

Cabinet

Tuesday, 15th October, 2013

6.00 - 6.55 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Steve Jordan (Leader of the Council), John Rawson (Cabinet Member Finance), Rowena Hay (Cabinet Member Sport and Culture), 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)

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

None.

5. BUILT ENVIRONMENT:REVIEW OF COMMISSIONED SERVICE

The Cabinet Member Built Environment introduced the report which updated Cabinet on the first year of the service level agreement, to review progress on a series of Cabinet recommendations approved on 18 October 2011 and to outline how the service would be managed under the Cheltenham Futures change programme.

The Cabinet Member highlighted the range and depth of work which was undertaken by Built Environment ranging from the JCS and Cheltenham Plan, enforcement, Civic Pride, to business support and off street parking. He made reference to the fact that despite the changes the service had realised some successes which included planning income exceeding targets, increasing confidence in planning decision-making, particularly in relation to some notable major applications and progressing a number of flood mitigation schemes. In terms of key challenges ahead he referred to the JCS and the Cheltenham Plan and day to day planning and enforcement activities.

Members were encouraged by a positive report. The fact that planning income was increasing signalled that the Cheltenham economy was reviving. The comment was also made that as the number of planning appeals was below target this suggested that the council had a robust planning decision making process and the service was therefore delivering and performing well.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. the progress made be noted;**
- 2. A stakeholder session be held to get feedback on how the service is performing;**
- 3. outstanding recommendations from the cabinet report in 2011 be progressed;**
- 4. further work be undertaken with partner councils to explore how built environment services can be delivered more cost effectively through collaborative working;**
- 5. Overview & Scrutiny review progress against the recommendations in six months' time.**

6. ANNUAL REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES

The Cabinet Member Housing and Safety introduced the report and explained that the Council had adopted a Hackney carriage fare formula which was used annually to calculate the running costs of a licensed Hackney Carriage vehicle. The formula this year indicated a 3.25 % increase in the running costs of a licensed Hackney Carriage vehicle. Cabinet was asked to approve the fare increase for consultation and if there were no substantive amendments following consultation, authority would be delegated to the Executive Director to adopt the proposed fares.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. an increase of 3.25% for Hackney Carriage fares be approved**
- 2. authority be delegated to the Executive Director to carry out the necessary advertising requirements to comply with section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, and**
- 3. subject to there being no substantive amendments being made following consultation, authority be delegated to the Executive Director to adopt the proposed fares to be implemented within two months.**

7. ALLOCATION OF THE COMMUNITY PRIDE FUND

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and explained that £50 000 had been set aside for the community pride scheme at Council in February. In addition a further £4 000 had been added from the community development budget to create a community building grant for the purposes of running small scale events and activities.

He reported that 33 community pride applications had been received for grants to match fund community led projects, up to the value of £5 000. 23 out of 33 had been approved either partially or completely. He informed members that an updated version of the appendix had been circulated and highlighted that the bid from Coconut Co-working Cheltenham had been withdrawn due to personal

circumstances. However, officers had offered to offer continuing support to this project through the economic development service. The total sum awarded through the process totalled £41 500 and officers were awaiting further information on a couple of bids before they were determined. It was proposed that any remaining funds were rolled over to create a small pot of funding to support events and activities to commemorate the centenary of the start of the First World War.

The Leader thanked all those represented on the Panel which was cross party and which included officers and representatives from the voluntary sector.

Members welcome the broad range and diversity of the bids received which would be of benefit to the community and officers were thanked for their work supporting the process. It was noted that this fund was an effective way of supporting local communities and as such it was hoped that it would continue in future years. CBC's contribution ensured that projects such as these had a greater impact.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. the list of projects to be funded from community pride funds as set out in appendix 2 (as amended) and community building grants as set out in appendix 3 be approved.**
- 2. it be noted that the Leader will determine how best to allocate the remaining funds**

8. BUDGET STRATEGY AND PROCESS

The Cabinet Member Finance introduced the report which proposed a broad strategy and outlined a process for setting the budget, housing rents and council tax for 2014/15. It outlined a number of principles that needed to be established at this stage to enable budget preparation to commence.

The Cabinet Member explained that there had been unprecedented cuts in the Government's Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and it was likely that in 2014/15 it would be to the tune of £844k. To that end the Medium Term Financial Strategy projections have been updated to reflect the planned funding cuts per the next spending review with the funding gap for 2014/15 rising to £989k. He reported that the good news was that there was a programme of identified savings so these cuts would not affect frontline services. This included the Leisure and Culture Trust, the senior management restructure and the contribution from shared services. He highlighted that there would be a further cut in grant the following year which would make it increasingly difficult. In addition, from 2015 the Government was intending to top slice the New Homes Bonus to fund economic development which was a cause for concern. The main focus now for CBC was to find efficiency savings and reduce costs.

The Leader added that this was part on an ongoing process but supported the current approach.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. the budget setting timetable at Appendix 2 be approved.**

2. **the expected cut in government funding of £844k (13.6%) for 2014/15 and estimated funding gap of £989k be noted.**
3. **the budget strategy outlined in section 4 and appendix 3 be approved.**
4. **the Section 151 Officer and the Cabinet Member for Finance be requested to consider suggestions from the Budget Scrutiny Working Group in preparing the interim budget proposals for 2014/15 as outlined in section 5.**

9. QUARTERLY BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO END OF AUGUST

The Cabinet Member Finance introduced the report and reported that the projected total budget saving amounted to £133 000 which was encouraging. He highlighted that planning income was above target and made reference to savings being achieved from the change in the way the council purchased its vehicles and bins. In addition he highlighted the £17 000 interest achieved on General Fund investments.

The Cabinet Member paid tribute to the enormous work both finance officers and other officers across the authority had undertaken to stay within budget. The focus was to find innovative ways to stay within budget.

Members welcomed the report and were encouraged by the surpluses which had been achieved this year.

RESOLVED THAT

1. **the contents of this report including the key projected variances to the original 2013/14 budget, and the projected total budget saving of £133,000 be noted.**
2. **if, following the more detailed monitoring process currently being undertaken as part of the budget setting process for 2014/15, a potential overspend is identified, corrective action be taken to ensure that the Council delivers services within the overall net budget for the year.**

10. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the report and explained that effective risk management was a key component of the Council's governance arrangements which included the senior leadership team (SLT) reviewing the Corporate Risk Register on a monthly basis. SLT considered the need to record any new risks, where mitigating actions may not be progressing as planned or what further action needs to be taken. They also considered any new risks and identified the mitigating actions which needed to be taken to manage the impact and likelihood of that risk.

The Cabinet Member referred to the dashboard in the appendix and explained that there were currently 19 active risks, 15 with a medium score and 4 with a high score. SLT and the relevant Cabinet Member were closely monitoring these. Cabinet were being asked whether they were satisfied that the Council

was identifying and considering the full range of risks which may impact on the delivery of our outcomes and that appropriate action was being taken to manage them. Cabinet was also asked to approve the content of the register.

The Leader added that Cabinet members were regularly receiving informal updates about the current risks following SLT meetings and that this document represented the annual formal risk report.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. the corporate risks and the progress being made to manage them be noted**
- 2. the Corporate Risk Register be approved**
- 3. the current risk reporting process be continued**

11. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS (RIPA)-OFFICE OF SURVEILLANCE COMMISSIONER'S INSPECTION REPORT

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the report and explained that the Assistant Commissioner from the Office of Surveillance Commissioners had conducted an inspection of the Council's use and governance arrangements for conducting covert surveillance in July 2013. His report commended the progress the Council had made since the last inspection in April 2010 and particular reference was made to the hard work of the Corporate Governance Officer and the Executive Director for achieving this. The report had been submitted to Audit Committee on 25 September.

Members welcomed the positive news.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. the recommendations within the OSC report following the inspection on the 26th July 2013 regarding the Councils arrangements for the use of RIPA (Appendix 2) be noted.**
- 2. the amendments to the Councils RIPA Guidelines Appendix 3 as per the recommendation from Audit Committee on the 25th September 2013 be agreed.**

12. THIRD SECTOR ASSESSMENT FOR THE GARDENS GALLERY CIC

The Cabinet Member Finance introduced the report and explained that the Gardens Gallery provided art education and exhibition opportunities to residents of Cheltenham and further afield. It was granted a lease by the Council in 2007.

The Cabinet Member highlighted that the Council now had a more structured policy with regard to third sector leases and rentals of Council property and the report judged to what extent a grant could be issued to offset the rent for the building. The recommendation was to grant a 100 % rental discount which represented a continuation of existing arrangements. The Gardens Gallery now required a longer lease as part of the structure of the grant awarded for the

installation of a green energy solution that would reduce energy usage at the building. The Cabinet member commended the efforts and successes of the Gardens Gallery.

Members supported the recommendations and highlighted the positive value of the venue to the community.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. the grant of a Lease to the Gardens Gallery Community Interest Company for a term of 25 years at market rent be approved**
- 2. authority be delegated to the Head of Property and Asset Management, in consultation with the Director of Resources and Borough Solicitor to negotiate such other terms of the lease as he considers necessary or advisable**
- 3. the 100% rental discount be approved in accordance with the content of the 3rd Sector report attached as appendix 1**

13. BRIEFING FROM CABINET MEMBERS

The Cabinet Member Sustainability informed members that discussions were ongoing with the county council with regard to putting solar panels on council buildings. A framework agreement was being drafted with the county and this would potentially allow CBC to put solar panels in place.

14. DECISIONS OF CABINET MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

The Cabinet Member Finance reported that he had made the following decisions :

- Accepted the tender from FMBR Ltd for the provision of new vinyl floor coverings to various council owned residential properties
- Accepted the tender from Tim Hobbs, CBH, for the supply and installation of standard composite doors and composite fire doors
- Accepted the tender from Snape Ltd for the provision of replacement soil pipe works various properties 2013 for Council owned residential properties
- Accepted the quotation evaluation report from Julian Denslow, CBH Asset and Procurement surveyor for the provision of a legionella risk mitigation consultancy service
- Accepted the tender from NKS for the provision of Void Works/Building Works Various properties 2013 for Council owned residential properties

The Cabinet Member Housing and Safety reported that he had made the following decision :

- Supporting people contract for older people's sheltered housing services

15. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXEMPT BUSINESS RESOLVED THAT

“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 paragraphs 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

16. EXEMPT MINUTES

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 17 September were approved and signed as a correct record.

Chairman