



## **CABINET**

**MEETING** : Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022

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

**Others in Attendance**

Cllrs A. Chambers and Hilton

Managing Director

Director of Communities

Director of Policy and Resources

Monitoring Officer (present for items 44-48)

Head of Place

Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

**APOLOGIES** : Cllr. Norman

#### **44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **45. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022 are confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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

A member of the public referred to a motion passed by a local branch of Unite the Union stating 'that everyone was entitled to live in a safe and warm environment and without fear.' He further informed Members that he believed the Member of Parliament for Gloucester saw this as an aspiration. The member of the public asked if the Leader of the Council would propose the same motion at Council in what he perceived to be a time of environmental and financial crisis.

The Leader of the Council responded that to live in a safe and warm environment without fear was a natural aspiration for most communities. He noted some of the obstacles to safety such as climate change, national conflict, violence against women and girls, and human rights abuses in what is a troubled world. The Leader of the Council further commented that the breadth of threats was beyond the scope of any local authority alone. He emphasised the need for collaboration between all

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tiers of government, other organisations including unions, and individual people. The Leader of the Council gave examples where Gloucester City Council had worked to address particular issues in partnership with a range of agencies such as the Local Resilience Forum, Police and housing associations. He stated that aspiration was indeed the right word and that together with initiatives from central government, such as the energy support programme and uplifts to benefits, the Council will play its part to collectively make a significant difference to residents' lives.

The Democratic and Electoral Services Officer read a question on behalf of a member of the public concerning agenda item 18. It enquired by whose authority Members would have the right to give tax-payers land free of charge without at least consulting the residents of Podsmead and Gloucester who they believed to have been kept in the dark about the proposed deal.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy pointed out that her report sought to delegate terms for negotiations rather than give authority to transfer the land. She affirmed that it was her understanding that at least nine consultation sessions had already taken place and that Gloucester City Homes would conduct more as plans developed. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy confirmed that the ultimate intention was to regenerate the estate as outlined in the Council Plan 2022-24 but that any action would be subject to the outcome of negotiations.

**47. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)**

There were no petitions or deputations.

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

In respect of question 1 Councillor A. Chambers asked when the collection rates would return to normal levels what the impact would be in financial terms. In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources the Leader of the Council gave assurance that a written answer would be provided and asked the Director of Policy and Resources to comment. The Director of Policy and Resources confirmed that the year-on-year variations were accounted for in the Collections Fund and that it was hoped that the normal collection rate would be resumed next financial year.

In respect of question 2 Councillor A. Chambers sought clarification on why £60,000 allocated by the Funds had not been spent when he perceived there still to be need. The Leader of the Council commented that it was a lengthy process to identify each desideratum and noted that they all had been successfully funded below the total allocation amount. He added that the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources was satisfied with the spending and invited Councillor A. Chambers to make known any issues which he felt would benefit from the Funds.

In respect of question 3 Councillor A. Chambers reminded the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure that darkness falls from approximately 3.30pm and that most shops shut from 5pm. He requested that the Cabinet Member consider having the

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Christmas lights on before 5pm each day to make the city more welcoming. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure gave reassurance that the suggestion would be considered. He commented on the benefit of having the lights on in the evenings for the night-time economy of the city.

In respect of question 4 Councillor A. Chambers asked for confirmation that the Member of Parliament for Gloucester's online post was mistaken. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure reaffirmed that negotiations were ongoing. He stated that although ultimately the building's future was in the hands of the County Council, the City Council would not take on an asset it could not afford to run.

In respect of question 5 Councillor A. Chambers queried whether the money spent on the mail contractor might be better invested employing young people in Gloucester to give them the skills and experience to kickstart their careers. In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources the Leader of the Council invited officers to respond. The Director of Policy and Resources advised that the cost of the contract was justified by the very high volume of mail received, which he reminded Members included all the revenues and benefits correspondence.

In respect of question 6 Councillor Hilton informed the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods that in his opinion the refurbished garden had not been properly maintained to the detriment of what ought to be a focal point for the city. He sought reassurance that it would be done in future. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods reiterated that a partnership had been entered into with Emerging Futures Community Interest Company to make and keep the garden attractive. He recommended that links with the Gloucestershire Royal Hospital and associated organisations be explored to make the most of the space and assist with its upkeep.

In respect of question 7 Councillor Hilton sought further clarification on why the Matson regeneration scheme is no longer going ahead as planned in 2017 and what the Member of Parliament for Gloucester has achieved without building on previously open space. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy stated that she could not answer for the Member of Parliament. She confirmed that the scheme had not met the viability criteria detailed in the original report. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy advised that should funding become available then regeneration projects would go ahead.

In respect of question 8 Councillor Hilton noted that according to the Gloucester City Homes website the new housing planned for Podsmead did not include additional homes for social rent and asked if that was acceptable. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy confirmed that applications for any new housing would be subject to the planning process and its requirements. She reiterated that her report regarding Podsmead (agenda item 18) was a proposal to enter negotiations so that needs for social rent housing can be addressed.

In respect of question 9 Councillor Hilton noted that the acreage of recreational land in the written response was less than what he understood to be the total area in question. He queried what would happen to the excess land. The Cabinet Member

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for Planning and Housing Strategy advised that a detailed answer would be supplied.

In respect of question 10 Councillor Hilton enquired whether the subject matter of the proposed negotiations would be shared with elected members so that assumptions may be challenged. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy confirmed that legal advice would be sought on what can be revealed. She further advised that she understood that the relevant Ward Member had been invited to discussions but had not attended.

**49. DRAFT MONEY PLAN 2023-28 AND BUDGET PROPOSALS 2023/24**

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 and budget proposals.

The Leader of the Council reminded Members that there were still unknown factors at this stage so that the final yearend positions remained uncertain. He nevertheless informed them that that he believed the authority to be in a better position than most others and stated that although savings had been identified, these would not impact staffing or priorities. The Leader of the Council outlined some of the positive achievements over the past year including increased income from recycling. He thanked officers for their work, especially the Finance Team, and took the opportunity to urge residents to engage with the budget consultation available on the Council website.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure expressed his pleasure at what he considered such a good team to be steering the Council's finances through uncertain times.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the assumptions contained in the Council's draft Money Plan from 2023/24 to 2027/28 and revisions to the draft revenue budget are approved
- (2) the uncertainties regarding future incomes, as shown in the report and Appendix 1, and the need to update the Draft Money Plan when there is more certainty regarding Central Government financing, are noted.

**50. TREASURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE - MID YEAR REPORT 2022/23**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that updated Members on treasury management activities for the six month period of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Code of Practice for Treasury Management.

The Leader of the Council summarised the report. He confirmed that the optimum yield on investments would continue to be sought. The Leader of the Council drew

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Members' attention to £35m of new borrowing to aid the Forum development (4.1) and reassured them that the Council has operated within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement limits.

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

**51. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2023/24**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that sought approval to retain the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2023/24.

The Leader of the Council outlined the background to the scheme and advised that the proposed scheme be subject to legislation changes expected in January 2023.

**RECOMMENDED** to Council 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) in the report be updated to align with any legislation changes in January 2023 and to be implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023
- (3) any urgent amendments to the scheme approved at 2.1 (1) in the report, in the event of a national emergency and authorised by the government, be adopted and implemented immediately.

**52. PERFORMANCE MONITORING QUARTER 2 - 2022/23**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that informed Members of the Council's performance against key measures in Quarter 2 of 2022/23.

The Leader of the Council detailed both the improving and declining trends described within the report.

**RESOLVED** that the Quarter 2 Performance Report 2022/23 at Appendix 1 of the report is noted.

**53. TOURISM AND DESTINATION MARKETING PROGRESS REPORT 2022**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure that sought to update Members on the progress of the Tourism and Destination Marketing Function against the objectives outlined in Tourism and Destination Marketing Plan issued in January 2022.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure informed Members that the progress and reach measured in the review (appendix 1) went beyond his high expectations and that he anticipated that even this performance would be exceeded with the major events planned in the coming year. The Cabinet Member for Culture and

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Leisure commented that Gloucester was really going places for which he thanked the Tourism and Destination Marketing Manager and her team.

The Cabinet Member for Environment reminded Members that Arts Council England (ACE) had recently demonstrated their confidence in the city by awarding National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status to Gloucester Culture Trust, Guildhall and Strike A Light. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy stated that it was good not only because more visitors were coming to spend money here but that residents had more reason to enjoy and be proud of the City.

**RESOLVED** that the Tourism and Marketing Progress Report is noted, and that the progress made against the marketing plan in 2022 is endorsed.

**54. ANNUAL REPORT ON THE GRANT FUNDING PROVIDED TO VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods that outlined the Council's financial contributions towards the voluntary and community sector during the year 2021/22.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods placed the report within the context of the Council's commitment to Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) practices whereby communities drive their own priorities forward to benefit residents. He gave examples from the over £27,000 distributed to 47 organisations (appendix 1) where small amounts of money had generated greater benefits through communities and individuals working together. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods advised that support would continue to be given to projects that aid residents such as the recent warm spaces initiative.

The Cabinet Member for Environment commented that the report and amount distributed demonstrated how much the Council are helping residents around the City. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure reiterated that it contained examples of where relatively small sums of money can make a real difference to people's lives.

**RESOLVED** that the report is noted and the same approach is endorsed for the 2022/23 year.

**55. GLOUCESTER COMMUNITY BUILDING COLLECTIVE**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods that provided an update on the City's successful community building activities and set out future steps for community ownership of the Gloucester Community Building Collective Community Interest Company (GCBC).

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods highlighted the key features of the report. He emphasised GCBC's aspiration to be a centre of excellence empowering communities and its achievements so far (3.3-5). The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods advised Members that it was widely regarded as a respected community partner and that this was the right time in order for its membership model to change to ensure continued success.

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The Cabinet Member for Environment reminded Members that this was another example of the Asset based Community Development (ABCD) approach working to deliver admirable results. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy commented that the projects funded represented a great example of communities working for themselves.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the significant success of the GCBC in delivering community building activities in Gloucester and developing as a mature and financially sustainable organization is noted
- (2) the next steps in the development of the Collective to become a community led organisation from December 2022 is endorsed
- (3) the Council withdraw from sole Membership and the Membership Agreement
- (4) authority is delegated to the Director of Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods and Council Solicitor to Implement these changes.

**56. ADOPTION OF THE GLOUCESTER CITY PLAN**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy that sought Members to recommend the adoption of the Gloucester City Plan as a part of Gloucester City Council's statutory Development Plan.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy stressed the scale of both the significance of the proposed plan, the first since 1983, and the huge amount of work to compile it. She commented on its impact not only on regeneration and the delivery of homes but also on climate change and jobs as well as the natural and historic environments. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy drew Members' attention to some of the innovative policies incorporated in the plan. These included the requirement for 25% of new homes to be adaptable and affordable, Biodiversity Net Gain and fall prevention measures for buildings over a certain height.

The Cabinet Member for Environment stated that the Gloucester City Plan was a great credit to the Planning Policy Manager and his team and asked officers present that they be thanked. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure reflected on the long process to form the Plan and opportunities given for everyone to feed into it. He commented that it would enable Gloucester to develop as we want rather than being dictated by others.

**RECOMMENDED** to Council that:

- (1) the Gloucester City Plan 2011 – 2031 (Appendix 5 of the report) be adopted, incorporating all of the Main Modifications recommended by the Inspector (Appendix 2 of the report), together with the Additional

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Modifications (Appendix 6 and Appendix 6A of the report), 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 Planning and Housing Strategy; and to finalise and publish an updated and consolidated version of the Policies Map as it relates to the Gloucester City Plan.

**57. INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT (IFS) 2021/2022 AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) RATE SUMMARY STATEMENT**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy that sought Members to approve the publication of the IFS relating to the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and the Annual CIL Rate Summary.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy advised Members of the need for the report and highlighted its key features.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the publication of the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) relating to the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 is approved; and
- (2) it is noted that the Annual CIL Rate Summary Statement will be published alongside the IFS by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022.

**58. TRANSFER OF LAND ADJACENT TO SCHOOL LODGE MATSON LANE TO GLOUCESTER CITY HOMES**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources and Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy that proposed the disposal of land adjacent to School Lodge, Matson Lane, to Gloucester City Homes (GCH) for them to construct affordable housing, with GCH to transfer School Lodge in return for lease to Together in Matson.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy commented that the proposed disposal of land would both facilitate new affordable housing and create a fantastic community asset for everyone to enjoy. The Cabinet Member for Environment noted that the proposal represented a good example of partnership working and would benefit the residents by utilising previously unused land and providing housing in an area of the City where it was needed.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the transfer of land adjacent to School Lodge, Matson Lane to Gloucester City Homes for them to develop for affordable housing for rent (9 apartments) in exchange for School Lodge is agreed. School

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Lodge to then be transferred by way of a long lease to Together in Matson for the use as a not for profit community café with Airbnb accommodation above

- (2) the Director of Policy and Resources in conjunction with the Director of Communities is delegated to agree the terms of the sale and long lease.

**59. TRANSFER OF SITES IN PODSMEAD TO ENABLE THE REGENERATION OF THE ESTATE**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources and Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy that sought to give authority to enter negotiations with Gloucester City Homes (GCH) over the transfer of land in Podsmead to enable the regeneration of the estate.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy outlined the process that led to the request by GCH to enter the proposed negotiations. She reminded Members of the vision agreed by the strategic partnership formed in 2017 (3.1). The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy further emphasised that her report recommended that negotiations commence and was not an agreement to transfer the sites. She reassured Members that should there be an agreement then it would be brought to a future meeting of Cabinet for due consideration.

The Cabinet Member for Environment advised Members that he had seen documentation demonstrating that consultation exercises had taken place. He noted that as much of the report as possible had been made accessible to the public.

**RESOLVED** that delegated authority is given to the Property Commissioning Manager, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Performance & Resources and Planning & Housing Strategy, the Head of Communities and the Head of Place to:

- (1) negotiate heads of terms with Gloucester City Homes (GCH) for the disposal of the freehold interest in the areas of sites shown edged Red on the Plan (“the sites”) whether by one or more transactions, and that a cost benefit analysis informs the final decision on disposal
- (2) negotiate heads of terms with GCH on an agreement to provide affordable homes within the regeneration of the estate
- (3) if so required, to seek authority from the Secretary of State to dispose of the sites on the proposed terms
- (4) negotiate terms with Gloucester United Schools Trust (GUS) for the release, relaxation or variation of the restrictive covenants affecting the sites.

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**Time of commencement: 6.00 pm  
Time of conclusion: 7.00 pm**

**Chair**