



CABINET

MEETING : Wednesday, 15th June 2022

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

Others in Attendance

Cllrs. D. Brown, J. Brown, Hilton and Wilson
Managing Director
Director of Policy and Resources
Head of Place
Regeneration Consultant - Place
Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Norman and Padilla

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 4th May 2022 are confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair in due course.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no public questions.

4. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions or deputations.

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

In respect of question 2 Councillor Hilton noted that Gloucestershire County Council had cyberattack insurance which required certain security conditions to be met. He asked whether having had to meet these conditions would have made the City Council less vulnerable. The Leader of the Council made it clear he did not believe that the County's insurance policy would have protected the City Council from the recovery costs incurred.

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In respect of question 3 Councillor Hilton emphasised the importance of restoring access to the Planning Portal as soon as possible and reminded Members that the Planning Committee had been unable to determine a recent application because of it. He enquired if it might be available again by the end of July. The Leader of the Council confirmed that officers were working hard to reinstate the system as quickly as possible. He took the opportunity to extend apologies to all those affected by the issue.

In respect of question 4 Councillor Hilton sought clarification on whether the paper copies of postal vote applications were retained and could be used should an election suddenly be called. The Leader of the Council invited the Managing Director to respond in his capacity as Electoral Registration Officer. The Electoral Registration Officer stated that these forms were routinely destroyed after a certain period for data protection leaving only digital copies so that there were only a relatively small number of the former available. He reassured Members that not only would individual postal voters be written to, but that more general communications on the matter would be made as well.

In respect of question 5 Councillor Hilton expressed disappointment that the closure of Oaksey's left the city centre without an independent greengrocer and asked what steps officers were taking to rectify this. The Leader of the Council advised that although the issues around Oaksey's were confidential, he had been informed that they had not fully engaged with officers.

In respect of question 6 Councillor Hilton informed Members of his perception that the newly opened restaurants at St Oswalds Retail Park will serve less healthy food than those they replaced. He queried whether the Council was doing enough to facilitate healthy eating in the City. The Leader of the Council stressed the importance of having as broad a range of options as possible available for diners to choose from. He reminded Members that the regenerated Kings Square was anticipated to attract new food businesses and that the Gloucester Food Dock would house up to fifteen of them when open.

In respect of question 7 Councillor Hilton asked when a deal might be struck to put the ground floor of Kings House back into use as the site is a focal point for the newly re-opened Kings Square. The Leader of the Council agreed on the importance of the building and confirmed that officers were working as hard as possible to resolve the issue which, he cautioned, was in the hands of the Leaseholder Greene King.

In respect of question 10 Councillor D. Brown recalled that certain measures, such as oiling eggs, had been undertaken to reduce seagull nuisance in the past and queried why these can't be done now. The Cabinet Member for Environment advised that Natural England had changed the regulations in 2019 to require an individual licence application for each nesting address. He stated that the experience of other councils had been that only 1 in 10 licence applications had been granted despite an excessive amount of officer time taken up in the application process. The Cabinet Member for Environment expressed frustration at the situation and confirmed that he had raised the issue with both Natural England and central government.

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In respect of question 11 Councillor Wilson questioned whether a reduction in the green waste fee rather than the service was considered given the cost of living crisis and whether 95 respondents was a big enough sample of residents on which to base the decision.

The Cabinet Member for Environment pointed to the increases in diesel and wage costs for green waste collection which had to be paid for. He stated that rather than increasing the fee for residents, the decision was taken to reduce collections in the months when the service was not used much anyway. The Cabinet Member for Environment noted that this course of action had the additional advantages of reducing the number of carbon dioxide (CO₂) producing heavy vehicles on the roads and at a busy time for general waste processing allowing staff to be redeployed there. Although the Cabinet Member for Environment confirmed that he would be pleased if more than 95 residents had responded to the Council Budget Public Consultation in which the green waste question had been put, he nonetheless pointed out that there was a clear majority in favour of the option taken.

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

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

Cabinet considered the report of the Leader of the Council that sought adoption of a Local List as a proactive means of giving visibility to locally important heritage and community assets and intended to support the Council's Planning officers in making informed decisions in relation to development proposals.

The Leader of the Council drew Members' attention to the recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 6th June 2022 (Appendix 5) and advised that it be accepted.

RESOLVED that the adoption of a Local List of Heritage Assets for Gloucester be considered at the July meeting of Cabinet following consultation with all Councillors.

7. PERFORMANCE MONITORING YEAR END 2021-22

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that informed Members of the Council's performance against key measures across 2021/22.

The Leader of the Council highlighted the key trends shown within the report. He reminded Members that some of the measures were still affected by the COVID pandemic and reassured them that these would be updated as soon as possible. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure informed Members that he was proud of the conduct and ideas of officers in his portfolio over recent difficult times, not least with the forthcoming 'Titanic Honour and Glory' summer exhibition at the Museum of Gloucester.

RESOLVED that the Year End Performance Report 2021/22 at Appendix 1 of the report is noted.

8. TREASURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE – ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources and Resources that sought Members to note treasury management activities for the period 1st October 2021 to 31st March 2022, prudential indicators, interest rate forecasts and an overview of the financial year 2021-22.

The Leader of the Council outlined the key features of the report and confirmed that there had been no further long-term borrowing over the period. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure thanked the Director of Policy and Resources and his team for producing a steady performance in difficult circumstances which had given him confidence for the future.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report are noted.

9. GLOUCESTER LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy that sought adoption of the Gloucester Local Development Scheme 2022 – 2024 (LDS), which updated the timetable for the preparation and adoption of the Gloucester City Plan and Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Strategic Plan.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy summarised the report. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure reminded Members of the huge amount of work undertaken by the Planning Policy Manager and his team to progress the LDS. He commented on the importance of getting the scheme right for the future regeneration of Gloucester and that people's views were being considered. The Leader of the Council thanked the Planning Policy Manager on behalf of Cabinet.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:

- (1) the revised Gloucester Local Development Scheme (Appendix 1 of the report) be adopted by the Council and takes effect immediately
- (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 be delegated to the Head of Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy.

10. KINGS QUARTER THE FORUM PHASE 2 APPROVAL

Cabinet considered the report of the Leader of the Council that sought Members to authorise officers to enter into a legally binding contract with the successfully tendered Hotel Operator and Car Park companies to deliver these elements of Phase 2 for the Kings Quarter The Forum mixed use development. Additionally, to authorise them to enter into a building contract with E G Carter for the continued construction of the residential apartments on plot 3c in Market Parade.

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The Leader of the Council framed the background to the report, particularly highlighting the successful applications to the government's Levelling Up Fund. He described each recommendation in detail, emphasised the social value to be gained from the contracts and opportunity to regenerate what is the gateway to Gloucester.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy expressed her pleasure in the considerable interest shown by potential occupiers over Kings Quarter. She informed Members of her own observations that the recently re-opened Kings Square was already bringing enjoyment and pride to people. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure confirmed that developers and others from outside the City were seeing great opportunities in what they considered to now be an exciting place. He further commented that he considered that this regeneration would be a wonderful achievement of which residents will be proud long into the future. The Leader of the Council relayed his experience of hearing reactions of amazement when conducting tours of the site. He further noted that Kings Square was only the start of a wider regeneration that would continue to amaze. The Leader of the Council thanked the Director of Policy and Resources, Head of Place and Regeneration Consultant – Place for their hard work.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the Head of Place in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment, the Director of Policy and Resources and the Council Solicitor is authorised to complete the acquisition of the remaining property interests in Market Parade, plot 3c, and enter into a JCT Building Contract with the successfully tendered construction company E G Carter to implement the second phase of the residential apartments forming part of Kings Quarter The Forum as set out in Appendix C of the report
- (2) authority is delegated to the Head of Place in consultation with the Director of Policy and Resources and the Council Solicitor to take all necessary steps and undertake necessary procedures, including entering into any legal arrangements or other documentation as may be required to implement or facilitate Phase 2 Kings Quarter The Forum for the operation of the Hotel and Car Park together with the development of the residential apartments on plot 3c.

Time of commencement: 6.00 pm

Time of conclusion: 6.40 pm

Chair