

Cabinet

Tuesday, 12th March, 2013

6.00 - 6.35 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Steve Jordan (Leader of the Council), John Rawson (Cabinet Member Finance), Peter Jeffries (Cabinet Member Housing and Safety), Andrew McKinlay (Cabinet Member Built Environment), Jon Walklett (Cabinet Member Corporate Services) and Roger Whyborn (Cabinet Member Sustainability)
Also in attendance:	Councillor Anne Regan

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Rowena Hay.

The Leader informed Members that the call-in report from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee was originally scheduled for this meeting but would now come to the April meeting of Cabinet.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2013 were approved and signed as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

There were none.

5. REPORT OF THE ALLOTMENTS SCRUTINY TASK GROUP

Cllr Regan, Chair of the Scrutiny Task Group Allotments, was invited to address Cabinet. In introducing the Task Group report she thanked the members and officers who had been involved and explained that the group had made 11 recommendations to Cabinet. A further recommendation regarding reviewing and revising the terms of the current allotment tenancy agreement had been put forward by the Cabinet Member Sustainability partly in response to the Task Group's recommendation that the process of enforcement of allotments needed to be revised to ensure that uncultivated plots were being managed. She hoped that the up to £600 000 allocated by Council for the development of new plots at Priors Farm would be allocated in full to address the demand in the town. Cllr Regan also highlighted the need for full resourcing of the Green Space Development team to provide support for allotments. Finally she clarified that the review in 12 months time would be undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee as opposed to reconvening the task group.

In response to a question regarding addressing the waiting list by splitting full sized plots Cllr Regan confirmed that this was already been done. The Leader of the Council also confirmed that the recent Council decision was to agree funding up to £600 k for satisfying allotment demand.

The Cabinet Member Sustainability thanked the task group for its report and the officers and members involved. The task group had made some constructive recommendations which he supported subject to feasibility and resources. The Cabinet Member went through each recommendation in turn. He confirmed that the development of plots at Priors Farm would be progressed albeit in a way that would satisfy the maximum number of people across the whole town, not just those living in close proximity to the site. Alongside this officers are reviewing waiting lists and addressing issues with ploholders not adhering to their tenancy agreements. In terms of the task group recommendation relating to additional resources he stated that this would not be possible, it was a question of maximising existing resources and using site wardens to the maximum.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Scrutiny Task Group for its useful piece of work and all those involved.

RESOLVED that

- 1. The recommendations of the Scrutiny Task Group Report as laid down in paragraph 7.1 of the report be approved subject to feasibility and resources.**
- 2. Authority be delegated to the Executive Director in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Sustainability and the Borough Solicitor to review and revise the terms of the Authority's current allotment tenancy agreement and enter into the new tenancy agreements with plot holders to enable the new terms to be effective from 1 January 2014 (as outlined in the Allotment Management implications of this report).**
- 3. It be noted that O&S have scheduled a follow up to the implementation of the recommendations in 12 months time.**

6. PRE-APPLICATION FEES FOR LICENSING APPLICATIONS

The Cabinet Member Housing and Safety introduced the report which concerned the introduction of a discretionary pre-application assistance and advice service in respect of licensing applications. This would be beneficial as it would enable the Council to produce better quality of licensing applications which would benefit persons resident or present in Cheltenham.

In response to a question, the Cabinet Member confirmed that the officer undertaking pre-application advice would not have any subsequent involvement with that individual application.

RESOLVED that

The introduction of a discretionary pre-application service and charges for new and full variation applications made under the Licensing Act 2003 be approved.

7. LICENSED VEHICLES TESTING STATIONS

The Cabinet Member Housing and Safety introduced the report and explained that the Licensing Committee had established a working group in October 2011 to investigate the Council's current arrangements for testing licensed vehicles. The working group recognised a need for a fallback option should the Council's approved testing station become unable to test vehicles. Officers have noted the working group recommendations and following discussions with Ubico are satisfied that in practice the working group recommendation has already been implemented.

RESOLVED that

- 1. the contents of this report be noted**
- 2. the working group recommendation at paragraph 1.3 has been implemented and that no further action is required.**

8. CLIMATE LOCAL INITIATIVE

The Cabinet Member Sustainability introduced the report and explained that the Climate Local initiative replaced the Nottingham declaration, which CBC had signed in 2002. Signing up to the initiative will reinforce the Council's commitment to reducing carbon emissions from council activities by 30 % by 2015 from a 2005/6 baseline and the Council's aspiration to reduce carbon emissions by 40 % by 2020. Actions that will be undertaken include working towards Bee Guardian Town status, developing a tree strategy and working with Severn Wye Energy Agency to support the community on climate change mitigation.

The Cabinet Member invited Gill Morris, Climate Change and Sustainability Officer, to address Cabinet. She highlighted that signing up to the Climate Local initiative reaffirmed the council's public commitment to carbon reduction and the actions identified comprised in-house improvements, assisting the community in adopting measures to tackle climate change and covered services which had been commissioned.

In response to a question on how CBC fared in comparison to neighbouring authorities, the Climate Change and Sustainability Officer explained that Stroud was leading the way but Cheltenham was doing well.

The Leader of the Council highlighted that it was important that the Council contributed to tackling climate change and whilst it was difficult in a recession, it could not afford not to do it.

RESOLVED that

- 1. the Authority signs up to the Local Government Association's Climate Local Commitment set out in appendix 2**
- 2. the Authority's commitments and actions to Climate Local are to be those set out in appendix 3**

9. REVIEW OF THE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULT POLICY

The Cabinet Member Housing and Safety introduced the report which outlined the changes to the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adult Policy further to national changes and local protocols and training pathways. He highlighted that this was a “live” policy which was continually examined as part of the core work of the council. He thanked those officers involved in producing it.

The Cabinet Member Finance welcomed the policy which he believed represented a step forward in making the policy more accessible to staff, more up to date and which strengthened the policy with regard to child sexual exploitation. Whilst the council was one of a number of agencies involved in safeguarding this should not reduce the significance of the policy and would assist in carrying out the council’s responsibility for children and young people.

Members agreed that every member of staff and every member of the Council should be taking an interest in the subject.

RESOLVED that

The revised policy, procedures and guidelines as set out in the Cheltenham Borough Council Safeguarding Handbook be adopted– attached as appendix 2

10. CHELTENHAM DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE BUSINESS PLAN 2013-15

The Cabinet Member Built Environment introduced the report on the Cheltenham Development Task Force Business Plan 2013-2015. He explained that the Task Force been very successful over the last three years. He gave the examples of the Midwinter development, the securing of Local Sustainable Transport Funding for Boots Corner, Brewery Phase 2 and North Place and Portland Street. These projects had been significantly aided by the activities of the Task Force in a time of economic recession.

The initial 3 year timeframe for the business plan had now elapsed and to build on the good work achieved to date Cabinet was now being asked to approve the 2013-2015 business plan. The Cabinet Member explained that as the Task Force was purely an advisory body, the targets were predicated up on resources (capital and revenue) being available from founding partners and therefore represented estimates of what it would cost.

The success of the Task Force was due to the work of CBC officers, County Council officers and representatives from the wider community, including the Chamber of Commerce. He commended them on their work.

The Cabinet Member Finance paid tribute to the personal time key people had put into the work of the Task Group such as Graham Garbutt and Diane Savory. He welcomed the joined up thinking between the public and the private sector which had attracted sources of funding, particularly in difficult economic circumstances.

Cabinet Members welcomed the work of the Task Force.

The Leader of the Council thanked all those who participated in Taskforce meetings which had produced great benefits for the town.

RESOLVED that

1. **the successful progress made by the Task Force since it's inception be noted**
2. **the continuation of the Task Force be supported**
3. **the new Business Plan for the next 3 year period subject to funds being approved by full Council in due course be approved.**

11. CORPORATE STRATEGY-2013-14 ACTION PLAN

The Leader of the Council explained that the Corporate Strategy would be submitted to Council on 25 March. It represented the fourth year of actions from a five year plan. It included measures and performance targets and actions from partnership discussions. Further discussions were needed on resourcing. The action plan had been submitted to Overview and Scrutiny whose comments included bringing the draft action plan to the December meeting of O&S to review the priorities for the plan and identify any gaps. The Leader suggested that it would be more appropriate to bring the draft to the budget working group to assess whether the targets were achievable within the resources available as this was more of a continuous process.

RESOLVED that

the draft corporate strategy action plan be endorsed for 2013-14 ahead of it going to full council for final approval (appendix A.)

12. BRIEFING FROM CABINET MEMBERS

The Cabinet Member Sustainability informed Members that all allotment tenants would be receiving a new tenancy agreement over the next few months.

**13. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXEMPT BUSINESS
RESOLVED**

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining agenda items as it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public are present there will be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 and 5, Part (1) Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Paragraph 3; Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Paragraph 5: Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

**14. EXEMPT MINUTES
RESOLVED**

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2013 be approved and signed as a correct record.

Chairman