

Council

Monday, 26th March, 2018
2.30 - 5.00 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Klara Sudbury (Chairman), Bernard Fisher (Vice-Chair), Matt Babbage, Paul Baker, Garth Barnes, Nigel Britter, Flo Clucas, Chris Coleman, Mike Collins, Tim Harman, Steve Harvey, Colin Hay, Rowena Hay, Alex Hegenbarth, Karl Hobley, Sandra Holliday, Peter Jeffries, Steve Jordan, Helena McCloskey, Paul McCloskey, Andrew McKinlay, Chris Nelson, Tony Oliver, Dennis Parsons, Chris Ryder, Louis Savage, Diggory Seacome, Malcolm Stennett, Pat Thornton, Jon Walklett, Simon Wheeler, Roger Whyborn, Max Wilkinson, Suzanne Williams and David Willingham

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Lillywhite, Mason and Payne had given their apologies.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

Councillor Hobley declared an interest in agenda item 12- motion b as he was an employee of the British Legion. He would withdraw from the chamber for this item.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting had been circulated with the agenda.

Upon a vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 19 February 2018 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

4. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor informed Members that her engagements had not been included in the previous minutes but would be added as an appendix.

The Mayor informed Members that Colin Nye, former Chief Executive had recently passed away. A minutes silence was then held. Councillors Barnes and Harman then led tributes to Mr Nye.

Members were also informed of the recent passing of Cliff Ryde, former Director at the Council.

The Mayor then wished to put on record her thanks to the retiring Councillors Helena McCloskey, Chris Ryder, Pat Thornton, Jon Walklett and Colin Hay for their contributions to the council and their local communities.

The Mayor then informed Members of her recent and upcoming engagements. These are attached as an appendix to the minutes.

5. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Leader also wished to pay tribute to Colin Nye.

The Leader put on record his thanks to Councillor Stennett for his contribution over the years to the Board of Gloucestershire Airport from which he was standing down following its restructure.

Thanks were given to the Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles and those officers involved in the event to mark International Women's Day.

The Leader then informed Members of the recent domestic homicide review which had highlighted what could be done better in terms of safeguarding.

The Local Plan consultation was now live and would run until 9 April. He thanked those officers who were involved in the recent roadshows in the Regent Arcade.

Finally the Leader also wished to thank all retiring Members for their contributions to the Council.

6. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS

None received.

7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1.	Question from Mr Michael Ramstedt to the Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Chris Coleman
	As one of those affected by the shutdown of the crematorium on February 12th 2018. Can the council guarantee that when the repairs are carried out that the cremators will be fit for purpose during the interim until the new crematorium is on line and that in the interim there will not be any ongoing maintenance issues going forward. And is the council getting value for money from the expensive service contract?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	It is well known and a matter of public record that the Council has been experiencing problems with its cremator plant for several years, during which time many families have nevertheless received an acceptable quality service from our bereavement services team. No authority or private crematorium can give a 100% guarantee that it will not have any technical issues with its plant, or that it will not have future maintenance problems. However, our maintenance provider has strongly advised the Council that our cremators are now safe to use and that they can be kept in a serviceable condition up until our new crematorium is

	<p>ready to operate.</p> <p>The current maintenance contract which the authority has with the company ATI was subject to our normal procurement arrangements which have been designed to secure value for money to the public purse. We will be assessing the performance of our contractor and may seek compensation if there is sufficient evidence to indicate a service failure under the terms of the contract.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Mr Ramstedt queried why the cremators, which he had been advised still posed maintenance issues, were still being used, if this was in fact the case?</p> <p>Whilst it was a matter of public record that there had been issues with for the cremators for some years, the Cabinet Member deeply regretted that these issues had resulted in the recent shutdown. He assured Mr Ramstedt that lessons had been learned and though the service was not able to run at full capacity (and hadn't for some time), officers were working tirelessly with the contractors to continue delivering a service.</p>
2.	Question from Mr Michael Ramstedt to the Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Chris Coleman
	<p>Despite a complaint being raised, families affected during the disruption were not offered any support and the complaint not properly investigated. Are the Cheltenham and Tewkesbury bereavement services therefore fit for purpose and does the council have a robust and fair complaint customer service and carries out such investigations without bias?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Mr Ramstedt made a complaint to the Council via his ward councillor, which has been fully investigated and responded to in accordance with our corporate complaints' procedure and at each stage, replies have been provided within 10 working days. Unfortunately, statements were made by Mr Ramstedt on social media regarding the processing of his complaint, which was not the appropriate or advised means of escalation. However, Council officers did nevertheless pick up on these comments and dealt with them as a request for review of the complaint at the next stage of the process.</p> <p>The Director of Environment investigated and responded to the complaint at Stage 2 and subsequently spoken at length to Mr Ramstedt by telephone, explaining that Stage 3 would be dealt with independently of his department.</p> <p>The final Stage 3 response was sent out on Monday 19th March and Mr Ramstedt has the option of approaching the Local Government Ombudsman if he remains dissatisfied with the outcome.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Mr Ramstedt queried why the council had a complaints procedure which differed to that of Cheltenham Borough Homes, which allowed complainants the opportunity to meet with officers to discuss their complaint?</p>

	<p>The Cabinet Member reiterated that he was satisfied that officers had followed the complaints procedure that had been adopted by the authority. Beyond that, he was happy to meet with Mr Ramstedt and officers to discuss his complaint, as well as his experience and thoughts on the complaints procedure. He would talk with the Cabinet Member Housing outside of the meeting about the CBH complaints procedure and whether it was appropriate for the complaints procedures to be more aligned.</p>
3.	<p>Question from Mr Jonny Brownsteen to Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Chris Coleman</p>
	<p>The recent severe weather has caused some disruption to and some uncertainty around bin collections. Will the council consider introducing a text message service which residents can opt in to, to inform residents of when to expect their bins to be collected during times of disruption?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>The Council and Ubico are currently looking at future investment in technology which may include text messaging. The Council appreciates residents' understanding in times of service disruption, particularly this winter due to the frequency of snow falls. Every effort is made to ensure as much up to date information as possible is available on the website for residents.</p> <p>Whilst Mr Brownsteen was confident that residents of St Pauls would welcome news that future investment in technology was being considered, he queried what 'other options' were being considered and asked to be given a realistic timescale.</p> <p>In response, the Cabinet Member explained that the vehicles for the new and comprehensive recycling service had been procured some 10 months prior. He had hoped that the Joint Waste Team would be in a position to provide the data needed to offer residents 'live' updates, but sadly this was not the case. As such, the Cabinet Member had asked that the council and Ubico look at in-cab technology which would allow residents to access up to the minute data via the council's website. Having previously lived in St Pauls, as well as having served as an elected representative in the area, he had concerns about how well a text message service would work given the high percentage of students who resided in the area, who may move on and receive irrelevant messages.</p>
4.	<p>Question from Ms Jo Stafford to Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles, Councillor Flo Clucas</p>
	<p>How can residents make their voices heard when applications such as the one for "Picnic in the Park" at Pittville Park, are made? While a family event is always welcome residents living close to the park felt they were not given adequate opportunity to comment on a live music event so close to their homes.</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>Large scale events such as the "Picnic in the Park" will require formal licences for putting on entertainment and selling alcohol. The statutory process for determining these types of applications includes the requirement to consult with, amongst others, affected people such as</p>

	<p>residents. The statutory consultation period is for 28 days and the regulations prescribe that an applicant must put up public notices and advertise the application in a local newspaper.</p> <p>In addition to the statutory process, the council's informal events process includes the ability for local ward Councillors to be engaged at an early stage in the council's engagement with event organisers. This creates an opportunity for Members to engage with their constituents and vice versa.</p> <p>In a supplementary question, Ms Stafford queried whether the Cabinet Member agreed that making the applicant responsible for advertising the event incentivises the minimum transparency and that it would be preferable for the council to do so and to recharge the applicant?</p> <p>The Cabinet Member reminded Ms Stafford that this was a statutory process and was therefore not in a position to provide an answer. She would need to seek advice from officers regarding the wider reaching implications of this proposal and would report back to the questioner once this advice had been received.</p>
5.	Question from Ms Jo Stafford to Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles, Councillor Flo Clucas
	<p>In light of the decision of the County Council to limit and means test assistance aimed at tackling period poverty, could the Cabinet Member for Healthy Lifestyles please consider what Cheltenham Borough Council and its partners can do to mitigate the effects of period poverty for girls attending Cheltenham schools?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>First, I wish to thank the questioner for raising such an important issue. It is regretful that the decision of the County Council in relation to period poverty does not reflect the needs of many girls or women in Gloucestershire today. While the money that has now been allocated is welcome, it isn't enough. Sanitary products are vital to the health and well-being of girls and women. The inability to afford sanitary protection means that, in Gloucestershire, 1 in 10 girls misses school.</p> <p>We want to ensure that every child is able to attend school, without the embarrassment that period poverty can inflict. However, to do so means that this Council, which is not responsible for Education in our town, needs to understand the full extent of the problem in our schools. I will therefore be coming forward with a proposal to survey all schools in Cheltenham, to identify the likely numbers of those who are affected by period poverty and to come forward with options to alleviate the problem.</p> <p>Whilst Ms Stafford welcomed the proposal to survey all schools in Cheltenham, she was keen that menstrual cups be considered as part of any solution, as with a lifespan of up to 10 years, they represented a sustainable and more environmentally friendly solution.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member was happy to have menstrual cups form part of any solution. She reiterated that she did not want to see any girls disadvantaged in any way by the county solution and would ask officers</p>

	<p>to put together a comprehensive response.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member took the opportunity thank officers who had supported the International Women's Day event for their hard work. The event had been an overwhelming success, attracting more than 350 attendees.</p>
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8. MEMBER QUESTIONS

1.	Question from Councillor Wilkinson to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay
	<p>Residents have reported that agency employed staff at Cheltenham Racecourse were being asked to work very long shifts and not offered suitable breaks during the recent Festival. Could the appropriate Cabinet Member confirm whether a 12-hour shift without breaks breaches any employment, licensing or other regulations that the council is responsible for monitoring? If so, what enforcement action can the council take?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The Working Time Regulations 1998 state provision for rest breaks at work and time off. They are not enforced by local authorities but an aggrieved employee can seek help from ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation, & Arbitration Service) if they are not satisfied with the response from their employer: http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4489.</p> <p>The Health & Safety Executive summarises the position with regard work breaks: http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/workingtime.htm</p> <p>There was no supplementary question.</p>
2.	Question from Councillor Willingham to the Leader, Councillor Jordan
	<p>Would the Leader of the Council join me in thanking the hard working Council Officers in our Licensing team, and the Licensing Officers from neighbouring authorities and the Police, who worked very hard to try to keep the people of Cheltenham, and the visitors to our town, safe during race week?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Race week is very important to Cheltenham and the surrounding area both in terms of the boost to the economy and the chance it gives for local residents to enjoy a world class sporting event on our own doorstep. Running the event and in particular keeping people safe during it is a massive team effort and I would thank all those involved. This is a good example of partnership working between the local authorities and I thank them for their support.</p> <p>There was no supplementary question.</p>
3.	Question from Councillor Willingham to the Leader, Councillor Jordan

	<p>Would the Leader of the Council also join me in thanking the other agencies and volunteer organisations, including the Police, the NHS and ambulance service, the street pastors, the guardians, the student community patrol, the taxi marshals, and cleansing staff from Ubico all of whom have worked antisocial hours to try to keep people safe during race week?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>As mentioned in the answer to qu3 I would join in thanking all those involved and particularly given the antisocial hours required.</p> <p>There was no supplementary question but the Cabinet Member did highlight that the response to the question should have referred to qu2 rather than qu3.</p>
4.	<p>Question from Councillor Baker to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay</p>
	<p>In the absence of any Government legislation to control or ban the use of single use plastic such as take away packaging, and the unlikelihood of any such legislation appearing in my life time, is there anything we can do as a Borough Council locally such as introducing new By-laws or planning conditions ?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>Whilst Cllr Baker's sentiment is entirely understood, planning conditions have to meet strict tests if they are to be applied to new development. Conditions must be: necessary, enforceable, precise, relevant to planning, relevant to the development to be permitted, and reasonable in all other respects.</p> <p>In terms of necessity, the question that should be asked is whether or not planning permission would be refused if the condition was not attached. This would be a very difficult test to pass.</p> <p>Government advice also states that conditions should not be used to remedy a pre-existing problem or issue not created by the proposed development. Given that conditions have to be relevant to planning, government advice also states that conditions should not be used where specific controls outside of planning legislation provide alternative means of managing certain matters – in this instance, single use plastic.</p> <p>The above does not mean that single use plastic is not recognised as an ongoing concern, merely that the planning system is not the place to remedy the issue.</p> <p>Councillor Baker felt he had received only a partial response as the Cabinet Member had not mentioned by-laws, which Councillor Baker felt should be looked at.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member had not mentioned by-laws as these would prove unworkable at a local level (not practical, deliverable or measurable) because any such by-laws would not apply to international suppliers.</p>

5.	Question from Councillor Baker to Cabinet Member Corporate Services, Councillor Whyborn
	<p>I note with concern that 1) 300 million tonnes of new plastic is made each year, half of which is for single use, such as packaging for convenience foods. In many cases, such as plastic straws, takeaway food containers and coffee cups, there are practical alternatives available that are either reusable or sustainable, and 2) that plastic in a marine environment leads to coastal / offshore dead zones, entanglement, death through ingestion, toxic transfer and, once degraded into micro plastics, contamination of the food chain – including our own. We are quite literally eating the plastic that has ended up in our seas. 3) More positively, I note the success of the plastic bag tax in reducing use of single use plastic bags by 85%.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member responsible for procurement, advise whether the council therefore has any plans to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. becoming a single use plastic free council by phasing out the use of single use plastic products such as bottles, cups, cutlery and drinking straws in council activities, where it is reasonable to do so, replacing them with sustainable or reusable alternatives where practicable and 2. further consider the environmental effects of not only the product, but also the packaging, in future procurement decisions in such a way as to encourage re-usable and recyclable packaging, and 3. encourage similar policies by bodies who carry out services on behalf of CBC as well as the wider community in Cheltenham
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The Cabinet Member advised that the response that had been published had been an early draft and outlined his final response (below).</p> <p>Yes we would want to become a ‘No single use plastics’ Council, by doing all that is reasonable and practical by the end of the 2018/19, but in reality the Council has already been moving in this direction for some time.</p> <p>Since December 2017, the officers began to purchase wooden stirrers instead of plastic stirrers and to purchase paper cups rather than the Polyethylene PE coated cups for the member’s room.</p> <p>Plastic water cups are only made available at the water machines in the committee suite which are collected for recycling. Elsewhere throughout the building staff are expected to use their own drinking receptacles.</p> <p>The general use vending machine is low and officers are currently in dialogue with the supplier to explore options for the machine including alternatives to the use of plastic cups.</p> <p>As far as procurement is concerned, in terms of construction activity, the Waste Management (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 are already in place and are captured as a requirement under the standard contract forms Prelims the council use for capital and maintenance work.</p> <p>The Crown Commercial Services standard questionnaire that the council is required to publish with all Invitation to Tender documents does not currently address the use of plastic. Officers anticipate that this</p>

	<p>will change in due course and therefore it will be something the Supply Chain as a whole will need to work at going forward. In the meantime the council will consider the use of plastic on a case by case basis when preparing our own evaluation criteria for ITT's.</p> <p>The Council will use its best endeavours, and powers, to encourage our partner organisations to choose alternatives to plastics where it is practical to do so.</p> <p>Councillor Baker thanked the Cabinet Member for his very positive response and commented that it was pleasing to see that a large organisation such as CBC was ahead of the game and setting an example for others. He asked whether the Cabinet Member would consider issuing a press release to show what the Council was doing, encourage our partner organisations are implementing similar measures, consider the introduction of public drinking water fountains and report back on progress in 6 months' time?</p> <p>The Cabinet Member agreed to issue a press release and would consider putting a motion to the next Council meeting in the pursuit of encouraging partner organisations to undertake similar measures, though he would first need to discuss this with his Cabinet colleagues. Water fountains were outside of his portfolio though clearly there would be a cost associated with this undertaking and in terms of a further update in 6 months' time, he would refer this to Cabinet colleagues as he could not guarantee that he would still be in office.</p>
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9. PLACE VISION

The Leader introduced the report which set out progress to date in bringing forward a place vision document for Council approval following the initial vision agreed by to Council 12 months ago. It was also acknowledged that whilst Cheltenham Borough Council would take the lead in its development, the aim was for the strategy to be owned by everyone who had a stake in the success of Cheltenham. A wide range of groups had been involved in shaping the vision to date and it was an evolving process. He wished to put on record his thanks to Richard Gibson, Strategy and Engagement Manager and his team for their contributions in driving this forward.

The Leader then highlighted that the vision, ambitions and aspirations were laid down in paragraphs 2.7, 2.9 and 2.11 of the report respectively. For each ambition and for each aspiration clear action would be proposed and local partners would now work together to develop plans for how those actions could be made into a reality. He emphasised that there were two significant actions described in the document, the commitment to building more affordable housing which was the key thrust of the Joint Core Strategy and the Cyber-park which would generate employment and opportunities in the west of Cheltenham. The council could not deliver these in isolation but could play a significant role in making this happen by working in partnership.

In terms of next steps the council's corporate strategy would translate issues from the place vision into actions for CBC. Alongside this a place governance group which will evolve out of the existing Cheltenham Strategic Leadership

Group to manage the place agenda so all parties could be involved and sign up to it.

The following points were raised and responses given:

- Was the Leader confident that the council had the resources to deliver CBC's contribution to deliver the place vision? In response the Leader explained that the senior officer restructure was being undertaken with this in mind and he emphasised that this was not solely a CBC vision but a partnership vision. He acknowledged that the council was ambitious and it would do whatever it could within the resources available.
- What method would be in place to measure the success of the outcomes ? The Leader highlighted that some indicative measures were set out in the document and also clarified that this was not for CBC to define but would be discussed in partnership with those involved.
- Could the council now progress the tourism strategy now that the place vision was submitted for council approval ? The Leader explained that the tourism strategy had not been put on hold but had been approved and Marketing Cheltenham was now up and running.
- Various strategies had been approved over the years but there should be continuity. In response the Leader said that although not all objectives had been achieved these had been important documents that had set out strategic objectives at the time . This new vision represented an opportunity for elected member input into a new strategic document and it was right that the council took stock and reviewed every few years.
- The inclusion of sport in the place vision was welcomed as it was felt that this had not been highlighted previously. Cheltenham had the opportunity to have an international presence in terms of sporting associations and the example was given of the water polo team and the Tour of Britain cycling event the town had hosted. There could also be opportunities for investment in the town's football club in order to host international women's football fixtures. The Leader commented that the term 'culture' encompassed sport and culture was not just focussed on the Arts.
- Members recognised that it had not been possible to engage with many different cohorts of young people but that steps should now be taken to ensure that the voices of young people were heard as this is key for the future of the town.. It was suggested that workshops be held in secondary schools in the town to ascertain what young people wished to see in the place strategy. The Leader took this on board and recognised that schools needed to be involved in the process. Having one young person on the governance group was only one step and not a panacea.
- Another member stated that the vision was important so that there was a focus on ensuring the town was a place where those that studied here stayed here providing there were the right jobs and the right housing and the town was vibrant and fun. Look beyond jobs and houses. He stated that the document could be construed as being middle aged and middle class and was therefore not hitting the audience it should be aimed at.
- The EU smart cities initiative was highlighted in terms of its role in removing congestion and pollution from town centres via the creation of green corridors

An amendment was then proposed by Councillor Parsons. This was seconded by Councillor Jeffries. The amendment was to include at least one person under the age of 25 on the place governance group. The Leader agreed to accept the amendment and incorporate into the main motion.

Further comments and responses were then raised by Members:

- It was suggested that the values were brought to the front of the document as this was fundamental to why there was a place vision. The Leader believed that the current document took the reader through a story on how to meet them. The intention was to feed thoughts on specific actions in terms of what to do as part of the process.
- Some understood culture to be broad for whole town to engage to populate they believe it means to look forward to concrete proposals and see whether going in right direction then see exactly how it is delivered. Aim was for people throughout the town to engage-the vision was evolving. Highlighted the fact that the diagram showed how everything bit was interrelated-business and culture-mind expanded. Some Members requested the inclusion of timescales. The Leader agreed that these could be included but this would be in consultation with all those involved who would commit to achievable timescales.
- The visual elements of the document were welcomed by Members.
- It was important to persuade young people that no doors were closed to them and this will be irrespective of gender.
- A Member wished to encourage the town to be represented at the Cities and the Regions event in Brussels and suggested that the Business Improvement District fund a group of young people to be represented there
- The town had a good future and it was important that the vision be realised so we could look back and be proud that we had made a difference
- It was proposed that the design of the document be examined for its accessibility for those with visual impairments. The Strategy and Engagement Manager welcomed the suggestion and would investigate the possibility of having an easy-read version to accompany the version included with the council papers
- The question was raised as to how engagement with hard to reach groups could be achieved. It was suggested that engaging with the young people involved in the Aston Project would be a good starting point. The issue of the closure of the Axiom centre was raised in terms of the loss of a valued facility for some young people. In response the Leader acknowledged its value but it had been difficult to make it financially viable and sustainable. He highlighted that the council had made investments in the Playhouse and the Wilson.

In summing up the Leader thanked Members for their comments. Work would continue on the place governance structure and making the vision work for Cheltenham as a whole.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT

- 1. The place vision document for Cheltenham attached at appendix 2 be approved.**
- 2. Authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council to make subsequent changes to the place strategy as a result of this Council meeting.**
- 3. Authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council to establish a place governance group to be evolved from the existing Cheltenham Strategic Leadership Group and to include at least one person under the age of 25.**

The Council adjourned at 3.55pm and resumed the meeting at 4.10 pm.

10. INTERIM CORPORATE STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2018-19

The Leader introduced the report and explained that the interim corporate strategy action plan set out a range of projects and initiatives where there was a current commitment. It was then proposed that a longer term corporate strategy be brought back to Council in July 2018 that would set out a longer term plan of action and a more robust performance management framework.

The Leader went on to explain that the two key strategic documents that had helped shape this year's corporate strategy were the draft place strategy and the council's medium term financial strategy. By aligning the corporate planning framework to the place strategy framework the council was making a statement in support of the place strategy and providing more detail about how the place aspirations would get delivered. He highlighted that the corporate strategy constituted the council's Crime Reduction Strategy to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force in April 2011.

The Leader then highlighted that the council would drive forward and provide leadership on many issues (but not all) in the plan. He explained that the Cheltenham Transport Plan had been part of the vision for the town for a long time and would come to fruition this year with the reconnection of the High Street as a trial in June. This would provide economic and environmental benefits for the town. There was much work to be done and any consequences arising from this would have to be managed and would take a high profile in the next plan.

The corporate plan also incorporated elements of the MTFS and highlighted a number of investment opportunities.

The following points were raised by Members and responses given :

- Boots Corner-the Cabinet Member Development and Safety stated that this represented 8 years of work and had been welcomed by businesses in the town and facilitated by a government grant of £6 million. Phases 1-3 of the Cheltenham Transport Plan were complete and had satisfied the predictions of the County Council's traffic modelling. There was no reason to believe that phase 4, i.e. the closure of Boots Corner would

not be successful. If it did then remedial action would be taken and changes introduced accordingly. On a point of personal explanation the Member explained that large pedestrian spaces were not always beneficial to those with visual impairments and the Leader agreed that various groups needed to be involved to ensure the area was accessible for all.

- It was requested that there be a more joined up approach between the Mayor's role as an ambassador for Cheltenham and the BID and Marketing Cheltenham. The Leader explained that Marketing Cheltenham was relatively new and one of its early tasks was to coordinate a list of events as they were currently not easy to access.
- Town centre CCTV-The Cabinet Member Development and Safety confirmed that CCTV would be undergoing a £260k upgrade and was currently in the procurement process; there had been a delay due to discussions with the Police regarding their requirements. He was pleased to confirm that CCTV on the Honeybourne Line was up and running.
- A Member remarked that there was unwillingness by the County Council to accept the need for a coherent strategy for parking in the town and residents parking schemes were being introduced on an ad-hoc basis and displacing parking problems to other areas of the town. He hoped that more could be done to encourage the County to work more closely with the borough. The Leader acknowledged the long standing difficulties with parking and explained that it had been suggested to the County Council that the Parking board be reinstated. Parking was crucial to the effective running of the town and there should be dialogue.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT

The interim corporate strategy action plan for 2018-19 (appendix 2) be approved and that this be used as a basis for monitoring the Council's performance.

Authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make subsequent changes to the interim corporate strategy action plan as a result of this Council meeting.

11. COUNCIL DIARY 2018-19

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the report which proposed the diary of Council meetings for September 2018 to August 2019. He confirmed there had been no policy changes since last year.

A Member raised the issue of holding meetings in school holidays which proved difficult for those with school aged children. In response the Cabinet Member said that whilst the aim was to avoid scheduling meetings in half terms, Christmas and August it was very difficult to avoid other school holidays due to the amount of council business.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT

The draft Council diary of meetings for September 2018-August 2019 be approved.

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion A

Proposed by: Councillor McKinlay and seconded by: Councillor Jordan

This Council welcomes the proposals by Highways England to improve the Highway at the “missing link” on the A417 at the Air Balloon, and believes that this development is vital to improve road access to the south of Cheltenham.

The Council recognises that Highways England are promoting two options, 12 and 30 in their consultation documentation.

Having considered the options this Council formally resolves

- 1. To support option 30 as the most effective way to tackle the current traffic problems on the A417.*
- 2. Requests the Cabinet Member Development and Safety to formally respond to the consultation communicating the Council’s support for option 30.*

As proposer of the motion, Councillor McKinlay offered members a brief explanation as to the background to this issue. The Government had launched a consultation for the A417 “missing link” which would close on the 29 March. He would ordinarily have put a response in his own name, but given the importance of the issue and the timeliness of this meeting, he had instead decided to raise the issue at Council. He did stress however, that this did not prevent members from responding as an individual. Members would be aware that the “missing link” had been a major bone of contention and the subject of lots of lobbying for some years and Highways England had finally undertaken an options appraisal. Having narrowed 30 options down to 2, options 12 and 30, Highways England had said that whilst option 12 was cheaper, option 30 offered better value for money and though both options would result in a safe and reliable route, option 12 would have periods of reduced flow, whereas option 30 would be free-flowing. Cotswold District Council had supported option 30 and Gloucestershire County Council would also be asked to endorse number 30 as the preferred option when they met on the 28 March. In closing, Councillor McKinlay hoped that members would support this motion which represented the best resolution to a longstanding issue.

Councillor Jordan had been happy to act as seconder to the motion as he felt that the A417 should have been addressed at the same time as the Cirencester bypass. This was not something that could be funded locally and therefore a unified message would be key and assuming members were support of the motion, a joint letter would also be submitted.

Members who spoke in support of the motion did so because they acknowledged that unified county-wide response would make for a stronger case and ultimately improve the chances of getting the desired outcome: investment which was long overdue.

A member representative of the Cotswolds Conservation Board highlighted that this group had a conflicting view and had voted in favour (FOR: 19 / AGAINST:

9) of the inclusion of a tunnel option, which he hoped would not derail the process. Another member, whilst fully intending to support the motion, did query why tunnel options had been dismissed by Highways England, for any other reason than cost, given the landscape at Birdlip.

Before thanking members for their support, Councillor McKinlay took the opportunity to remind members that Highways England had explained that tunnel options were discounted based on the disparity of cost, with tunnel schemes estimated between £875 million and £1.6 billion compared to the £465m and £485m options being considered today. He hoped that Gloucestershire County Council would endorse Option 30, thus ensuring Gloucestershire spoke with one voice.

Upon a vote the motion was CARRIED unanimously.

Motion B

Councillor Hobley left the chamber having earlier declared an interest in this item.

Proposed by: Councillor Hegenbarth and seconded by: Councillor Wilkinson

This Council notes:

- 1. The obligations it owes to the Armed Forces community within Cheltenham Borough as enshrined in the Armed Forces Covenant; that the Armed Forces community should not face disadvantage in the provision of services and that special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most.*
- 2. The absence of definitive and comprehensive statistics on the size or demographics of the Armed Forces community within Cheltenham Borough. This includes serving Regular and Reserve personnel, veterans, and their families.*
- 3. That the availability of such data would greatly assist the council, local partner agencies, the voluntary sector, and national Government in the planning and provision of services to address the unique needs of the Armed Forces community within Cheltenham.*

In light of the above, this Council resolves to

- 4. Support and promote The Royal British Legion's call to include a new topic in the 2021 census that concerns military service and membership of the Armed Forces community.*
- 5. For the council's armed forces champion, the Leader of the Council, to write to Cheltenham's MP outlining the Council's support for the Count Them In campaign and asking them to support the Council's call upon the UK Parliament, which will approve the final census questionnaire through legislation in 2019, to ensure that the 2021 census includes questions concerning our Armed Forces community.*

Councillor Hegenbarth, as proposer of the motion, did so because after the 2011 census, we knew more about the Jedi population of the UK than about those who have served in our Armed Forces. By adding new questions to the 2021 census we could improve our understanding of this unique community and ensure that local services fully met the needs of our serving personnel, veterans and their families. We, as a country, had counted on them and now it was time to count them in.

Councillor Wilkinson, seconder, advised that having researched the issue, he had found that 40% of veterans suffered from mental health difficulties, veterans were more than twice as likely to be unemployed and that homeless veterans were, on average, older than others living on the street. He had visited some of the residents of the Homes for Veterans project in St Pauls and their stories had highlighted the importance of capturing information at a local level to allow services to be directed appropriately. He hoped that there would be unanimous support for this motion.

Members spoke in support of the motion and fundamentally, how the gathering of this information would help to identify where local services and support should be targeted. A member who had previously worked in a category B therapeutic prison highlighted that sadly, veterans were often over represented and that support for serving Regular and Reserve personnel, veterans, and their families would have the added benefit of reducing crime and victims.

In closing, Councillor Hegenbarth noted that in 2017 the Office of National Statistics had agreed that this topic should be included in the 2021 census and whilst this council was by no means trail blazing, support for the motion would further demonstrate this council's commitment to the Gloucestershire Armed Forces Community Covenant.

Upon a vote the motion was CARRIED unanimously.

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

There were no urgent items requiring a decision.

Klara Sudbury
Chairman

The Mayor explained that her diary had been very busy, in recent weeks amongst many other events the Mayor had attended:

- The first birthday celebrations of The Willow Tree, High Street, a wonderful independent business that provides support for local artists and makers, as well as running regular workshops to help you get crafty
- The University of Gloucestershire's Creative Writing department's V-Day 2018 event – a really thought provoking multi-media performance including dramatic monologues written by some of the biggest names in contemporary literature and drama, complemented by an exhibition of art photography and a post-show discussion with Sally Morrissey, Support Service Manager at GDASS.
- All Saints Academy's production of Beauty and the Beast as well as Bournside School's Spring Concert
- Gloucestershire Federation of Womens Institutes AGM at Cheltenham Town Hall
- Civic Society AGM
- Cheltenham Arts Council Awards at The Playhouse
- Private view of from Tundra to Taigra at the Gardens Gallery
- International Women's Day 'Push for Progress' event at Pittville Pump Rooms
- Mayor of Tewkesbury's Civic Ball
- Easter Eggsstravaganza at St Marks Community Centre
- A Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service workshop for young people about domestic abuse and healthy relationships
- A visit to Great Western Ambulance in Filton
- Bucket collections in Cheltenham town centre for race week and also at CTFC – thank you to Cllr Paul Baker for helping us arrange the latter, cllrs Helena and Paul McCloskey, alderman John Rawson, for helping.
- Miss Cheltenham fundraising events
- YMCA sleep easy
- The Mayor's charity civic ball at Manor by the Lake
- Quiz night hosted by Paul Sinha 'The Sinnerman' in aid of the mayors charity appeal

The Mayor thanked Miss Cheltenham finalists who have been supporting her charity appeal. The Mayor commended them for their hard work raising a lot of money for the charities she is supporting.

The Mayor let members know that her next fundraising event was 'Tea at Three' on April 4th at Sacred Hearts Church Hall.

The Mayor also told members about her final fundraising event, the Mayor's Well Fit (Morning) at Sandford Park Lido on Sunday May 13th. It will be a morning of yoga, Pilates, Zumba and swimming – the Mayor told members it would be the perfect way for them to recover mind and body after the long election campaign has ended on May 3rd.

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