



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING : Monday 31st January 2022

PRESENT : Cllrs. Field (Chair), Pullen (Vice-Chair), Durdey (Spokesperson), Castle, Dee, Gravells, Hilton, O'Donnell, Organ, Sawyer and Wilson.

Others in Attendance

Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment,
Councillor Richard Cook
Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure, Councillor Andrew Lewis

Head of Culture
Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Ackroyd, Evans, Kubaszczyk and Padilla.

89. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

90. DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIPPING

There were no declarations of party whipping.

91. MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2022 were approved and signed as a correct record by the Chair.

92. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

93. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

There were no petitions and deputations.

94. ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

95. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

- 95.1 The Chair introduced the latest version of the Council Forward Plan and invited suggestions as to any items Members wanted to add to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme.
- 95.2 It was agreed that the Cultural Strategy Update would be added to the agenda for the meeting on 28th February 2022. Due to adjustments to the review timetable, it was explained that Members would receive a written update on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Review New Charging Schedule to note for information.
- 95.3 The Chair explained that following a request from a Member, a Community Safety meeting had been added to the Work Programme for the meeting on 4th July 2022, and that a range of organisations from the Community Safety Partnership would be invited to attend.
- 95.4 Councillor Hilton requested an update on arrangements for the scrutiny session on Gloucestershire Airport. The Democratic and Electoral Services Officer confirmed that contact had been made with the Chairman of the Airport and that this session would take place either on 28th March or 25th April 2022, depending on Director availability.
- 95.5 In response to a request from Councillor Gravells for an update on the Gloucester Commission to Review Race Relations report and resulting Calls to Action, it was agreed that enquiries would be made with the relevant officers.

RESOLVED –

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

96. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – TASK AND FINISH GROUP DISCUSSION

- 96.1 The Chair referred to the discussion during the previous meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and explained that Task and Finish Groups provided an opportunity for Members to consider a specific problem and make recommendations to Cabinet. He confirmed that Task and Finish Group enquiries should be focused with a narrow time scale and referred

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Members to the list of suggestions outlined in Agenda Item 9, which had been put forward at the previous meeting.

- 96.2 The Chair also confirmed that a motion had recently been approved by the Council to look to establish a Task and Finish Group to consider how the Council consults and engages with young people. He noted that Task and Finish Groups could include any Members other than those with Cabinet positions, and that they were not restricted to Overview and Scrutiny Members.
- 96.3 Councillor Pullen and Councillor Wilson confirmed that they felt that a Task and Finish Group focusing on young people was a priority.
- 96.4 Councillor Gravells referred to the suggestion of forming a Task and Finish Group to review how young people from racially minoritized backgrounds living in Gloucester were being encouraged to apply for university, and noted his support for this suggestion.
- 96.5 Councillor Durdey noted that the motion approved by full Council had a broader scope and suggested that Councillor Gravells' idea could be treated as a separate enquiry. It was pointed out that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had the option to establish a Task and Finish Group during that meeting, with a view of forming another in 6 months' time.
- 96.6 Councillor Sawyer expressed the view that engagement with young people and issues experienced by people from racially minoritized backgrounds should be priorities for the Council and queried whether it would be possible to establish two Task and Finish Groups running consecutively. It was explained that due to the focused and time-limited nature of Task and Finish Groups, it would be difficult to get the most out of two separate consecutive groups due to resources and officer time.
- 96.7 It was agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would opt for a Task and Finish Group focusing on how the Council engages with young people. The Committee also agreed to look to establish a further Task and Finish Group in 6 months' time considering how young people from racially minoritized backgrounds living in Gloucester were being encouraged to apply for university.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee establish a Task and Finish Group to consider how the Council engages with young people.

97. THE GLOUCESTER CITY MONUMENTS REVIEW

- 97.1 The Leader of the Council introduced the report and explained that the review was one of three resolutions from a Council motion passed in 2020, and tied in with the work of the Gloucester Commission to Review Race Relations. He explained that the overall purpose of the report was to explain the rationale behind the recommendations of the monuments review which

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were outlined in Appendix A. The Leader of the Council confirmed that Cabinet was being asked to agree the recommendations of the monuments review.

- 97.2 The Leader of the Council noted that the results of the monuments review were set out in section 9 of the main report at Appendix B. He confirmed that some of the general recommendations from the review included the creation of a display in the Museum of Gloucester sharing the history of the City and objects connected to the Transatlantic slave trade, the encouragement of educational projects to improve public understanding and for the Council to encourage partner organisations to identify contested heritage assets. The Leader of the Council also referred to the specific recommendations which were discussed in further detail in section 9 of the main report.
- 97.3 It was confirmed that an estimated total budget of £30k to £40k would be needed to implement the recommendations over a 3 year timescale, and that changes would likely depend on the willingness of organisations with ownership of those statues and monuments to agree to the changes. The Leader of the Council paid tribute to the City Archaeologist for his work in undertaking the review and for what he felt was a fantastic and comprehensive report.
- 97.4 The Chair commented that the review was very exhaustive and that he had learnt a great deal from reading the report. He noted his interest in the statue of Queen Anne in Spa Fields Sports Ground and the Charles II statue in St Mary's Square, and asked for clarification on what the future plans were for these statues. The Leader of the Council confirmed that both Queen Anne and Charles II were considered to be national figures and neither had a direct link to Gloucester. The Leader of the Council further noted that it was made clear in the report that moving these statues would cost the Council a considerable amount of money, and he therefore anticipated these statues remaining in their respective locations.
- 97.5 The Chair referred to the narrative in the report at 9.35 and 9.85, and highlighted that Bathurst Road and Gladstone Road were in Moreland rather than Podsmead. It was agreed that these locations would be checked, and the report amended accordingly.
- 97.6 Councillor Pullen expressed the view that the report was fascinating and welcomed the engagement with partner organisations, particularly the University of Gloucestershire and the Gloucester Commission to Review Race Relations. Councillor Pullen noted his agreement with the recommendations and the courses of action, and expressed the view that public consultation was important.
- 97.7 Councillor Pullen referred to the narrative at 11.2 concerning the risk of public backlash and asked for further details as to how the Council intended to engage with the public. He also referred to the financial implications at 9.2 in the report and asked whether the estimated £30 -£40k had been allocated to this effect in the Council's budget. The Head of Culture confirmed that the estimated budget needed to implement the recommendations had not been

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included in the latest Council budget and it was his assumption that funding bids would be submitted to cover some of the costs. This said, the Head of Culture confirmed his expectation that the Council would need to cover some of the budget due to officer time and resources. In relation to Councillor Pullen's comments on public consultation, the Head of Culture confirmed that provided the recommendations were approved, the Council would develop a project plan to implement the recommendations. He confirmed that consultation would form part of the project plan.

- 97.8 In response to a further question from Councillor Pullen regarding a review period, the Head of Culture confirmed that he would be happy to include further details on this in the project plan.
- 97.9 Councillor Organ noted that this was a very sensitive subject and expressed the view that consultation with the public was key.
- 97.10 Councillor Wilson expressed the view that the report was one of the most impressive he had seen as a Councillor. He asked whether consideration had been given to making the document available to schools or formally published in some way. The Leader of the Council confirmed that he would be very willing to look at ways to make the review available to schools and the wider public.
- 97.11 Councillor Wilson referred to the challenges where monuments were owned by third parties and asked whether contact had been made with United Reformed Church or Whitefield House. The Leader of the Council noted that the Council had not yet made contact with the organisations but confirmed his expectation that some would take the recommendations on board and other owners may not. The Leader of the Council confirmed that it would be a priority to extend the knowledge in the city and internationally. He also expressed the view that the Council should focus on explaining and contextualising rather than censoring history.
- 97.12 Councillor Wilson expressed the view that the recommendations were sensible and that the City Archaeologist deserved thanks and recognition for his work in undertaking the review.
- 97.13 Councillor Hilton referred to the narrative in the report at 9.206 concerning 'Whitefield Street' in the city centre and noted that the correct spelling of the street was in fact 'Whitfield Street'. It was agreed that follow-up enquiries would be made to check whether there was a direct link between George Whitefield and Whitfield Street and that the report would be corrected if necessary.
- 97.14 Councillor Hilton referred to the narrative in the report concerning the statue of Charles II and expressed the view that he had caused damage to Gloucester as punishment for the city's stance in the English Civil War. Councillor Hilton noted that Charles II had also reduced the powers of the City Council and confirmed that he was against the Council spending money to remove or restore the statue.

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- 97.15 Councillor Sawyer commended the report and welcomed the support from the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum. She also noted her support of the recommendation for the Museum of Gloucester to create a display sharing the history of the city and objects connected to the slave trade, and asked whether consideration had been given to pop-up displays in the city centre. She also expressed the view that the findings in the report needed to be shared with other parts of the country with links to the figures, such as Bathurst Estate in Lydney and Picton monuments elsewhere in the country. The Leader of the Council confirmed that it was his hope that the knowledge in the report would be shared widely.
- 97.16 Councillor Sawyer asked whether the ‘status quo’ option referred to at 6.25 could be removed from the report entirely as she felt that the Council had a responsibility to take action. The Leader of the Council explained that the Council was committed to engaging with other organisations however where the Council did not own the assets and the owner was not prepared to engage with the recommendations, there was little the Council could do.
- 97.17 In response to a further query from Councillor Sawyer, the Leader of the Council confirmed that if the Council had a reasonable opportunity to take positive action, he would consider it however cost implications would be an important consideration.
- 97.18 Councillor Wilson suggested that the Committee could make a recommendation for the Council to consider ways of making the report more widely available to schools and other educational institutions. The Leader of the Council confirmed that this was already included in the general recommendations in Appendix A.
- 97.19 Councillor Durdey commented that the report had provided him with an insight into the city which he did not have previously, noting that it was right for residents to be proud of the city but it was also important to raise awareness of the difficult periods of history. He noted his support for the recommendation focusing on education as well as the recommendation to create a display in the Museum of Gloucester.
- 97.20 Councillor Organ expressed the view that raising awareness of periods of history such as the Holocaust or The Troubles should also be a priority for the Council. He reiterated his view that the matter needed to be approached sensitively and that there needed to be an ongoing dialogue.
- 97.21 Councillor Wilson noted that the Monuments Review had been actioned as a result of a specific motion to Council and commented that the issues raised through the motion were still a running sore in society.
- 97.22 Councillor Pullen noted that much of Gloucester’s history was well known to residents, however the links with the transatlantic slave trade identified through the review were not so widely known. He expressed concern that by extending the review to other historical events, there was a danger of diluting the issue.

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97.23 The Chair paid tribute to the City Archaeologist and the volunteers who contributed to the report. A discussion ensued about a reasonable time frame as to when the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could request an update on the implementation of the recommendations. The Leader of the Council referred to the general and specific recommendations outlined in Appendix A which would form the basis of the work going forward and suggested that a year would leave a reasonable amount of time for some of those recommendations to be underway.

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

(1) An update on any progress on the recommendations of the Monuments Review be provided to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in 12 months' time.

98. EVENTS AND FESTIVALS REPORT ON 2021 & PLAN FOR 2022-21

98.1 The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure introduced the report and noted that despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, many successful events had taken place throughout 2021. He noted that examples of these were set out in Appendix A and included Frank Turner concerts, the Rooftop festival, Kings Jam, Gloucester Goes Retro, Gloucester History Festival and Globoscope.

98.2 The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure paid tribute to the Head of Culture and his team and noted that there was a large programme of events scheduled for 2022, including the reopening of Kings Square and subsequent events calendar, included at 3.9.2 in the report.

98.3 The Chair asked for clarification on the insurance situation, given that many events throughout 2020 and 2021 had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions. He queried whether it was now more difficult for organisers to secure insurance. The Head of Culture confirmed that this had been a challenge for organisers throughout the pandemic however following lobbying of central Government, there was now a specific insurance scheme in place which he felt should make a positive difference to the sector.

98.4 Councillor Wilson referred to the narrative at 3.8 confirming that the previous carnival arts partnership had not applied for funding for Gloucester Carnival in 2022 and asked whether there was a concern that the carnival was coming to an end. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure confirmed that there were some challenges posed by health and safety requirements during the pandemic but noted that there were proposals being developed for a different approach in the future.

98.5 Councillor Pullen referred to the draft calendar of events at 3.9.2 in the report and noted that the Kings Square development was shortly due to be completed. He asked whether the Cabinet Member intended to relocate some events which traditionally take place in The Docks into Kings Square. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure noted that it was not his

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intention to encourage the relocation of events from The Docks but hoped that the events taking place across the city would complement each other. He confirmed his hope that the events team would receive recommendations from the public as to how they wanted to use the Kings Square space, noting that he was keen to engage with young people in particular.

- 98.6 Councillor Organ commented that he would like the city to continue to be promoted as a tourist destination. He expressed the view that the Kings Square development would provide a good opportunity to link different areas of the city together and that it was important for Members to raise awareness of events taking place in the city. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure commented that the Retro Festival was a prime example of a successful city-wide event and that the infrastructure was already in place.
- 98.7 Councillor Hilton noted that he was pleased to see the Council using local contractors for the development of Kings Square. Councillor Hilton noted his view that Kings Square would be an asset to the city in due course but highlighted that there was a need to make sure that it complemented events rather than overtaking them. Councillor Hilton referred to narrowboat events in the Docklands which previously took place on alternative years and asked whether there was a possibility that these events could take place yearly. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure responded that Members were welcome to share their ideas with the team.
- 98.8 Councillor Sawyer stated that she would like to see more diverse cultural events taking place and promoted in the city, such as Chinese New Year and Diwali celebrations. She also noted her support for a children's festival and asked for clarification as to who Members should contact to share their ideas. The Head of Culture confirmed that Members could approach the Events team with their suggestions. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure explained that he was hoping to expand the Tredworth street party and also noted that the Polish festival was very much orientated towards children. He commented that there was much diversity in the city which ought to be celebrated.
- 98.9 Councillor Durdey noted his agreement with the suggestion of more cultural events celebrating diversity in the city. He expressed the view that making Gloucester more inclusive should be a priority and that Councillors should engage with their communities to encourage participation in these events.

RESOLVED - That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee **NOTE** the report.

99. TOURISM AND DESTINATION MARKETING REPORT

- 99.1 The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure introduced the report and thanked the Tourism and Destination Marketing Team for their hard work. He confirmed that the team currently consisted of just 4 officers and commended them for their work in promoting Gloucester as a tourist destination on the Visit Gloucester website, which he noted had seen a 5.6% increase from 2019 in online visitors. The Cabinet Member for Culture and

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Leisure confirmed that the team had been made permanent employees of the Council and expressed the view that they had made considerable achievements in a short period of time.

- 99.2 The Chair commented that the report was very detailed and that he was particularly impressed with the timescales. He expressed the view that the Tourism and Destination Marketing Team seemed to work efficiently and that he was pleased to see regular content on the website.
- 99.3 Councillor Hilton expressed the view that the report was excellent. He referred to previous difficulties with Marketing Gloucester and noted his view that it was right for the Council to bring the service back in-house. He referred to the target audiences of the Nordic market, North American and Canadian travellers outlined in Appendix 3, and asked whether thought had been given to encouraging visitors from other European countries. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure confirmed that the Covid-19 international travel restrictions had posed a challenge for European visitors but noted that the Gloucester Cajun and Zydeco Festival included performances from Dutch and German artists.
- 99.4 In response to a further query from Councillor Hilton as to whether there was an expectation that the position would change as the city emerged from the pandemic, the Head of Culture confirmed that the target audiences had been selected in response to how the market was recovering and that the Nordic market in particular had been singled out as an area of growth. He confirmed that this was not at the exclusion of other countries but as the Tourism and Destination Marketing Team were a small team, there was a need to focus their resources.
- 99.5 In response to a query from Councillor Hilton concerning the statement in the narrative at 3.9 that the Council would not work with certain publications, the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure confirmed that this was an error and the statement would be removed from the report ahead of it being considered by Cabinet.
- 99.6 In response to comments from Councillor Hilton regarding online tourism promotion, the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure noted that he was mindful that some residents, such as the older generations, still relied on newspapers but confirmed that the pandemic had changed the way many people accessed their local news.
- 99.7 Councillor Pullen referred to the narrative in Appendix 3 concerning target audiences and requested clarification on whether this included students. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure confirmed that students and people under 25 were included in the target audience. In response to a further query from Councillor Pullen regarding the night-time economy and young people, the Head of Culture confirmed that promotion was not being restricted to the night time economy, and there would also be a focus on the marketing of Gloucester's food scene, festivals and other cultural events.

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- 99.8 Councillor Pullen welcomed the narrative at 3.9 concerning the consideration of ethical and environmental impacts of all marketing activities. In response to a query from Councillor Pullen regarding the Sun and Daily Mail publications, the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure reiterated that this was a clerical error which would be corrected.
- 99.9 In response to a request from the Chair for clarification on what was meant by the term 'REM' in the Tourism and Destination Marketing Plan, the Head of Culture confirmed that this was an abbreviation for the Richmond Events Management company who were contracted by the Council to deliver the Tall Ships Festival.
- 99.10 The Chair noted that some residents did not have access to the internet and asked whether the Council made use of billboards in the city centre as a marketing tool. The Head of Culture confirmed that Gloucester Business Improvement District (BID) were investing in more digital screens which would be rolled out across different areas of the city, noting that tourism marketing and advertisement would form part of that content. He also confirmed that there were several tourism leaflet pick-up points available in high footfall areas across the city, including supermarkets, shopping centres, visitors attractions and the bus and railway stations. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure noted that making use of community boards in local supermarkets was a further option to explore.
- 99.11 In response to a question from Councillor Durdey as to whether the Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) work was undertaken internally or externally, it was confirmed that Search Engine Optimisation was provided in-house and the Council's paid digital media was outsourced externally.
- 99.12 Councillor Gravels noted his agreement with amending the narrative at 3.9 and expressed the view that the Council should not be in the business of dictating which publications were acceptable to work with. Referring to the target audience and earlier comments from Councillor Hilton regarding European tourists, he suggested that the Council could ask its twinned cities to help promote the city as a tourist destination. In response to further comments from Councillor Gravells regarding the campaign celebrating the filming of Harry Potter around Gloucester Cathedral, the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure confirmed that this was a key draw for many tourists.
- 99.13 Councillor Organ asked whether the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations would be included in the cultural strategy. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure confirmed that there was a plan to plant a circle of trees in the city to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee. He also confirmed his expectation that there would be additional events including street parties organised by communities.

RESOLVED - That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee **NOTE** the report.

100. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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Monday 28th February 2022

**Time of commencement: 6.30 pm hours
Time of conclusion: 8.22 pm hours**

Chair