



CABINET

MEETING : Wednesday, 17th June 2020

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

Others in Attendance

Cllrs Hilton, Stephens and Wilson

Managing Director

Corporate Director

Corporate Director

Head of Place

Head of Communities

Head of Policy and Resources

Head of Cultural Services

Major Projects Consultant

Housing Services Operational Lead

Policy and Governance Manager

Democratic and Electoral Services Team Leader

Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

APOLOGIES : None

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th May 2020 are confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chair in due course.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

The Democratic and Electoral Services Officer read the following question on behalf of a member of the public who submitted it in writing in lieu of participating in the virtual meeting.

The member of the public apprised Members of his experience as an advocate for people living on the street, in temporary and in supported accommodation and what he perceived to be the dire need for the most vulnerable to be represented in

CABINET
17.06.20

disputes, appeals and other matters with individuals, agencies and authorities. He asked if the Council would consider recognition of a community union to represent such people. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods replied that although the Council had developed both good working relationships with a broad range of advocacy services across the county and robust complaints procedures, it was nonetheless vital to strive for additional ways to support vulnerable people to overcome obstacles. She gave reassurance that this suggestion alongside others would be raised within the cell of partner agencies set up to explore ways of assisting people to achieve and sustain housing.

The Democratic and Electoral Services Officer read the following two questions on behalf of another member of the public unable to participate in the virtual meeting.

The member of the public informed Members that Gloucester Business Improvement District (BID) sponsored flower displays had been noisily replaced after 11pm. He asked if work of this nature could be carried out at a more reasonable hour given the many residential properties in the city centre. The Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth responded that a complaint from a resident had already been received and immediately acted on. She reassured Members that the parties concerned, including Gloucester BID who had arranged the work in question, would be reminded again to avoid such activities at unsociable times.

Regarding the COVID-19 lockdown the member of the public advised Members that he believed many city centre shops could have opened legally and safely prior to June 15th 2020 but did not. He asked what the Council and its funded organisations such as Gloucester BID could have done better to encourage local businesses to have reopened faster. The Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth stated that officers, Gloucester BID and the Federation of Small Businesses had been engaging with and keeping local businesses up to date with government advice. She summarised the timescale of what was permitted when and pointed out that the broad range of retailers were only allowed to open from the 15th June and only if they could clearly demonstrate compliance with the social contact guidelines. The Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth commented that although the Council offered support, any decision to open or not was made by the businesses themselves.

4. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions or deputations.

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

Concerning the proposed City Centre Commission (agenda item 7) Councillor Hilton asked when its terms of reference would be set and if they would first be shared with elected members' group leaders. The Leader of the Council confirmed that they would as soon as they were available. Councillor Hilton sought further clarification on whether the terms of reference would allow each of the groups to nominate a Commission member. The Leader of the Council stated that he believed all political parties should be involved in the Commission and would make the recommendation to its Chair.

CABINET 17.06.20

Councillor Stephens suggested that the name 'City Centre Commission' implied its vision would be restricted to the centre rather than the wider city. He enquired if a more inclusive alternative such as 'Future City Commission' could be considered. The Leader of the Council confirmed that it would evolve over time to encompass the whole city but would initially concentrate on the centre. He stated that it might get a different title as it developed to reflect its evolution. Councillor Stephens sought clarification as to whether the Commission would be able to monitor key sites as he felt that maintaining scrutiny over the hit list of regeneration sites had been advantageous for the Regeneration Advisory Board. The Leader of the Council agreed that the Commission should be able to make contributions towards the hit list of key sites but he made it clear that the Commission was to have a strategic viewpoint rather than be concerned with individual sites or day-to-day delivery of schemes.

Councillor Wilson sought reassurance that any revenue shortfalls for local authorities during the COVID-19 pandemic were to be reimbursed by central government as had been implied by their public announcements and whether there was a plan in place should they not be. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources confirmed that monthly accounts were being submitted and that the latest would be shared with opposition groups to make them aware of the current situation of the Council. She gave reassurance that the Leader of the Council, officers and herself were lobbying to receive a concrete plan for reimbursement beyond the £1.3 million already received and that Cabinet were considering how to manage portfolios in a range of best and worst case scenarios. The Leader of the Council commented that he had written to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to seek clarity on the government's position and reiterated that he continued to lobby hard alongside the Local Government Association, District Councils Network and other bodies.

Councillor Wilson drew Members' attention to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (10 March 2020) concerning the former Marketing Gloucester Limited (MGL) and asked when they would be considered by Cabinet. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure stated that the report by the MGL Interim Chief Executive discussed at that meeting would be brought to the next meeting (15 July 2020) and to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee before that. He emphasised the need to make the correct decisions in a timely manner.

6. CITY CENTRE COMMISSION

Cabinet considered the report of the Leader of the Council that sought approval to establish a City Centre Commission for Gloucester.

The Leader of the Council listed some of the successful regeneration projects in which the Regeneration Advisory Board had been instrumental and highlighted the need for the new focus on revitalising the city centre to be provided by the proposed Commission. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure stressed the importance of having the right person, such as the Dean of Gloucester, to lead the Commission. He asked if the Dean had agreed to his nomination in the report. The Leader of the Council confirmed that he had.

CABINET
17.06.20

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the Council invites the Dean of Gloucester, the Very Reverend Stephen Lake, to establish a City Centre Commission for the purpose of developing and overseeing the delivery of a 10 Year Vision for the City Centre
- (2) the Regeneration Advisory Board be replaced by City Centre Commission
- (3) a budget of £10,000 be made available from the Regeneration Reserve to support the administration of the Commission during 2020/21
- (4) Cabinet receives an annual progress report on the City Centre Commission and, subject to satisfactory progress, consider a further annual grant of up to £10,000 to support the work of the Commission.

7. PERFORMANCE MONITORING QUARTER 4 2019/20

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 4 of 2019/20.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources highlighted the key features and trends in the report. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure reminded Members that footfall in the Museum of Gloucester (Performance Indicator VE2) had been increasing before the COVID-19 pandemic. He took the opportunity to thank everyone working in and with the museum for their efforts.

RESOLVED that the Quarter 4 Performance Report 2019/20 at Appendix 1 of the report be noted.

8. FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2019/20

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that informed Members of the final Council position against agreed budgets for the 2019/20 financial year and sought them to note the final outturn position and approve movement to and from earmarked revenue reserves.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources outlined the position in each portfolio and placed them in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in relation to reductions in income. She reminded Members that the financial position had been good before the pandemic and emphasised the central importance of the reserves both in the current situation and to safeguard the Council in the longer term. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources advised Members that in contrast to other local authorities the reporting deadline had been met without utilising the special extension. She thanked the finance team and Section 151 Officer for their hard work. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure commented on their professionalism in difficult times. The Cabinet Member for

CABINET
17.06.20

Communities and Neighbourhoods drew Members' attention to the work done by everyone in her own portfolio, particularly the Corporate Director and Housing Services Operational Lead, to reduce the human as well as financial costs both during and before the pandemic and thanked them. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy echoed those sentiments and extended his thanks to partner organisations, particularly registered housing providers. He advised Members that despite the disappointing income shortfall from major planning applications, the financial prospects of his portfolio were back on course.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) it be noted that:
 - i. the year-end position for the financial year 2019/20 is a decrease to the General Fund balance of £172k against a budgeted decrease of £90k.
 - ii. the General Fund balance has decreased from £1.673m to £1.501m at the end of 2019/20.
 - iii. the savings achieved in year total £170k.
 - iv. the level of earmarked reserves has reduced by £535k to £4.031m.
 - v. the impact of COVID19 pandemic on the Council year end position
- (2) the transfers to and from earmarked reserves as detailed in the table in section 6 of the report be approved.

9. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER UPDATE

Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Audit Risk Assurance that presented the Strategic Risk Register (SRR) as at 25th February 2020 to Members for their awareness.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources introduced the report and reminded Members that the SRR related to earlier in the year when circumstances were very different.

RESOLVED that the Strategic Risk Register be noted and endorsed.

10. WASTE, STREETSCENE AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SERVICES OPTIONS REPORT

The Leader of the Council announced that his report to provide an assessment of the options available to the Council as a consequence of the current contract for the delivery of Waste, Streetscene and Grounds Maintenance Services coming to an end in March 2022 and to recommend the next steps would be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29th June 2020. He advised Members that a report would be brought to Cabinet at a later date.

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

**CABINET
17.06.20**

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business (Agenda item 13) 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.

12. KINGS QUARTER DELIVERY PROPOSAL

Cabinet considered the report of the Leader of the Council that provided Members with an update on the Kings Quarter development.

RESOLVED as per the recommendations in the confidential report.

Time of commencement: 6.00 pm

Time of conclusion: 6.48 pm

Chair