

Cabinet

**Tuesday, 15th September, 2015
6.00 - 6.45 pm**

Attendees	
Councillors:	Steve Jordan (Leader of the Council), John Rawson (Cabinet Member Finance), Rowena Hay (Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles), Peter Jeffries (Cabinet Member Housing), Andrew McKinlay (Cabinet Member Development and Safety), Jon Walklett (Cabinet Member Corporate Services) and Chris Coleman (Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment)
Also in attendance:	Andrew North, Peter Lewis, Mike Redman and Councillor Rob Reid

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 14 July 2015 were approved as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

None received.

5. GAMBLING ACT 2005 STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay, introduced the report. The report explained that the Gambling Act 2005 requires that the council produce, consult on and publish a statement of the principles that they propose to apply when exercising their functions under the Act. The Act also requires that the Statement of Principles should be kept under review and must be re-published at least every three years. Cheltenham Borough Council published its existing Statement of Principles in October 2012 and the Statement is now due to be reviewed and a new Statement of Principles will need to be published to take effect no later than January 2016.

The Cabinet Member emphasised that with only 20 licensed gambling premises in Cheltenham, there were few problems arising from gambling in the town.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. the proposed changes to the Statement of Principles be noted; and**

2. **the attached revised draft of the three year Statement of Principles be approved for the purpose of consultation with all relevant parties; and**
3. **subject to no substantive amendments being made following consultation, Council be recommended to adopt the revised Statement of Principles.**

6. AMENDMENTS TO LICENSING POLICY, GUIDANCE AND CONDITIONS FOR PRIVATE HIRE AND TAXIS OPERATING WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF CHELTENHAM

The Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay, introduced the report. The report explained that the council has a statutory duty to ensure all of its licensed drivers are, and remain, fit and proper people. The council is committed to keeping its policies under review to ensure they continue to be effective and comply with the latest guidance and national best practice. This report was seeking permission from Cabinet to approve minor changes to the council's taxi and private hire licensing policy for consultation.

He highlighted the proposed requirement for all licensed drivers to undertake safeguarding training and this would enable them to assist the authorities in identifying any relevant activities and equip themselves against any false allegations.

RESOLVED THAT

1. **the proposed changes to the current taxi and private hire licensing policy be noted; and**
2. **the proposed changes be approved for consultation.**

7. RECOMMENDED OPTION FOR THE FUTURE PROVISION OF THE CHELTENHAM CREMATORIUM SERVICE

The Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Coleman introduced the report. He was delighted that he was able to bring this report to Cabinet and he gave thanks to the excellent team of officers who had made a tremendous input to the project. He also acknowledged the contribution made by Councillors Reid, McCloskey and Ryder as members of the Cabinet Member working group who had been a very useful sounding board to himself and the rest of the team.

It had been acknowledged that investment was needed to improve public facilities and in particular, the reliability of the cremators at Cheltenham's cemetery and crematorium. This follows the poor quality cremator installation which took place in 2011, during which the main contractor went into liquidation, leaving a number of authorities with sub-standard equipment issues. To ensure that the best solution was secured, architects Robert Potter and Partners were commissioned to look at a number of options ranging from installing new cremators in the current building, to building a new chapel and crematorium. The options identified were diverse and had different operational, customer

service and financial implications. All options had been considered in detail by the Project Board and at gateway review meetings before selecting option E as the preferred one. He was confident after all the work that had been done, that option E was financially viable given the increase in fees recommended.

The report set out the results of the public consultation process which had included professionals as well as the public. There had been an encouraging response in favour of option E including support for increasing fees. He concluded that the cemetery and crematorium was seen as a hugely important service to the town by its residents and by Council Members. He was now seeking Cabinet endorsement of the recommended preferred option for implementation, subject to Council agreement to the financial implications of the project.

Cabinet Members praised the work done in bringing this project to this stage and felt it was a huge step forward given the situation 12 months ago. The level of public response had been heartening and demonstrated the importance of the service to people in Cheltenham. It sent a message to the town that the council is committed to protecting and delivering quality local services. They fully endorsed the recommendations and hoped the Council would take the same position and support the financial implications.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. it be agreed that Option E be progressed- a new build facility on Council-owned land to the east of the current cemetery site - as the preferred option for the future provision of its crematorium service;**
- 2. authority be delegated to the Director of Environmental and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Clean and Green Environment and the Head of Property Services to prepare and submit the necessary planning application for the new building, cremator plant and associated works;**
- 3. it be noted that, subject to Council approving the project budget;**
 - 3.1 the Head of Property Services will undertake the procurement for the design and construction of the new crematorium, cremators and associated works, in consultation with the Director of Environmental and Regulatory Services, the Cabinet Member for Clean and Green Environment, the Section 151 officer and the Borough Solicitor;**
 - 3.2 following the procurements referred to in recommendation 3.1 a report will be presented to the Cabinet Member for Clean and Green Environment requesting approval to award the contracts to the successful contractors;**
- 4. authority be delegated to the Head of Property Services in consultation with the Director of Environmental and Regulatory Services to take all necessary steps and undertake all necessary procedures, including the entering into of legal or other documentation, as may be required to implement or facilitate the**

project;

5. **the cross-party Cabinet Member Working Group which has been helpfully acting as a sounding board for the project be asked to continue its role in relation to the new build project, with updated terms of reference as appropriate;**
6. **It be agreed in principle to an increase in the cremation fee by 2017/18 to sufficiently cover additional revenue costs.**

Council be recommended to:

7. **allocate the budgets for financing Option E as detailed in Appendix 4 (exempt).**

8. LECKHAMPTON AND WARDEN HILL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA APPLICATION

The Leader, Councillor Jordan introduced the report. The report explained that an application to designate a Neighbourhood Plan Area had been received from Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council. This application had been assessed against the requirements set out in the legislation and was considered to meet the requirements to enable designation of the Neighbourhood Area.

Following the Council resolution, the Cabinet were being asked to approve the designation to ensure a response was given within the eight week timescale. This would enable Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the area covered by the designation.

Cabinet Members agreed that neighbourhood plans were something that the council was keen to encourage as it facilitated local people making local decisions about their areas. It was noted that the council may need to give some consideration to how the process might work for non-parished areas.

RESOLVED THAT

the designation of a Neighbourhood Area covering Leckhampton with Warden Hill parish be approved.

9. SHOPMOBILITY-FUTURE DELIVERY

The Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles, Councillor Hay, introduced the report. She reminded Members that Cabinet had received an earlier report on 14 July 2015 on the future delivery of the Shopmobility service, which had been served notice to quit its current premises by November 2015. Cabinet had resolved to consult on its future delivery and this report set out the results of that consultation. Provisional analysis of the consultation results indicated significant support for continued provision of a Shopmobility service in the town. The Community Impact Assessment clearly indicated that any changes to the provision of the service would affect a vulnerable section of the community and therefore the council would need to continue to make a sensitive assessment

against the budgetary position for this non-statutory service. The tables in the report indicated the current subsidy level and the falling patronage.

Whilst the favoured organisation for continued delivery was the Borough Council, there was a general acceptance that delivery could be through another organisation. A town centre location close to car parking was favoured. An updated consultation report following the closing dates for comments had been made available to Members before the meeting.

Cabinet were being asked to support the relocation of the service to the Horse & Groom, St George's Place and then commence a procurement exercise to establish interest from other organisations in operating the service. The Cabinet Member recognized that the proposed site for relocation does not meet all of the needs however this relocation would allow the service to continue whilst the commissioning process is implemented and the finances are reviewed. She gave thanks to the members of the scrutiny task group and to all of the people who had responded to the consultation.

The Leader supported the recommendations and felt they were a very sensible solution in the circumstances.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. the relocation of the Shopmobility service to the Horse and Groom, St George's Place be agreed with the one-off costs being funded from within the existing service budget.**
- 2. Cabinet is committed to a commissioning process for the Shopmobility service, the process to commence in January 2016.**
- 3. in the interim a review of fees and funding sources is undertaken, in conjunction with the 2016/17 Budget Setting Process.**

10. BRIEFING FROM CABINET MEMBERS

The Cabinet Member Development and Safety confirmed that following a recruitment process, Tracey Crews had been appointed as Director of Planning, in the new structure for REST agreed by Council.

Earlier this week he had attended a series of presentations by officers in the REST division to demonstrate how they had improved customer services and service standards. He had been very impressed by their achievements particularly as all the changes had been completed whilst continuing to deliver business as usual. He thanked and congratulated all the staff for their efforts.

The Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles reported that the Tonga World Cup Rugby Team had been delighted by the Welcome reception they had received. This had been organised by the Cheltenham Trust but the council and local community groups had been involved.

The Cabinet Member Finance updated members on the conservation work being undertaken on the war memorial. The conservator had completed his initial tests and would soon be in a position to submit a listed building

application to this council and a tender document was being prepared for the work.

The Leader advised that the Director, Mike Redman had produced a briefing note on economic development which the Leader intended to publish with the minutes of this meeting.

The Leader updated members on the latest situation with regard to Community Pride funding. The Strategy and Engagement Manager had sought further information on the three bids outstanding and circulated this to the Leader. Cabinet had previously delegated the final decision to the officer in consultation with himself and he was happy that the bids could now be confirmed. All bids had now been determined leaving a small amount in the fund.

Cabinet Members advised Cabinet of any Cabinet Member decisions they had taken since the last meeting and details were all available on the council's website.

Chairman

Briefing Notes

Committee name: Cabinet

Date: 15th September, 2015

Responsible officer: Mike Redman
01242 264160

mike.redman@cheltenham.gov.uk

This note contains information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Cabinet but where no decisions from Members are needed. If Members have questions relating to matters shown, they are asked to contact the Officer indicated.

Update regarding Economic development

Joint Core Strategy (JCS) – the JCS examination in public resumes in October, with additional sessions meaning that adoption is unlikely to take place until summer 2016 at the earliest. The JCS is arguably the most significant strand of work the council is pursuing in relation to long term impact on the economy of the town and its wider environs. In accordance with planning policy, the strategy seeks to balance economic, environmental and social impacts to deliver a plan for sustainable development.

The Inspector is considering some significant representations in relation to the quantum of employment land proposed for the JCS area and also, the intended status of safeguarded land identified for development around Cheltenham post-2031.

Areas of proposed safeguarded land at west Cheltenham and north-west Cheltenham adjacent to Junction 10 of the M5, have not yet been subject to the level of analysis afforded to allocations within the plan. If the Inspector indicates that the plan needs to have more flexibility during the plan period, further work may be required to assess the potential for safeguarded land being allocated at this stage.

Officers have been looking in particular at the proposed cross-boundary safeguarded site at west Cheltenham, which subject to changes to the sewage treatment plant at that location, may have potential for cyber security-related development.

Whilst this might offer additional employment land flexibility for Cheltenham, the Inspector and other JCS partners will be looking for evidence that any move in this respect would not unbalance delivery across the JCS area.

To this end, the Inspector has requested a document setting out the economic strategy as established by the JCS, updated in the context of the issues debated through the JCS examination and the analysis of additional evidence requested by the Inspector. It is appropriate that the economic strategy is an adaptable tool that responds to the wide range of influences which are working collectively to drive the economy of Gloucestershire, in respect of which the JCS area plays a significant role with influences beyond the county boundary. This document will therefore seek to clearly set out the direction of travel and identify, supported by evidence, modifications proposed to the JCS for consideration by the JCS examination in December.

Cheltenham Plan consultation

The Cheltenham Plan is a new planning policy document to guide development in the local area. It will be used in combination with the JCS for Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury. The Cheltenham Plan has been split into two parts and the latest six week consultation which closed on 3rd August 2015, focused on part one.

The consultation builds on the previous scoping consultation that provided key information about the future plan. It focusses on issues (current and future) affecting Cheltenham and identifies planning approaches and options that can help solve and alleviate these issues.

This part one stage focuses on three policy areas:

- economic strategy;
- potential local green space designations; and
- potential development allocations (sites for development)

The main purpose of the consultation was to hear views on the early stages of Cheltenham Plan production, which will help the council to prepare the 'pre-submission draft' of the Cheltenham Plan.

Consultation responses will be reported to Council and published on the Cheltenham Plan webpage. Positive responses have been provided in relation to suggestions for local green space designations and there has been significant level of support for the provision of a cyber-security employment hub.

Athey report – developing Cheltenham as a business location

In late 2014, Athey Consulting was commissioned to support the development of an economic strategy for Cheltenham, focusing on the authority's role as a business location. The subsequent report published in January 2015 provides an economic assessment of Cheltenham, including an employment site review and key findings from consultation meetings and interviews with businesses and other stakeholders. Chapter 3 of the report outlines a number of key priorities and objectives for Cheltenham's economic strategy and goes on to discuss potential delivery ideas and options to help achieve these.

The report concludes that the rationale for the scale of the economic ambition for the town and the potential impacts and benefits from the strategic allocations within the JCS could be strengthened. Further work is needed to develop economic forecasts to identify what actions are likely to make the biggest impact on revenues, jobs, business retention etc. – this would provide the rationale for targeting certain priorities e.g. cyber-security. A strategic assessment of strengths or gaps in respect of what industries or businesses need from a location in terms of their commercial imperatives would help inform allocations and the management of strategic assets.

Athey also identifies the need to identify how innovation initiatives can be progressed to impact on productivity and how strategic sites might impact on existing district and town centres. More consideration also needs to be made of how sites work individually or in combination to address economic or social ambitions for a locality.

Highlighting what has been delivered well would be useful – e.g. the work of the Cheltenham Development Task Force, as this may stimulate further activity and investment. This needs to be clearly linked to outcomes and impacts such as jobs, business start-ups and turnover.

In terms of future investment, we need to be clearer about what industries and businesses are expected to underpin the demand for land and premises, or which will be responsible for shaping the local economy in future years.

If businesses cannot find suitable premises we need better intelligence to understand what the blockages are and what may be stifling or preventing investment. The role of the LEP in helping to gather this information and to link with FE/HE institutions to promote this commercial potential, alongside R&D activity, enterprise support and entrepreneurship would also be helpful.

Main conclusions from stakeholder consultation:-

- If established businesses and start-ups have growth ambitions, there is nowhere for them to move to and grow within the town;
- CBC needs to be more growth orientated with a stronger vision for change over the next 20 years;
- Allocating land for growth is a top priority, which would help local companies looking to expand and improve the offer for start-up businesses. There is a general feeling that the care sector is a major growth opportunity;
- Confirmed that any vision of Cheltenham as a location for new business HQ's would be highly unrealistic;
- There is a need for more provision of larger modern, high grade offices and business space to compete with the likes of Gloucester;
- Improvements to transport and parking – many consultees emphasised the need for transport improvements in and around the town, including measures to ease congestion e.g. ring road/northern relief road, better parking provision, easier customer access to retail businesses and measures to encourage modal shift away from cars;
- GCHQ is looking at opportunities for themselves and locations for subcontractors/associated businesses. CBC needs to support GCHQ with identifying suitable space for expansion within Cheltenham and to actively influence and support this;
- Need to develop rapport with key industries and remaining large employers such as GCHQ, with more active brokering of relationships to 'make things happen'.

Joining-up Gloucestershire economic development support

CBC is participating in a county-wide project being led by Gloucestershire County Council to look at how the districts are currently providing economic development support and what opportunities there are to do this more collaboratively in the future. At this stage, there is no suggestion that this will involve setting up a shared service, but we are looking at how authorities can work virtually to support business needs across municipal boundaries, in line with relevant recommendations within the Athey report as detailed above.

Findings from this project are being reported back through the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC)

Cheltenham Business Partnership (CBP) manager role

Following a temporary appointment earlier in the year, Kevan Blackadder, formerly editor of the Gloucestershire Echo has now been appointed to this role on a consultancy basis. The role is currently part-funded by CBC, but this may be reviewed in light of the outcome of the Business Improvement District proposal outlined below. Kevan has been very active in liaising with the business community on a range of issues and is providing regular update reports through the CBP.

Business Improvement District

Following an initial feasibility study the Cheltenham Business Partnership has agreed to progress the project to establish a Business Improvement District (BID) for Cheltenham town centre. A ballot of businesses in the proposed area will be held to decide if the BID should be formed. This will entail a degree of resources and to support towns in developing a BID the DCLG has created a loan fund (£10,000 to £50,000) for which partnerships can apply.

This project is being overseen by Martin Quantock, formerly Cheltenham's town centre manager.

If loan funding is secured, the BID ballot could take place in mid-2016.

Criteria for the loan fund requires the support of the local authority and for the local authority to act as the Accountable Body should the partnership be successful in its application.

The Cabinet Member for Finance has agreed to approve Cheltenham Borough Council to:

- Act as the Accountable Body for a loan from The BID Loan Fund to be used to progress the development of a Cheltenham BID.
- Act as treasurer for the financial administration of the BID scheme, on behalf of Cheltenham Business Partnership.

If the ballot of businesses in the proposed area is unsuccessful the loan does not have to be repaid.

If the ballot is successful, the loan will be repaid from the income generated by the BID levy. As the council will collect the BID levy the loan repayments can be deducted before any levy income is paid to the BID Company. Interest at 1% above inflation will be charged each year which will also be deducted from BID levy income (late payment fees can also be charged). We are currently waiting to hear from DCLG as to when funds would be available to support the Cheltenham BID.

Based on current proposals, it is estimated that in excess of £400,000 per annum could be generated from BID levy. The risk of there being insufficient funds to repay the loan and any interest payable is considered to be minimal.

Car Parking Strategy

Members will be aware of the longstanding commitment within the corporate plan to review the Council's car parking strategy.

This work is now being progressed through the establishment of a cross-party Cabinet Member Working group which will have its inaugural meeting on 15th October, 2015.

Terms of reference for the group will be established at the initial meeting and its remit is likely to include:-

- Car parking quantum;
- Relationship between on and off street parking provision;
- Impact of car parking on the local economy;
- Strategy for parking charges;
- Review of service costs and current staffing arrangements;
- Legal constraints on the service;
- Relationship to objectives within the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan;
- Opportunities for off street parking site consolidation, or further investment in provision.

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