

Cabinet

Tuesday, 9th October, 2018
6.00 - 6.40 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Steve Jordan (Leader of the Council), Flo Clucas (Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles), Chris Coleman (Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment), Rowena Hay (Cabinet Member Finance), Alex Hegenbarth (Cabinet Member Corporate Services), Peter Jeffries (Cabinet Member Housing) and Andrew McKinlay (Cabinet Member Development and Safety)

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meetings held on 4 and 11 September were approved and signed as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

There were none.

5. COMMUNITY PRIDE GRANTS

The Leader introduced the report and explained that this had been a positive process. This year the fund was being used to support the place vision and ambitions for Cheltenham through community owned projects that build community pride and enable local groups to be more influential in supporting their communities and neighbourhoods.

The Leader reported that up to £30k was made available for community pride grants to be match funded up to the value of £5k. 19 bids had been submitted up to the value of £80k and he was pleased to report that 14 of those could be supported, albeit not to the full value requested. The bids addressed a wide range of issues across the town. He wished to place on record his thanks to the panel comprising himself, the Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles, Angela Gilbert from GRCC, and members of the strategy engagement team.

A Member asked whether Whaddon Bowls Club had discussed the installation of disabled toilet facilities with the football club given that the properties backed on to each other. In response the Leader undertook to raise this given that the council were still awaiting clarification from them on certain issues. In the meantime the Member suggested she could also take this up as ward member.

RESOLVED THAT

the list of projects to be funded from the Community Pride Fund as set out in Appendix 2 be approved.

the Participation and Engagement Team Leader, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to consider how best to award any remaining funds.

6. DISPOSAL OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE - SURPLUS LAND AT KING GEORGE V PLAYING FIELD

The Cabinet Member Finance introduced the report and explained that the strip of land highlighted in red of the plan formed part of King George V Playing Field which was designated as 'public open space'. The strip of land contained overgrown vegetation and did not form part of the main recreational area.

She reported that the developer New Dawn Homes had acquired the land adjacent to the strip and had recently submitted a planning application for 18 residential homes. The site was likely to be developed in the near future and would significantly limit access to the strip of land in our ownership. She explained that the planning team had advised that selling the land would not impact the planning decision.

The Cabinet Member added that in the past the land was retained by the Council as a pedestrian access route, this was now no longer usable due to the surrounding land having been developed. She explained that to have such a narrow strip of land bordered on both sides by private housing would make it very difficult to manage, and the land would soon become even more derelict with tree management and surgery very difficult to achieve. Therefore it would be preferable to incorporate this strip of land into rear gardens of the proposed plots thereby giving more generous plot sizes as well as negating CBC's responsibilities. The Cabinet Member explained that the land also carried a risk of becoming a sheltered, enclosed area that may encourage anti-social behaviour.

As the property was public open space the Council must advertise the proposed disposal for 2 consecutive weeks in a local newspaper and consider relevant objections. It had been agreed that the purchaser would be liable for these costs.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. the Head of Property & Asset Management (in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance) be authorised to dispose of the land for best consideration and upon such other terms as are deemed appropriate.**
- 2. the Borough Solicitor be authorised to prepare and conclude the necessary documentation.**

7. CHELTENHAM SPA BOWLS CLUB-AUTHORITY TO DISPOSE OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

The Cabinet Member Finance introduced the report and explained that Cheltenham Spa Bowls Club had been in place at St Georges Square since 1925. The club's previous lease expired on the 23rd June 2017 and was for a term of 20 years, with a 6 months rolling break notice.

She reported that the tenant wished to renew their Landlord & Tenant Protected Lease and there were no reasons to oppose the renewal on statutory grounds. Draft heads of terms had therefore been agreed for a new lease for a new term of 15 years with a Landlord & Tenant rolling 6 months break notice.

She explained that as the land was deemed Public Open Space the appropriate notices detailing the proposed leasehold disposal was advertised as per the Local Government Act 1972 and no objections were received.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. the land and buildings edged in red on the plans that accompany this report be leased to the trustees of Cheltenham Spa Bowling Club for a period of 15 years at market rent and**
- 2. authority be delegated to the Head of Property and Asset Management, in consultation with the Borough Solicitor, to agree the terms of the leases**

8. RENOVATION OF CORNISH TYPE PROPERTIES-APPOINTMENT OF CURTINS CONSULTING

The Cabinet Member Finance introduced the report and explained that the council owned a number of Cornish type built properties that had significant structural issues. She reported that several specialist structural surveys had been carried out since 2005 and a presentation to the asset management working group was made giving consideration to the business case to renovate or demolish the properties and their recommendation to cabinet was to renovate.

The Cabinet Member reported that budget provision had been made for the whole project totaling £2.98m. This comprised up of £2m from the Non-Traditional Homes budget and £980k from the External Improvements budget. The capital budget was approved by Council in February this year.

Consideration was given to undertake the services in-house, but this had been rejected due to a lack of the specialist expertise required, therefore a competitive tendering exercise had been carried out. She sought Cabinet approval to agree that Curtins Consulting Ltd be awarded the contract as set out in the report. She explained that this appointment would enable the most suitable and cost effective long term solution for the renovation of the Cornish type properties to be delivered and would extend the life of these properties for at least a further 40 years.

RESOLVED THAT

1. **Curtins Consulting Ltd be appointed to provide the professional service of civil and structural engineer and contract administrator for the project to renovate Cornish type properties. The service would be awarded under the NHS' Standard Call-off Terms and Conditions for the Supply of Services for the period until 31st October 2023.**
2. **It is considered the contract will provide good value as it was secured through competitive tendering and importantly through the expertise and experience Curtins have in renovating Cornish type properties and in administering contracts.**

9. UPDATE REGARDING BUSINESS CONTINUITY ISSUES AT CHELTENHAM CREMATORIUM

The Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment introduced the report which provided an update in respect of ongoing challenges regarding the reliability of the cremators at Cheltenham crematorium. He explained that the council was now at a point where a decision should be made regarding suspending cremations, temporarily stop taking new bookings and phasing the shutdown of the cremation operation. For those who had existing bookings services and cremations would be assured although it may be necessary to arrange for cremations at alternative locations should there be any further technical failure of the plant. The Cabinet Member paid tribute to the staff involved who had done all they could to maintain the operation of the crematorium to date. Sadly the risk to staff, customers, contractors and the fabric of the building was now deemed to be too high to continue its operation. This was a very sad and brave decision and he wished to put on record his thanks to staff and officers. The financial implications of this decision was at the forefront and an alternative interim service offer and related charges would be made available until the new crematorium became operational in Spring 2019. He wished to highlight however that the crematorium building remained open for services and burials. He also emphasised that this decision did not represent a threat to the employment of current staff neither individually or collectively as there were ample other functions necessary in preparation for the opening of the new operation.

The Cabinet Member Finance informed that the issues arising from the cremators would have a significant impact on budgets next year as officers were anticipating that the net position may be up to £450k below target. Fortunately, the council had the foresight to construct a new facility.

Members agreed that this was a necessary decision, particularly in view of the health and safety aspects of the operation where the risk assessment was unacceptable.

The Leader wished to thank all the staff who had been operating in extremely difficult circumstances. The situation was far from ideal but managing the consequences of this decision was already in hand.

RESOLVED THAT

1. the ongoing technical issues which the Director of Environment and the bereavement services team are managing in relation to the existing cremator plant be noted;
2. the decision taken by the Crematorium Business Continuity Management Group (CBCMG) to temporarily stop taking new bookings for cremation services be endorsed.
3. the phased shutdown of the cremation operation at the Bouncers Lane site be approved, noting that it may be necessary to arrange for cremations at alternative locations, should there be any further technical failure of the plant;
4. the development of an alternative interim service offer and related charges be approved, subject to consultation with funeral directors, which will be made available until the new crematorium becomes operational in Spring 2019;
5. authority be delegated to the Director of Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Clean and Green Environment, to finalise details of the revised service offer and take any other actions necessary to optimise service delivery arrangements and any associated contractual changes.
6. the projected financial impact arising from these recommendations, as set out under the 'Financial implications' section below be noted.

10. BRIEFING FROM CABINET MEMBERS

The Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles informed Members that on 11 November, Remembrance Sunday, Evenlode productions would be projecting a short film on to the Municipal Offices. A promotional video about this would shortly be made available on their website. In order not to cause upset to partners of the Cheltenham Remembers project they had been involved and were fully supportive. She referred to the march which would be held on 10 November and explained that more participants were sought. 450 people had already registered to take part and it was hoped that 1000 would participate in order to represent each soldier killed. She wished to put on record her thanks to support those Members and organisations involved to date.

The Cabinet Member Development and Safety reminded Members that the new John Lewis store would open on 18 October. The pedestrian works on the High Street were going well.

He also reported that the traffic modelling data in relation to the Cheltenham Transport Plan was due back at the end October.

The Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment stated that the cemetery and crematorium project was running on time and within budget. He paid tribute to those officers involved. He had visited the site the previous day and commended the new building. The two new cremators were now on site which represented a key milestone in the project. He was disappointed that the failure of the current cremators and the success of this project was happening

simultaneously but this was a good news story and a significant project resulting in a facility for generations to come. He envisaged that the public would have the opportunity to see the new facility before it became operational via a series of open days.

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the newly appointed Executive Director-People and Change, Darren Knight.

The Leader updated Members on Gloucestershire 2050. Three reports had now been received 1) the validity framework, 2) the consultants report on delivery 3) feedback on the main 2050 public consultation. They would all be discussed at Leadership Gloucestershire on Thursday. The documents had been circulated to all Members and there would be an opportunity for the council to discuss this with one option being to reinstate the devolution task group.

The Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles expressed her concern about the lack of reference to culture in the documents which represented an important economic driver in Cheltenham. She requested that this be raised at Leadership Gloucestershire.

The Leader referred to the bidding process the council had made to the £22m HRA cap. The Prime Minister had just announced that the cap would be abolished but no details of this had emerged yet.

**11. 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 items as it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public are present there will be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in paragraph 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)

**12. EXEMPT MINUTES
RESOLVED THAT**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 September be approved and signed as a correct record.

**13. PROPERTY INVESTMENT ACQUISITION - INDUSTRIAL PREMISES- ITEM
WITHDRAWN**

Item withdrawn.

Chairman