recently announced cuts to BBC local radio programming.

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Time of commencement: 6.30 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 8.25 pm hours

Chair