



CHELTENHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Notice of a meeting of Council – Annual Meeting

Monday, 13 May 2013

5.00 pm

Council Chamber, Municipal Offices

Membership	
Councillors:	Colin Hay (Chair), Wendy Flynn (Vice-Chair), Andrew Chard, Garth Barnes, Ian Bickerton, Nigel Britter, Chris Coleman, Barbara Driver, Bernard Fisher, Jacky Fletcher, Rob Garnham, Les Godwin, Penny Hall, Tim Harman, Rowena Hay, Diane Hibbert, Sandra Holliday, Peter Jeffries, Steve Jordan, Andrew Lansley, Paul Massey, Helena McCloskey, Andrew McKinlay, Paul McLain, David Prince, John Rawson, Anne Regan, Rob Reid, Diggory Seacome, Duncan Smith, Malcolm Stennett, Charles Stewart, Klara Sudbury, Pat Thornton, Jon Walklett, Andrew Wall, Simon Wheeler, Roger Whyborn and Suzanne Williams

Agenda

1.	A MOMENT OF REFLECTION	
2.	APOLOGIES	
3.	ELECTION OF THE MAYOR 2013-2014 The Mayor (Councillor Colin Hay) to call on Councillor Walklett to move the motion proposing Councillor Wendy Flynn as Mayor. Councillor Walklett will propose “that Councillor Wendy Flynn be, and is hereby, elected Mayor of the Borough of Cheltenham and Council chairman for the ensuing Municipal Year” . The Mayor will call upon a Councillor to formally second the motion. The Mayor, will thereafter put to the Council the motion “that Councillor Wendy Flynn be, and is hereby, elected Mayor of the Borough of Cheltenham and Council chairman for the ensuing Municipal Year” . The Mayor will invite Councillors to give a show of hands to indicate their support. The Mayor will congratulate Councillor Flynn on her appointment and invite her to take her place in the chamber (he will still be wearing the chain until he hands it over to the new Mayor in the Town Hall	

	<p>ceremony).</p> <p>The Chief Executive will ask the newly elected Mayor to sign a declaration of acceptance of office of Council chairman 2013-2014 (this is not read out).</p> <p>From this point onwards Councillor Wendy Flynn will chair the meeting.</p>	
4.	<p>ELECTION OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR 2013-2014</p> <p>The Mayor will call upon Councillor Whyborn to move the motion to appoint Councillor Simon Wheeler as Deputy Mayor.</p> <p>Councillor Whyborn will propose “that Councillor Simon Wheeler be, and is hereby, elected Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Cheltenham and Council Vice-Chairman for the ensuing Municipal Year”.</p> <p>The Mayor will call upon a Councillor to formally second the motion.</p> <p>The Mayor to put the motion to Council “that Councillor Simon Wheeler be, and is hereby, elected Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Cheltenham and Council Vice-Chairman for the ensuing Municipal Year”.</p> <p>The Mayor will invite Councillors to give a show of hands to indicate their support.</p> <p>Upon being carried, the Mayor will congratulate Councillor Simon Wheeler on his appointment.</p> <p>The Chief Executive will ask the newly elected Deputy Mayor to sign a declaration of acceptance of office of Council Vice-Chairman 2013-2014 (this is not read out).</p>	
5.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
6.	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING 25 March 2013	(Pages 1 - 12)
7.	COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR	
8.	COMMUNICATIONS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL	
9.	NOTICES OF MOTION	
10.	TO RECEIVE PETITIONS	
11.	ANY OTHER ITEM THE MAYOR DETERMINES AS URGENT AND WHICH REQUIRES A DECISION	
12.	LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 -EXEMPT INFORMATION The Council is recommended to approve the following resolution:-	

	<p>“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 1 and 3, Part (1) Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, namely:</p> <p>Paragraph 1; Information relating to any individual.</p> <p>Paragraph 3; Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)</p>	
13.	EXEMPT MINUTES 25 March 2013	(Pages 13 - 14)

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Andrew North
Chief Executive

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Council

Monday, 25th March, 2013

2.30 - 3.45 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Colin Hay (Chair), Wendy Flynn (Vice-Chair), Andrew Chard, Garth Barnes, Ian Bickerton, Nigel Britter, Chris Coleman, Barbara Driver, Bernard Fisher, Jacky Fletcher, Rob Garnham, Les Godwin, Penny Hall, Tim Harman, Rowena Hay, Sandra Holliday, Steve Jordan, Andrew Lansley, Paul Massey, Helena McCloskey, Andrew McKinlay, David Prince, John Rawson, Anne Regan, Rob Reid, Diggory Seacome, Duncan Smith, Charles Stewart, Pat Thornton, Jon Walklett, Andrew Wall, Simon Wheeler and Suzanne Williams

Minutes

1. A MOMENT OF REFLECTION

Reverend Robert Pestell had given his apologies to the Mayor but had supplied some words in way of a moment of reflection which the Mayor read out.

2. APOLOGIES

Councillors Hibbert, Jeffries, McLain, Stennett, Sudbury and Whyborn had given their apologies and Councillor Wall had indicated he would be arriving late.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Driver, C Hay, Lansley, Smith and Williams declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 17 as Board Members of Cheltenham Borough Homes.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting had been circulated with the agenda. It was noted that the correct spelling of the Mayor's Chaplain was Reverend Pestell.

Upon a vote it was (unanimously)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 22 February 2013 be approved and signed as an accurate record.

5. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor announced the resignation of Councillor Jo Teakle, of Warden Hill Ward, for health reasons. On behalf of the Council he thanked her for her contribution as a Councillor and wished her well for the future.

The Mayor explained that the names of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the forthcoming municipal year being put forward to Annual Council was usually an agenda item. Having consulted Group Leaders, he confirmed that Councillor

Wendy Flynn and Councillor Simon Wheeler would be proposed as Mayor and Deputy Mayor respectively at the Annual Council meeting in May.

6. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

On behalf of the Cabinet and the Liberal Democrat Group the Leader of the Council thanked Jo Teakle for her contribution as a Councillor.

The Leader informed Council of a decision he had taken with regard to giving Ubico approval to enter into contracts with Gloucestershire County Council and Zurich Municipal Insurance.

He also congratulated One Legal on its contract to work with Herefordshire council.

The Leader made reference to the proposed Highways Scheme at the Air Balloon roundabout. He had received responses to his letters from both the Highways Agency and Stephen Hammond MP and informed Members that this scheme was no longer going ahead. Cheltenham Borough Council would be consulted before a further option was proposed.

The Leader also confirmed that Eric Pickles MP had responded with regard to calling-in the proposed incinerator application. However, he informed Members that last week the County Planning Committee had rejected the application for the incinerator. This was a complex issue which would be discussed within the waste partnership and it was hoped that CBC would be included in the consultation.

7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been received.

8. MEMBER QUESTIONS

The following responses were given to the 10 member questions received;

1.	Question from Councillor Wall to Cabinet Member Finance
	The Lib Dem Cabinet launched the garden waste collection service with predictions that 20,000 residents would have signed up to it by 2013. In February 2013 only 12,573 residents signed up leaving a shortfall on expectations of 7,427. Using the original £36 yearly fee as the basis this means that the Council has missed out on planned revenues of almost £270,000 for 2013 alone. On top of this the Council currently has almost 10,000 unused brown bins stockpiled at a cost of nearly £150,000. What has the Council done to make up for this unplanned 2013 double-whammy of £400K+ over-expenditure and loss of income and what impact has this had on other Council services?
	Response from Cabinet Member Finance, Councillor Rawson
	I know how keen Cllr Wall is to see Liberal Democrat policies succeed, and I am deeply sorry that he is so anxious about an "unplanned 2013 double whammy" in the Council's budget arising from a shortfall in garden waste income. However, I am glad to be able to put an end to his distress by telling him that no such whammy exists, whether planned or unplanned, double, single or in any other multiple.

	<p>The garden waste collection charges were introduced in 2011-12, at a time of heavy cuts in public expenditure, and some time after similar charges had been introduced by both the neighbouring (Conservative led) district councils. It became apparent in the 2011-12 financial year that the projected levels of take-up for the new paid-for service would not be met. We therefore did what any prudent organisation would have done: we remodelled the base budget for 2012-13 to take account of the income levels we were actually achieving. We did this by finding efficiency savings within the garden waste collection service and more generally across the Council's services.</p> <p>When the 2013-14 budget was put together, the income target for green waste charges was based on what was actually achieved in 2012-13, not on what was projected back in 2011-12. As far as it is possible to predict, we set a target that is realistic and achievable.</p> <p>Cllr Wall will also be delighted to hear that the garden waste service is earning us around £430,000 a year from garden bin subscriptions, and is more than covering the cost of the green waste collection service. That income would not exist if we had followed Cllr Wall's advice and not introduced the charge. It is odd that he is bewailing a shortfall in an income stream that he doesn't believe should exist in the first place.</p> <p>I realise Cllr Wall's judgement may be clouded by his anxiety over the green waste situation, but he should realise you can't conflate a £270,000 revenue figure and a £150,000 capital item to make a figure of "£400,000+ over-expenditure and loss of income" for 2013-14. Anyone would think he was trying to mislead people. The purchase of brown bins was funded out of the capital programme in 2011-12 and the money only needed to be spent once. As for the shortfall of income against the original 2011-12 forecasts, that has been built into the base budget in both 2012-13 and 2013-14 and therefore to describe it as "unplanned" at this stage is wholly inaccurate.</p> <p>In response to his last paragraph: because the budget was adjusted in 2012-13, there was no need to take any further major corrective action in the 2013-14 budget.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Question from Councillor Wall to Cabinet Member Sustainability</p>
	<p>I have received many complaints from angry Battledown residents about the Lib Dem Council's side waste policy. The Council is being described to me as introducing bin police, bin snoops, rubbish snoops, bin busy bodies and many others.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member please confirm what description he thinks is most appropriate for the policy he has introduced?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member Sustainability, Councillor Whyborn</p>
	<p>None of the above. This is not a picture I recognise.</p> <p>Experience in other wards - where incidentally Councillors have very been supportive regardless of party affiliation – is that the enforcement of closed bin lids and no side waste policy is working well, with almost no complaints, and Ubico staff are reporting noticeable diversion of waste</p>

	from landfill to recycling, thus saving the taxpayer some £72/tonne.
3.	Question from Councillor Wall to Cabinet Member Sustainability
	The Council has said in its new policy that it will no longer collect side waste yet it is introducing an excess waste bag scheme where residents can pay extra for specific bags that will be collected as side waste. Can the Cabinet Member please explain this apparent double-standard of a policy that does not apply if a resident pays?
	Response from Cabinet Member Sustainability, Councillor Whyborn
	This description is a complete misrepresentation. The excess waste bag scheme (where residents can pay extra for specific bags that will be collected from the kerbside) has been put in place to enable residents to deal with special events such as house moves and clear-outs, which are above and beyond the normal refuse collection service.
4.	Question from Councillor Wall to Cabinet Member Sustainability
	In December 2008, the Lib Dems first attempt to launch a green waste scheme was scuppered at Full Council through an amendment I proposed. Many of the arguments against a paid for green waste scheme raised that day appear to have come to fruition - lower than projected sign-ups, over-optimistic income projections, angry residents rejecting extra charges for something they already used through their Council Tax, more trips to recycling centres that increase traffic and CO2. In a recent Gloucestershire Echo Editorial as a result of my questions from the last Full Council, the Editor has said it is " <i>time to say sorry for Cheltenham's brown bin mountain</i> " and " <i>there comes a time when the best thing to do is just to say: 'We got it wrong'.</i> "
	Does the Cabinet Member think it is now time for him to say sorry for the failure of the Cabinet's much derided green waste scheme and the huge and continuing waste of public money that it has involved?
	Response from Cabinet Member Sustainability, Councillor Whyborn
	This question of brown bin stocks has been answered on two previous occasions, and I question why it is being raised again.
	Councillor Rawson's answer to Q1 eloquently explains who has got the policy right, and one perhaps could add that had Cllr Wall's 2008 blockade of the Lib Dem administration's waste policy been allowed to continue, the authority would probably still be clocking recycling rates of below 33%.
5.	Question from Councillor Wall to Cabinet Member Sustainability
	The Cabinet Member has previously confirmed that a three stage process has been adopted by Cheltenham's Bin Police to warn residents of breaches in the Council's new side waste policy, namely a sticker, a tag and then a formal warning letter that threatens 'enforcement' action.
	Since the Council's publicity on this matter appears to be non-existent, to enable me to provide complete clarity to the residents of Battledown, can the Cabinet Member please confirm:
	- what enforcement action the Council will take against residents who receive a formal warning letter?

	<p>- in what circumstances will a resident be prosecuted?</p> <p>- what the impact is to a resident's waste collection if enforcement action or prosecution is undertaken?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member Sustainability, Councillor Whyborn</p>
	<p>I do not recognise the expression Cheltenham's Bin Police which appears to owe much more to a vivid imagination than to the waste policy.</p> <p>The education and enforcement policy, its rationale, how it is rolled out, and how residents are informed about it is covered in the Waste policy document, and covering report which was recently put through cabinet on December 2012. Each stage of the process, commencing bin stickers explains the next stage to the resident. So far no prosecutions have taken place, and would only take place where in the view of the enforcement officer, they were necessary and would serve to enforce the policy, and/or would be successful. As said in Q2, this policy is saving the taxpayer some £72 per tonne of waste diverted from landfill.</p>
6.	<p>Question from Councillor Harman to Cabinet Member Sustainability</p>
	<p>Will the Cabinet Member look at how we can remove the curse of the plastic shopping bag and whether we can provide collection points as is the case with some leading Supermarkets?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member, Councillor Whyborn</p>
	<p>I have much empathy with the issue you raise. However Ubico are advised that whilst plastic bags can be taken for recycling, the final destination is likely to be in the Far East, and would also attract "gate fees" and possibly transport charges. In general; the administration supports the principle that the polluter should pay – and in this instance supermarkets appear to be willing to take this on-board. So it is in fact a far better solution to a) encourage retailers to recycle plastic bags, and b) continue (through the LGA and other bodies) to lobby central government to encourage retailers to restrict the use plastic bags through legislation, levies, or any other means.</p> <p>In a supplementary question, Councillor Harman asked whether the Cabinet Member would consider looking at what the council could do to work with retailers to reduce the number of plastic bags.</p> <p>The Leader indicated that Councillor Whyborn was not able to attend the meeting to answer member questions due to illness. The Leader was supportive of the proposal by Councillor Harman but he would ask the Cabinet Member to provide a written response.</p>
7.	<p>Question from Councillor Fletcher to Cabinet Member Finance</p>
	<p>The Conservative controlled Cotswold Council has been able to reduce their Council tax by 5%. They have been able to do this because of the many savings they have made including shared services with a number of councils. Can the Cabinet Member Finance explain why the Liberal Democrat Administration here, which has also invested in Shared Services, is unable to make these kind of savings?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member Finance, Councillor Rawson</p>
	<p>Both Cheltenham and Cotswold councils have achieved substantial savings in their 2013-14 budgets. Cheltenham made £1.25 million of</p>

	<p>savings of which £383,000 came from shared services. Cotswold made savings of £858,000 overall, including savings from shared services.</p> <p>I am very happy with the contribution shared services have made to our budget savings. Up to and including 2013/14, this Council will have delivered £572k annually from shared services.</p> <p>However, savings whether from shared services or other sources are not the only issue affecting council budgets. One of the ways Cotswold District Council reduced its council tax was to use its very large New Homes Bonus income.</p> <p>Cotswold is due to receive £1.374 million in New Homes Bonus in 2013-14, almost twice as much as Cheltenham - not surprisingly as it has much more space to build houses.</p> <p>Cotswold chose to allocate all of its New Homes Bonus to support its budget. By contrast, we were more cautious, taking just £250,000 of the £699,000 directly into the base budget and a further £200,000 into the Planned Maintenance Reserve. The rest was used for one-off spending which will drop out of the budget next year.</p> <p>If we had the same New Homes Bonus income as Cotswold District Council and used all of it to support the base budget, we could theoretically have had a council tax cut of 11%. However, Conservative members in this chamber may remember, and might even blush if they were not so shameless, that they protested vehemently against us using ANY New Homes Bonus money to support the base budget.</p>
8.	<p>Question from Councillor Chard to the Leader</p>
	<p>Can the Leader of the Council please tell me what proportion of homes in Cheltenham have a broadband connection to the internet and, if not, will he endeavour to obtain this figure. Will he also advise me how this figure compares to National urban statistics?</p>
	<p>Response from the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan</p>
	<p>The Borough Council does not have these figures but I have asked GFirst whether they are able to provide this information.</p>
9.	<p>Question from Councillor Penny Hall to the Leader</p>
	<p>The NHS Consultation Document on Proposals for Change 2013 gives details of their proposed changes for services at both Cheltenham General Hospital and Gloucestershire Royal Hospital. The consultation period runs until 3rd May 2013.</p> <p>What plans have you made as Leader of the Council for Cheltenham Borough Council to respond formally to all the proposed changes that impact on services provided at Cheltenham General Hospital?</p>
	<p>Response from the Leader</p>
	<p>The view of the Cabinet which I will be feeding into the consultation is that we are concerned whether enough time and thought has been given to resolving the staff shortages, before making any changes to the service provided at Cheltenham General Hospital.</p>

	<p>All Council members were invited to a presentation on the proposals in February and there is a drop-in session in Cheltenham in the High Street on Friday 19th April, 11am-3pm. While the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny committee take the lead on health issues, members of the Cheltenham Overview and Scrutiny may wish to review the proposals.</p>
10.	<p>Question from Councillor Penny Hall to Cabinet Member Sustainability</p> <p>Local residents have contacted both myself and other councillors to express their concerns at the increasing amounts of dog fouling on pavements and grass verges. CBC's Enforcement Officers work hard to actively engage with dog owners but to community groups and indeed the our Parish Council more dog bins would improve the problem. They are prepared to offer to donate money to fund the cost of more dog bins.</p> <p>Please can you clarify CBC's policy on Parish Councils/Community groups donating funds to provide dog bins in their locality?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member Sustainability, Councillor Whyborn.</p> <p>I am aware of numerous complaints in the last few weeks concerning dog fouling, and now that race week is behind us, officers are addressing the question of some additional enforcement. There is an existing policy position on the provision of bins (including dog bins):- Essentially where bins can be funded through Parish Councils/Community groups, it is necessary to ensure that the revenue costs of servicing them can also be met through either existing budgets or new money.</p> <p>In a supplementary question, Councillor Hall asked for clarification on the last sentence of the response.</p> <p>The Leader advised that in this case there was both a capital cost for the installation of the additional bins and thereafter a revenue cost for their collection. If the parish council were prepared to cover both the capital and revenue cost that would not be a problem but if it was just covering the installation, the council may not be in a position to cover the additional revenue cost for emptying them.</p>

9. CORPORATE STRATEGY - DRAFT 2013-14 ACTION PLAN

The Leader of the Council introduced the Corporate Strategy 2013/14 action plan, the fourth annual action plan of the five year strategy. He thanked all officers involved.

He reported that the action plan included measures and performance targets and actions from County and Cheltenham partnership discussions. Resourcing issues would be kept under review. 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 scrutiny working group to assess whether the targets were achievable within the resources available as this was more of a continuous process.

The Leader acknowledged that it was an ambitious and challenging plan but it was important that, despite the economic climate, the council moved forward. He highlighted the key projects of carbon reduction, commissioning and the provision of affordable housing. In addition he referred to the redevelopment of the Art Gallery and Museum and North Place and Portland Street Car Parks which were vital for the economic growth of the town.

Councillor Garnham, took the opportunity to thank Councillor Teakle for her work as Councillor on behalf of the Conservative party. He asked the Leader of the Council what sanctions were in place should Ubico fail to meet its targets. In response the Leader explained that it was very much about partnership working and communication was key. A service level agreement existed and regular meetings were held between the council and Ubico.

When asked about the target relating to increasing the number of VCS organisations supported by GAVCA and the danger that the more organisations reliant on GAVCA it could potentially weaken them, the Leader explained that this target related to the use of the training and other facilities of GAVCA as opposed to granting funding to more groups. Clarification was also sought as to the increase in the target for the percentage of identified “troubled families” who no longer met the criteria. The Leader explained that this concerned the Inspiring Families project and was an interpretation of national requirements.

In response to a question the Leader also confirmed that the GO user satisfaction survey was no longer intended to take place.

Upon a vote the recommendations were agreed (there was 1 abstention from a member who had arrived late).

RESOLVED that the 2013-14 corporate strategy action plan (Appendix A) be approved and used as a basis for monitoring the council’s performance over the next twelve months.

10. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services explained that a requirement of the Localism Act 2011 was for councils to produce a pay policy statement in respect of employees each financial year. The key changes against 2012-13 were the addition of a reference to the Living Wage and deletion of the reference to Car Allowances. The approved pay policy statement would be published on the CBC website to comply with the government guidance that a council’s approach to pay needs to be accessible for citizens and to enable local tax payers to take an informed view of whether local decisions on all aspects of remuneration are fair and make best use of public funds.

The Cabinet Member referred to the drafting corrections to section 1.1 of the draft Pay Policy Statement which had been tabled.

A member highlighted that the role of Returning Officer had not been identified separately in the document. The Cabinet Member Corporate Services agreed to follow this up.

Upon a vote it was (unanimously)

RESOLVED that the 2013-14 Pay Policy Statement (Appendix 2) be approved.

11. REVIEW OF COUNCIL SIZE AND ELECTORAL CYCLE

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the report and set out the background and drivers for the review. The Chief Executive had already spoken to group leaders along with himself, One Legal and the Director of Commissioning. The recommendation before Council was to set up a working group as proposed in the report to take forward the review. He warned against the risk of coming up with a solution before the problems and issues had been properly identified.

It was noted that the target date of risk reference 3 in Appendix 1 of March 2013 was incorrect as the working group had not yet met.

Councillor Garnham, speaking as the leader of the Conservative Group, was pleased to see the report and indicated that his group were in support of option 4 and a move to four yearly elections and a reduction in the number of councillors. He was keen to set up a working group but made a plea that if Council decided to go down this route, any subsequent report would not get buried.

The Leader agreed that this was an important issue and thought that the review should begin with first principles. The starting point was not a money-saving exercise and the Boundary Commission would not accept this as a valid reason to change. He pointed out that although a unitary authority was not on the agenda for the next two years, it could potentially reappear in the future and this would need to be taken into account. His personal view was that the savings being made through shared services would diminish the arguments for a unitary authority in Gloucestershire.

Councillor Godwin, as Leader of the PAB group, considered that making changes in this area could be long and tortuous, and urged that each political group should ensure the groups views were fed into the working group.

Other members spoke in support of setting up of a working group. The aim should be for a council that the public would see as fit for purpose and providing cost-effective democracy for the town. Some reservations were expressed about the review:

- It was wrong to prejudge the review by favouring a particular option at this time.
- The potential cost savings or four yearly elections needed to be a thoroughly investigated, taking into account the potential to share county and European elections every four years.
- There would be a significant cost to the review which was outlined in section 6.3/6.4 of the report and therefore there was a question mark about whether this was the right time.
- If the population of Cheltenham increased significantly as predicted, there needed to be sufficient councillors to support them and it would be a mistake for wards to get too large. Experience in other towns where the number of councillors had been reduced, had led to more work for officers in terms of casework referrals.

- If the reduction in councillors leads to more work for individual councillors, then this could deter younger people from becoming councillors.
- Implementing changes in this area could prove to be a lot more complicated than maintaining the status quo.

Councillor Walklett thanked members for their comments and acknowledged that they would be working to a tight schedule in order to bring back a report to Council on 22nd of July. He recognized that it was difficult for councillors who were working full-time to fulfil their role particularly where there was a daytime commitment for example Licensing and Planning.

Upon a vote it was (unanimously)

RESOLVED that;

- 1. A cabinet member working group with terms of reference as set out in Appendix 3 be set up.**
- 2. The working group be requested to report back to council on 22 July setting out their findings and if appropriate a draft letter to the LGBCE.**
- 3. Group Leaders make their nominations to the Director of Commissioning as soon as possible.**

12. COUNCIL DIARY SEPTEMBER 2013 TO AUGUST 2014

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the report, which sought approval of the provisional diary of meetings for September 2013 to August 2014. He highlighted that the production of the diary was a logistical challenge and the rationale for the diary and the draft calendar had been circulated to interested parties in February as part of the consultation.

It was brought to member's attention that there was a draft proposal that the European elections and borough elections be combined and held on Thursday, 22 May 2014. The safest course for the purposes of the diary was to assume that the draft proposal was likely to be adopted and thus the date of the annual meeting and Mayor making would need to be adjusted (along with other consequential amendments). It may be worthwhile to delay the printing of the diary inserts until this was finalised.

Upon a vote it was (unanimously)

RESOLVED that the draft Council diary of meetings for September 2013 – August 2014 be approved.

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion on St Margaret's Road traffic light experiment

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Lansley and seconded by: Councillor Walklett:

Following the traffic light experiment undertaken in St Margaret's Road, Cheltenham during November 2012 the subsequent general perception of the trial amongst drivers was extremely positive with feedback suggesting that traffic flow through the area was much quicker. Previously expressed concerns regarding queuing in side roads were proved unfounded.

The council believes that the issues highlighted by a number of pedestrians and cyclists can and should be addressed using lessons learnt from the test. The council therefore fully supports the overwhelming positive public response to the scheme from the residents of Cheltenham and in particular the St Paul's ward.

Council requests Gloucestershire County Highways to vigorously explore permanent solutions to the horrific congestion problem caused by the current traffic management system in place on St Margaret's Road.

Councillor Lansley introduced the motion as set out in the agenda and thanked all those involved in the experiment.

Councillor Driver indicated that she was happy to support the motion but proposed an amendment with the addition of the following words; *and that any permanent solution must address the needs of disabled people.*

This amendment was seconded and accepted by the proposer.

Another member speaking for the motion thought it was an eminently sensible request but added a note of caution. As work was about to start on the car park at North Place which may have implications on traffic flow, the Gloucestershire County Highways may want to consider this before coming to a decision on further work. Hence the result that members were looking for may not come as quickly as they would like.

Another member indicated that his issue had been raised at a meeting of the Cheltenham Development Task Force and all partners at the meeting considered that the experiment had been a success.

Councillor Walklett as the seconder of the motion was delighted with the responses from members. His only disappointment was that in the well-written report on the experiment, it suggested that as there had been no major accidents at this location, additional work may not be justified.

The Mayor agreed that it seems strange that the Highways Agency justified work on the basis of accident records instead of considering the economic impact of traffic delays and the potential health benefits if the pollution caused by traffic congestion was reduced.

Upon a vote on the motion as amended was agreed unanimously.

14. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS

No petitions were submitted, nor had any been received since the last meeting.

15. ANY OTHER ITEM THE MAYOR DETERMINES AS URGENT AND WHICH REQUIRES A DECISION

There were no urgent items for discussion.

16. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 -EXEMPT INFORMATION

Upon a vote it was (unanimously)

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 1 and 3, Part (1) Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Paragraph 1; Information relating to any individual.

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

Councillors Driver, C Hay, Godwin, Smith, Prince, Lansley and Williams left the chamber for the remainder of the meeting.

17. NEW BUILD DEVELOPMENT - ST PAUL'S PHASE 2 LAND ASSEMBLY

The Cabinet Member Finance introduced the report. The report explained that following a decision at Cabinet in October 2012, Cheltenham Borough Homes were mandated to progress development proposals for the St Paul's Phase 2 site in Crabtree Place. This included assembly of the full site by decanting tenants and securing the freehold of privately owned properties. The report sought approval for a further £150,000 to complete the acquisitions and associated works to enable a better development to be provided. He was very pleased to be able to commend the report to Council.

Upon a vote the recommendations were agreed (there was 1 abstention from a member who had arrived late)

Resolved that the increase of £150,000 in the budget for site assembly costs for the St Paul's Phase 2 development be approved.

Colin Hay
Chair

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