



## **CABINET**

**MEETING** : Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2022

**PRESENT** : Cllrs. Cook (Chair), Norman, S. Chambers, Hudson and Lewis

**Others in Attendance**

Cllrs Hilton, Pullen and Radley

Managing Director

Director of Policy and Resources

Head of Place

Head of Culture

Transformation and Commercialisation Manager

Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

**APOLOGIES** : None

### **112. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 9 (Gloucester Business Improvement District (BID) Proposal for BID Term 2) by virtue of owning a BID qualifying rate-paying property. He did not participate in debate or voting on this item.

### **113. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022 are confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair in due course.

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

There were no public questions.

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

There were no petitions or deputations.

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

In respect of question 2 Councillor Hilton advised that he had no access to the report referred to in the published response. He asked whether it was known that Civica UK Ltd intended to withdraw from the provision of ICT services when the decision not to progress a shared services option with the County Council was made and whether the rationale behind it would prevent reopening discussions.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources assured Councillor Hilton that she would forward a copy of the report in question directly to him. She confirmed that she had not been aware of Civica's intention to withdraw until their announcement in February 2022. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources noted that when the shared service decision was made the County Council were unable to procure the level of service and flexibility the City Council required, nor to provide the needed reassurances on pricing at that time.

In respect of question 3 Councillor Hilton sought reassurance that Civica UK Ltd had not withdrawn from the IT services procurement process because of the cyber incident at the City Council in December 2021.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources stated that she understood the decision had been made following their own review of the direction of their business across the sector as a whole. She invited the Director of Policy and Resources to respond as he had been present at meetings with Civica representatives. The Director of Policy and Resources confirmed the Cabinet Member's statement to be correct and that Civica were reviewing the ongoing provision of IT services for other local authorities.

In respect of question 4 Councillor Hilton asked if the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources was disappointed that an unreliable service provider had cost officer time. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources replied that she was disappointed. She however emphasised that the decision to withdraw had been taken by Civica head office and that local Civica staff had demonstrated unwavering commitment and support to the City Council.

In respect of question 7 Councillor Hilton noted the importance of resolving the IT services issue as soon as possible and that 3 months was the minimum period to bring them back in house. He enquired what the maximum period might be. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources confirmed that 18 months had been allowed to plan in detail should that option be pursued. She expressed confidence that it could be completed sooner than that.

In respect of question 8 Councillor Pullen informed the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure that he had been told in a meeting with Richard Graham MP's Chief of Staff that 62% of residents in the latter's own survey opposed charges. He sought reassurance that residents' opinions would be respected when making the decision. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure made it clear that the opinions of residents would be taken into account when the decision is made but stated that he had not been present at the meeting in question so could not comment on the survey.

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In respect of question 16 Councillor Radley advised that she had received reports of confusion among residents in the situation at issue and requested more detail on how they are to obtain information and support.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources reassured Councillor Radley that reports would be passed to officers for action. She stated that the first point of contact for residents was the Council website then telephone (01452 396396). The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources paid tribute to the hard work of officers in processing the large number of Council Tax Rebates despite the challenges of the cyber incident. She noted that Gloucester City Council was one of the only local authorities to have already made Council Tax Rebate payments with a third batch about to be delivered.

In respect of question 29 Councillor Pullen reminded the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture of the considerable quantity of extra work necessary should the Aspire Culture and Leisure Trust not agree to a contract extension and asked who would deliver the services if this happened.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure advised that discussions with the Aspire Chief Executive were progressing well and that he was satisfied that the proposed year-long extension would give both parties time to prepare for the longer term should Cabinet accept the recommendations in his report.

In respect of question 30 Councillor Pullen queried whether legal advice had been sought to ensure that the Partnership Delivery Plan could not be considered a contract variation. At the invitation of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure the Head of Culture responded that legal advice was being sought.

In respect of question 31 Councillor Pullen sought clarification of the term Multi-Site Operator and whether Aspire qualified as such. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure requested that the Head of Culture elucidate the matter. The Head of Culture confirmed that although Aspire was technically a Multi-Site Operator, operating GL1 and the Oxstalls Sports Park, in this context the term tended to refer to bodies operating sites across different towns or cities. He stressed however that it was not intended for any procurement exercise to exclude Aspire or other Single-Site Operators so that the options would not be limited.

**RESOLVED** that the written questions submitted and corresponding responses are noted.

**117. GLOUCESTER CITY PLAN - MAIN MODIFICATIONS**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy that sought approval for the publication of the Main Modifications to the Gloucester City Plan for public consultation.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy summarised the long journey that had progressed the Gloucester City Plan to the current stage. She particularly paid tribute to the hard work of Councillors Gravells and Organ in their roles as former holders of her portfolio. The Cabinet Member for Planning and

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Housing Strategy further outlined some of the benefits that the City Plan with the proposed modifications would bring.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources took the opportunity to thank on behalf of Cabinet the Planning Policy Manager and Principal Planning Officer for their clear and passionate advocacy for the City Plan at the examination hearings and Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure informed Members that he had observed the long development of the City Plan as a member of the Planning Committee for ten years. He reminded them of the importance of getting it right so that more say is given on how Gloucester evolves and regenerates in the future.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the proposed Main Modifications to the Gloucester City Plan as set out at Appendix 2 of the report (including proposed modifications to the Policies Map), are approved for public consultation, alongside Additional Modifications and the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment addendum
- (2) the correction of any minor errors such as spelling, grammar, typographical and formatting changes that do not affect the substantive content of the plan is delegated to the Head of Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy.

**118. GLOUCESTERSHIRE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy that sought approval from Members for the Gloucestershire Statement of Common Ground.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy outlined the key features of the report. She advised Members that Gloucester was the first of the local authorities in the partnership to consider the final version of the proposed joint statement.

**RESOLVED** that the Gloucestershire Statement of Common Ground as set out at Appendix 1 of the report is approved.

**119. GLOUCESTER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) PROPOSAL FOR BID TERM 2**

Cabinet considered the report of the Leader of the Council that sought Members to review the BID proposal for Term 2 including the draft business plan and process for a renewal ballot.

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The Leader of the Council highlighted the benefits already brought to Gloucester since the BID was established in 2017 and the key areas of focus for the proposed second term. He reminded Members that the partnership was able to do things that the local authority could not. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources expressed her support for retaining this partnership initiative which had advantaged both businesses and residents with schemes such as that for the City Protection Officers. She commented that now with the regeneration and growth of events in Kings Quarter was not the time to end a successful partnership.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the Gloucester BID's plans to re-ballot for a second term is noted, and
- (2) authority is delegated to the Director of Policy and Resources to cast a vote in favour of extending the BID for a second term through any qualifying rate-paying properties owned by the Council.

**120. LEISURE AND CULTURE OPTIONS APPRAISAL, CONTRACT EXTENSION AND INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure that updated Members on the existing culture and leisure provision and presented options for future provision.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure summarised the key findings and proposals within the report. He noted that the independent assessment by market leaders in the field had recognised Gloucester to be on the right track and provided focus for further progress. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure commented that the recommendations would allow Aspire Leisure and Culture Trust a breathing space to recover from the COVID pandemic and for the council to concentrate on developing the Guildhall and Museum of Gloucester thus exploiting the opportunity to get things right and build on the success of the recent regeneration of Kings Square. The Cabinet Member for Environment informed Members that he considered Aspire to have done great work so far and that he would be glad to work with them into the future.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the report is accepted and the actions noted
- (2) the contract period with Aspire Leisure and Culture trust is extended by a further 12 months on the condition that a Partnership Development Plan is agreed for the duration of this extension
- (3) agreement is given to follow the recommended route to procure a new leisure contract from an external provider

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- (4) in-house service is retained for Cultural services, whilst services are transformed in line with the Council Plan and options for future delivery of cultural provision are explored
- (5) delegated authority to implement these recommendations is given to the Head of Culture in consultation with the Director of Policy & Resources and Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure.

**121. ICT SERVICES: OPTIONS REPORT**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that sought to ensure continuation of ICT services beyond the current contract end date of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources reminded Members that Civica UK Ltd had unexpectedly withdrawn from the ICT contract process in February 2022. She advised them that the recommendations would allow a period to properly consider options for the longer term.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the content of the report is received and noted
- (2) the option to 'do nothing' is dismissed
- (3) the option to procure on the open market is dismissed
- (4) ICT services are moved to an in-house provision at the earliest opportunity, whilst a review of viable options for long term delivery of ICT services is undertaken, to consider:
  - (a) Joining an existing Local Authority services ("Teckal") company or a shared service
  - (b) Bringing the services in-house
  - (c) Procurement via a compliant framework
- (5) delegated authority is given to the Director of Policy and Resources (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources and the Council Solicitor) to implement these decisions and the outcome of the review of viable options.

**Time of commencement: 6.00 pm**

**Time of conclusion: 6.35 pm**

**Chair**