

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet

Minutes

Meeting date: 7 March 2023
Meeting time: 6.00 pm - 6.15 pm

In attendance:

Councillors:

Peter Jeffries, Flo Clucas, Mike Collins, Iain Dobie, Martin Horwood, Alisha Lewis and Max Wilkinson

Also in attendance:

Gareth Edmundson (Chief Executive)

1 Apologies

Councillor Hay and Councillor Atherstone sent their apologies.

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 February were approved as a true record and signed accordingly.

4 Public and Member Questions and Petitions

There were none.

5 Discretionary Business Rates Relief

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets summarised the report, and invited Members' questions or comments. There were none.

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure relief scheme and the 2023 Supporting Small Business Relief Scheme as detailed in Appendix 2 be approved;**
- 2. the Head of Revenues and Benefits be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets, to implement any changes to the reliefs detailed in appendix 2 as required by Government or to ensure the successful operation of the schemes;**
- 3. Due to the volume of cases, decisions relating to the application of these reliefs be delegated to the Head of Revenues and Benefits and officers in the Business Rates team. In the case of a dispute, reconsideration is to be made by the Executive Director for Finance, Assets and Regeneration.**

6 Land adjacent to 68 Windsor Street

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets introduced his report, highlighting the stringent conditions relating to the use of the land, as set out at paragraph 2.2 of the report.

There were no questions or comments from Members.

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. permission be granted for notices to be placed in the local newspaper, pursuant to s.123(2)(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, advertising the disposal of the land;**
- 2. subject to the outcome of the notices, the land subject to the conditions of sale and heads of terms agreed be disposed of;**
- 3. the Executive Director of Finance, Assets and Regeneration is authorised to instruct the Director of One Legal to prepare and conclude the necessary legal documentation to reflect the terms negotiated by the council and authority to execute such documents.**

7 Briefing from Cabinet Members

The Cabinet Member for Customer and Regulatory Services told Members that the planning department had recently been the subject of a peer review, organised by the LGA, which involved three intensive days, looking the whole planning process, and speaking to the team, planners, agents, and other stakeholders. Feedback was good, particularly the good relationship between planners and agents, and the recommendations will be taken seriously and acted upon. It was all in all a very

positive exercise, and he thanked officers, in particular Liam Jones and Tracey Birkinshaw, and all community stakeholders, including the parish councils and the Civic Society.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency thanked the team working on the Cheltenham Zero partnership, saying there had been some huge progress this month – including new packs being launched and new training made available. She said the project is taking off in a significant way, and small businesses and community groups were beginning to feel the benefits. She hoped to bring news of more exciting developments soon.

The Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities was delighted to say that Big Local – the St Peter’s and The Moors partnership – had now had its charity status approved by the Charity Commission, which would enable it to draw down funds from elsewhere.

She also wished all the women of Cheltenham a happy International Women’s Day for Wednesday, and thanked male colleagues for their support.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing briefed Members on three items:

- thanks to the cyber businesses who were kind enough to host a recent round-table event at Gloucestershire College. It was a valuable session, attended by both mature businesses and interesting new start-ups. He thanked CyNam and Hub 8 for helping to facilitate the work;
- he had been working for some time with Lansdown Art Studio, and talking with planning officers about how to secure its future, at risk from the planning application on the site. He was pleased to say that a significant progress had been made, and was nearly at the stage where it could be said that the studio was secured. He thanked planning officers for taking on the interesting task of preserving this cultural asset;
- with Race Week imminent, he advised Members that the ‘War on Wee’ would be stepping up a gear with a strong media presence in the next few days, and including hydrophobic paint to discourage this antisocial behaviour.

The Cabinet Member for Cyber, Regeneration and Commercial Income echoed the Cabinet Member for Customer and Regulatory Services comments about the planning peer review – it was very interesting, and good to hear other people’s opinions. He looked forward to the outcome.

Decisions of Cabinet Members

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing reported on his [decision](#) to enter into a licence agreement with Network Rail and Great Western Railway in order to extend the former Honeybourne Line, paying tribute to officers for their hard work. He added a caveat that this was now very much down to Network Rail and Great Western Railway, and that he hoped to see progress by the end of the month.

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Street Services said that the waste and recycling service was Ubico’s largest single ongoing expenditure, mitigated by

getting the best possible price for what is collected. His [decision](#) to award a three-year contract to Plan B, a specialist recycling materials broker service, would provide the most advantageous terms in future, in line with CBC's climate emergency commitments.

The Cabinet Member for Customer and Regulatory Services told Members that although the proposed reforms set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill: Reforms to National Planning Policy 2022 were mixed – some positive, some more difficult - the council had made a good and authoritative response to the consultation, and his [decision](#) to formally submit this was taken on 3 March.