



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING : Monday 6th June 2022

PRESENT : Cllrs. Field (Chair), Durdey (Spokesperson), Ackroyd, Dee, Evans, Gravells MBE, Hilton, Organ, Sawyer and Wilson.

Others in Attendance

Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Richard Cook.
Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, Councillor Hannah Norman.

Director of Policy and Resources.
Head of Place.
City Archaeologist.
Heritage Engagement Officer.
Democratic and Electoral Services Officer.

APOLOGIES : Cllrs Pullen, Castle, Kubaszczyk, Hudson, O'Donnell and Zaman.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIPPING

There were no declarations of party whipping.

3. MINUTES

3.1 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 25th April were approved and would be signed as a correct record by the Chair at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

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5. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

There were no petitions and deputations.

6. ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- 6.1 Councillor Wilson requested a meeting with the Director of Policy and Resources to discuss some queries he had concerning the information provided by Gloucestershire Airport.
- 6.2 Councillor Gravells confirmed that he also had additional queries which he would share with the Democratic and Electoral Services Officer to follow-up with Gloucestershire Airport.
- 6.3 Councillor Hilton referred to the action point update concerning the Gloucester City Plan – Main Modifications, and queried whether the update was provided verbally or in writing and who it had been provided by. It was agreed that follow-up checks would be made to establish whether the information had been provided by a Severn Trent Engineer, and to request the information in writing if necessary.

RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee **NOTE** the updates.

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

- 7.1 The Chair introduced the latest version of the Council Forward Plan and invited suggestions as to any items Members wished to add to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme. The Chair explained that the Community Safety session had been postponed on the Work Programme to the meeting on Monday 5th September, due to a clash with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods' work commitments which were already in place prior to his appointment. He confirmed that efforts would be made to invite representatives from the Gloucestershire County Council Emergency Planning Team, as well as an update on Women's Safety initiatives.
- 7.2 Councillor Hilton suggested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the Environmental Crime Enforcement Update and it was agreed that this would be added to the agenda for the meeting on Monday 3rd October.
- 7.3 It was suggested that the Committee request an update on the financial position of Gloucestershire Airport at the meeting on 3rd October and it was agreed that enquiries would be made with the Managing Director and Chairman to ascertain their availability.

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- 7.4 Councillor Hilton queried whether the Future of Eastgate Indoor Market had been issued with a revised Cabinet date on the Forward Plan. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources confirmed that no revised date had been confirmed at that stage.
- 7.5 It was highlighted that the Green Travel Plan Progress Report 2021-22 had been given a revised date on the Forward Plan and it was agreed that this item would be added to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on Monday 5th September, alongside the routine Quarter 1 Financial and Performance Monitoring reports.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be amended to reflect the above and
- 2) To **NOTE** the Work Programme.

8. PERFORMANCE MONITORING YEAR END REPORT 2021-22

- 8.1 The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources introduced the report and explained that the report set out the Council's performance against a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in 2021/22. She explained that some measures were unavailable at that time due to the ongoing impact of the cyber incident, but expressed hope that this data would be available once the Pentana system was updated.
- 8.2 The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources confirmed that Appendix 1 of the report set out the performance data for the whole year, including comparative information from 2020/21 where available. She went on to explain that areas seeing an improving trend were the number of Environment Health service requests, the number of anti-social behaviour interventions by Solace and footfall at the Museum of Gloucester.
- 8.3 The Chair referred to the transfer of waste service provision to Ubico which had taken place earlier in the year. He asked for an update as to whether the Council was seeing an improvement in customer waiting times. He also requested clarification on the figures at KPI CS-6, concerning the number of telephone calls received by the Council. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources explained that through 2022, the Customer Services team had seen a reduction in calls to the Council, which was in part due to a channel shift from telephone services to the online 'My Gloucester' facility. She confirmed that levels of contact from residents varied throughout the year, and that some periods were busier than others, for example, increased garden waste collection requests during the summertime. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources further noted that the Council had seen an improvement in customer wait times during the second half of the year, and that the average waiting time had improved, with the latest figures showing calls averaging 5 seconds shorter.

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- 8.4 Councillor Wilson queried why the annual target was still set at 2 minutes when response times back in 2020 sat around the 1-minute mark. He expressed the view that the Council should be more ambitious in setting waiting time targets. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources explained that although in her view the waiting time figures were healthy, sometimes cases were complex, and a Customer Services officer might be on a call for 15-20 minutes dealing with a complex query which could sometimes create a bottleneck. She noted that with the advancement of the online 'My Gloucester' reporting facility and the ability to signpost residents to the appropriate service, the customer telephone contact centre should in time be a last resort for residents. She noted that she was happy to challenge the team, but there were other factors to consider such as sickness or holiday leave which might make a 1-minute target unrealistic.
- 8.5 The Chair requested an update on how the Council Tax rebate was progressing. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources confirmed that the latest figure she was aware of showed that 32,000 households in Gloucester had received their rebate, which was the highest in the County. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources expressed her view that this should be applauded, particularly in light of the IT disruption the Council was facing from the December 2021 cyber incident. In relation to non-direct debit holders, she confirmed that the Council would be working with all advice agencies to raise awareness that residents without a Council Tax direct debit were entitled to a rebate and needed to apply. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources encouraged Members to raise awareness within their communities.
- 8.6 In response to a query from the Chair as to whether the rebate would be issued to recipients of Universal Credit, the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources stated that it was her understanding that the payment would be issued by energy companies directly.
- 8.7 Councillor Wilson queried whether those residents who paid their Council Tax annually had received their rebate, and it was agreed that follow-up enquiries would be made with the Revenues and Benefits team to obtain this information. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources noted that there may be some anomalies, but the team were progressing with the rebate distribution well. The Director of Policy and Resources further noted that 90% of residents paid their Council Tax via direct debit, however those residents who had very recently moved home or changed their name might wait a little longer.
- 8.8 Councillor Hilton referred to the CWB-13 indicator and requested clarification on the Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 figures, which he noted were below the threshold target. He asked how the cyber incident has affected the reporting of incidents. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources envisioned that inspections were still taking place, but understood there were issues with the system taking in data. She noted that there were some lockdown restrictions in place through Quarter 1 and 2 of 2021 and staff vacancies in the service, however the team were now working at capacity

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and there would be an updated assessment in due course once the remaining data was accessible.

- 8.9 In response to a further question from Councillor Hilton as to whether she was confident that the Quarter 3 and 4 figures would be above target, the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources referred to the statement in the narrative that the team expected the final figure to be above target, however she suggested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could invite officers to explain the position to the Committee should the final figure be under target.
- 8.10 Councillor Durdey referred to CWB-1 and the statement in the narrative that the way Environmental Health service requests were recorded had 'changed and become more efficient'. He requested further information as to what these improvements were, and whether there were any plans to roll out the new approach to other service areas to improve efficiency. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources noted her understanding that the improvements might be similar to the shift from paper driven processes to automated processes in the Licensing service, and agreed to clarify with the Community Wellbeing team.
- 8.11 Councillor Sawyer referred to the KPIs concerning Customer Services at CS-6 and CS-8. She asked whether the Council measured customer satisfaction levels in any way and if so, whether the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could be provided with some up-to-date figures. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources agreed to make follow-up enquiries with the Customer Services team to check. It was her understanding that there was no survey as such in place, however team leaders listened in on calls on a monthly basis with a view of providing coaching and mentoring to team members. She also confirmed that there was an option for customers to provide feedback.
- 8.12 Councillor Sawyer queried whether the Council measured the Here to Help email response times and if so, whether some up-to-date figures could be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It was agreed that follow-up enquiries would be made with the Customer Services team to obtain this information.
- 8.13 In response to a further query from Councillor Sawyer as to whether the Council benchmarked their figures against other local authorities, the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources confirmed that there was no formal comparison process in place, however the Customer Services Manager had previously worked at other Councils and was still in touch with colleagues. The Director of Policy and Resources also confirmed that there was no formal comparison process.
- 8.14 In relation to the KPIs relating to housing at H-10, Councillor Durdey commented that the figures concerning the number of people living in temporary accommodation seemed to be improving. He asked how many temporary accommodation units were in Council ownership. The Director of Policy and Resources confirmed that the Council had recently acquired

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ownership of Potters Place, which had around 48 units of varying sizes and would be managed by the YMCA. He also confirmed that other accommodation owned by the Council included Caridas House, Jubilee House and Priory Place.

- 8.15 In response to a further observation from Councillor Durdey regarding Council investments, the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources noted that decisions such as the acquisition of Potters Place enabled the Council to support residents and provide them with the right accommodation. She expressed the view that it was better for the Council to utilise its own resources rather than outsourcing where possible.
- 8.16 Councillor Organ commented that having strong preventative measures in place was key to reducing the number of people needing temporary accommodation.
- 8.17 Councillor Sawyer requested a list of all Council owned temporary accommodation, including the number of units if possible, and a list of temporary accommodation not under Council ownership but still used to accommodate households in need of temporary housing. It was agreed that follow-up enquiries would be made with the Housing team to obtain this information.
- 8.18 Councillor Sawyer requested further clarification as to why the KPI at H-10 set out the average number of new households placed in temporary accommodation rather than the actual number. She asked whether consideration could be given to adding the actual number to future Performance Monitoring Reports. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources agreed to follow-up these queries with the Communities team.

RESOLVED – that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee **NOTE** the report.

9. ADOPTION OF A LOCAL LIST OF HERITAGE ASSETS FOR GLOUCESTER

- 9.1 The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment introduced the report and explained that it sought to adopt a Local List of heritage assets for Gloucester. He noted that this would be a proactive means of giving visibility to important heritage assets in the city and would be updated on an annual basis. The Leader of the Council confirmed that information about what was particularly significant about each asset would be included on the Local List, which was set out in Appendix 2
- 9.2 The Leader of the Council confirmed that the consultation response report was provided in Appendix 3 and the FAQs presented to owners were set out in Appendix 4.
- 9.3 The Chair asked for further information regarding next steps and asked whether there would be future opportunities for Members to engage with the Local List. The Leader of the Council confirmed that the panel would continue to work to develop the Local List document and noted that it would

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be updated annually. He stated that all Members were encouraged to engage with this process as they had been previously.

- 9.4 Councillor Hilton raised concerns that some of the heritage assets included in the Local List were in the wrong ward and expressed the view that more work was needed on the Local List document. He referred to assets listed in Kingsholm which were in fact in Elmbridge and noted that the assets listed in Longlevens were also now in Elmbridge. Councillor Hilton commented that it was important that the document was accurate and that these errors were rectified ahead of final approval. It was noted that 2016 boundary maps were used to ascertain the relevant wards and the City Archeologist confirmed that officers could review the document and check that the wards were correct.
- 9.5 Councillor Hilton also queried why many of the assets were being proposed for addition to the Local List when they were already in conservation areas, such as Manor Farm House and Hillfield Gardens. He expressed the view that these assets would already have protection and that his preference would be to filter out assets which were already in conservation areas and focus on protecting those outside.
- 9.6 The City Archeologist explained that the Local List was a live document. He noted that once adopted, the list would be shared with Historic England and it would be updated annually in line with additions and removals. The City Archeologist stated that he would hesitate to exclude assets which were already in conservation areas as he felt there was still real value for assets and premises in being added to the Local List as it provided an additional layer of protection.
- 9.7 In response to a further query from Councillor Hilton, the Heritage Engagement Officer confirmed that a consultation had taken place and that the general public and asset owners were encouraged to participate. She reiterated that the Local List was a dynamic and fluid document. The Heritage Engagement Officer noted that it may take up to a year for Historic England to update their records and it was likely that assets would be added or removed as time goes on.
- 9.8 Councillor Hilton referred to the Consultation Response report at Appendix 3 and the reference to 'St Mark Street', and noted that that the street was not included in the Local List at Appendix 2. The Heritage Engagement Officer explained that the List had been updated since the publication of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agenda, reiterating that it was a live document. She confirmed that nominations came from members of the public, including Councillors, and were considered on merit alongside the selection criteria.
- 9.9 In response to a further query from Councillor Hilton regarding the final published Local List, the Heritage Engagement Officer confirmed that all properties which had been accepted would be put forward to Historic England. She confirmed that these assets would be given added protection through Local List status.

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- 9.10 The Chair queried who the owner of the Gloucester Sainsburys Collins Relief asset was. The Leader confirmed his understanding that this land was owned by Mountcharm.
- 9.11 In response to a query from Councillor Hilton regarding the colour-painted houses on St Marks Street, the City Archeologist confirmed that the latest Local List document had been updated to refer to the street as 'colour-painted' houses rather than Rainbow Street.
- 9.12 Councillor Hilton requested clarification as to who had nominated the colour-painted houses on St Marks Street for inclusion in the Local List. He noted that local Members were not aware, and expressed the view that it did not meet the selection criteria and that colour-painted housing was not sufficient grounds for inclusion in the Local List. The Head of Place explained the process for assets to be added to the Local List and noted that property owners had been encouraged to engage with the Council through the consultation process. He further explained that it was down to the Local List nomination panel to decide whether to accept or decline additions to the Local List and reiterated that it was a live document which would be updated on an annual basis. The Head of Place noted that the team had already spent a considerable amount of work on the project and were happy to answer any questions.
- 9.13 Councillor Hilton raised concerns that only one Councillor had a seat on the nomination panel. The Leader responded that an invite had been shared at the start of the process for Members to sit on the panel but only one volunteer had put themselves forward.
- 9.14 Councillor Hilton expressed the view that the report was good but incomplete and that there were anomalies which needed addressing before the report proceeded to Cabinet for approval. Councillor Hilton reiterated his view that buildings in conservation areas did not need to be included in the Local List as they already had protection. The City Archeologist commented that the Council had sought advice from Historic England on this matter and they had confirmed that inclusion in the Local List added additional weight and protection in the planning process. He further noted that there was always a risk that assets could be missed but the Heritage team were responsible for overseeing the List and assets could be added or removed if needed.
- 9.15 Councillor Organ raised concerns that admitting assets on the basis of art or colour-painting could set a precedent. He queried whether it might be useful for the Planning Policy Working Group to have a role in reviewing the document. The Head of Place explained that the Local List was not concerned with listing buildings, but instead identified locally important assets. He explained that if there was a planning application in the pipeline with a potential impact on the asset, inclusion on the Local List would be a flag in a Planning Officer's mind when considering an application. He agreed with Councillor Organ that consultation with the Planning Policy Working Group on an annual basis could be explored.

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- 9.16 Councillor Wilson commented that he was pleased to see the inclusion of Conway Road properties on the Local List. He referred to additional properties in Hucclecote which he thought may have been included and queried whether they had been excluded due to their Grade II listing. The Heritage Engagement Officer confirmed that Councillor Wilson was correct and that the Local List did not include statutory listed buildings.
- 9.17 Councillor Wilson suggested that local graded buildings be included as an addendum to the Local List. The City Archeologist explained that the GIS Planning system would have all the statutory listed buildings and the Local List data, and all of this data would be mapped and accessible as part of the planning process.
- 9.18 Councillor Sawyer referred to earlier comments concerning ward changes and confirmed that the assets listed in Longlevens were in Elmbridge. She expressed the view that the report was a good starting block and wondered whether it would be beneficial if it was circulated to all Members for their views and comments, as elected Members were well placed to represent residents' views. She noted that this also might be an opportunity for Members to check that ward boundaries were listed correctly. It was noted that Members were welcome to draw areas of heritage or archeological interest to the attention of the Heritage team.
- 9.19 In response to a query from Councillor Durdey regarding whether property owners could request removal from the Local List, the Head of Place confirmed that asset owners could request to be removed. The Heritage Engagement Officer noted that the Heritage team were engaging with owners directly and that channels of communication were open. In addition, the City Archeologist further explained that although it was open to owners to request removal from the Local List, the entry would not be removed from the Historic England record, and it would still be flagged on planning systems.
- 9.20 Councillor Gravells commended the hard work of the Heritage team in preparing the report and congratulated them for their work, particularly around Sherrif's Mill. He raised concerns about owners being able to remove themselves from the Local List and expressed the view that this made the protection toothless. The Leader of the Council thanked Councillor Gravells for recognising the efforts of the team. The City Archeologist explained that even where owners request removal from the Local List, monuments would have still been brought to the attention of Historic England and would still be flagged by archeologists and heritage officers. He noted that removal from the Local List would not stop officers from flagging the assets during any planning application. Councillor Gravells responded that he felt it weakened the protection if owners could remove their assets and expressed the view that it should not be made easy for them to do so.
- 9.21 Councillor Organ noted that forcing owners to remain on the Local List arbitrarily might present difficulties for owners wishing to sell their properties. He expressed the view that communication with owners was key and that the Council should try and find a balance. Councillor Organ suggested that a

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useful step might be to remind owners about how they can access protection through the Local List, and to work to identify buildings which could benefit from protection. He noted that it was a great initiative and that he anticipated a good result.

- 9.22 Councillor Hilton expressed the view that more involvement with Members was needed, commenting that although lots of work had already been undertaken, he would like further opportunities for elected Members to consider the report as he still had many questions and concerns about the balance of listed properties. He felt that circulating an updated document to all Councillors for their comments ahead of final approval by Cabinet would be useful, expressing that it was important to get the approach right.
- 9.23 The Leader of the Council reiterated that it was a fluid list and that he would encourage Members to be involved. The Head of Place commented that if the Committee recommended that all Councillors review the Local List ahead of approval by Cabinet, his advice would be to delay the report by 1 month to provide Members with the chance to review the document and submit any minor corrections.

RESOLVED that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee **RECOMMENDS** that:

- (1) An updated Local List of heritage assets be circulated to all Councillors ahead of the final report reaching Cabinet, to provide Members with an opportunity to submit their views and identify any minor errors before approval.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 4th July 2022

Time of commencement: 6.30 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 8.30 pm hours

Chair