

# Cabinet

Tuesday, 11th October, 2022

6.00 - 6.40 pm

## Attendees

**Councillors:** Rowena Hay (Leader of the Council), Peter Jeffries (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Finance & Assets), Flo Clucas (Cabinet Member Safety & Communities), Mike Collins (Cabinet Member Cyber, Regeneration and Commercial Income), Iain Dobie (Cabinet Member Waste, Recycling & Street Services) and Max Wilkinson (Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing)

**Also in attendance:** Gareth Edmundson, Bev Thomas, Gemma Bell and Martin Stacy

## Minutes

- 1. APOLOGIES**  
Apologies were received from Councillors Lewis, Atherstone and Horwood.
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
There were no declarations of interest.
- 3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**  
The minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2022 were agreed unanimously as a true record of the meeting.
- 4. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**  
One Member question was received from Councillor Willingham, who was in attendance at the meeting.

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| <b>1.</b> | <b>Question from Councillor Willingham to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Victoria Atherstone</b>  |
|           | On 4th June 2021, a fire at 168 Arle Road left the building a wrecked, burnt-out shell. By the time of this Cabinet meeting, the building will have been in that state for 16 months. The date in the Forward Plan for Cabinet making the decision to commence issuing a Compulsory Purchase Order for this property seems to keep getting pushed back. Given the blight that the building is causing the area, and the fact that until it is made good the community will not be able to fully move on, could I get an assurance that the Council will expedite getting a resolution to this issue, and that the report authorising the CPO will be brought to the next Cabinet Meeting? |
|           | <b>Response from Cabinet Member</b>   |
|           | Compulsory Purchase is a complicated process involving confidential   |

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|  | information and which can only be undertaken as a last resort. Certain factors relating to this case have meant that there have been delays beyond the control of CBC. I have, however, received officer assurance that the report will be taken to Cabinet in December 2022.   |
|  | <b>Supplementary question</b>   |
|  | <p>I'd like to thank the Cabinet Member for her response, I know as a ward colleague she cares about this as much as I do.</p> <p>This picture shows what residents have been living with for the last sixteen months.</p> <p>Because this is a semi-detached property in a residential area, and the CPO process can take considerable time, could we can have a site meeting with officers with the correct powers, to discuss some minimal works that CBC be requested to do in default and apply as a charge against the property? These would seek to limit water ingress through the roof, limiting further damage to the neighbour's attached home, and also to more securely board-up the building to deter anti-social behaviour and try to make the building less visually intrusive into the neighbourhood?"</p> |

As Councillor Atherstone was not present at the meeting, a response to the supplementary question will be provided by email.

## 5. **SOCIAL HOUSING DECARBONISATION FUND: WAVE 2.1**

In the absence of the Cabinet Members for Housing and for Climate Emergency, the Leader invited the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Well-being, as the most recent portfolio holder for climate emergency, to introduce the report. He said that as well as fighting the climate crisis, CBC was committed to helping people who are struggling with fuel bills. The authority bid successfully for Wave 1 funding, and success in Wave 2 will make a significant difference to hundreds of people in the town. The £5m funding - £3m from the Housing Revenue Account, £2m from the government grant scheme – will help bring around 200 less efficient council homes to a minimum energy efficiency rating of C, by upgrading insulation and improving ventilation. In due course, further investment in housing stock will be required, to bring the town's 4,500 council homes to the higher standards required to reach our Net Zero goal, but the workplan set out in the report will make a difference to families for generations to come, helping people to enjoy a more comfortable home life, improve their health, lower their fuel bills, and cut their carbon footprint.

There were no questions or comments from Members.

The Leader said these are really important papers, and a successful bid will be a huge benefit to current and future residents.

She then moved to the vote, where it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED THAT :**

- 1. the inclusion of CBC in the consortium bid to be submitted by Stroud District Council for grant funding under SHDF Wave 2.1 be approved;**
- 2. authority be delegated to the Housing Strategy & Partnerships Manager, in consultation with Cabinet Members for Housing and Climate Emergency, and s.151 Officer, to agree to any uplift to CBC's financial commitment in respect of this grant funding application if it significantly exceeds the anticipated £3m HRA commitment (as detailed within the report, and subject to any final approval by Council of the 2023/24 HRA budget in February 2023);**
- 3. authority be delegated to the Housing Strategy & Partnerships Manager, in consultation with Cabinet Members for Housing and Climate Emergency, to accept the said grant funding offer, if the bid is successful, and to enter into any agreements or documentation as necessary;**
- 4. authority be delegated to the Housing Strategy & Partnerships Manager to enter into a partnership agreement with Stroud District Council and the other consortium members, if the bid is successful.**

**6. OUTDOOR LEISURE AND CATERING CONTRACT - PITTVILLE AND MONTPELLIER PARKS**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets introduced the report, which recommended the renewal for seven years of In The Park Ltd's lease to run the leisure and catering facilities in Pittville and Montpellier. He was sure that colleagues would agree that these well-used services add to the offer which makes these parks so valued. He said that a legal nuance under Section 123 of the Local Government Act described the lease renewal as a disposal, but for complete clarity, reiterated that the authority is not disposing of these assets.

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Street Services re-emphasised the points made, saying that the café and leisure facilities were very popular with the public, greatly enhancing the parks' offer, and commercially successful. He fully supported the recommendation.

There were no further comments or questions from Members.

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

**RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. the granting of a new lease for a period of seven years to the successful party in the tender of the outdoor leisure and catering contract be approved;**
- 2. permission be sought to place s123 notices in the local paper to grant new leases to the successful party to the tender, leases to commence February 2023.**

3. **Authority be delegated to the Director of Finance & Assets, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Assets, to ensure the marketing and disposal of the property represents best consideration and upon such other terms as are deemed appropriate or desirable to protect the council's interests; and**
4. **The authority enters into such documents as the Director of One Legal deems necessary or desirable to reflect the terms negotiated by the Director of Finance & Assets.**

**7. CHELTENHAM'S CLIMATE IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL**

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Well-being, on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, introduced the report, saying that part of Cheltenham's ambitious Net Zero target was to ensure that the environmental impact must be considered at the very earliest stages when considering new projects and policies and making decisions. This already happens to some extent, but is often too late in the process to get the best environmental outcomes. The tool presented will soon become a familiar part of all Council and Cabinet business, and although it should be made clear that the tool is a guide, not a veto, it does enable officers and Members to derive vital considerations regarding the climate emergency at the earliest possible stage. He thanked offices and partners in West Oxfordshire for their work on the tool, which would help ensure that the climate emergency is put first in everything the authority does.

The Leader commented that a presentation from officers made it very clear how the wheel was going to work. She said everyone is aware of climate emergency, and building this into our reports will encourage developers to take note of what the authority considers important and give it due consideration moving forward.

The Cabinet Member for Cyber, Regeneration and Commercial Income noted that there could be accessibility issues with the colours used on the wheel, and offered to help test this.

There were no further comments or questions from Members. The Leader moved to the vote where it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED THAT:**

1. **the use of the Climate Impact Assessment Tool be approved and piloted on all projects and policies put forward for a decision, and that this should form part of the council's standing reporting process and associated guidance, subject to a review of its practical application after six months.**

**8. BUDGET SETTING PROCESS AND STRATEGY 2023-24**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets confirmed that the budget setting process and timetable needed to be agreed as part of the financial regulations set out in the constitution, and showed the extent of the work, allowing for maximum transparency. In these unprecedented and turbulent economic times,

the current predicted overspend for the current financial year was £2.834m, as previously reported, and this was reflected in the assumptions made in preparing the interim budget proposals. Cheltenham's sound financial record and a lot of hard work from dedicated officers will culminate in the drafting of the interim budget, but residents, protected valued services and, together with partners, providing whatever support we can to those in need, will be the main consideration.

The Leader thanked the Cabinet Member and moved to the vote where it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. the budget setting timetable at Appendix 2 and outlined in Section 5 of the report be approved;**
- 2. the outline budget strategy outlined in Section 6 of the report be approved;**
- 3. Note the pressures in addition to the £2.834m overspend reported to Cabinet on 13 September 2022 and the large amount of work which will be required to close this gap;**
- 4. the intention for this council to remain in the Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool in 2023-24 be noted as outlined in Section 7 of the report;**
- 5. the Section 151 Officer, Deputy Section 151 Officer and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets be requested to consider suggestions from the Budget Scrutiny Working Group in preparing the interim budget proposals for 2023-24.**

**9. BRIEFING FROM CABINET MEMBERS**

The Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities reported the following:

- Saracens Football Club and local community has agreed to work with CBC to develop its ground;
- the leadership summit for No Child Left Behind will be held on 30 November and the awards ceremony on 26 January. The flag has been raised on the Municipal Offices and its designer will attend Council next week;
- officers have been looking at warm spaces in relation to winter, working with Food Network, Family Space and others, and also considering breakfast clubs, to ensure children and older people are properly fed and looked after;
- she has attended a Police and Crime Panel meeting, where two new independent members were appointed;
- she has attended the University of Bristol Global Council on Political Renewal, Human Rights and Relief, and hopes to continue working with the university on this;

- the Deputy Governor of Kisumu County in Kenya has visited, and had interesting discussions about how Cheltenham can assist our friendship town to develop entrepreneurship for women and girls;
- the pan-African flag has been raised at the Municipal Offices to mark the start of Black History Month, and the authority is working with Know Your Patch at how to see what can be done to help families in Cheltenham from now to the new year, amid concern at how county council finance is being delayed;
- she attended a conference of 47 European cities and regions where she shared information about Cheltenham and what people do to help each other.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Well-being reported that:

- earlier that day, Cheltenham Literature Festival hosted visitors from Ukraine, including someone who organises a literature festival in that country. It was a moving event, particularly poignant in light of recent events, and was good to show solidarity;
- a few weeks ago, he attended a spectacular light show in one of the warehouses at Lansdown Industrial Estate, staged by Squidsoup, as part of the culture board work that CBC is supporting. It highlighted how the town can link its expertise in the cultural and creative sphere with its expertise in cyber, and was attended by representatives of the Golden Valley Development and other interested parties. He thanks Squidsoup for organising the event.

The Cabinet Member for Cyber, Regeneration and Commercial Income reported that he had been invited to attend the National Cyber Awards on behalf of the Golden Valley Development, which was nominated for the Cyber Business of the Year award. It came second, receiving a highly-commended certificate.

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Street Services and Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets did not have anything to report on this occasion.

The Leader reported on three events she had recently attended:

- the Literature Festival event for Ukraine that day, together with members of the British Council, who were interested to hear about what Cheltenham does as a town of sanctuary across the board and offered support;
- BBC Radio Gloucestershire's 'Make A Difference' awards at the racecourse, with numerous people from across Gloucestershire being presented with well-deserved awards, and Cheltenham volunteers recognised, including Sarah Avery of Feed Cheltenham;
- the Black Police Conference, with a welcome event at the Tivoli Cinema, which brought together police officers from all over the country.

**10. DECISIONS OF CABINET MEMBERS**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets took a decision in September relating to the Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) scheme, to amend the list of excluded businesses to include further education establishments providing mainly vocational courses, and to set the relief level at 100% of the business rates for applications received by the closing date that fully met the eligibility criteria. He confirmed that the closing date has now passed.

The Cabinet Member for Cyber, Regeneration and Commercial Income took a decision to submit comments on behalf of CBC in relation to additional targeted non-statutory consultation for the proposed M5 Junction 10 Improvement Scheme. He said a lot of partners were involved and hoped to see some progress.

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, the Leader reported on her decision to allocate Cheltenham Zero Community Fund Grants of up to £10,000 to named community groups and voluntary organisations.

**11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE LEADER DETERMINES TO BE URGENT AND REQUIRES A DECISION**

There was no other business on this occasion.

**Chair**