

Cabinet

**Tuesday, 6th December, 2022
6.00 - 7.40 pm**

Attendees

Councillors: Rowena Hay (Leader of the Council), Peter Jeffries (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Finance & Assets), Victoria Atherstone (Cabinet Member Housing), Mike Collins (Cabinet Member Cyber, Regeneration and Commercial Income), Iain Dobie (Cabinet Member Waste, Recycling & Street Services) and Alisha Lewis (Cabinet Member Climate Emergency)

Also in attendance: Gareth Edmundson

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Clucas, Horwood and Wilkinson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November were approved and signed as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

1. Question from Councillor Wendy Flynn to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Rowena Hay

Why are only Cabinet and Full Council meetings available to watch on YouTube after the event and not all public meetings of this Council?

Response from the Leader

Thank you, Councillor Flynn, for raising this. It had been brought to my attention prior our new Monitoring Officer joining us, and following her arrival it is on a future agenda.

In accordance with our webcasting policy at Appendix K in the constitution, all council meetings are streamed live to YouTube. To date, the Democratic Services team has been following advice issued when the council was required to conduct virtual meetings during the Covid pandemic, which recommended removal of the recordings from the public domain immediately after each meeting – with the exception of Cabinet and Council. This practice has resulted in the recordings being deleted from YouTube once the minutes of the meeting have been approved.

The Monitoring Officer is now reviewing this practice and will be recommending updates to the webcasting policy to the next meeting of the Constitution Working Group with a view to the proposed changes coming to Council in 2023

2. Question from Councillor Wendy Flynn to Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing, Councillor Max Wilkinson

In the face of both a Cost of Living Crisis and a Climate Emergency, this winter a number of towns and cities in the UK and Europe (including countries much colder than ours) have ditched seasonal ice rinks in favour of roller rinks. There's an absurdity on councils constructing temporary, energy-guzzling ice rinks outside at a time when global warming means increasingly milder winters. As a roller rink would be cheaper for people to access, have a much, much smaller environmental impact, and yet be just as much fun, will the cabinet member commit to pursuing a festive public roller rink for next year instead of an ice rink?

Response from Cabinet Member

Thank you to Cllr Flynn for raising this issue. Carbon footprint reduction is an important part of this council's goals and monitoring is part of that work. After assessing the 2021 winter ice rink, we put in place plans to substantially reduce emissions from future ice rinks, including the initiation of a project to install electricity connections on site. While a roller rink lacks the festive links of an ice rink, we always welcome suggestions and if Cllr Flynn would like to provide more details we will consider this as part of the procurement for the 2023 Christmas festivities and future activities. However, this council's plan remains to host an ice rink next year.

5. HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND PROGRAMME 2022

On behalf of the Cabinet Member Safety and Communities the Leader introduced this report. She explained that the authority had been allocated funding from the Household Support Fund Programme via the County Council. The first tranche of funding of £150 k was used between 1 April-30 September and the second tranche, amounting to £123k, covers the period 1 October to 31 March 2023. The fund is to provide support to vulnerable households in most need of support to assist with the increasingly high cost of living in line with eligible expenditure. She highlighted that CBC's partners are a highly established network of providers and all of them have a high priority in promoting equity and tackling discrimination. Within the scheme there is flexibility to identify which vulnerable households are in most need of support and to apply discretion in relation to the allocation of monies.

The grant must however be allocated against a specific framework :

- At least one third must be ring-fenced to support households with children
- At least one third must be ring-fenced to support pensioners

- At least one third must be ring-fenced to support those in genuine need and not necessarily in receipt of DWP benefit

The report outlined the provider selected, the activity that has to be funded through the scheme and the amount of money being allocated to that organisation. In addition to demonstrating the amount of money spent on each activity there is also the amount spent on the administration. She emphasised that Cabinet was confident that the partners will be able to deliver the plan.

In her absence, the Cabinet Member Safety and Communities was thanked for her report. Cheltenham was an affluent town but had extreme pockets of poverty.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT:

1. **The award of the first tranche of grant funding as set out as set out in para 2.8 be approved;**
2. **The award of the second tranche of grant funding as set out in para 2.11 and 2.12 be approved.**

6. 2022 INDEPENDENT RESIDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

The Leader introduced the report and explained that residents' surveys are frequently carried out by local councils in order to collect statistically robust views from a representative sample of residents. CBC last undertook a survey in 2019 and the same questions were raised this year in order to benchmark against it. A representative 1,100 sample size was used which will provide accuracy of +/-2.9 % at the 95 % confidence interval.

The Leader gave the following highlights:

- Overall, resident satisfaction with their local area as a place to live is at 90 %, which represented a 6 % increase from 2019 and was 9 % higher than the national Local Government Association (LGA) Polling Survey.
- Satisfaction with the way the council operates has increased to 59%, an increase of 4% since 2019 and is now broadly in line with the LGA Polling Survey and if highways issues had been taken out CBC would have come out above
- Satisfaction with parks and gardens is 90 %
- Overall statements about Cheltenham as a place to live has come out above, with the largest increase recorded relating to Cheltenham having a positive future
- Regarding town centre amenities the largest increase (+21%) in overall satisfaction was for events

Cabinet recognised the focus on high street regeneration which provides job opportunities but it was clear from the survey that the commitment to building more affordable housing should remain. Finally, the Leader highlighted the importance of the ethos of partnership working in the borough. The results of the survey would be shared with partners, particularly Gloucestershire County Council and the Police.

Members welcomed the report and commented that councillors received a range of views and opinions when talking to residents. This statistical data highlighted the positives.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT:

- 1. The 2022 Resident Satisfaction Survey results, and the baseline they provide for the new Corporate Plan priorities, be acknowledged;**
- 2. The survey be repeated in three years' time to measure the impact of the Council's corporate plan on resident satisfaction levels;**
- 3. The results be used to inform Council service plans to address areas in need of performance improvement and/or further investigation;**
- 4. The results from the survey be communicated to the Council's partners that have lead responsibilities for areas where further improvement has been identified**

7. USE OF THE GREEN INVESTMENT FUND TO UPGRADE THE COUNCIL'S BUILDING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Cabinet Member Climate Emergency introduced the report and wished to thank the climate team for their work on this. Using the green investment fund to upgrade the council's building management system was a good first place to start-investing in sustainable solutions now would save in the future.

The building management project would support all CBC buildings including the Pump Room, the Municipal Offices and the Wilson and would ensure that energy use is positively managed and maintained with the focus on not heating and powering buildings when they are not in use. The system could be accessed remotely using live technology and a step forward in moving towards more climate sustainable energy sources and also saving substantial money.

Members welcomed the report and the use of this advanced technology to make a positive impact for the environment and reducing associated energy usage costs of our buildings.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT:

- 1. A capital investment of £151,000 from the Green Investment Fund, to install and/or upgrade the building management systems and monitoring arrangements across the council's operational property estate, be approved;**
- 2. Authority be delegated to the Director of Climate Change, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Assets (Deputy s151 Officer), to procure and award the contract for the installation of the equipment and monitor the implementation.**

8. TREASURY MID-TERM REPORT - POSITION AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets introduced the report which would be considered by Council on Monday 12 December. He highlighted the work of the treasury management team in the face of the current economic turbulence and resultant inflationary pressures.

Members welcomed the updates which included proactive support to charities and social housing providers, such as Cheltenham Borough Homes.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT:

- 1. Following the recommendation of Treasury Management Panel, the contents of this summary report of the treasury management activity during the first six months of 2022/23 be noted and recommended onto Council.**

9. COUNTER FRAUD AND ANTI-CORRUPTION POLICY

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets introduced the report and explained that CBC is a member of the counter fraud partnership. The Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit (CFEU) has developed a Fraud Risk Strategy for implementation across the Counter Fraud Partnership.

The Strategy, attached at Appendix 2, has been developed to comply with Government Functional Standards relating to counter fraud activities.

The Strategy sets out the definitions and motivations for fraud and the principles of risk management. Risk management and being 'risk aware' are vital to ensure the effective operation of this strategy within our council.

He highlighted that dealing with and handling public money comes with a level of trust, with the risk of fraud and corruption ever present, it is incumbent upon the council to take actions to mitigate against all risks. By being risk aware the council is in a better position to avoid threats, develop processes that reduce the loss or impact, and increase its ability to recover.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT:

- 1. The Policy attached to this report be approved and adopted;**
- 2. The Director of Finance and Assets (Deputy S151 Officer) be authorised to approve future minor amendments to the Policy, in consultation with the Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit, One Legal and the Cabinet Member Finance and Assets.**

10. BRIEFING FROM CABINET MEMBERS

The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency referred to the recent funding award for a viability study into heat networks in the town centre and Golden Valley. This was an exciting opportunity and would inform national policy. She also reported that the climate team had been invited to speak to the national

public sector team about CBC's climate assessment tool, which reflected that CBC was leading the way.

The Cabinet Member Waste, Recycling and Street Services remarked that the two questions on the residents' satisfaction survey with the highest scores related to household recycling and the way the council was rolling out new services in this respect. He highlighted that the council was continuing to work innovatively with the FlexCollect system now being piloted in one part of the town. CBC was therefore at the forefront of recycling soft plastics and he was confident that this would be expanded in the borough along with the potential recycling of other materials.

11. DECISIONS OF CABINET MEMBERS

The Cabinet Member for Cyber, Regeneration and Commercial Income took a decision on 10 November 2022 to award a contract to Nick Sturge (Omnigenix) to support the Golden Valley Project

The Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing took a decision on 16 November to make part of the current contract for services between Cheltenham Borough Council and the Cheltenham Trust known as the specification publicly available.

12. 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 paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 Part (1) Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Paragraph 1; Information relating to any individual.

Paragraph 2; Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual

Paragraph 3; Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

13. COMPULSORY PURCHASE RESOLUTION - 168 ARLE ROAD

The Cabinet Member Housing introduced the report and thanked officers for their support in bringing this report to Cabinet.

Members noted the comments received from Cllr Dr David Willingham as ward Member.

RESOLVED unanimously THAT:

1. The recommendations be approved.

14. A PROPERTY MATTER (1)

The Cabinet Member Finance and Assets introduced the report and Members were given the opportunity to address the meeting.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT:

1. The recommendations be approved.

15. A PROPERTY MATTER (2)

The Cabinet Member Finance and Assets introduced the report and Members were given the opportunity to address the meeting.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT:

1. The recommendations be approved.

Chair