



CABINET

MEETING : Wednesday, 8th February 2017

PRESENT : Cllrs. James (Chair), Watkins, Organ, D. Norman, Noakes and Cook

Others in Attendance

Jon McGinty, Managing Director

Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director

Anne Brinkhoff, Corporate Director

Jon Topping, Head of Finance

Anthony Wilson, Head of Planning

Shirin Wotherspoon, Solicitor

Atika Tarajiya, Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor James (Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy) declared a personal interest in agenda item 11 (Festival and Events 2017/18 and update on progress 2016/17) as Chairman of the Board of Marketing Gloucester Limited and advised that he would not take part in the discussion or vote on this item.

68. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 11th January 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

69. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no public questions.

70. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions or deputations.

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

There were no questions from Members to the Cabinet.

72. MONEY PLAN 2017-22 & BUDGET PROPOSALS 2017/18

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for the Performance and Resources (Councillor Norman) reviewing the Council's Money Plan for recommendation to Council.

Councillor Norman highlighted key areas of the report acknowledging that the City Council were facing a very challenging financial outlook that was unlikely to improve in the short term. He welcomed the robustness of the proposals which would provide the Council with a sustainable budget capable of withstanding the continued financial pressures. He warned that with the further expected decreases to the New Homes Bonus Scheme the Council would be required to continue to generate additional income and make further savings.

Councillor Norman reported that the City Council had accepted the Government's four year settlement offer and submitted an efficiency plan in line with this. He explained that the Together Gloucester transformation project, delivered by a group of officers from across the Council, had been successful in identifying £1 million savings in 2017/18 financial year and thanked the officers involved for their achievements in regards to this. He concluded by reporting that Cabinet would continue to support the management team in implementing the proposals noting that the Council would continue to lobby the appropriate channels.

Cabinet Members supported the proposals acknowledging the challenging decisions being undertaken and the significant pressures that the Council faced.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:

1. That the proposals for the 2017/18 budget included in this report be approved.
2. That the implementation of the target budget reductions set in the Money plan 2017/2022 be approved.
3. That it be noted that consultation has been undertaken on budget savings proposals to achieve the level of savings required in 2017/18.

73. BLACKFRIARS AND QUAYSIDE DEVELOPMENT SITES EQUALISATION AGREEMENT

Cabinet considered report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy (Councillor Paul James) which sought approval for the City Council to enter into an agreement (the equalisation agreement) with the Gloucestershire County Council dealing with how any receipts from the disposal of both authorities' sites would be dealt with.

Councillor James outlined key areas of the report stating that this was an example of the different tiers of government working collaboratively together for a mutually beneficial result. He welcomed the ensuing redevelopment of the site that the agreement would facilitate, noting that it was vital the development be appropriate for the City's residents.

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Cabinet Members expressed support for the proposals noting that it was complex deal that demonstrated good negotiation skills.

RESOLVED:

1. Authority be delegated to the Property Manager in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Economy, to agree terms for an equalisation agreement between the Councils.
2. Authority be delegated to the Property Manager to agree any ancillary documentation that the City Council's Solicitor considers necessary or desirable to enable the transaction to proceed.
3. The proceeds be distributed on the basis of the percentage of the area that each authority's site bears to the total area of the combined sites. This has been calculated at 43.45% for the City Council and 56.55% for Gloucestershire County Council. However, this figure may change if either party adjusts the site areas available for development.

74. BLACKFRIARS SITE NOW OCCUPIED BY BARBICAN CAR PARKS

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy which sought approval for the disposal of the Council's freehold interest in the Blackfriars Site.

Councillor James explained that the site was earmarked for redevelopment as part of the SRDWA (South West Regional Development Agency) agreement, as outlined in the report. He stated that the proposed student accommodation would attract students to the City Centre and enhance the daytime and night-time economies and enable the Gloucestershire University's Oxstalls Campus development to go ahead.

In response to Councillor Norman's query whether the Gloucestershire University's Oxstalls Campus development would be completed by September 2018 target date, Councillor James provided reassurance that the target date was achievable but acknowledged that it was a tight timeline.

RESOLVED:

1. Authority be delegated to the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Economy) to dispose of the freehold interest in that part of the Blackfriars site shown edged red on the plan (but excluding the area hatched) for the best consideration reasonably obtainable (as confirmed by an external specialist valuer) to allow the construction of phase one of the student accommodation.
2. Authority be delegated to the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Economy to decide on the best use of phase two including if appropriate to agree the terms of an option agreement to allow the future disposal of the

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remainder of the Blackfriars site (shown on the attached plan as the hatched area).

3. Authority be delegated to the Property Manager to agree terms with the developer of Phases 1 and 2 over the temporary use of the entire site during phase one of the development and the return of undeveloped area so it may be used as a car park by the Council during the term of the option.
4. Authority be delegated to the Property Manager to agree the terms of any ancillary documents the Council Solicitor (following consultation with the Property Manager) considers necessary or desirable to enable the transaction to proceed.

75. WESTGATE LEISURE AREA

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Cook) which informed Members on progress that had been made in respect of Westgate Park and which sought authorisation to market test interest in developing leisure related facility in the park and which sought delegated authority to pursue a development solution.

Councillor Cook reported that the site had within recent years fallen into a state of disrepair and limited by a number of constraints including flooding and contamination. He advised that if granted approval, Officers would proceed to draw up an opportunity document outlining both the opportunities and the constraints for the site and invite development and community organisations to come forward with proposals.

In response to Councillor Norman's query of what small scale costs stated in 8.1 of the report referred to, Councillor Cook explained that this referred to the cost of officer time/resource in the project.

RESOLVED:

1. Responsibility be delegated to the Corporate Director to prepare the opportunity document referred to in the report to test market interest in Westgate Park.
2. Authority be delegated to the Corporate Director in Consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Leader of the Council to grant a lease(s) with a potential partner(s) in order to further develop Westgate Park.

76. GROWING GLOUCESTER'S VISITOR ECONOMY ACTION PLAN ANNUAL UPDATE 2016

The Chair agreed to revise the order of the agenda to allow agenda item 11 to be discussed as the final item of the meeting.

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure (Councillor Lise Noakes) which updated Members on the progress that has been

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made in achieving the Growing Gloucester's Visitor Economy Action Plan during 2016.

Councillor Noakes highlighted key areas of the report noting that the City's Visitor Economy had grown significantly in recent years. She advised that since adoption of the policy in 2014, the new Cultural Strategy had been developed and adopted and the Gloucester Culture Board had been appointed, with the new director due to take up position on the 14th March 2017. She commented that significant officer resource from the Culture and Leisure Portfolio had been diverted to the Together Gloucester project which had resulted in some areas not performing as highly as others. She expressed hope that the City's Great Place Scheme bid was successful as this would represent significant investment into the City's Cultural offer

Councillor Watkins welcomed the report noting that it demonstrated the journey of improvements the City had undertaken. She welcomed the inclusion and participation of community group in developing the cultural offer and hoped this would continue.

Cabinet Members supported the proposals, commenting that the visitor economy was a key economic driver which supported the local economy.

RESOLVED:

1. The achievements made in delivering the Growing Gloucester's Visitor Economy Action Plan be noted;
2. The activities planned by various partners be recognised as contributing to the 'Growing Gloucester Visitor Economy' aims and objectives;
3. The Action Plan be further reviewed and updated on an annual basis, to reflect the actions achieved and to identify and agree future actions.

77. GLOUCESTER PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY 2017 - PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy which sought approval to allow the Draft Public Realm Strategy to progress to a 6 week period of public consultation prior to recommendation of adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Councillor James commented that the existence of high quality public realm stimulated private sector development, and that whilst the majority of public realm works were the responsibility of the Council, some works were undertaken by developers, and a consistency of approach was required. He advised that an action plan, outlining short term improvements was being developed, noting that the policy had been presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on the 30th January 2017.

Councillor Norman referring to paragraph 8.2 of the report warned that the City Council could utilise only those resources that were available to them and would

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need to consider ring fencing budgets or earmarking funds to make available for the project.

Councillor Watkins thanked officers for preparing the strategy commenting that it was an opportunity for the Council to consider how they could make the City accessible for everyone, including individuals who had mobility impairments. She welcomed responses to the consultation and encouraged community groups and individuals with mobility issues to share their views.

Councillor James advised that Overview and Scrutiny Committee had requested that list of consultees be considered to include disability and mobility awareness groups. Responding to Councillor Norman's comments regarding the finance, he noted that some improvements would be delivered through large scale developments such as Project Pilgrim. He acknowledged that the Council would need to think creatively about ways to finance improvements to other areas of the City, and in particular the gate streets.

RESOLVED:

That the 'Gloucester Public Realm Strategy 2016 - Public Consultation Draft' be approved for a six week period of public consultation.

78. RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT AND STRATEGY 2017-2020

Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Audit Risk Assurance which proposed an updated Risk Management Policy Statement and Strategy to become effective from 1st April 2017.

The Head of Finance highlighted key areas of the report noting that the Council complied with the statutory requirements and codes of good practice.

RESOLVED:

1. The Risk Management Policy Statement and Strategy 2017 – 2020 be endorsed; and
2. The Strategy, be disseminated to managers in accordance with a Communications Plan, to reaffirm the Council's risk management objectives.

79. ANTI FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY STATEMENT AND STRATEGY (INCLUDING THE ANTI BRIBERY POLICY AND ANTI MONEY LAUNDERING POLICY) 2017-2019 AND THE CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING PROCEDURE (WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY).

Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Audit Risk Assurance which sought independent assurance on the adequacy of the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption response and framework.

The Head of Finance highlighted key areas of the report commenting that the Council complied with statutory requirements and codes of good practice.

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RESOLVED:

1. The Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy Statement and Strategy, the Anti Bribery Policy, Anti Money Laundering Policy 2017-2019 and the Confidential Reporting Procedure (Whistleblowing) be endorsed; and
2. The strategy and policies be disseminated to managers in accordance with a Communications Plan, to reaffirm the Council's anti-fraud culture and objectives.

80. FESTIVALS AND EVENTS 2017/18 AND UPDATE ON PROGRESS 2016/17

Councillor James declared a personal interest in the agenda item as Chairman of the Board of Marketing Gloucester Limited (MGL) and withdrew from the meeting.

Councillor Watkins chaired the meeting during the discussion on this item.

Council considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure which sought approval for the proposed events, support and associated budgets during 2017/18.

Councillor Noakes outlined key areas of the report, noting that the City's events were gathering increasing number of visitors. She commented that events were most successful when in collaboration with partners and stakeholders noting that it was not solely the responsibility of the Council to hold events within the City. She encouraged Members to promote participation from individual and community groups within their wards, stating there was funding that could be accessed to organise events.

She explained that MGL had been tasked with undertaking a strategic impact assessment of events organised in 2016/17 to provide a qualitative valuation of the impact of holding such event and to assist in the consideration of the following year's events. She concluded by reporting that funding provided to MGL had been reduced in 2017/18, reflecting Council-wide pressures and the organisation had been tasked with thinking creatively to encourage external investment and sponsorship.

Cabinet Members expressed support for the proposals, welcoming the addition of the strategic impact assessments to ensure value for money. Councillor Organ (Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning) thanked volunteers, community groups and officers for taking part and assisting with the organisation of events around the City and in particular the Gloucester Goes Retro Festival.

RESOLVED:

1. The 2017/18 programme of Council funded and supported events as set out in Section 3 of the report be approved.

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2. The criteria set out in paragraph 5.3 of the report are still relevant and should continue to form the basis of any strategic decision making when planning future events and festivals.

Time of commencement: 6.00 pm

Time of conclusion: 6.42 pm

Chair