

Council

Monday, 23rd July, 2018
2.30 - 6.45 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Bernard Fisher (Chair), Roger Whyborn (Vice-Chair), Victoria Atherstone, Matt Babbage, Paul Baker, Dilys Barrell, Angie Boyes, Nigel Britter, Jonny Brownstein, Flo Clucas, Mike Collins, Stephen Cooke, Iain Dobie, Wendy Flynn, Tim Harman, Rowena Hay, Alex Hegenbarth, Karl Hopley, Sandra Holliday, Martin Horwood, Peter Jeffries, Steve Jordan, Andrew McKinlay, Dennis Parsons, John Payne, Louis Savage, Diggory Seacome, Malcolm Stennett, Jo Stafford, Simon Wheeler, Max Wilkinson, Suzanne Williams and Dr David Willingham

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Barnes, Coleman, Harvey, Mason, McCloskey, Oliver and Sudbury.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Steve Jordan declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 as a Member of the Cheltenham Business Improvement District.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meetings held on 14 May 2018 were approved and signed as a correct record.

4. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor updated Members on his recent engagements.

5. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Leader informed Members that the Community Pride Fund was now open for applications for match funding, up to the value of £5,000, to support community pride projects across Cheltenham with the closing date being 14 September. A report would be brought to Cabinet in October detailing how the funding had been allocated.

6. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS

There were none.

7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1.	Question from Mr Peter Sayers to the Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	The Independent newspaper headline (30th June 2018) states 'Air

	<p>Pollution causes 15,000 new diabetes cases a year'. In light of this new evidence redirecting over 75 thousand vehicles a week into residential streets, by closing Boots Corner, is perhaps dangerous to ratepayers' health. On the website justifying the closure, it states 'reducing pollution' as a justification for this closure. Will the Council please amend this statement, with immediate effect, in light of the risk to residents?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>I am not sure that a newspaper headline should be read as evidence. The Cheltenham Air Quality Management Area has an associated action plan which has relied on the wider Cheltenham Transport Plan to help deliver some key targets especially the modal shift away from private vehicles in a town that is conducive to walking and cycling. Our ambition remains to reduce air pollution overall.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Mr Sayers asked whether the council could amend the statement on the website which stated that reducing pollution was justification for the closure of Boots Corner when 75 000 vehicles a week were being redirected into residential streets and there was evidence that air pollution contributed to 3.2 million new diabetes cases globally in 2016.</p> <p>In response the Cabinet Member Development and Safety stated that he would not amend the statement and that any level of pollution presented an automatic risk. He informed that the Government had set a safe level of 40 µg/m³ and none of the road routes that the traffic would be redirected to away from the town centre exceeded this level.</p>
2.	<p>Question from Mr Peter Sayers to the Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p>
	<p>The closure of Boots Corner is a risk to ratepayers (and their children's) health and wellbeing. Is this justified by the gains to Council income by the intended leasing of the Municipal Offices?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>I do not accept that a trial to restrict access to Boots Corner is a risk to ratepayers (and their children's) health and well-being.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Mr Sayers asked how the council intended to evidence that there was no risk when air quality monitors were not in place at key pinch points in the traffic network before and after the trial.</p> <p>In response the Cabinet Member Development and Safety confirmed that there were air quality monitors installed in a number of strategic sites to measure the ambient level of pollution before the scheme and these sites would be monitored to measure any changes so they would be clearly evidenced. There was therefore no reason to suggest that there would be any issues.</p>

8. MEMBER QUESTIONS

1.	<p>Question from Councillor Clucas to Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Coleman</p>
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	<p>What effect the proposed new incinerator is likely to have on Cheltenham's recycling collections?</p> <p>Though a County Council project, does the Cabinet member know what the likely cost will be to Cheltenham residents?</p> <p>Is the Cabinet member aware of the system for incineration that is being proposed and potential hazards?</p> <p>Further, the Cabinet member is requested to refer the issue to Overview and Scrutiny Committee, so that an in depth report can be prepared, which will look at a range of issues including those above, with a request that the County Cabinet member with responsibility for the scheme, be asked to attend to clarify issues raised.</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>As you will know, I have always been and remain opposed to the County Council's incinerator. It is bad news for the environment and bad news for the tax payer.</p> <p>Undoubtedly there will be a cost to Cheltenham residents but in recent weeks a change in the County Council's plan has worsened the position. The County Council and the Joint Waste Team have consistently said that they would support the delivery of a Waste Transfer Station for Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council. This would allow both Authorities to collect waste from residents homes and take it to the Waste Transfer Station located in a convenient area to 'tip'. The County Council would then arrange for the waste to be transported down to their Incinerator.</p> <p>However they recently announced that they were considering Direct Delivery - forcing both Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council to take residents waste from their homes down the M5 to the Incinerator. Had I not been a County Councillor, the first that I would have heard of this plan would have been from the Echo.</p> <p>If they force us to direct deliver waste, we will need to almost double the vehicle fleet and find extra drivers. There will also have to be round changes. We estimate that the cost will run into millions of pounds - and that is before you add in the environmental damage caused by huge numbers of additional vehicle movements.</p> <p>Direct Delivery is a typically bonkers County Council idea. I am extremely angry that it is being considered because the Joint Waste Team, who appear to be advising the County Council on direct delivery, advised us during the recent service redesign that direct delivery was not an option. We designed our rounds and purchased our vehicles on the advice of the Joint Waste Team.</p> <p>I moved a motion opposing direct delivery at the recent Joint Waste Committee meeting and I'm pleased to say that all District Council representatives from across the County supported my motion. Ubico also provided professional advice explaining in detail that direct delivery is completely impractical. Regrettably, but unsurprisingly, the County</p>

	<p>Council representative voted against. I very much hope however that the County Council will see sense and follow the majority decision of the Joint Waste Committee.</p> <p>As a Cabinet Member, I do not think it is for me to refer matters to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It is however my firm view that it would be beneficial for the Committee to review the County Council's Incinerator plans as well as the Joint Waste Teams' conflicted advice on the issue, as well as that given by all of the other professionals involved, and particularly around direct delivery.</p> <p>I have visited an incinerator to see how they work in practice. It was absolutely heartbreaking to see vehicles tip materials that could have easily been recycled into the fire. For the record, it is my view that we need to make it as easy as possible for Cheltenham residents to reduce, reuse and recycle so together we can keep what ends up in the County Council's wretched bonfire to an absolute minimum.</p>
2.	Question from Councillor Boyes to Leader, Councillor Jordan
	<p>According to the Government's own assessments, Brexit will leave the UK economy worse off in every scenario. Are there any measures that the Council can take to investigate the consequences of Brexit for Cheltenham's economy and jobs?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Clearly the impact of Brexit is a concern for Cheltenham as for everywhere else in the UK. Since the referendum we have consulted local businesses about Brexit to understand both their view of the opportunities and concerns. Their main issue has always been to understand the 'deal' for the UK leaving the EU in good time to plan ahead. The rising concern is that 2 years after the referendum details of the 'deal' are still not clear with the chance of the worst case scenario of a 'no deal' Brexit seemingly increasing as deadlines for decisions get closer.</p> <p>The uncertainty is a major concern for companies such as Airbus with complex supply chains that include many jobs based in our area. We are working with the County Council and LEP to understand the implications for the wider area including consequences of current EU funding programmes ceasing after 2020. For instance we have recently received over £600k EU funding which is contributing towards the environmental improvement in the High Street and we need to know whether such funding will exist in the future and how any replacement scheme will work. These issues are being reported to and discussed by the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee.</p>
3.	Question from Councillor Mason to Leader, Councillor Jordan
	<p>Given the increasing numbers of empty shops. What proactive support is the Borough Council giving to the town's struggling retailers?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The main aim of the Council is to ensure that Cheltenham is an attractive place to shop and so support local retailers by ensuring a buoyant local economy.</p>

	<p>CBC was instrumental in the formation of the BID, and has regular direct access with levy payers, many of whom are retailers. Whilst we fully recognise the challenges facing town centre retailers, the work of the BID and other bodies such as the Task Force has encouraged new entrants – John Lewis, Oliver Bonas, Urban Outfitters and India Jane. Equally we take a pro-active stance where threats are imminent and I have recently been in correspondence with House of Fraser over how this Council may be able to assist in the future plans for Cavendish House.</p> <p>Beyond that CBC has taken the lead, working with GCC, on significant public realm improvements on the High Street and are also jointly trialling the restrictions at Boots Corner, supported by many retailers.</p> <p>The BID is leading the development of a new web page to support individuals and retailers seeking to operate in the town.</p> <p>Additionally Cheltenham has been singled out as one of the region's retail success stories by real estate advisor Colliers International at the launch of the Colliers International Midsummer Retail Report for the South West - a review of the UK shopping scene.</p> <p>Hal Clarke, senior surveyor, retail agency (south), said: "Polarisation between the 'best and the rest' retail locations is becoming increasingly apparent throughout the UK and this is no different for the South West.</p> <p>"The dominant centres in the region, such as Bristol, Bath, Cheltenham, Exeter and Plymouth, continue to benefit from good levels of demand and relatively low levels of vacancy.</p> <p>"An example is Cheltenham, where rents remain unchanged from 2017 and the town will welcome a new 115,000 sq ft John Lewis department store in October of this year."</p> <p>The report follows the publication of Knight Frank's Top 200 Retail Ranking last year, which had Cheltenham ninth in the UK outside London as best High Streets to invest in.</p> <p>That report said: "Affluent market towns' such as Guildford, Chichester, Winchester and Cheltenham generally have strong fundamentals that transcend wealth alone."</p> <p>In addition the Council provides support though Business Rate discounts for new and expanding businesses.</p>
4.	Question from Councillor Harman to Cabinet Member Development and Safety , Councillor McKinlay
	Has the Cabinet met or is he planning to meet Town Centre Businesses who are being disadvantaged by the closure of Boots Corner?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The BID and their ambassadors are pro-actively engaging with BID members across the town, many of whom are strong supporters of the

	<p>trial. Equally they are reporting back on issues being raised and referring these through to either CBC or in most cases GCC.</p> <p>As the trial is in its infancy it is premature to assess impacts so we have encouraged all issues be reported back to GCC as part of the wider monitoring process.</p> <p>https://gloucestershire-consult.objective.co.uk/public/trp/phase4/phase4</p>
5.	Question from Councillor Harman to Cabinet Member Development and Safety , Councillor McKinlay
	Has the Cabinet Member met or is he planning to meet persons with disabilities or mobility issues who feel disadvantaged by the closure of Boots Corner?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>GCC has consulted with a disability forum enabled via CBC at every stage of the Cheltenham Transport Plan implementation. For this stage those conversations resulted in the retention of the Pelican crossing at Boots Corner and the provision of extra blue badge parking bays in the town centre.</p> <p>As the trial is in its infancy it is premature to assess impacts so we have encouraged all issues be reported back to GCC as part of the wider monitoring process.</p> <p>https://gloucestershire-consult.objective.co.uk/public/trp/phase4/phase4</p> <p>In a supplementary question to questions 4 and 5 Councillor Harman asked if the Cabinet Member was aware that a number of businesses in Clarence Street and Clarence Parade had been adversely affected since the scheme had started and that Marks and Spencer had experienced a 6 % reduction in visitor numbers since the scheme had started. He reported that M&S had offered blue badge holders the use of the loading bay but only on Sundays.</p> <p>In response the Cabinet Member informed the Member that a process for feedback on the trial was in place via the County Council website. It was important that feedback was given in order to analyse the impact. Specific issues were currently being discussed with businesses.</p>
6.	Question from Councillor Harman to Cabinet Member Development and Safety , Councillor McKinlay
	What criteria will be used to judge whether the Boots corner reconfiguration has been successful?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>GCC have advised that the scheme will be assessed through consideration of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic data on flows and speeds gathered before and during the experiment at around 25 sites across Cheltenham • Journey time data on key routes. This will be undertaken at intervals throughout the trial period

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centre footfall including a count of pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchairs and the use of seating and bike stands • A survey of public and business perceptions • Data from air quality monitoring sites across Cheltenham • The numbers of passengers using public transport • Comments received regarding the scheme. • Observations and thoughts of GCC and Amey officers. <p>Bear in mind that some of the measures are subject to random factors (for example, air quality monitoring can be heavily influenced by the season and the weather) so we will need to review several months of data once initial disruption has settled down before reaching valid conclusions.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Harman asked whether road safety aspects, particularly relating to shared space, would be taken into account when assessing the scheme. In response the Cabinet Member confirmed that road safety was indeed a key issue and some changes in signage were being made due to this.</p>
7.	Question from Councillor Willingham to Cabinet Member Development and Safety , Councillor McKinlay
	<p>Recognising that the primary responsibility for traffic signal sequencing is with Gloucestershire County Council, could at Cabinet Member give me an assurance that pressure will be put onto the County Council to review the timing and sequencing of the traffic signals on the B4633 Gloucester Road, to ensure that these signals are optimised to deal with traffic displaced following the closure of Boots Corner?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>GCC have collected data pre-trial from c25 sites across the town as a benchmark and are currently collecting data post-trial implementation, but would wish initial disruption to settle before reaching any valid conclusions.</p> <p>That data will inform any interventions or mitigation deemed necessary including the timing and sequencing of traffic lights.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Willingham that there was queuing traffic from the St George’s Street junction with the A4019 through St Pauls and in to St Peters which consequently blocked buses going to the Lower High Street. He requested that this issue be raised in discussions with the County Council.</p> <p>In response the Cabinet Member confirmed that all impacts of the trial would be considered but to date there was no initial data available from the County Council. He undertook to raise the specific issue referred to.</p>
8.	Question from Councillor Willingham to Cabinet Member Development and Safety , Councillor McKinlay
	<p>Recognising that the primary responsibility for communications about Traffic Regulation Orders is with Gloucestershire County Council, could the Cabinet Member give me an assurance that pressure will be put onto the County Council to ensure that the closure of Boots Corner is updated to the providers of vehicle SatNav services, such as Google and TomTom</p>

	so that drivers are less likely to be routed through the closure by GPS technology?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>We have informed Google Maps about the restrictions introduced by the trial but we do not know when they will update their mapping. The national body that communicates map changes to SatNav companies (GeoPlace) does not pick up on any temporary or experimental closures. They will only do this if the closure becomes permanent at some point in the future.</p> <p>We strongly recommend that road users do not rely on their digital devices alone and instead observe and take note of the road signs in place, in line with the highway code.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Willingham asked that, bearing in mind the trial lasted for 18 months, SatNavs were adjusted accordingly. In response the Cabinet Member confirmed that SatNav companies had been advised but these things took time and it was out of the council's hands.</p>
9.	Question from Councillor Willingham to Cabinet Member Development and Safety , Councillor McKinlay
	Recognising that the primary responsibility for signage and road markings is with Gloucestershire County Council, could the Cabinet Member give me an assurance that pressure will be put onto the County Council to enhance the signage about the closure of Boots Corner for example with the addition of large "no motor vehicles" signs painted on the road?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>For enforcement to be effective, all signs must accord with Dept for Transport regulations and as the trial restricts what traffic may still enter Boots Corner care has to be taken to ensure that messages are transparent.</p> <p>CBC and GCC have recognised that some motorists are not complying with the new restrictions so GCC have advised that they will be implementing further "advisory" signage imminently prior to enforcement action being implemented.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Willingham asked whether the issues with inadequate signage added to the localism argument to bring highways back to CBC so that local decisions could be made locally for Cheltenham.</p> <p>In response the Cabinet Member agreed with Councillor Willingham but in the meantime the aim was to work with partners as well as possible.</p>
10.	Question from Councillor Willingham to Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles, Councillor Clucas
	I recently visited the Local Government Association Conference in Birmingham, and attended a presentation given by "The Silver Line", which is a free, confidential, 24-hour helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people. Would the Cabinet Member be willing to investigate if this Council can promote those services in Cheltenham?
	Response from Cabinet Member

	<p>In thanking Cllr Willingham for his question, I am mindful that the organisation of which he writes, has recently spoken of its reliance on Lottery funding, which is currently not secured. Given that concern, I do know of the organisation and would be happy to look at how we might look at working with it, once its future funding is agreed.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Willingham asked if the Council could work with partners to promote the availability of Silver Line and the service it provided in order to tackle loneliness and other issues among the elderly community.</p> <p>In response the Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles confirmed that the council would do all it could to assist those older people in isolation by talking to partners in a more robust way.</p>
11.	Question from Councillor Willingham to Leader, Councillor Jordan
	<p>Earlier in July the Police launched a murder investigation following a very serious incident in St Peter's ward and I am sure that the Leader of the Council would join me in expressing our condolences to the family and friends of the victim. This level of serious crime is fortunately very rare in Cheltenham, but as well as the devastating consequences for the victim and their family, it is very unsettling for the wider community, could I get an assurance that this council will work with the Police, and other agencies to provide reassurance to the local community that policing and other community cohesion work will be targetted at this area?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>I would indeed join Councillor Willingham in expressing our condolences to the family and friends of the victim in this incident.</p> <p>Through project Solace, the Council is working much more closely with the police than ever before and indeed, we are sharing office accommodation within the Municipal Offices.</p> <p>Work is also being done to collate a shared data picture of crime and anti-social behaviour, to inform our priorities for targeting resources to best effect.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Willingham asked what system the Police had to keep ward councillors informed of serious incidences occurring in their neighbourhoods.</p> <p>In response the Leader undertook to ascertain what alerts ward councillors received on a regular basis.</p>
12.	Question from Councillor Willingham to Leader, Councillor Jordan
	<p>Recognising that the primary political responsibility for Policing is now with the Police and Crime Commissioner, does the Leader of the Council know how many Police that should have otherwise been on the streets of Cheltenham were diverted to London and other parts of the UK to cover the US presidential visit and the significant protests against it?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>No I currently don't have that information but will update Cllr Willingham if/when I do.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Willingham asked that the Leader</p>

	<p>when discussing with the Police and Crime Commissioner raised concerns with regard to the impact of police cuts on the increase in crime levels.</p> <p>In response the Leader expressed his willingness to raise such issues and added that the police focussed very much on community policing.</p>
13.	Question from Councillor Cooke to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay
	<p>The closure of Boots corner is likely to disperse traffic into neighbouring residential areas. Have the air quality levels in these areas been established prior to the closure of Boots Corner and by what methodology?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Air quality is measured for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) levels. The CBC interactive map can be found on the CBC website under air quality.</p> <p>Some sites were discontinued at the end of 2015 to save money, where results were consistently below legal limits. Monitoring locations at 7 sites around the town are being started to assess compliance with legal limits, including at 3 previously used sites.</p> <p>The main collection tool is diffusion tubes and data is measured long term in accordance with Environment Agency advice.</p> <p>Additionally I note that you attended the recent members seminar established to provide additional information and understanding on this complex matter</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Cooke asked what the baseline period was for measuring pollution.</p> <p>In response the Cabinet Member explained that the County Council dictated the appropriate monitoring and locations were outside the Brewery complex, Swindon Road and Clarence Square. The council would receive a baseline reading from all sites. Further data could be requested from the County Council.</p>
14.	Question from Councillor Cooke to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay
	<p>Given that assessing air quality using diffusion tubes yields only an average measurement over time (including at night), how will you reassure residents in the affected areas that there has been no significant increase in levels of particulates and oxides of nitrogen in the air to which residents are exposed during peak periods, in the rush hour and when children are walking to school?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Yes, diffusion tubes measure long term, average levels. Research has shown there is a correlation between short term, peak levels and long-term levels as follows: Where long term (annual) levels do not rise above 60ug/m³, the short term (1hour) level is very unlikely to breach the 200ug/m³ limit. The highest annual level monitored in Cheltenham is 48.5 ug/m³, so there is very unlikely to be breach of the 1-hour limit at this location. Initial results using new monitoring equipment at this</p>

	<p>location have confirmed this.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Cooke asked what measurements were taken of other air pollutants in high pollution areas, not only NO2?</p> <p>In response the Cabinet Member explained that only nitrogen dioxide was measured and this was in line with Defra guidance. There was a calculation you could do which, based on NO2, indicated levels for the other 6 pollutants.</p>
15.	Question from Councillor Savage to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay
	<p>I have been contacted by residents concerned that the closure of Boots Corner will disadvantage elderly and disabled people, reducing their ability to access town centre retailers.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member assure us that any adverse impact on people with mobility difficulties has been fully considered, and that appropriate mitigating steps have been taken?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>GCC received and responded to issues raised by the CBC led disability forum - see Q5. In addition to more blue badge parking bays for private motor vehicles consideration has been given to alternatives for those with accessibility challenges. Every Stagecoach bus deployed in the town has low floor capability and earlier this year CBC made a commitment to ensure that over time there will be a greater number of disabled friendly taxis operating in the town.</p>
16.	Question from Councillor Seacome to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay
	<p>Boots corner and residents' delivery.</p> <p>The Boots Corner development has thrown up a problem for residents (there are about 28 of them) who live within the new one way system that is Boots Corner.</p> <p>Delivery companies are unable to guarantee delivery before 10.00 and after 18.00, because they can't work to that narrow timetable, which includes most of the working day, and they don't want to leave the area by the only route, i.e. via the penalty-ridden Boots Corner. The two solutions offered to me by officers are impractical and unworkable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (Viz, park by Yates and walk down Post Office Lane, for a residential block next door to Kath Kidston. In the rain, and with anything bigger than a small parcel?? Ludicrous!! How will the Sat Nav correlate to the two destinations required? - And secondly, stick to the timetable, unworkable, as stated. <p>What is the administration going to do, to sort out this anomaly? (Apart from revoking the Boots Corner experiment.)</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>I understand that advice was provided to you and a concerned resident by email on 09/07/18 and that subsequently the resident was advising both their delivery driver of options and their landlord over maintenance.</p> <p>As the trial is in its infancy it is premature to assess full impacts so we have encouraged that all issues be reported back to GCC as part of the wider monitoring process.</p>

	<p>https://gloucestershire-consult.objective.co.uk/public/trp/phase4/phase4</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Seacome asked whether any plans had been made to introduce another entry on Post Office Lane. In response the Cabinet Member agreed that Post Office Lane was the last 'escape route'. He highlighted that the trial was in its infancy and as only baseline data was available at this stage no changes would be made. He believed there were problems with deliveries in certain areas but this was mainly a communication problem.</p>
17.	Question from Councillor Payne to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>On 14th June following a member's request the location of the 26 traffic monitoring locations was published. Could I please request that the data associated with these survey points be published? In addition could you please confirm the details of the survey, i.e., times and method of recording?</p> <p>I make this request in order that Members can better assess the impact of Boots Corner closure on traffic flow within Cheltenham.</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>I will gladly request this from colleagues at GCC but my current understanding is that the majority of the data collecting sites collect data 24/7.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Payne referred to the 220 cars an hour travelling along Oriel Road at peak times and asked what action would be taken to reduce this safety hazard.</p> <p>In response the Cabinet Member referred to the Saturn modelling and acknowledged that the existing level of traffic flow was quite high but explained that the long term plan was to have that area pedestrianised as part of the final section of the High Street improvement works. This would minimise the traffic but not eradicate completely.</p>
18.	Question from Councillor Wilkinson to Cabinet Member Housing, Councillor Jeffries
	<p>Cheltenham has been identified as an area with challenges of housing affordability. Can the Cabinet Member for housing detail current activities around council investment in homes in the town. Could he also comment on any potential bids for funding to deliver new housing within Cheltenham - for example via the Housing Revenue Account Additional Borrowing programme to fund new council houses?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Set out in our recently approved Housing & Homelessness Strategy are our plans to launch a £100m investment programme to provide around 500 homes, with the needs of families and young people especially in mind. This will not only enable a step change in the delivery of social and affordable housing, it will also create opportunities for the council, in partnership with Cheltenham Borough Homes (CBH), to provide excellent quality private rented homes to young people and families which can be let on a long term let basis, thereby providing much valued security of tenure.</p>

	<p>Currently CBH has plans to supply 25 affordable homes within the HRA during 2018/19 with schemes already on site at two former garage areas. Hester's Way Road will generate 4 new homes and Newton Road will create 6 new flats. These were due to complete December 2018 but will complete 2 months ahead of programme to provide new homes by Autumn 2018.</p> <p>Looking strategically at CBC and HRA landholdings, and assessing their housing suitability, there is the potential for some larger sites to come forward – however undoubtedly the larger the site, the longer the lead-in time. In the shorter term there are number of smaller sites which are being appraised and progressed: a further 6 garage sites, 2 non-garage sites and the development of the Monkscroft Villas site. It is hoped that the first of these schemes will be on site by March 2019 and together these sites will deliver more than 50 new homes. Funding is already identified, using HRA reserves and utilising Right To Buy receipts. The pipeline also identifies a further 12 garage sites which should also produce more than 50 homes.</p> <p>In addition, Homes England have recently announced an opportunity for a number of councils, including Cheltenham, to bid for a share of £1billion extra borrowing to build these much-needed homes. I can confirm that we will be putting in a bid for a share of this funding. We will also bid for grant funding for more social rented homes to be provided as part of our new build aspirations.</p> <p>All of this will complement our existing new supply programme and runs alongside our current activities in considering potential regeneration opportunities to the west of Cheltenham.</p> <p>In a supplementary question the Cabinet Member was asked whether housing would remain a big priority for the council over the years to come as Cheltenham had a particular affordability problem. In response the Cabinet Member confirmed that housing was a key priority for the town and the council would do all it could to address the issues.</p>
19.	Question from Councillor Wilkinson to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay
	Will the Cabinet Member for development and safety take advantage of the new air quality monitoring technology to, in due course, publish live, real-time air quality data as part of a public awareness campaign on the harm to air quality caused by car journeys?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Yes. This is currently being considered by CBC Environmental Health as part of a range of wider initiatives. In particular we are working with a major local employer to provide data for their staff relating to air quality immediately outside their premises. We are also working towards linking data from new equipment in the town centre to real-time information on the CBC website. More information will be provided as this project develops.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Wilkinson asked whether the council would look at a public awareness campaign regarding air quality around primary schools. In response the Cabinet Member agreed that</p>

	this would be looked at going forward in order to reassure the public that this was not an issue.
20.	Question from Councillor Wilkinson to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay
	In light of the 2050 big conversation, which rightly highlights the flight of younger people from the county, can the Cabinet Member for development and safety provide details on the average age of participants in some recent example council consultations? How does this compare to the average age of a Cheltenham resident?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	While CBC doesn't routinely capture the age of participants in consultations, there is an on-going effort to make sure the views of younger people are included. For instance the Wilson Collective in Cheltenham have been actively involved in the 2050 process. However, it is interesting to note that the organisers of the 2050 consultation have been disappointed with the overall level of response from young people so it is clear there is still work to be done on this. In a supplementary question Councillor Wilkinson asked that given we know that people are leaving the county could more of an effort be made in capturing data to know that this was actually young people. In response the Cabinet Member said that there were no specific questions relating to age but as the age profile of the county was known a demographic response was obtained.
21.	Question from Councillor Mason to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay
	Is there any form of compensation for a business that can show drop in profit due to the closure of Boots corner? If so how do they make a claim? If businesses are entitled to compensation has a sum to cover it been included in the project's budget?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	No funding has been identified for such a compensation scheme. This scheme is a trial and consequently no decision over implementation will be made for many months.

9. FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2017/18 AND BUDGET MONITORING TO JUNE 2018

The Cabinet Member Finance introduced the report which highlighted the Council's financial performance for the previous year which set out the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue and capital outturn position for 2017/18. The information contained within the report had been used to prepare the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2017/18.

She explained that 2017/18 had been another challenging year due to continued changes to Government funding arrangements together with the economic climate, which raised ongoing concerns for the council's budgets.

The Cabinet Member reported that an underspend of £403k had been achieved due to the hard work and sound financial management by officers and partners via savings, reducing costs and generating income where possible. This would be transferred to the budget strategy support reserve pending decisions for its use in 2018/19 and future years.

Significant variances to the original budget included the following :

- Waste and Recycling-exceptional, one-off expenditure had been incurred due to the implementation of the new regime which is why a contract variation of an additional £200,000 be considered by council for approval in 2018/19 to reflect the true anticipated cost of the Ubico contract.
- Shortfall in car parking income of £30k in the first quarter of the year. The implementation of the car parking strategy is expected to result in this shortfall being recovered in the remainder of the year, with the expected outturn being in line with budget.
- Cemetery and Crematorium-there had been a loss of income due to capacity issues with the current facility but the new build remained on track and within budget.

The Cabinet Member then highlighted the following:

- There was a proposal to support the Christmas lights with match funding from the Business Improvement District
- One carry forward request supported by Cabinet and for Council approval was £7k to allow for identity cards and software to be integrated in the new sound system.
- Treasury management had reported a surplus of over £70k for its net loan and investment interest for the financial year. This was mainly due to diversifying some of our investments into a Pooled Property Fund of £3m which provided returns over 4%. In light of the strong returns the authority has since added further investment into two other funds (CCLA Diversified & Schroders Maximiser Fund) after seeking advice from our advisers Arlingclose. As interest rates still remained low the returns of these funds would provide extra revenue to support the council's Medium term financial strategy going forward.
- The outturn on investment income was £431k or 0.80% return on an average portfolio of £23.5m.
- The outturn for debt interest paid was £2.434m on an average debt portfolio of £66.4m which equated to 3.67% .
- The business rates pool had delivered a positive variance of £23,700 which has been transferred to the Business rates retention equalization reserve which would support economic and business growth.
- She welcomed the work CBH and CBC were undertaking beyond its remit including the investment in benefits advice, employment initiatives and services for older and disabled people.
- There was a 98% collection rate for business rates and council tax as outlined at appendices 10 and 11.

Finally, the Cabinet Member wished to put on record her thanks to every council employee without whom the delivery of services within budget and the under-spend would not have been achieved.

The following points were raised by Members and responses given:

- It was noted that only a modest amount was spent on air quality monitoring, should this be increased to match public expectation? The

Cabinet Member undertook to take this issue to the Budget Scrutiny Working Group as part of the budget setting process.

- The Cabinet was requested to look into the annual grant which CBC had previously paid to Cleeve Common.
- Section 106 funding for play equipment- the detail for allocating funds for play space provision was detailed in the 5 year play space investment plan
- It was noted that there was an increased reliance on business rates and the council should ensure that the different data sources of businesses liable for nndr should be used. The Cabinet Member Finance stated that the Revenues and Benefits service was thorough and had high collection rates.
- Concern was expressed regarding the use of reserves and using windfalls and underspends to support the general fund. The Cabinet Member Finance acknowledged that this was not sustainable but highlighted that whilst there was continued uncertainty with business rates this could not be avoided.
- Presentation of data in appendix 3-it was noted that in a few cases the current budget was significantly larger than the original and to that end the quality of the data used was questioned. In response the Cabinet Member stated that in the instance quoted this was due to corporate management shifts and in some instances changes could not be predicted so budgets had to be adjusted accordingly.
- What was the background behind the overspend at The Wilson by £50k and the underspend at Leisure@ by £70k in utility costs. The Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles explained that there was ongoing work at Leisure@ and the figures regarding savings on utilities and at the Wilson would be made available.
- Monitoring of car parking income at Regent Arcade - the Cabinet Member Development and Safety acknowledged the issues at Regent Arcade and said the current car parking system was being replaced
- Enhanced investment property portfolio-concern was expressed that where investment was not an organisation's core activity it fared badly. In response the Cabinet Member stressed that diversification of investment was very important and whilst the risks were acknowledged they were deemed to be worth taking in terms of the potential benefits.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT

1. the financial outturn performance position for the General Fund, summarised at Appendix 2, and notes that services have been delivered within the revised budget for 2017/18 resulting in a saving (after carry forward requests) of £403,179.
2. £7,000 of carry forward requests (requiring member approval) at Appendix 5 be approved.
3. the use of the budget saving of £403,179 as detailed in Section 3 be approved.
4. a further allocation of £15k towards Contactless Donation Points, funded via a contribution from the Homelessness earmarked reserve, as

detailed in para 8.2 be approved.

5. a 2018/19 contract fee adjustment of £200,000 to Ubico Ltd, funded from General Balances, as detailed in para 13.5 be approved.
6. the annual treasury management report at Appendix 7 be noted and the actual 2017/18 prudential and treasury indicators be approved.
7. the capital programme outturn position as detailed in Appendix 8 be noted and the carry forward of unspent budgets into 2018/19 (section 7) be approved.
8. the position in respect of Section 106 agreements and partnership funding agreements at Appendix 9 (section 9) be noted.
9. the outturn position in respect of collection rates for council tax and non-domestic rates for 2017/18 in Appendix 10 (section 10) be approved.
10. the outturn position in respect of collection rates for sundry debts for 2017/18 in Appendix 11 (section 11) be noted.
11. the financial outturn performance position for the Housing Revenue Account for 2017/18 in Appendices 12 to 13 be received and the carry forward of unspent budgets into 2018/19 (section 12) be approved.
12. the budget monitoring position to the end of June 2018 (section 13) be noted.

10. CONSULTATION ON LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME FOR 2019/20

The Cabinet Member Finance introduced the report and explained that since April 2013, councils became responsible for designing their own local council tax support scheme for working age people on low incomes. The Council was required to undertake public consultation on any proposed changes to its scheme which had remained largely unchanged since 2013. Council approval was being sought to consult on proposals for a revised scheme for 2019/20 based on income bands with some changes to how entitlement was calculated was sought.

The period of consultation proposed would run for a 6 week period from 25th July to 7th September 2018. Once the results of the consultation had been analysed a report would be brought to council in October with recommendations for a revised scheme for 2019/20.

Members raised the following comments and responses given :

- Taper relief-a Member asked if there could be some kind of transition period if it was dropped significantly.
- Compliance with equality duty-the council should be satisfied that equality was genuinely considered. The Cabinet Member undertook to liaise with officers but highlighted that this was at consultation stage at this point.

- The cost of working age council tax relief. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the Cheltenham share of council tax was £451k.
- Consultation over the school holiday period-the Cabinet Member replied that the consultation had been extended into the second week of September. It was available on the council's website and would be sent to Members electronically in order to make residents aware. The delay in the start to consultation was due to elections and timings associated with meeting the deadlines for council meetings in order to form part of the budget setting process.
- Universal Credit- the council tax support grant was not included within universal credit as this was deemed to be too administratively complicated.
- Members highlighted that whilst it appeared to concern only relatively small financial amounts of support they were extremely important to those on low incomes. The Cabinet Member responded by saying it was regrettable this had to be done and that consultation was really important.
- Members requested that Job Centre Plus be encouraged to make claimants aware of the consultation.
- Participation levels in council consultations-the Cabinet Member confirmed that there was no benchmark but would consider this point further although this decision was needed for the budget setting process.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT

The proposed public consultation in Appendix 2 be undertaken between 23rd July and 7th September 2018.

11. PROTOCOL FOR MEMBER / OFFICER RELATIONS

The Chair of the Standards Committee, Councillor Wilkinson introduced the report on the revised protocol for Member/Officer relations. The protocol which was adopted by the Council in 2010 had been reviewed and amended by a Member working group and approved by the Standards Committee for adoption by the Council. The draft revised Protocol for Member / Officer Relations was attached at Appendix 1 and reflected changes to legislation and the Code of Members' Conduct which had taken place since 2010 together with amendments arising from consultation with Members and Officers.

He thanked Members and the Chief Executive who had inputted to the review and to Councillor Harman who had suggested consultation with the trade unions which had been carried out. He highlighted there had been some debate during the course of the review about the public interest test but the general conclusion that there was not a great need for change to the protocol.

A Member asked for reassurance that a member of staff reporting an issue to another member of staff would receive the same level of protection as a potential whistleblower. Councillor Wilkinson referred Members to section 13 of the report which set out the procedure for dealing with any complaints.

A Member raised an issue about Members access to information. It was largely up to the sender of information to take a decision on confidentiality and this led to over classification. The risk was that if sensitivity is over used there was a risk that it would be ignored. He had discussed the issue with the Chief Executive and was happy with the solution she had proposed to address this point. Another Member supported the presumption of transparency unless there were good reasons why not.

A Member requested that in future the Executive Summary included a summary of the modifications so that Members knew what they should be scrutinising.

Councillor Wilkinson advised that there had been some discussion at the working group about confidentiality and public interest. It had been highlighted that if a Member questioned whether a document could be released to the public and was advised it was confidential, they would then be a prime suspect if it was subsequently leaked. There was always a question about who guards the guards.

Upon a vote the recommendations were approved with 1 abstention.

RESOLVED THAT

The revised Member-Officer Protocol be adopted for inclusion as Part 5C of the Constitution.

12. NOMINATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Chief Executive introduced the report and explained that following each Selection Council, and at other times when vacancies arose, the Leader/Cabinet took the opportunity to nominate and, in limited cases, appoint persons to various roles within bodies external to the Council. Also the opportunity was taken to nominate persons to other bodies such as Joint Committees and other bodies/groups.

Cabinet met on 10 July 2018 and nominated Members to outside bodies. There remained one appointment, namely the Cleeve Common Trust where there were 5 nominations for 3 places and agreement could not be reached between the Group Leaders and therefore this had been referred to Council.

A voting list had been circulated at the start of the meeting for Members to indicate up to 3 people they wished to support as nominations to the Cleeve Common Trust. Councillor Babbage advised that he was happy to withdraw from the nomination process and the votes for the remaining candidates were as follows:

Councillor Payne - 15, Councillor Simon Wheeler – 28, Councillor Willingham 26 and Pat Thornton 16.

A Member asked for confirmation that this type of ballot was consistent with the constitution and questioned whether it should have been a secret ballot. The Head of Law informed that the normal way for resolving contested places would be a vote in open session. In discussions prior to this meeting it was agreed that the voting sheet would be a more appropriate way from a practical point of view. The request for a secret ballot could be noted for the future.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. Pat Thornton, Councillor Simon Wheeler and Councillor David Willingham, be nominated to the Cleeve Common Trust :**

13. GLOUCESTERSHIRE 2050

The Leader introduced the report and explained that a range of partners had come together to start a conversation, called Gloucestershire 2050, to identify key challenges and explore ambitions and ideas that could shape the county's long-term future. The consultation on this was open until the end of July 2018. Given the potential significance to Cheltenham's future, and the fact that Council agreed a place vision for Cheltenham in March, Council was being asked to consider submitting a formal response to the consultation following agreement by the council's political group leaders.

The Leader went on to say that it was important young people were included in the process and they had limited involvement to date. The projected net loss of young people from the county represented a risk and this risk should be assessed in any projects coming forward. Two reports were expected beyond 31 July, namely feedback from the consultation and the proposed delivery options. He believed it was essential that Gloucestershire 2050 partners spend more time on developing strategic outcomes prior to focussing on delivery vehicles.

He added that two Member seminars had taken place at CBC and partners around the town were being encouraged to feed in their thoughts to the process, including the Wilson Collective.

He very much welcomed the debate but believed that the ambitions should be turned into a wider vision for the county and then key projects should be identified with links to communities, not just infrastructure.

In terms of the specific proposals the Leader made the following comments :

- Cyberpark- it was important that Cheltenham Borough Council helped make this happen
- Supercity-this was a confusing name, what exactly was it? Rather than creating the idea of urban sprawl the idea of a green corridor separating the two urban areas should be pursued preserving the unique identities of communities within them albeit connected by transport and digital infrastructure facilitated by collaborative working.
- Views of young people- affordable housing, fulfilling jobs and an exciting cultural offer. The Joint Core Strategy aimed to tackle affordable housing and jobs up until 2031 but improved transport infrastructure to include ideas such as light rail and better links to Bristol, London and Oxford as well as green corridors were also necessary
- Cotswold international airport-a new airport was not really achievable and better linkages to the regional airports of Birmingham and Bristol should be investigated; Gloucestershire Airport should continue to be supported

Finally, the Leader explained that the aim was to achieve a broad consensus on how to take this forward and the intention was to agree the final wording of the draft with Group Leaders by the deadline of 31 July.

Members made the following points :

- Young People- should be listened to as they may not say what is expected; concern over retaining them should not be so strong as living in a mobile society provides them with life experience which they could bring back to the area
- Supercity- rather than merging the urban centres the focus should be on greater connectivity between them in terms of better public transport. A light rail/tram system, would be supported and would connect the vast majority of people. Improving transport connections and links with other destinations such as Bristol, Birmingham and Oxford should also be promoted. The example of the Rotterdam-Den Haag model was highlighted with the relevant municipalities cooperating together on strategic issues. Transport provision should not be focussed on only one industry. Cycling provision was also key in terms of sustainable transport.
- Cyberpark-this development had the capability of attracting inward investment and it was important to look wider than Gloucestershire as there was potential for an M5 corridor for cybersecurity.
- Cotswold International Airport-reservations were expressed on this particularly bearing in mind the national strategy to expand regional airport capacity
- Education-emphasis should be placed on working with educational institutions as the current disconnect between further education, higher education and business should be addressed in terms of offering courses relevant to the town. This should assist in retaining young people, ensuring economic development and small business growth. Engaging with schools, both primary and secondary was also recognised.
- Culture was also recognised as an important economic driver.
- Strategic alignment- project ideas should respect the agreed Joint Core Strategy development framework up to 2031;

In responding to comments the Leader agreed that the link between further education and higher education was key to ensuring that young people had the necessary skills for the jobs available. He made reference to the Gloucestershire Employment and Skills Board whose role was to give employers and education experts the opportunity to come together and shape skills across Gloucestershire.

Maximising the use of Gloucestershire Airport was recognised, particularly in relation to the Cyberpark whilst recognising its limited runway justifying better transport links to existing regional airports e.g. Bristol and Birmingham.

Recognising that urban sprawl to Gloucester was undesirable the Leader supported a significant development of a multi purpose crossing at Lydney

Sharpness for both homes and employment which would take some pressure off Cheltenham.

It was an important aim to prevent the projected net loss of young people from the county and equally important that any suggested projects be measured against the actual likelihood of achieving that.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT

1. the Gloucestershire 2050 consultation be welcomed
2. it be agreed that a response to the Gloucestershire 2050 consultation be submitted using the draft consultation response attached at appendix 3 as the starting point for the response.
3. **the Leader, in consultation with the two other political group leaders, be requested to agree the final wording of the response and to submit this response by 31 July 2018.**

14. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were none.

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

None.

**16. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 EXEMPT BUSINESS
RESOLVED THAT**

“In accordance with Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining agenda item as it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public were present there would be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3, 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)

17. A PROPERTY MATTER

The Cabinet Member Development and Safety introduced the report regarding the West Cheltenham Urban Extension and the request for the authority to commit £250,000 to establish a programme office and undertake the necessary work streams and actions to maximise the economic outcomes and secure the financial interests of the council. He highlighted the importance of the Cyber Park and the strong government support expressed for the scheme. He also highlighted the benefits to Cheltenham for jobs and housing and the increased income from business rates and council tax which would be a major input to the council finances going forward.

The scheme provided a massive opportunity but there were risks involved which were set out in the report. The biggest risk was that the developers would fail to

take forward the scheme. It was important for the council to demonstrate to Government departments that the council were serious about the scheme and would deliver it. Essentially the town was in charge of its own destiny and this council should be driving the agenda to achieve what was best for the people of Cheltenham. It was also important for the council to retain control and ensure it was not taken over by the county council or the BID.

The Leader of the Conservative group expressed his party's full support for the scheme and he felt it was a golden opportunity for Cheltenham and the risk factor of not supporting the recommendations was far greater. The Leader of the PAB group also offered his support and said it was important that the council took charge of the programme in order to avoid fragmentation as the developers would always act in their own interests.

In the debate that followed Members supported the recommendations and the Cabinet Member made the following responses to questions.

The £250k was needed to get the scheme to the planning application stage and without this intervention it was unlikely that the developers would take any action before January 2019 and this would potentially risk losing government funding and the whole scheme could unravel.

Asked what return on investment the council could expect, the Cabinet Member advised that technically the council's money was at risk if the application failed to get approval through planning but this was a very unlikely outcome. Depending on the council's approach and how much it was prepared to invest, it could potentially provide some very good returns but no promises could be made.

He advised that the £22 million of government funding for infrastructure work would be focused on junction 11 of the M5 and improving access to the site but all the infrastructure work was not necessarily needed all in one go. Whilst acknowledging the current traffic problems at the Arle Court roundabout he could not support the suggestion of a more drastic solution such as an A40 flyover.

A Member shared the enthusiasm for the benefits the scheme would bring to Cheltenham in terms of jobs and housing but it was a considerable amount of money and therefore there were important questions to be asked. Given the sacrifice of some of the greenbelt if the scheme went ahead, could the council insist that the new development conforms to the highest possible environmental standards for a countryside location. Could consideration also be given to supporting public transport access such as light rail?

The Cabinet Member responded that outline plans already indicated a lot of green open space on the site and the key driver was for a high quality site.

The potential uses for the £250k of funding were set out in section 2.4 of the report and in summary this was a fund for increasing the capacity for delivering those functions in a timely manner.

In response to a question on whether the council could guarantee that only cyber businesses would occupy the sites, the Cabinet Member advised that

control would be based on land ownership. He referred to the director of planning who confirmed that all applications would be considered against set criteria and there would be parameters in place for employment.

In response to a question, the director of planning confirmed that the Department of International Trade (DIT) had made representations at the French MIPIM international trade conference. The council was in dialogue with the DIT so could suggest that Cheltenham officers or Members had a role in future MIPIMs. The Cabinet Member agreed to look into this but highlighted that the scheme was part of a national package of which the scheme for Cheltenham was only a part.

In response to a question about whether the removal of the sewage works from Hayden Park was an essential part of the plans for the Cyber Park, the Cabinet Member advised that initial discussions with the owners of the sewage works, Severn Trent, had indicated that they were happy to consider closing the site and realising their assets in a reasonable timescale but there were no firm commitment at this stage.

Members asked whether talks on safeguarding plans had opened up and whether the green spaces indicated would benefit local communities and not just employees on the site. The Cabinet Member advised that one of the benefits of the council taking more control of the development was that the authority would be in a better position to consider the needs of local residents far more than any developer would.

A Member was keen that infrastructure plans for transport links were done first and consideration given to transport links to the station and recreational areas. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the government funding was currently focused on improving transport links in to the site from the A40 corridor but it was acknowledged that new local transport links would be necessary to support new housing and employment. There were no concrete plans as yet and further funding would be needed to develop more local schemes.

Asked whether the plans for a cyber park presented increased security threats to the town the Cabinet Member indicated that this had been raised with GCHQ but they had been unwilling to discuss any details. He envisaged that the level of security would be an issue for each user on the site but his vision was not for a prison-like security for the site as a whole.

In his summing up the Cabinet Member thanked members for their support for this very exciting project and it was now down to the council to take control and have a positive influence on the outcome which these recommendations would support.

Upon a vote the recommendations were agreed with one abstention.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. A programme budget of £250,000 be approved for the creation of a multi-disciplinary team to undertake feasibility and due diligence work to review, and actions required to support, the delivery of the West Cheltenham Urban Extension.**

2. It be endorsed that the Programme's Senior Responsible Officer be authorised, in consultation with the Executive Director Finance and Assets and the Borough Solicitor, to spend against the programme budget to procure and facilitate specialist services and teams in order to create a multi-disciplinary team and undertake the necessary work to maximise the economic benefit to Cheltenham, the county and the wider region.

Bernard Fisher
Chairman