

Cabinet

Tuesday, 27th July, 2010
6.00 - 7.30 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Colin Hay (Cabinet Member Corporate Services), Steve Jordan (Leader of the Council), John Morris (Cabinet Member Built Environment), John Webster (Cabinet Member Finance and Community Development) and Roger Whyborn (Cabinet Member Sustainability)

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Fisher and McKinlay.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June were signed by the Leader as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

None.

5. PROCUREMENT REVIEW

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the report which proposed a strengthening of the text in the corporate procurement strategy relating to ethical procurement and reflecting changes in the Equality Act 2010. It also reviewed the implementation of the strategy action plan, procurement performance over the past year and planned activity against targets.

The Cabinet Member highlighted that in some areas targets had not been met due to the diversion of resources to the GO project. This was regarded as a sensible approach. With regard to the reduction in cashable savings this was partly due to how budgets were held and this would be resolved with the ERP system.

He also mentioned that with discussions on moving towards strategic commissioning underway further changes in procurement approaches would be inevitable.

Members hoped that the Council would be able to exert some influence through procurement approaches on the ethical standards of those companies it already purchased from who operated in the developing world.

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The proposed amendment to the corporate procurement strategy strengthening the text relating to ethical procurement, and reflecting changes in the Equality Act 2010 be approved, and
2. The review of the implementation of the strategy action plan, procurement performance over the past year and planned activity against targets for this financial year be noted.

6. CORPORATE DEBT MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Cabinet Member Finance and Community Development introduced the report and explained that the Council had a duty to ensure that all income due was collected efficiently and effectively for the benefit of its council tax payers. The Corporate Debt Management Policy intended to set a framework for a consistent but fair approach to the collection of all debt whilst at the same time ensuring robust action was taken to minimize the amount of debt and maximize income due to the council.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Corporate Debt Management Policy shown in appendix 1 be adopted.

7. HATE CRIME FRAMEWORK

On behalf of the Cabinet Member Housing and Safety the Leader of the Council introduced the report on a guidance framework to respond to hate incidents and hate crimes in Cheltenham. It specifically addressed how the Council and its officers tackle these issues. He highlighted that partnership working was essential in combating hate crime in the town.

The Community Safety Manager advised members that he had, among others, consulted with the Chair of the County Hate Crime Group and the Chair of GayGlos on the framework and as no comments had been received this was regarded as positive.

RESOLVED THAT:

The guidance framework to respond to hate incidents and hate crimes in Cheltenham (appendix A) be formally adopted.

8. ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Cabinet Member Built Environment introduced the Asset Management Plan 2010-2015 which outlined how the strategic management of the Council's property portfolio would contribute towards the delivery of the corporate business plan as well as the medium term financial strategy.

He highlighted that the action plan needed to be as flexible as possible in light of the prevailing economic climate. There would be opportunities to optimise income, and capital receipt as well as providing a challenge to the operational efficiencies of holding property assets, with the intention of making a positive contribution to the Council's financial funding gap.

Members were advised that a new Appendix H had been circulated on the policy for property lettings and disposals to the third sector, voluntary and community groups. In future all lettings by the Council would start from the basis of a commercial or market rate clearly set out in the tenancy agreement and any subsidy would be explicitly identified. A standardised approach would resolve some issues which had previously arisen.

The Leader highlighted that it was important that the Council maximised the value of its assets whilst balancing against the needs of the voluntary sector and its contribution to the Council's Corporate Plan.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Asset Management Plan 2010-2015 with the revised Appendix H be approved and adopted.

9. PROPOSED WASTE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION SYSTEMS

The Cabinet Member Sustainability introduced the report which set out a set of proposals to further reduce the amount of household waste which is sent to landfill. He advised members that minor amendments were proposed to the resolutions in order to cross-reference to the main body of the report.

The Cabinet Member made the following points regarding the proposals:

- In terms of environmental benefits 5000 tonnes of waste would be diverted from landfill and recycling would improve. Energy savings could be made in terms of reclaiming materials and a reduction in fuel consumption.
- The diversion of waste from landfill would result in savings in terms of payment of landfill tax which is paid for by the tax payer through the county element of the council tax
- Kitchen waste collection was key to the proposals as the subsequent amount of residual waste would be minimal. Weekly collections of kitchen waste would be maintained.
- A closed lid policy would be introduced in September on health and safety grounds and work would also be undertaken to control side waste
- Some terraced houses or houses in difficult to reach areas would remain on weekly collections recognising that one –size does not fit all
- The new garden waste scheme which also addressed the health and safety issues for the operatives and users in terms of the current use of bags to be replaced by wheeled bins, would be an optional scheme for which a modest charge of £3 per month would be introduced
- In terms of consultation Environment O & S had recently examined the proposals and current recycling champions across the borough would be consulted. It was not anticipated that changes in details to the proposed scheme through further consultation would jeopardise the implementation or key milestone dates for the purchase of equipment

- The green box would still be used for the collection of recyclable materials as this facilitated better sorting at the kerbside producing a higher purity recyclate. Reference was made to the system operated at Tewkesbury where recyclate was mechanically sorted after collection.

Cabinet members welcomed the recognition within the scheme that “one size did not fit all”. They also supported the flexible and reasonable approach in terms of initial enforcement of the scheme and there should be an emphasis on educating the public.

Members of Cabinet welcomed the proposals which were important for the town. They regretted that similar proposals put forward in 2008 had not been approved as this had in the interim incurred significant landfill tax charges. However they were confident that moving forward there would be high take up from residents.

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The recent improvements to kerbside recycling services and the aim to provide every household in Cheltenham with the opportunity to recycle at kerbside glass, paper, card, plastic bottles and cans by 2012 be noted.
2. The weekly collection of segregated kitchen food waste and the alternate weekly collection of residual waste and recycling with effect from April 2011(as set out in the report) be approved.
3. Authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Operations in consultation with the Cabinet Member Sustainability to complete the supply agreement with Gloucestershire County Council on terms and conditions approved by the Borough Solicitor.
4. A new fortnightly garden waste collection scheme with access expanded to all households in the Borough (subject to site specific health and safety considerations) as set out in this report, be approved. The new scheme will start in February 2011 and households who wish to participate in the fortnightly garden waste collection scheme will be provided with a special wheeled bin at a cost of £3-00 per month.
5. A budget of £20,000 per annum be set aside to promote home composting and to provide subsidised home compost bins to those who do not want to participate in the garden waste collection scheme. The recycling centre at Swindon Road will also continue to receive garden waste free of charge.
6. The policy of closed lids and no side waste with effect from 1st September 2010 be approved with enforcement being applied sensitively, as set out in this report.
7. The policy of charging for the supply of additional or replacement waste and recycling containers with the level of charge being set as

part of the annual review of fees and charges contained within the budget consultation process be approved.

10. REVIEW OF NORTH PLACE AND PORTLAND STREET DEVELOPMENT BRIEF AND CHELTENHAM CIVIC PRIDE URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK SPD

The Leader of the Council introduced the report explaining that the new Cheltenham Development Task Force had been looking at the best way forward in developing Council owned sites in the town centre.

Following recommendations from the Task Force officers have reviewed the adopted development brief and supported the Task Force in its recommendation that changes were required to provide flexibility in the type and mix of uses within the regeneration area of North Place and Portland Street. The key changes of the Development Brief were laid down in paragraph 2.3 of the report. An indicative timetable had been drafted setting out how the revised brief and Supplementary Planning Document could be the subject of public consultation and a formal Council adoption process.

The Cabinet Member Built Environment wished to put on record his thanks to the businessmen and others who formed the Development Task Force in giving up their time for the future of Cheltenham. He emphasised the firm commitment for Civic Pride to take the town forward.

Members welcomed the new flexibility built into the plan. They highlighted the importance of good management and maintenance of social housing. With regard to traffic flows the Cabinet Member Built Environment explained that work was ongoing at County level in terms of computer modelling and this would be presented to the Task Force at its September meeting.

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The revised North Place and Portland Street Development Brief as set out at Appendix A be approved as the basis for public consultation
2. The revised Cheltenham Civic Pride Urban Design Framework SPD as set out at Appendix B be approved as the basis for public consultation
3. The timetable for finalisation of the SPD, technical appendix, supporting documentation and public consultation be delegated to the Strategic Director
4. Arrangements for public consultation be delegated to the Strategic Director

11. AN APPROACH TO SERVICE ACCESS DELIVERY

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the report which outlined an approach to service delivery that responded to the need to maintain or even improve services within the context of decreasing budgets. The approach covered service redesign and process optimisation and improved web-based

services. As the Council moved towards strategic commissioning this new approach would make it better placed to respond to this new way of working.

Members highlighted the importance of keeping the customer as its main focus and were satisfied that this was embedded in the approach proposed.

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The approach to service access and delivery detailed in the appendix to this report be approved, and
2. A further report in the autumn detailing a costed business case for its implementation be considered.

12. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT-SIGNIFICANT ISSUES ACTION PLAN

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services explained that whilst the Audit Committee was charged with governance and overseeing the production and monitoring of the annual governance statement and associated action plan it was important for the Cabinet to have oversight of the action plan and ensure that appropriate action was being taken.

A member raised the issue of whether there had been any feedback on the member training and the buddying process which was implemented for new members of Council following the May election. The Cabinet Member Corporate Services replied that there had been no specific feedback but that it would be appropriate for this to be followed up by Staff and Support Services which was responsible for Member development.

Cabinet colleagues were also urged to take up the significant issues in their 1:1s with Assistant Directors.

RESOLVED THAT:

Cabinet Leads discuss with relevant officers the action plan and ensure that it is progressed, and that corrective action be taken as appropriate.

13. KPMG INTERIM AUDIT REPORT-ACTION PLAN

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the report which laid down the action plan to address the recommendations from the interim audit report from the Council's external auditors.

RESOLVED THAT:

The management response to the action plan be endorsed, and it be noted that the Cabinet Member Corporate Services would be updating the Audit Committee on progress against the plan at their next meeting.

14. MIDWINTER AREA IMPROVEMENT-PROPOSED SALE OF STATUTORY ALLOTMENT LAND

The Leader of the Council announced that following the satisfaction of outstanding requirements for the disposal of the Midwinter development site the council was now in a position to proceed with the sale.

The Leader made the following points :

- a large part of the capital receipt would be to replace the allotments in the area which was a statutory obligation.
- the proposal was to develop 25 % of the Midwinter development to a minimum code rating of 4.
- there would be both space and funding through S106 for the development of a children's play area on the Elmfield Road site.
- The planning application for the development of the site was imminent

The Cabinet welcomed the approach to integrating social housing and market housing. Cabinet also wished to put on record their thanks to all officers who had been involved.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Head of Property and Asset Management be authorised to finalise and agree the terms of the conditional contract for sale to Bloor Homes Ltd, and subsequently to dispose of the land, as set out in the report in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

15. SOURCING STRATEGY PROGRAMME-POSITION STATUS

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the report which reviewed progress against the original work plan and asked members to consider whether revisions to the work plan and funding allocations were necessary in the knowledge of implications of events, particularly in relation to shared service working within the first 6 months of the programme. It was also appropriate to review the contribution that the programme would make to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Members expressed their disappointment at the loss of commitment from three authorities with regard to the shared procurement of ERP System and Sharing Transactional Services (Finance/HR/Payroll/Procurement) however were confident that the project would move forward. The Cabinet Member Corporate Services highlighted that the savings outlined in the report were conservative but there may be future savings opportunities as well as potential assistance from the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership.

Members congratulated officers involved in the project for their exemplary work.

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Revised Sourcing Strategy Financial Plan (Appendix 1) be approved, and the following proposals to set aside funding on an invest to save basis:

- £100k Revenues and Benefits investment for systems thinking be retained and extended to a systems thinking initiative within the front-office with the expectation that a minimum £115k pa cashable savings will be delivered by 1 April 2012 (para4.2.7).
- £138.5k one off budget originally allocated to Revenues and Benefits shared service (para 4.2.9) and £32.5k one off budget originally allocated to the ICT feasibility study (para4.4.6) be retained within the Sourcing Strategy programme and used on an invest to save basis.
- The potential additional investment of £85k required to implement an ERP system which acknowledges the impact of the partnership reducing from 7 to 5 (para 4.1.15), be noted, and which will be the basis of a further report in the autumn.
- The closure of the OneHR shared service project be endorsed and a s101 arrangement is not entered into between CBC and TBC for the provision of a Human Resources and Payroll service (para 4.3.4)
- Up to £24k one-off revenue from the OneHR interim support be retained within the Sourcing Strategy programme (para 4.3.7)
- The closure of the ICT feasibility study project be endorsed and it be replaced with systems thinking work in the ICT division (para 4.4.5)

16. PROPOSAL TO DELIVER THE SUPPORT AND HOSTING CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR THE GO ERP SYSTEM

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the updated report which outlined the objective of the GO partnership to procure and implement a single Enterprise Resource Platform application to be used as a basis for shared services for all partners in HR, payroll, procurement and finance.

The risks as outlined in the report were deemed to be low and manageable and Members welcomed the CBC expertise and knowledge to host the system.

RESOLVED THAT:

1. It be agreed that CBC submit a proposal to the GO partnership to provide the support and hosting centre of excellence
2. The business case for the support and hosting centre of excellence be approved
3. The CBC draft proposal for the GO support and hosting centre of excellence be approved, and authority be delegated to the Strategic Director, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, to make any further minor amendments to the proposal for CBC to provide the support and hosting centre of excellence.

17. LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER BRIEFING

The Leader of the Council explained that the briefing note regarding the Art Gallery and Museum had not yet been issued.

He also informed the meeting that further to his announcement at Council the previous day Councillors Hay and Fisher would be retiring from the Cabinet. He wished to put on record his thanks for their contributions.

18. DECISIONS OF CABINET MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

The Cabinet Member Sustainability announced that he had made a Member Decision that day to instruct officers to proceed with market testing of catering and outdoor recreation services in Montpellier Gardens and Pittville Park, including public consultation on the potential disposal under lease of the relevant buildings to facilitate outsourcing should it prove the best option.

Members highlighted the newly adopted Asset Management Plan which should be followed before a decision is made on any lease or disposal.

Chairman