



CABINET

MEETING : Wednesday, 11th October 2023

PRESENT : Cllrs. Cook (Chair), Norman (Vice-Chair), S. Chambers, Lewis and Padilla

Others in Attendance

Cllrs A. Chambers and Hilton

Managing Director

Monitoring Officer

Head of Finance and Resources

Head of Place

Head of Transformation and Commissioning

Head of Culture

Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

APOLOGIES : None.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

27. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2023 are confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

28. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no public questions.

29. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions or deputations.

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

In respect of question 1 Councillor Hilton queried how the required independent energy audit could be conducted with the swimming pool being closed. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure noted that the pool was open when that

CABINET
11.10.23

condition was proposed to Aspire and that they had agreed it. He stated that he was sure it would be completed further down the road.

In respect of question 2 Councillor Hilton informed Members that he considered now would be a sensible time to refurbish the shower and changing facilities as the swimming pool was closed. He asked when the refurbishment would take place. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure confirmed that a programme of refurbishment works would be discussed with the interim provider whom the Council hoped to appoint in a matter of weeks rather than months.

In respect of question 3 Councillor Hilton advised that he was aware of three dates mentioned for the swimming pool to reopen by: 1st January 2024, 31st March 2024, or before the May 2024 local elections. He sought clarification of the intended date. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure gave assurance that plans were afoot to appoint a new interim provider and that the matter would be discussed in detail at the coming extraordinary Council meeting (19th October 2023). He stated that the pool would be open by January 2024.

31. ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT UPDATE

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods that updated Members on the support offered to current and former members of the armed forces, reservists, and their families as part of the Council's commitment to the Gloucestershire Armed Forces Community Covenant.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods reminded Members of the Council's commitment to the Covenant and whole of the armed forces community. He drew Members' attention to some of its obligations (3.3) and activities undertaken by the Council to meet them (Appendix 1). The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy noted that Gloucester has the largest veteran population in the county (3.5). She advised that the support given to veterans by the Housing and Homelessness Teams went beyond what was required by legislation. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure commented on the debt owed to those who put their life on the line and urged that when they needed help they should get it. The Cabinet Member for Environment emphasised the importance of supporting those who protect us as a mark of respect.

RESOLVED that work undertaken to support current and ex-service personnel as part of the Council's ongoing commitment to the Covenant is endorsed.

32. CITY CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy that sought approval to consult on the Draft Gloucester City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan prior to issuing the document for public consultation.

CABINET
11.10.23

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy thanked officers for the depth of detail contained within the report and outlined the background to it. She drew Members' attention to the proposed amendments to the conservation area and reminded them how much development and regeneration had taken place in the City since the last review in 2007. The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure commented that the expertise of officers had provided a fascinating insight into Gloucester's heritage. That the City's rich history was a large part of its unique appeal was reiterated by Cabinet Member for Environment who looked forward to seeing what the public will contribute to the proposed consultation.

RESOLVED that the draft Gloucester City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is approved for consultation with the public and interested parties in the city centre.

33. FINANCIAL MONITORING: QUARTER 1 2023-2024

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that sought Members to note year-end forecasts, the financial pressures on the Council during the Quarter ended 30th June 2023 and report on the performance of the Council against certain key financial performance indicators.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources highlighted the key features of the report including the decrease to the General Fund Balance (2.1(1), 4.2) and principal pressures (4.3). She emphasised that both officers and Cabinet Members were working hard to reduce those pressures. The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources noted the favourable forecast within her own portfolio (5.4). She further noted the £3m income forecast to be generated by the Council's property portfolio (5.8) whilst cautioning that pressures within commercial sector be closely monitored.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure apprised Members that he expected the considerable cost burden from the Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust (5.12) to be short-term. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy expressed gratitude to the Housing Teams who continued to demonstrate great adaptability and bring forward solutions to issues largely outside of the authority's control. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods commented that close partnership working at all levels and the successful pursuit of external grants had contributed to the £59k favourable to budget position of his own portfolio (5.1-3). He advised that this approach would continue to build so as to benefit residents and help alleviate the challenges they face. The Cabinet Member for Environment pointed to the positive position of the environment portfolio (5.16) and the work being undertaken by managers to reduce costs which he anticipated would bring future improvements.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) it is noted that the forecast year end position is currently for a decrease to the Council's General Fund balance of £1,504k against a budgeted decrease of £104k

CABINET
11.10.23

- (2) the details of specific budgetary issues identified by officers and the actions being taken to address those issues is noted
- (3) the current level of Capital expenditure as shown in Appendix 2 of the report is noted.

34. NON-RESIDENT BURIAL FEES

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that proposed that non-residents' fees be put in place for residents living outside of Gloucester City Council boundary to help prolong the space available for the residents of Gloucester.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources made it clear that the proposed fees were in line with other cemeteries and would not apply to pre-purchased plots, re-opened graves or residents who have moved to hospices or nursing homes beyond the City boundary. She reassured Members that although officers were seeking additional land for burials, there are multiple years-worth of space currently available. The Cabinet Member for Environment commented on the importance of making the existing space last as long as possible for the benefit of everyone living in the City. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy informed Members she believed the proposals would make things fairer for residents.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) non-residents' fees are put in place to residents that are not living within the Gloucester City boundary
- (2) a non-resident fee will be charged if the person being buried (the deceased) wasn't living in Gloucester when they died. This is on top of the **Exclusive Right of Burial Fee** meaning that people who don't reside in Gloucester, but who want to be buried in Gloucester Cemeteries, will pay more than residents who do live in Gloucester City boundary. This will not apply to persons that have a pre purchased grave in Gloucester Cemeteries, a person who will be interred into a re-opened grave and a person who was once a resident of Gloucester City boundary but moved out of the boundary to reside in a nursing home, hospice, or something of a similar nature, the latter scenario to be entirely at the Council's sole discretion.

35. DISPOSAL OF HERBERT, KIMBERLEY AND PHILLPOTTS WAREHOUSES

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that sought to update Members on the progress for the disposal of the Herbert, Kimberley and Phillpotts warehouses in Gloucester Docks, and to authorise negotiations with a new purchaser.

CABINET
11.10.23

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources summarised the report and the recommended preference for Developer C (7.0). She advised Members of the negative impact the COVID-19 pandemic had had on the plans for conversion of the warehouse into a hotel (Cabinet 15th January 2020 Agenda Item 13). The Cabinet Member for Environment informed Members that he was glad progress was being made in what had been a long process.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the actions taken to date are noted
- (2) the Head of Finance & Resources (S151 Officer) is authorised to continue negotiations with the interested parties and, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, to accept an offer of an assignment of the existing leases or the grant of a new lease, which taking into account the opinion of external advisers is considered to represent best value consideration to the Council provided that:
 - a) the consideration shall be payable in full upon the final assignment or grant of a new lease; and
 - b) the transaction shall be an outright assignment or grant of lease at arms' length, without any obligation for a continuing relationship with the Council other than as landlord
- (3) authority is delegated to the Head of Finance & Resources (S151 Officer) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Policy & Resources and the Director, One Legal to take all necessary steps and undertake necessary procedures including entering into any legal arrangements or other documentation as may be required to implement the disposal of these three warehouses.

Time of commencement: 6.00 pm

Time of conclusion: 6.20 pm

Chair