

Cabinet

**Tuesday, 14th September, 2021
6.00 - 6.40 pm**

Attendees	
Councillors:	Rowena Hay (Leader of the Council), Peter Jeffries (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Finance & Assets), Victoria Atherstone (Cabinet Member Culture, Wellbeing & Business), Iain Dobie (Cabinet Member Waste & Recycling & Street Services), Martin Horwood (Cabinet Member Customer & Regulatory Services) and Andrew McKinlay (Cabinet Member Cyber & Strategic Transport)
Also in attendance:	Gareth Edmundson, Sarah Farooqi, David Jackson

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Clucas, Collins and Wilkinson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting on 13th July were approved and signed as a correct record.

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The minutes of the 13th July meeting be approved.

4. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

There were none.

5. COMMON LICENSING STANDARDS FOR LICENSING HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

The Cabinet Member Customer and Regulatory Services presented the report, describing it as a positive and sensible move to seek common licensing standards across the county in line with government guidelines, unless there is a very good reason not to. Anyone hailing a cab in Cheltenham, especially at busy times like race week, was likely to use one licensed in Tewkesbury or Gloucester. The alignment of common standards would help drivers and passengers to know where they stood and keep people safe.

The Cabinet Member Cyber and Strategic Transport praised the report as a common-sense step forward with positive practical implications for Cheltenham. The authority prided itself on high standards of licensing and enforcement, which was not necessarily the case at other councils. He noted that there were more private hire vehicles licensed in Tewkesbury operating in Cheltenham

than in Tewkesbury, suggesting it was easier to pass licensing tests in Tewkesbury. These shared standards would help to raise the bar across the county.

The Leader moved to the vote, where it was unanimously:

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The consultation feedback be noted;
2. The Common Licensing Standards for Taxi and Private Hire Licensing attached at Appendix 2 of this report be adopted;
3. Authority be delegated to the Licensing Team Leader to put in place the practical measures to implement the common licensing standards policy.

6. FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN

The Cabinet Member Customer and Regulatory Services presented the report, noting that it was an annual statutory obligation rather than a sudden area of concern. He praised the resilience of the Food Safety team during the pandemic, and thanked the businesses who had co-operated with officers and shown a real commitment to high standards of food safety and environmental health. Cheltenham's wide variety of restaurants and hotels were a big part of its appeal, and the increase in registered food businesses from 969 a year ago to 1,025 today was a sign that the economic recovery was in progress.

The Leader added that it was important to have such a plan, and it was hugely encouraging to see an increase in the number of food businesses in the last year.

The Leader moved to the vote, where it was unanimously:

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The appended service plan for 2021-22 be approved.

7. BRIEFING FROM CABINET MEMBERS

The Cabinet Member Culture, Wellbeing and Business reported that there would soon be a new sports bar at the Prince of Wales Stadium, and thanked the officers involved in doing this. She also thanked those involved in bringing big screen entertainment to Imperial Gardens, which had been hugely enjoyable for everyone who came to watch classic movies, theatre, the Proms, Olympics and Paralympics. The event had been family friendly and saw between 150 and 350 visitors daily.

The Cabinet Member Waste, Recycling and Street Services reported that next week would be Recycle Week, so he was happy to say that the Pod Back scheme for recycling coffee pods was progressing well, with Karen Watson (Head of Environmental Partnerships) leading on this. He added that weedkiller usage was being reduced in favour of weed rippers in order to promote biodiversity, and that Ubico's progress across the town could be followed by residents on the CBC website.

The Cabinet Member Customer and Regulatory Services reported that he had had a productive meeting with the Gloucestershire Rape and Sexual Abuse

Centre (GRASAC), prompted by a recent council survey on women's safety. It was good to see these conversations happening, and he had particularly raised the issue of how women's safety varied throughout the year, for example during race week. Sexual Entertainment Venues (SEVs) were a relevant topic, as they were still subject to a loophole allowing unlicensed SEVS to remain open. At the meeting, he had agreed to write to government to ask for this loophole to be closed, and would also look at codes of practice regarding attaching conditions to alcohol licensing. It was important to reflect a positive image of the town, and the safety of residents and visitors was integral to this.

The Cabinet Member Finance and Assets noted that the Budget Monitoring report had been delayed to October Cabinet, and acknowledged the economic difficulties still faced by businesses and individuals as the pandemic continued. It was important to keep a close eye on the council's economic recovery, a key part of which would be the revised capital budget.

The Leader added that she had attended the iESE Awards along with the Chief Executive, Laura Carter and Katie Sandey (Communications), where CBC had received a gold award for its use of communications during the pandemic. The council had also won a Transformation Award for its allocation of relief funding to businesses, for which she thanked the officers involved.

Cabinet Member Decisions

The Cabinet Member Finance and Assets reported that he had made five decisions since the last meeting. These related to tender acceptance for replacement fire doors within CBC's housing stock, an amendment to the Discretionary Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme, a contract award for electrical works, the provision of specialist services for Fire Risk Assessments and cyclical redecoration works to CBC-owned residential properties.

In the absence of the Cabinet Member Safety and Communities, the Leader reported that she had made a decision regarding the allocation of HAF funding, which would deliver a programme of summer holiday activities and food provision for children who received benefits-related free school meals.

In the absence of the Cabinet Member Climate Emergency, the Leader reported that he had made a decision to support the Honeybourne Line Missing Link project being delivered and fully funded by Great Western Railway (GWR).

In the absence of the Cabinet Member Housing, the Leader reported that he had made a decision to commit to accommodating approximately seven households across the borough from the British Forces Afghan Relocation and Assistance scheme during 2021/22.

The Cabinet Member Culture, Wellbeing and Business reported that she had extended the grant agreement for Welcome Grant Funding agreed on 8th December 2020 as part of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Reopening High Streets Safely Fund. This decision increased the amount of funding to the maximum sum of £207,155.

The Cabinet Member Cyber and Strategic Transport reported that he had made a decision to employ Nick Sturge of Omnigenix on a short-term contract to support the Cyber Central Project of the Golden Valley Programme in leading

the Cyber Eco-System work stream and engagement with academia and talent development.

The Leader reported that she had made a decision to allocate a series of executive functions to the Head of Property, Finance and Assets, or in their absence the Executive Director Finance and Assets.

8. URGENT ITEM - CHRISTMAS ICE RINK

The Leader explained that a notice of intention to take an urgent key decision regarding the Christmas Ice Rink had been published on 8th September. The decision could not reasonably be deferred as the supplier required confirmation of order and deposit payment as soon as possible or Cheltenham risked losing the event. The Vice-Chair of O&S had agreed to waive the call-in period so it could be implemented as soon as possible.

The Cabinet Member Culture, Wellbeing and Business presented the report and thanked officers for putting it together at short notice. She explained that before the pandemic, the Business Improvement District (BID) had a plan in place for the ice rink, including planning consents and financial modelling. The original planning consent was for the rink to be situated in the north west quadrant of Imperial Gardens and to last for 45 days over the Christmas period, but it fell victim to Covid and the cancellation of live events. With restrictions now eased, the ice rink can come back to bolster the festive period, which is vitally important both for resident and businesses. The BID was no longer in a position to commit to it due to the timing of its recent renewal ballot, so this report set out conditions for the business case and financial conditions for the council to take on the contract and provide full financial underwriting for the event.

She added that a revised application had been submitted to to move the ice rink to the site adjacent to the south-west quadrant, bordered by the Promenade and Queens Hotel. This was due to the new plaza, part of the Quadrangle redevelopment at the rear of the Town Hall, making the original site too small. This application would be determined at the October Planning Committee.

The council's recovery strategy and Economic Recovery Task Force supported the reopening, reinvention and revitalisation of the Town Centre, and this would add to the wide range of experiences available in the town centre to encourage footfall. She added that the expected advertising and ticket revenue of the rink would help it to break even at just 46.5% capacity, with a potential capacity of 60% resulting in a net profit of £85,353. The environmental impact of generators required to keep the ice cold would be kept to a minimum, while the covered structure would help to keep temperature fluctuations to a minimum. £80,302 would be paid as a non-refundable deposit before the planning permission was granted. Local businesses (including StayLets, the Queens Hotel and TURF Cheltenham) had voiced their support.

The Cabinet Member Finance and Assets added that this was a good use of money that would draw people to the Town Centre and increase economic activity.

The Leader added that while the BID was not in a position to underwrite this project, it would be heavily involved and remained a valuable partner on the Christmas market and more. The Christmas period was more important than

ever after what had happened at the last minute last year, and residents would welcome the rink.

The Leader moved to the vote, where it was unanimously:

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Authority's contract rules be waived pursuant to contract rule 6.1.1 for the appointment of 11th Hour Events Limited to supply and deliver the Christmas ice rink in 2021 on Imperial Gardens;
2. The Authority appoint 11th Hour Events Limited to supply and deliver the ice rink on behalf of the Authority, in advance of planning permission being considered by the Planning Committee on 14th October 2021, and that the costs and risks set out in this report be noted;
3. A total potential financial commitment of £335,575 plus VAT be approved;
4. Authority be delegated to the Director of Planning, Place & Growth to agree the terms of the contract and the entrance fees;
5. £80,302.50 plus VAT be paid as a non-refundable deposit to secure the contractor before planning permission is determined and the contract entered into.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICE PLAN

The Health and Safety Service Plan briefing note was taken as read. The Leader added that in the past, this would have come as a full report, but this was now a three-yearly process with an annual update.

10. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXEMPT BUSINESS

Members resolved to move into exempt session.

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)."

11. EXEMPT MINUTES

The exempt minutes of the 13th July meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The exempt minutes of the 13th July meeting be approved.

Chairman