

## Council

**Monday, 19th October, 2015**  
**3.00 - 6.55 pm**

<b>Attendees</b>	
<b>Councillors:</b>	Duncan Smith (Chairman), Chris Ryder (Vice-Chair), Matt Babbage, Flo Clucas, Chris Mason, Dan Murch, Chris Nelson, John Payne, Max Wilkinson, Wendy Flynn, Andrew Chard, Paul Baker, Garth Barnes, Nigel Britter, Chris Coleman, Bernard Fisher, Jacky Fletcher, Colin Hay, Tim Harman, Rowena Hay, Peter Jeffries, Steve Jordan, Helena McCloskey, Andrew McKinlay, David Prince, John Rawson, Anne Regan, Rob Reid, Louis Savage, Diggory Seacome, Malcolm Stennett, Klara Sudbury, Pat Thornton, Jon Walklett, Simon Wheeler, Roger Whyborn and Suzanne Williams

## Minutes

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Lillywhite and Holliday.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Wilkinson declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 as he worked in communications for the energy sector.

Councillor Babbage declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 as he worked for an energy company.

### 3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2015 were approved and signed as a correct record.

### 4. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor reminded Members that the Remembrance Service would take place on Sunday 8 November and encouraged all to attend.

The Mayor highlighted that a special Council meeting would be held on Monday 16 November to discuss devolution.

### 5. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Leader took the opportunity to welcome back Chris Brierley, politics reporter at BBC News.

The Leader wished to put on record his thanks to Severn Trent for the way they had communicated with communities during the recent works.

The Leader informed Members that a planning application would be submitted this week for Pittville Play Area and further details of the scheme would be publicised the following week.

## 6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

<b>1.</b>	<b>Question from Naturewatch Foundation to the Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay</b>
	<p>According to Battersea Dogs &amp; Cats Home at least 560,000 puppies are born in Britain each year. The Pet Food Manufacturer's Association estimates suggest a number closer to 800,000. At the time of writing 142 litters are currently listed for sale in Cheltenham by the top five online advertisers.</p> <p>Meanwhile reports such as BBC2's The Dog Factory, BBC1's Watchdog (broadcast 8th October) and those of national animal welfare charities, including Naturewatch Foundation, show a clear link between commercial, volume distribution of puppies and disease, distress and damage to families, communities and individual animals.</p> <p>Given that commercial traders and careful, considerate local breeders will both post adverts which look the same, what can Cheltenham Borough Council do to identify licensable trading and to ensure full adherence to specified conditions thereafter?</p> <p>Also, in the event that prospective puppy buyers in Cheltenham identify adverts or trading circumstances which they believe either warrant licensing, or breach licence conditions which have been applied by Council, how can they best help achieve the high standards local people and animals both need and deserve?</p>
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member Development and Safety</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no licensed dog breeders in the district at the moment, although reports of licensable trading are followed up when received from the public. If Cabinet approve the recommended standards for dog breeders, the animal licensing service would proactively identify traders who should be licensed</li> <li>• The proposed procedure for <b>identifying licensable trading</b> in this respect (subject to the standards being adopted by Cabinet) is:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Education and awareness of:                 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. what kinds of trading are licensable in respect of dog breeding, how to apply for a licence and how to report someone who should be licensed (using media, local vets and council website for example). The key message is dog breeders with more than five breeding bitches need to be licenced. A list of licence holders will be available on the council website so that the public, vets etc can check the person/business they are interested in is licensed. (information about pet vendors and dog boarders are already listed for example). In addition, the licence holder should display</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> </ul>

	<p>their licence prominently so the public can see it, or produce it on request.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. the standards attached to animal licences so the public etc can report non-compliances</li> <li>iii. the types of trading/activities that do not require a licence (so that we manage customer expectations and receive intelligence that we can take action on). The key message is that a small breeder with less than five breeding bitches does not need to be licensed.</li> </ul> <p>b) All complaints, reports and intelligence relating to unlicensed dog breeders will be allocated to the animal licensing service for investigation and enforcement as appropriate.</p> <p>c) The team will proactively investigate any concerns they become aware of through local advertisements, websites etc.</p> <p>d) The team is part of a county wide animal welfare group which aims to raise standards and consistency in this field. The group have proposed a Gloucestershire project focussing on imports and illegal trade, subject to resource.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to <b>ensure adherence to the specified conditions thereafter</b>, the animal licensing service would undertake an inspection regime, investigate complaints and concerns and have regard to the council's graduated enforcement policy throughout. For example, an inspection by a vet and Environmental Health Officer (EHO) is part of the licensing application process, with an annual EHO inspection thereafter when the licence is renewed. The council's enforcement policy does not prescribe a certain course of action with reference to specific legislative requirements but guides a 'most appropriate course of action'.</li> <li>• Each case must be considered on its own merits, but a likely graduated course of enforcement action with regard to animal licensing could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Verbal warning</li> <li>▪ Written warning</li> <li>▪ Schedule of works required (informal)</li> <li>▪ Schedule of works required by serving a legal Notice under the Animal Welfare Act 2006</li> <li>▪ Prosecution under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 or under licensing legislation</li> <li>▪ Revocation of licence</li> </ul> </li> <li>• It is important to remember that the council only has Power of Entry into premises already licensed (this power does not extend to domestic premises but does include outbuildings where dogs may be bred). Depending on the facts of the case, a warrant would likely be requested from the Magistrates Court.</li> <li>• No formal enforcement action has been taken so far with regard to animal licensing as outcomes were obtained through informal means</li> </ul>
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	<p>eg through the use of compliance checks and written letters/warnings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The key message for the public is <b>not to buy the puppy and to report any concerns to the council</b> for investigation. Although some people may feel they should buy the puppy to 'rescue' it, this would actually perpetuate the situation and provide financial incentive to offenders.</li> <li>• Puppies should normally be bought after they have been seen at least twice in their home with the mother (regardless of whether this is with a licenced breeder, a kennel club breeder or a non-licensable arrangement). The public can refer to the council's proposed standards, as well as noting observations such as if they are shown a puppy socialisation plan, and if the adult dogs seem happy and well cared for.</li> <li>• The standards themselves were chosen by the council as they represent best practice (<i>CIEH Model Licence Conditions and Guidance For Dog Breeding Establishments January 2014</i>) although it should be noted that the council will not have any standards under which to operate, should Cabinet choose not to adopt those that have been recommended to them.</li> </ul> <p>In a supplementary question, Mr Joel asked whether the council would consider raising awareness of the issue particularly in events that it organises such as Paws in the Park.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member thanked Mr Joel for this suggestion and said the council would be happy to raise public awareness in any way it could.</p>
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## 7. MEMBER QUESTIONS

<b>1.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Harman to Cabinet Member Finance, Councillor Rawson</b>
	Can the Cabinet Member update the Council on whether there is any progress with regard to the North Place Site and whether any Car Parking Spaces can be secured for the important Christmas period?
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member Finance</b>
	<p>Now that the legal hearing has concluded between the developer and Morrisons, the council is working with the developer to explore the possibilities of bringing at least part of the site back into temporary use for parking in 2016, whilst the longer term situation continues to be addressed.</p> <p>Our information suggests that the car park at North Place will not be available for Christmas parking due to ground conditions and the need for reinstatement works before this could safely take place. As work commenced on the planned supermarket development before a legal dispute arose, the planning status of the site will also need to be addressed. However, the fact that the developer has stated its willingness</p>

	<p>seriously to consider re-opening the site as a car park on a temporary basis, represents encouraging progress.</p> <p>In a supplementary question, Councillor Harman asked the Cabinet Member whether he would consider that there was sufficient car parking space available in Cheltenham to cope with the Christmas demand?</p> <p>In response, the Cabinet Member said that the current car parking facilities served the town well last year and there were more than 2000 offstreet car parking spaces with rates starting at £1.20 an hour. Members should be careful about talking down the Cheltenham offer as the town was well positioned for Christmas shoppers and will be in a position to give them a warm welcome.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Harman to Cabinet Member Finance, Councillor Rawson</b>
	Can the Cabinet Member update the Council on the Plans announced in his budget on improvements to the Royal Well Bus station, shelters and public facilities?
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member Finance</b>
	<p>A planning application for the improvement scheme will be submitted in the next few days, hopefully this week. The tender process is about to begin with a view to awarding the contract in December and getting on site in January. The aim is to have the work completed in February or March.</p> <p>Some time has been spent over the past few months in looking at potential designs for the scheme. The aim has been to produce a design that fits the location and makes the best use of space. Given the importance and sensitivity of the site, I believe it has been time well spent. I believe Councillors and residents will like the resulting scheme, which consists of two four-bay shelters made of powdered aluminium and perspex together with space for a coffee pod to serve refreshments. The design aims to make a feature of the pod by using coloured tarmac for its base, so that it looks as if it is meant to be there, rather than seeming to have been dropped there merely to fill a space.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Harman to Cabinet Member Corporate Services, Councillor Walklett</b>
	<p>I attended an event on 8th October, also attended by the Mayor other Civic Leaders and many Business leaders, recognising the importance of our Reserve Armed Forces which also encouraged Employers to support members of Staff who volunteer for the Reserves of The Royal Navy, The Army and the Royal Air Force.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member inform Council how many of our staff are currently serving in the Reserves and what policies the Council has for supporting them and encouraging others to serve.</p>
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member Corporate Services</b>
	Reservists employed by the council are supported with paid leave. The Council's Employee Volunteering Policy has incorporated specific

	<p>reference to reserves since 2009. For interest any arrangement made for paid leave under this policy is on top of allowances made for participation in specific community roles such as Jury service, Magistrate and School governor.</p> <p>I am able to confirm that no CBC employees volunteer for the Army, Navy or RAF reserve forces at this present time.</p> <p>As Councillor Harman is no doubt aware the Ministry of Defence tends to periodically use national advertising, mostly via television campaigns to recruit reservists. Certainly this Council would respond positively to any approach made by the M.O.D to use posters or other soft point of sale materials in CBC properties.</p> <p>In recent times a reservist employee of one of CBC services did undertake a tour of duty in Afghanistan.</p> <p>In a supplementary question, Councillor Harman asked whether the Cabinet Member had given consideration to working closer with ARRC (Allied Rapid Reaction Corps) based at the former RAF Innsworth.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member said he hadn't but would take that suggestion forward with HR.</p>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Wilkinson to Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Coleman</b>
	<p>In the light of the recent missed bin collections in the St Stephen's Road area, would the cabinet member for clean and green environment please explain the process undertaken by Ubico and the county highways contractor when roadworks may prevent bins being collected? What can be done in future to ensure residents are not inconvenienced when highways works clash with bin collection days?</p>
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member Clean and Green</b>
	<p>Prior to and during a road closure the information Ubico receives can vary immensely and in some cases the contractors that plan on closing the roads don't provide notification at all.</p> <p>If Ubico do receive prior notification, a supervisor reviews the days that access may be a problem. If they have been provided with the contractors contact details they will make every effort to discuss the road closure prior to it happening so that they can arrange a mutually acceptable collection method.</p> <p>In cases where prior notification is not received, Ubico visit the site on the day the road closes and attempt at that point to make alternative arrangements. However, because of the nature of roads closures it is very rare that a single contractor will be responsible for all works. What is generally found is that one contractor digs up the road, another carries out the repairs and someone else may supply the fencing. Therefore ensuring all contractors appreciate the needs of the Ubico collection teams can be exceptionally difficult.</p>

	<p>This issue has been highlighted in the past when an arrangement has been made with the contractor digging up the road to assist in pulling out the bins/boxes only for the collection team to arrive on collection day and find that another contractor has fenced all of the bins/boxes in.</p> <p>Ubico collection crews try various methods to complete the collections as quickly and effectively as possible. Sometimes they are able to either pull/carry the receptacles out from each end of the road; other times they send a smaller vehicle on the collection day. However, given that all of the current fleet of vehicles are optimised with their own collection rounds each day, sometimes this option is unavailable.</p> <p>In instances where access cannot be gained, Ubico keep the customer service teams updated and attempt to gain access each day until the collections have been made. This information is put on the internet and in certain cases where there is likely to be an extended period of disruption customers are advised of remedial arrangements by letter drop.</p> <p>I anticipate that residents would expect Gloucestershire Highways to be able to inform Ubico of planned maintenance in good time to allow them to make the arrangements as detailed above. As a result of your question, I have therefore today written to the County Council Cabinet Member responsible for Highways to remind him of the importance of ensuring Ubico are kept fully informed and requesting his assistance in improving the current situation if possible.</p>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Wilkinson to the Leader, Councillor Jordan</b>
	I'm sure all members will welcome the news that John Lewis has announced it will open a shop in Cheltenham. Please would the leader of the council outline the role of the borough council in bringing this flagship retailer to town?
	<b>Response from the Leader</b>
	It is indeed welcome news and will have a positive impact of that part of the High Street. The Cheltenham Development Task Force, in particular its MD Jeremy Williamson, has been exploring potential opportunities in Cheltenham with senior representatives of John Lewis for several years. Equally discussions have been on-going with Blackrock, as owners of the Beechwood Shopping Centre, about its future. Over the last couple of years I have personally had a number of meetings with the parties involved. The Task Force, Cabinet and CBC staff have undertaken a facilitating role supporting both parties to address challenges associated with achieving a new store on the High Street and we are grateful to our colleagues at GCC for unlocking a key impediment which was the approval of the Cheltenham Transport Plan. Additionally the Council approved £450k spend for High Street public realm as a demonstration of this Council's commitment to meeting the expectations of retailers and to improve the area for residents and visitors alike. This money will be spent in co-ordination with GCC maintenance allocations.
<b>6.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Savage to Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Coleman</b>
	Has the Council considered installing bins in public spaces for recyclable

	as well as general waste?
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment</b>
	<p>Sixteen recycling litter bins are installed at various locations in the town centre to encourage people to segregate cans and plastic bottles from other general litter.</p> <p>In the main, these are used reasonably well however there are large levels of contamination which lowers the quality of the recyclables collected. Each of the bins is emptied three times a day and the contents of both the recycling compartment and litter compartment are taken back to the Swindon Road recycling centre where the recyclables are placed into the recycling containers.</p> <p>These bins are very costly to purchase and so are only used in areas which have high levels of footfall and where they are going to be frequently used.</p> <p>I can confirm however that I have asked for consideration to be given in installing these bins in our parks and gardens. I consider this to be the next logical step in improving recycling facilities in our public spaces.</p> <p>In addition, one of the first things I asked for having taken over this Cabinet Portfolio was a strengthening of the Land Use Agreement to compel all of those who run public events in our parks and gardens to have a recycling scheme in place. These changes have been made and Ubico is now able to offer a recycling collection service for such events.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Savage suggested the council should be leading by example if they were expecting householders to sort their recyclable waste. He asked whether the Cabinet Member accepted that increasing the number of recycling litter bins would help to prevent grot spots and improve the image of the town.</p> <p>In response the Cabinet Member said that since taking up his portfolio he had done all he could to promote recycling on the doorstep and in public spaces and he would agree that having more visible recycling bins would encourage people to recycle more.</p>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Payne to Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles, Councillor R. Hay</b>
	<p>As a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group that reported on the relocation of the Shopmobility Service I am very disappointed at the Cabinet decision on 15<sup>th</sup> September to re-locate the service to the Horse and Groom, in St George's Place.</p> <p>This location fails to recognise the criteria put forward by the staff and current users of the facility. It is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- not a town centre location</li> <li>- it does not provide ready access from buses</li> <li>- it does not have easy access from parking facilities for the disabled.</li> </ul>



	<p>The proposed location does not provide a sufficiently high profile that would attract third party providers to support the service.</p> <p>There is no mention in the proposal that the reception area of The Wilson would provide a portal for the service, something the Task Group believed The Wilson was keen to pursue.</p> <p>The consequence of the chosen location will inevitably lead to a reduction in the number of customers, a fact that was highlighted in the Community Impact Assessment.</p> <p>This decision will disadvantage vulnerable members of our society, and says little about Cheltenham's commitment to make Cheltenham an accessible place for tourists.</p> <p>My question is this, giving that the number of customers has been in decline, and will with this relocation decline further, at what point will this administration say, enough is enough and withdraw support for the service.</p>
	<p><b>Response from Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles</b></p>
	<p>As Councillor Payne is aware, it is not this administration's intention to withdraw support for the Shopmobility service.</p> <p>In the consultation over the summer, only 2 of the 143 respondents thought that the service should be withdrawn. And the strategy we have adopted acknowledges this strength of support. That strategy ensures that Shopmobility has a home at the Horse and Groom; once that is achieved we will seek expressions of interest from third parties for continuing its provision.</p> <p>It is a strategy intended to secure continuation of the service in the town so that it can continue to benefit the vulnerable users which Councillor Payne mentions.</p> <p>The relocation to the Horse and Groom is the only relocation option achievable within current budgets.</p> <p>Contrary to the statements in Councillor Payne's introduction it offers a town centre site which is closer to the High Street and the Promenade than the current office.</p> <p>In terms of access to buses, the new site is an improvement over the Beechwood office. It is significantly closer to the main town centre bus hubs at High Street, Clarence Street and the Promenade; only the Pittville Street hub is further away - an additional 20 metre trip.</p> <p>With regard to car parking, in the last full year, 40% of users did <u>not</u> park in the Beechwood car park when using Shopmobility. They came by other means – predominantly taxi or bus – for these people the new site will be an improvement. For the 60% who did use the car park, the new site is very convenient for both on-street blue badge parking and off-street parking; and for the many users who are driven by friends there is drop-</p>

	<p>off/pick-up zone.</p> <p>As Councillor Payne is aware, there is potential interest in a commissioned Shopmobility service. Its new location just off the High Street, close to the regenerated Brewery, the TIC and other town centre facilities positions it favourably in respect of the commissioning process.</p> <p>If there is interest in linking the operation to the Wilson, that would need to come forward through the commissioning process, which I anticipate commencing in the new year.</p> <p>Councillor Payne has spoken previously at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee about the positive and caring attitude of the Shopmobility staff and the summer consultation was similarly very positive about their attitude and approach. It is their intention to use the relocation as a positive opportunity to reinvigorate the service – I think we should all get behind them in that endeavour so that Cheltenham can continue to have a Shopmobility service of which the town can be proud.</p> <p>You are quite wrong to suggest the Cabinet's decision is designed to manage the decline and then closure of Shopmobility. On the contrary we are actually looking to maintain and improve the provision. The Horse &amp; Groom allows us to look at suitable long term solutions. To have made a quick decision, forced on us by the closure of Beechwood, would not have been in my opinion in the long term interest of the service.</p> <p>In a supplementary question, Councillor Payne, highlighted that the proposal for relocation of the service referred to the necessary renovations being financed from existing budgets. Could the Cabinet Member confirm the amount of cost involved and whether this would impact on staff.</p> <p>In response the Cabinet Member advised that she did not have the figure to hand but would confirm in writing to Councillor Payne. She reassured him that the renovation work would not be done at the expense of staff.</p>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Fletcher to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay</b>
	<p>Following the excellent news that John Lewis is locating to The Beechwood, which I believe will bring shoppers from adjoining counties and beyond to Cheltenham, isn't now the right time to consider lowering our parking charges both in our car parks and 'on street' parking in negotiations with Gloucestershire County Council. These charges are considered by many to be extortionate, and surely we want to encourage more visitors and shoppers to Cheltenham?</p>
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member Development and Safety</b>
	<p>No, now is not the right time. The Cabinet Member Working Group on Car Parking will be considering the issue of pricing policy as part of its terms of reference. I believe it would be inappropriate to pre-empt any recommendations that the working group might make.</p> <p>In a supplementary question, Councillor Fletcher asked when would be</p>

	<p>the right time? The working group appeared to have been set up at the 11th hour and she wanted to know when the outcome of the working party would be known given that members had been waiting so long.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member suggested that how long it would take for the working group to make their recommendations was in the hands of the working group and he would not want to rush them in this process. He reminded Members that the current parking strategy had been produced four years ago and it was reasonable to review it after that period of time and hence there was nothing unusual about the timetable being set for this review. He reminded Members that car parking charges had been frozen since 2010 and when the MTFs had been discussed at the last Cabinet Meeting there were no assumptions made about car parking fees rising in the next three years. There were a lot of competing factors to be assessed in making any reductions or increases in car parking charges which had been explained to the working group at their first meeting.</p>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Regan to Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Coleman</b>
	<p>Will the Cabinet member ensure our streets and paved areas are regularly cleaned of chewing Gum which encompasses the whole of the town centre and inform us when the last time chewing gum was cleaned off our streets?</p> <p>Will the member agree it is ugly, unsightly, and that spitting out gum is unacceptable?</p> <p>Is he aware that the whole pavement length of the promenade outside our prestigious shops is covered in discarded gum?</p> <p>Will he approach the manufacturers for funding towards removal of this unpleasant habit?</p> <p>Can he look at the possibility of installing Gum Bins?</p>
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment</b>
	<p>I am aware of the problem of chewing gum on our pavements and agree with your observations on its ugly and unsightly nature.</p> <p>I am advised that the removal of chewing gum from our pavements is a more difficult job than one would expect and at the current time has to be carried out by specialist contractors. The Promenade, High Street and Bus Station were all targeted in a stand-alone cleanse which was undertaken in 2008 by such a contractor at a cost of £12,500.</p> <p>In respect of installing additional bins, I am not persuaded that the few anti-social people who drop/spit their chewing gum on the floor would be any less likely to do so should further bins be installed. There are already a number of bins available in and around the town centre and I would urge people to use them.</p> <p>I am certainly prepared to make representations to the manufacturers in</p>

	<p>accordance with your suggestion but I consider that it would also be beneficial to lobby central government on this point. I would add that it is exactly this sort of service that becomes difficult to provide as a result of the cuts to local government funding.</p> <p>I do want to assure you that the Cabinet is actively looking at ways of removing chewing gum from the pavements that you refer to. I am also exploring with Officers whether the expansion of Ubico would now allow for the purchase of the specialist equipment needed to remove chewing gum across all partner Authorities although I am mindful that this would likely bring additional cost to the Council.</p> <p>In a supplementary question, Councillor Regan, asked whether the Cabinet Member would consider finding a sum of money in 2016 for this purpose before the town hosted dignitaries from our twin town in Annecy.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member responded that he agreed with the thrust of the question and reassured the member that Cabinet were were considering every possible solution for sorting this problem.</p>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Wilkinson to Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles, Councillor R. Hay</b>
	<p>Please could the cabinet member for healthy lifestyles make a statement on the appointment by Cheltenham Poetry Festival of a Poet in Residence for Cheltenham?</p>
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member Healthy Lifestyles</b>
	<p>I am very pleased to take this opportunity to say how good it is that the Cheltenham Poetry Festival have appointed a Cheltenham Poet in Residence.</p> <p>I would like to thank Anna Saunders the Festival founder &amp; director for inviting me to formally announce Angela France as the Poet in Residence at an open Mic event at Smokey Joes on National Poetry Day the 8<sup>th</sup> October.</p> <p>Having a Poet in Residence is a unique initiative and the formal announcement has generated a huge twitter response. The Forward Poetry Organisation alone has circa 24 thousand followers promoting internationally through their networks, the story has also been promoted by the poetry press Nine Arches and many more local poetry groups across the County, generating something in the region of 64 thousand tweets.</p> <p>Cheltenham Poetry Festival media sponsor Gloucestershire media have supported the project not only covering the event but also publishing poems by the town's bard.</p> <p>The whole initiative is designed to make Cheltenham a poetry destination, which will not only raise the profile of poetry within the town but also attract internationally acclaimed spoken word performers to perform in our community.</p>

	<p>As with all Festivals, the value to the town's recognition within the country and internationally is hugely positive. It increases our town as a destination, bringing economic value and enhancing the cultural richness and wellbeing for our residents.</p> <p>I am very happy to say, that having spoken to next year's Mayor, Councillor Chris Ryder, a poem about Cheltenham by Angela France will be read. Angela will also be formally recognised as the Poet in Residence for next year at the Mayoral Inauguration. I believe a very suitable addition to the town's annual civic celebration and I am grateful for Councillor Ryder's support in this.</p> <p>In a supplementary question, Councillor Wilkinson, asked the Cabinet Member whether she agreed that all members should be supporting this initiative.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member yes.</p> <p>On a point of clarification, the deputy Mayor, Councillor Ryder, welcomed the initiative and although the arrangements for the Mayoral inauguration had not yet been agreed she would ensure that the appointment was recognised in some way at the event.</p>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Lillywhite to the Leader, Councillor Jordan</b>
	<p>Question for Steve Jordan following his recent comments in the Echo;</p> <p>Why would John Lewis want Boots Corner closed? It is the principle access to their proposed Car Park for the majority of Cheltenham's population, possibly 70% of which live south of the High street.</p> <p>The alternate route through Rodney Road is also likely to be severed by a 'rising bollard'. So that 'dispersed' traffic does not travel along the High Street to Winchcombe Street, at 'Thomas Cook Corner', a far greater severance than Boots Corner with a much higher impact on the new store.</p> <p>Will he please outline how traffic that would have used Boots Corner would now reach the new store from the South of town, specifying road names.</p>
	<b>Response from the Leader</b>
	<p>My comments reflected discussions with representatives of Blackrock (owners of the Beechwood Shopping Centre) and John Lewis Partnership who believe that removing traffic is positive for High Street performance. In fact JLP stipulated GCC approval of the Cheltenham Transport Plan and the specific changes to return Albion Street to two way working before finalising the deal.</p> <p>Access to the new store from the South of town could be through a variety of routes. On the assumption that the Boots Corner trial progresses then traffic will choose to disperse around the town centre in either an easterly or westerly direction thus accessing Albion Street via London Road and St James's Street or from North Street.</p>

<b>12.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Lillywhite to the Leader, Councillor Jordan</b>
	<p>The Council leader refers to 'The County's endorsement' of the Transport Plan. Had he attended the Cabinet meeting he would understand in no uncertain terms and direct from Mark Hawthorne, their leader, that they do not approve and were going to throw it out as the Traffic Authority were unable to answer so many of the questions formally raised and opposition was so strong. However, they were stopped by the last minute interjection of 'strong voices from the Cheltenham business community'. They had to fashion a means of implementing it in a conditional, phased manner each one subject to the 'success' of the last.</p> <p>The 'strong voices' were of the Brewery Scheme developer and a spokesman for the Chamber of Commerce, who claimed 99% support, which is yet to be substantiated despite requests.</p> <p>The impression the leader has given to the general public in his statements regarding the 'County's endorsement' is misleading, is he intending to correct this?</p>
	<b>Response from the Leader</b>
	<p>Whilst there may have been robust debate at the GCC Cabinet meeting on 22/07/15 the outcome was approval to progress the Cheltenham Transport Plan so my comment stands as a factual interpretation of the decision.</p> <p>My understanding is that there was and remains significant business community support. My response above (Q11) clearly demonstrates how significant investors, other than promoters of the Brewery also supported implementation of the plan. I am aware that retailers and traders such as Supergroup, Yo!Sushi, Specsavers, Trespass, Tesco, Bar &amp; Wok and many more, plus the Chamber of Commerce and Stagecoach all supported the position.</p> <p>So to suggest that the "strong voices" emanated solely from one scheme is clearly incorrect.</p>

## 8. 2020 VISION

The Mayor invited Members to consider suspending standing orders to enable the Leader to speak for longer than the 10 minutes laid down in the Council Procedure Rules. Upon a vote this was agreed.

The Leader started by thanking Members and Officers across the council for their contribution in enabling him to bring this report today in support of what was a very key decision for this Council.

He began by responding to the question of why he was recommending to Council that they enter into the 2020 Vision partnership structure (2020).

The first reason was financial and with the ongoing financial pressures on local government budgets it was necessary to look at alternative solutions in order to avoid future cuts in services. The 2020 report detailed the significant projected

savings over the period of the MTFS with potential additional savings from the formation of a local authority company.

The second reason was that this council had a track record of sharing services and with the success of GO and ICT shared services it was the logical step to build on these existing arrangements in 2020.

He acknowledged that there were concerns about the potential political and cultural differences across the four councils and also that Cheltenham was an urban authority going into partnership with three rural authorities. However he could reassure members that services that were special or unique to Cheltenham, in particular those delivered by REST and the Cheltenham Trust, were not going into the 2020 arrangements.

Customer services, revenues and benefits and property services had been identified within the project as the next services to be considered for sharing. He added that this detailed work would begin shortly with a report being brought to Cabinet at some stage in the New Year. He highlighted that members would be involved in this process.

He emphasised that before any future services were moved into 2020 there would need to be a full report to Cabinet, including a business case and alternative options, which would have to be agreed before any future transfer of services takes place. The recommendation agreed by Cabinet stated that Cabinet would receive and have to approve further business case briefings and proposed Service Level Agreements for these services under consideration.

There was the potential for staff to be transferred into a Local Authority company which would assist with the pensions' deficit and a further business case for this would be brought back next year.

He stressed the importance of Cheltenham maintaining its own democratic governance in the new arrangements.

He explained that 2020 would be governed by a Joint Committee with two members represented from each authority. Cabinet proposed that the current Cabinet Member Corporate Services, Councillor Walklett, undertake one of these roles. He was the current council representative on the member governance board and the CBC representative on the Joint Monitoring and Liaison Group for GOSS. The Leader highlighted the suggestion from Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the second member on the Joint Committee could be a cross party representative. He had raised this with the other councils but he hadn't had any responses in support of this. Consequently he proposed that Councillor Flynn, as the chair of the Appointments Committee, should be the Council's second representative. He would welcome the formation of a cross-party group of members to look at how effective scrutiny might be operated in the new arrangements.

The Joint Committee would be responsible for overall financial policies and potential HR policies. The Leader referred members to the amended recommendation 5 which now included the introduction of a protocol which would require the Joint Committee to defer any item relating to changes to employment terms and conditions where it was unlikely to be passed by

unanimous decision in order to seek a resolution to the matter. The Leader added that whilst rationalisation of HR terms and conditions would be useful, to have a mechanism in place to deal with any issues was a sensible approach. As indicated in the report, senior staff at this council would be excluded from the delegation of HR functions to the Joint Committee.

The Leader reported that the post of Managing Director of the Partnership had been ringfenced to the Chief Executives of Cheltenham and Cotswolds/West Oxfordshire Councils. He explained that the current Chief Executive of Cheltenham had not expressed an interest in being considered for this position. The position of CEX would be deleted at the council but as a consequence the post of Head of Paid Service would be required at Cheltenham and would be the subject of an internal recruitment process by the Council's Appointments Committee. A key role for the Head of Paid Service would be to ensure that Cheltenham gets the services they expect from 2020.

If the recommendations in the report were agreed by Council today, the existing shared service arrangements for GO Shared Services and ICT Shared Services would be undertaken by the Joint Partnership Structure from April 2016.

He concluded that it had been a long process to get to this stage and he appreciated that members still had some concerns. He felt that the review by Overview and Scrutiny had been very useful in stepping back and reviewing the whole process and he felt members should be comforted by the O&S conclusions that they should support 2020 going forward. The current recommendations did not exclude other partners joining the arrangements in the future. On that basis he commended the report to Council.

The Mayor invited members to ask questions on the report and the following responses were given by the Leader:

- In response to a request for clarification, the Leader confirmed that the second recommendation agreed by Cabinet did not predetermine future Cabinet decisions and a report would have to be brought to Cabinet and agreed prior to any delegation of further services to the 2020 Vision Joint Committee.
- There was a proposed mechanism for call-in by scrutiny of a decision made by the Joint Committee and if such a call-in was requested by more than one authority this would automatically trigger some type of shared call-in arrangement.
- The reference in the Legal Implications referred to the amendment of arrangements with Ubico, The Cheltenham Trust and CBH. This would be necessary as those organisations were currently making use of services which were already shared and in future they would be provided by 2020 hence this needed to be reflected in the formal agreements.
- He advised that there was no clash with devolution plans for Gloucestershire, even though one of the 2020 partners was outside the county. This was because 2020 Vision was concerned with the delivery of services. He added that it would be important for this council to ensure it had the capacity to negotiate with the County Council on devolution proposals, particularly with regard to any delegation of powers or funding to the districts.
- A Member commented that it was unusual to be making the Chief Executive redundant and at the same time recruiting a new Managing Director for REST and asked whether any thought had been given to internal reallocation of



responsibilities. Another Member questioned why the appointment to the Head of Paid Service should be an internal recruitment process?

In response, the Leader advised the internal recruitment was partly due to the fact that this was a temporary situation which required an interim process. There were complications regarding the government funding and the advice received was that a chief executive post should be made redundant. The appointment of the MD for REST would strengthen the structure and provide resilience.

- A Member highlighted that the redundancy costs for the Chief Executive's post amounted to £180,000 of public money and there was a lot of public disquiet about senior officers being made redundant and then taking up work with another council. Was there a compromise agreement in place which would prevent the Chief Executive coming back to work with any council in Gloucestershire either as a consultant or a paid employee?

The Leader advised that he would be happy to check that out and advise members accordingly.

Having completed questions, the Mayor invited members to debate the report.

Councillor Tim Harman spoke as Leader of the Conservative Group and Chair of Overview and Scrutiny. He acknowledged the great financial challenges facing the council and the solution that 2020 offered in balancing the MTFs. He felt the proposals in the report had not gone unquestioned and there had been a robust debate.

He referred to the request from scrutiny that a member of the non-ruling party at the council should be represented on the Vision 2020 Joint Committee to ensure that scrutiny had a stake in the process. He appreciated that the Leader had discussed this with the other councils in the partnership and he would not object to the recommendation that Councillor Flynn was appointed to the Joint Committee provided the council's own scrutiny arrangements were robust.

He noted that the issue of devolution had been raised and he accepted that it was a different process. However he felt that 2020 would put this council in a better position for the future in any new arrangements for devolution. There would be shared expertise across the councils in addition to the financial savings from 2020 and the arrangements would ensure that the people of Cheltenham will have value for money from their council services. On that basis his group would support the recommendations.

The Cabinet Member Finance referred to the fact that existing shared services with Ubico and GOSS made the council an annual saving of £2.7 m annually. With Government core funding reduced from £8.8 m to £4.6 m between 2009 and 2015 and likely to be further cut between 25 % and 40 % over the next 4 years, further radical efficiency savings needed to be made without cutting services. With evidence that the four councils concerned were already making shared services work so well 2020 Vision represented further new ways of working which had been supported by Government via the £3.8 m Transformation Challenge Fund. He reported that Vision 2020 would generate £581 000 of savings annually increasing to £800 000 per annum if a Teckal company was established and these figures had been endorsed by CIPFA. The Cabinet Member paid tribute to the hard work invested in the 2020 project by all officers involved.

A Member referred to 2020 as Goplus as it was building on the the success of GO and four years ago when GO was first agreed, the options for sharing further services and becoming a local authority company had already being suggested. The government funding had now made this option possible and he stressed the extra resilience and opportunities for staff that the new arrangements would bring. It was important that there would be a decision point before any service was moved into the new arrangements and that had been clearly addressed in the recommendations. He highlighted that the Constitution allowed for reports from joint committees at Council and he felt that there should be regular reports from all joint committees in future.

Some Members felt they could support the recommendations but still had concerns. One Member said that whilst it seemed sensible for the existing GOSS and ICT Shared Services to be transferred to the Partnership, he expressed a note of caution regarding other services such as Revenue and Benefits and Customer Services. He considered that one of the strengths of the current Customer Services team was that they knew the town well and so were in a good position to respond to telephone enquiries. He contrasted this with the potential scenario of a shared call centre in Witney as a money-saving exercise but one where staff would not know the area. He was pleased that REST services remained with the council and Cheltenham focussed as they had little in common with the three rural authorities involved and delivery of those services had a key impact on the people of Cheltenham. A member also suggested that the appointment of the Head of Paid Service should be undertaken quickly as in his view the council could not afford to be left with a power vacuum. This would also enable early resolution of any potential conflict between that role and the role of the current Head of Paid Service. He felt the organisation needed a very clear head to avoid confusion and in order to get the best out of the new structure.

Another Member indicated that although he would support the recommendations he was still on the sceptical list. His major concern was that given his experience as a backbench Councillor for a party in administration or opposition, he sometimes found this a frustrating role because of the way the democratic process operated. His fear was that there would be more power and influence in the hands of the Joint Committee and the ability of a backbench Councillor to get involved would be moved further away from them. He supported the move of ICT and GO into the new arrangements and highlighted the need for improvements to the scrutiny process to support 2020. He was disappointed with the result that opposition groups would not be represented on the Joint Committee but accepted that it had to be reciprocal across all four councils before this could be put in place. He welcomed the Leader's suggestion that a cross party group should be set up alongside the Joint Committee to consider the scrutiny arrangements. He also welcomed the confirmation that a report would be brought back to Cabinet on any future services being considered for 2020, as 2020 may not be the best option in every circumstance. He considered REST was a set of very Cheltenham focused services which must be retained on that basis. There was a role for scrutiny in ensuring that REST delivered benefits from the extensive systems thinking work that had been carried out. Similarly the cemetery and crematorium service should remain with this council.

Another member echoed this note of caution that there should be a very sound business case before any service was moved into 2020. There would also need to be a great deal of care in setting up the scrutiny arrangements to ensure they were effective in a new larger organisation.

A Member spoke in support of 2020 in terms of the budget savings and highlighted the need for the role of the non-Cabinet member to be considered alongside the Joint Committee. He felt that it was important that the council continued to look for other ways of balancing the budget and suggested that the council should look carefully at the use of the land west of Cheltenham which could help safeguard future employment.

In his summing up the Leader thanked Members for their comments. He agreed to continue to explore the membership of the Joint Committee with the partner councils and he encouraged members to talk to their party colleagues in other councils and seek to persuade them of the value of this proposal. He supported the suggestion that joint committees should report regularly to Council and he would also consider other ways of maximising information to all Members.

Upon a vote the recommendations in the report with the addition of Councillor Flynn in recommendation 15 were carried.  
Voting (For 32 with 2 abstentions)

#### **RESOLVED THAT**

1. The Authority enter into the shared services partnership structure described in **Appendix 2**.
2. the consequential revised senior management structure for this Authority as set out in **section 7** be endorsed.
3. the 2020 Vision Business Case at **Appendix 3** be approved.
4. the Commissioning Strategy at **Appendix 5** be adopted.
5. the 2020 Vision Joint Committee be established in accordance with Sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972, and the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012 made under Section 9EA, 9EB and 105 of the Local Government Act 2000, with draft Constitution at **Appendix 6** including a protocol which requires the Joint Committee to defer any item relating to changes to employment terms and conditions where it is unlikely to be passed by unanimous decision in order to seek a resolution to the matter.
6. authority be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, the Section 151 Officer and the Borough Solicitor to finalise and complete the Inter Authority Agreement (including the Constitution) and other documentation on terms to be approved by the Borough Solicitor and to take all necessary steps to create the 2020 Vision Joint Committee by April 2016.
7. It be agreed that the existing 2020 Vision Member Governance Board arrangements will continue until the 2020 Vision Joint Committee is created.

8. Upon establishment of the 2020 Vision Joint Committee
  - 8.1 To authorise the delegation to the 2020 Vision Joint Committee those functions of the Authority as described in the draft Constitution for the 2020 Vision Joint Committee, subject to retained decisions as set out in **section 10** of this report
  - 8.2 To agree to appoint Forest of Dean District Council as Administering Authority to provide administration support to the Joint Committee
  - 8.3 To agree to appoint Cotswold District Council as the Accountable Body to provide financial support to the Joint Committee and enter into any contracts required on behalf of the Joint Committee
  - 8.4 To agree to appoint the following councils to provide the following functions of the Joint Committee;  
  
Forest of Dean District Council – Monitoring Officer  
  
Cotswold District Council – S151 Finance Officer  
  
Forest of Dean District Council – Clerk to the Joint Committee
9. the appointment of David Neudegg as Partnership Managing Director be confirmed.
10. It be agreed to make available such of this Authority's staff as are necessary for the 2020 Vision Joint Committee to fulfil the functions which the Authority delegates to it
11. the revised senior management structure for this Authority as set out in **section 7** (which includes the deletion of the post of Chief Executive and consequential costs) be approved for consultation with affected staff and recognised trade unions with a proposed implementation date of 28 March 2016.
12. the Chief Executive be authorised to undertake all necessary processes for the introduction of the revised senior management structure and to make any changes to the structure arising from consultation provided that such changes fall within the budget and overall parameters of the structure (as referenced in this report).
13. It be agreed to internally recruit to the post of Head of Paid Service (who it is anticipated will also become the Returning Officer/Electoral Registration Officer from 23 May 2016) and it be noted that the appointment to the post will be undertaken by Appointments and Remuneration Committee with final approval resting with Council.
14. It be agreed that, in the event of it being necessary to second any of the Authority's staff in order to facilitate the functions which it delegates to the 2020 Vision Joint Committee, the Head of Paid Service be authorised to approve such secondment.

15. Councillor Walklett and Councillor Flynn be appointed as the Authority's Members on the 2020 Vision Joint Committee.

16. the Democratic Services Manager, in consultation with the Borough Solicitor, be authorised to make such changes to the Constitution as are necessary to reflect and facilitate the implementation of the recommendations in this report.

**9. INTERIM REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS FOR LANSDOWN WARD**

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the report and explained that the council had a duty to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as practicable and to ensure that the polling stations are accessible to all electors including those with special needs. He explained that a consultation exercise had been completed for Lansdown Ward.

Members supported the proposal of rationalising Polling District HB to Polling District HA as the situation for some electors had been rather anomalous.

**RESOLVED (unanimously) that the following changes to polling districts HA and HB be approved :**

**Move Douro Road, Drakes Place, Lansdown Terrace, Lansdown Terrace Lane, Malvern Place and Malvern Road from Polling District HB to Polling District HA**

**10. RECOMMENDED OPTION FOR THE FUTURE PROVISION OF THE CHELTENHAM CREMATORIUM SERVICE**

The Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment introduced the report. He was delighted that he was able to bring this report to Council and he gave thanks to the excellent team of officers who had made a tremendous input to the project. He also acknowledged the contribution made by Councillors Reid, McCloskey and Ryder as members of the Cabinet Member working group who had been a very useful sounding board to himself and the rest of the team.

The Cabinet Member explained that it had been acknowledged that investment was needed to improve public facilities and in particular, the reliability of the cremators at Cheltenham's cemetery and crematorium. This follows the poor quality cremator installation which took place in 2011, during which the main contractor went into liquidation, leaving a number of authorities with sub-standard equipment issues. At this point he thanked the scrutiny task group which had produced an excellent report on the issues. To ensure that the best solution was secured, architects Robert Potter and Partners were commissioned to look at a number of options ranging from installing new cremators in the current building, to building a new chapel and crematorium. The options identified were diverse and had different operational, customer service and financial implications.

The report set out the results of the detailed public consultation process in addition to the member seminars which had been held. The Cabinet Member reported that there had been an overwhelming response in favour of option E. He explained that very detailed work had been undertaken on the business

case for Option E and having assessed and benchmarked Cheltenham's charges and level of service against other local providers there was scope for increasing fees to cover the cost of the borrowing required to invest in a new facility on land currently identified for expansion of the cemetery site.

In summing up the Cabinet Member acknowledged that this was an ambitious project but was considered to be the best approach to secure the long term success and viability of the service.

Members praised the work done in bringing this project to this stage, in particular the way that officers had engaged with members of the public in the consultation which was reflected in the consultation responses. They welcomed the prospect of an enhanced, fit for purpose facility which would benefit Cheltenham residents and those in surrounding areas. Key officers at the crematorium were praised for their professionalism. The valuable work of the cross party Cabinet Member working group was also recognised.

Whilst Members supported the financial implications of Option E they did however emphasise the importance of keeping project costs under close scrutiny. In response to this the Cabinet Member reported that the Cabinet Member working group would maintain a role in monitoring this.

**RESOLVED (unanimously)**

**To allocate the budgets for financing Option E as detailed in Appendix 4 (exempt).**

**11. SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15**

The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny introduced the annual report and gave thanks to officers who had supported the work of the committee and the task groups over the year. Scrutiny had covered a wide range of issues and the committee had also invited representatives of community groups to speak to the committee about the valuable services they provide.

He encouraged members to bring forward any issues which they felt would be worthy of scrutiny and to put themselves forward for O&S task groups. He also encouraged Members to complete the Members Skills Audit so those with the appropriate experience are invited to join the relevant group.

It was noted that the membership of the Cycling and Walking Scrutiny Task group was incorrect and should read Councillors Wilkinson, Lillywhite, Murch and Williams with co-optees John Mallows, Bronwen Thornton and John Newbury.

**RESOLVED**

**To note the Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny 2014-15.**

**12. NOTICES OF MOTION  
Motion A**

Proposed by: Councillor Wilkinson and seconded by: Councillor Clucas

**“Council notes with concern the Government's antipathy to the renewable energy industry. In particular, council condemns the removal of support for popular technologies such as solar and wind which, between 2010 and 2015, helped the UK become a world leader in renewable energy. Council resolves to write a letter to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change encouraging her to reconsider the decision to make such drastic cuts to the subsidy for the industry.”**

In proposing the motion Councillor Wilkinson said that between 2010 and 2015 renewable energy generation soared. There were dramatic increases in the amount of energy generated from solar, wind and other renewable sources, largely thanks to government support for these initiatives. The UK was now exceeding renewable energy targets set by European directives. However, he expressed concern that in the past few months things have changed and he was extremely concerned about the direction of government policy on renewable energy with reduced support for wind generation, solar power generation, a U-turn on a pledge to ban fracking in national parks, axing regulations encouraging zero carbon homes, closing the green deal energy efficiency scheme, scrapping the tax reductions on less polluting vehicles and adding a climate change levy to renewable energy generation.

Councillor Wilkinson referred to an opinion survey produced by the Department for Energy and Climate Change - the government department charged with energy generation policy and tackling climate change which highlighted that solar was supported by more than 80% of people and opposed by less than 5%, Offshore wind was supported by almost 75% and opposed by fewer than one in ten and Onshore wind was supported by almost 70% and opposed by only 10%.

He said that according to the leading think tank Policy Exchange only 1% of the average household bill went towards paying the feed in tariffs but despite this, and despite the fact that subsidies make up a relatively small proportion of spending by the DECC and a small proportion of overall public spending, the government was planning subsidy cuts which were likely to have profound implications for the future of the energy generation industry.

Councillor Wilkinson reminded Members that solar panels installed by Cheltenham Borough Homes gave energy bill savings of between £100 and £200 per year per tenant. Whether this success could be replicated in future council housing developments would seem in doubt.

Councillor Wilkinson made reference to the potentially ground-breaking project in Bath Terrace car park and explained that part of the scheme involved installing solar panels, which would generate electricity to be consumed locally. He warned however that unfortunately, the renewable energy aspect of the project may now not be affordable due to proposals to cut the Feed in Tariff..

Councillor Wilkinson highlighted that these subsidy cuts were taking place while the government progressed with new nuclear generation at Hinkley Point.

He urged Members to support the motion to demonstrate that Cheltenham was a forward thinking town that cared about the biggest threat to human existence.

In debating the motion the following points were raised :

- There was a consultation currently running on the feed in tariff with the closing date of 23 October;
- The feed in tariff consultation process was triggered by the EU in investigating whether the private sector could be subsidised by Government under EU state aid laws; Members recognised the importance of the consultation and the Leader pledged to respond to it in the form of a letter containing this motion if adopted; it was important to do this to reflect the views of residents and tenants who had benefited from having solar energy panels installed on their properties;
- The excellent work being undertaken in Bath Road Terrace car park was commended;
- The motion was deemed by some to be political and not factually correct;
- Some members mentioned the impact the reduction in feed in tariff would have on the solar panel industry and the resultant lack of a stable policy framework;
- Members highlighted the importance of the work Cheltenham Borough Homes had done in investing £3 million to install solar panels on its properties leading to annual savings in energy bills for tenants;
- 1000 households in Cheltenham had benefited from the feed in tariff and the opportunities for green energy; renewable energy was vital to the future of all residents;
- Some members believed that the subsidies put in place by Government were too generous in the first place and thought that industries should now be in a position where they were self-funding;
- The council did buy green energy but some questioned whether Combined Heat and Power should be considered renewable.

Upon a vote the motion was CARRIED (For: 22; Against: 4; Abstention: 9)

### **Motion B**

Councillor Harman proposed the following motion. This was seconded by Councillor Mason :

“That this Council commends the initiative of the "Wombles" group of volunteers and other groups of volunteers in tackling the issues of litter and general grot which plagues our Town and calls upon the Borough Council to raise its game in tackling these issues.

Whether litter, graffiti, etc. is on public or private land it detracts from our splendid Town and it is surely the duty of all of us to show leadership backed by practical steps I hope that Council will support this motion today and instruct the Cabinet to bring forward an action plan.”

In proposing the motion Councillor Harman paid tribute to the work the Wombles, the Friends of the Honeybourne Line, Benhall Open Space and other volunteers made to tackling the litter issues in the town. It was generally acknowledged that there was a problem with litter on both public and private



land which detracted from the attractiveness of the town. Cabinet was asked to draw up an action plan to address the issues and it was suggested that one low tech solution would be to install more bins and to educate the people where litter should be disposed of.

An amendment, proposed by Councillor McKinlay, seconded by Councillor Baker, to the motion had been circulated and read as follows :

Delete all of notice of motion B after:-

"that the Council commends the initiative of the "Wombles" group of volunteers and other groups of volunteers in tackling the issues of litter and general grot which plagues our town."

And replace with:-

"Council notes with concern that one of the high profile "grot spots" identified in the press is owned by Gloucestershire County Council.

Council supports the proactive stance being taken by Cheltenham Borough Council's enforcement team under Section 215 and 219 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and other legislation to tackle the problem of both land and buildings that are in poor condition in the Borough.

Council supports the use of all legal powers available to officers to ensure that land owners maintain their property in a satisfactory condition."

As proposer of the motion Councillor Harman spoke to the amendment. He believed every person who is part of our community should raise their game. A bigger challenge was tackling the problem where it was on private land as it was not known who was responsible for clearing the litter. Councillor Harman was disappointed that the amendment deleted reference to the action plan.

The proposer of the amendment, Councillor McKinlay, said that he did not want the motion to suggest that the council was not fulfilling its role in tackling litter and that it relied solely on volunteers to address the problem. This was simply not true. He accepted however to retain the inclusion of the action plan in the motion. With this addition to the amendment this became the substantive motion.

In the debate that ensued the following points were addressed:

- Councillor McKinlay outlined the Council's achievements and actions in this area over the last 12 months;
- Tribute was paid to the hard work undertaken by the Friends of Springfield Park in Springbank; **all** volunteers should be publicly commended on their efforts;
- The Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment said that the action plan was an important piece of work. Grot spots in the town did give a negative impression but in general Cheltenham was a clean and tidy town. The street cleaners were exceptional and routinely praised, particularly after events such as The Festival.
- Residents and businesses should work in partnership with the council;
- One Member suggested there should be an increase in the number of enforcement officers to tackle the littering issue;

- It was acknowledged that many council sites were cleaned on a regular basis but there was concern with those sites that were privately owned. It was also important to discuss with partners such as the County Council.
- Education of the public in preventing littering in the first place was key;
- Shops and businesses should be encouraged to look after their frontages and take pride in their premises.

In summing up the debate, the proposer of the motion, Councillor Tim Harman, said that the council did indeed play its part in addressing the problem but the wonderful volunteer resource in tackling the issue should be recognised. He believed however that there should be some new thinking in terms of engaging with the utilities companies, health and the County Council to improve the situation.

Upon a vote the amended motion was unanimously approved.

**“That this Council commends the initiative of the "Wombles" group of volunteers and other groups of volunteers in tackling the issues of litter and general grot which plagues our Town. Council notes with concern that one of the high profile "grot spots" identified in the press is owned by Gloucestershire County Council.**

**Council supports the proactive stance being taken by Cheltenham Borough Council's enforcement team under Section 215 and 219 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and other legislation to tackle the problem of both land and buildings that are in poor condition in the Borough.**

**Council supports the use of all legal powers available to officers to ensure that land owners maintain their property in a satisfactory condition.**

**Council instructs Cabinet to bring forward an action plan on this issue.”**

#### **Motion C- WITHDRAWN**

Proposed by: Councillor Whyborn and seconded by Councillor Flynn

“Cheltenham Borough Council notes that many councils across the country, of various party political control, have implemented or are now implementing 20mph speed limits over wide areas without traffic calming. Over 14 million people now live in areas, where 20 mph has become the default speed limit in residential and urban streets, except for arterial roads.

Council recognises that 20 mph limits have the potential to promote increased road safety, particularly for young and elderly pedestrians and cyclists, as well as to enable active and sustainable travel. Nationally Public health and other bodies such as NICE, Public Health England, the LGA and the WHO all support such a policy. It is described as the most cost-effective way to improve health equality by tackling inactivity, obesity and isolation, whilst also being child, disability, elderly and dementia friendly.

Council notes that the report of the Cycling and Walking Scrutiny Group includes recommendations to "initiate a review to assess the appetite for a 20 mile speed limit across town from residents, businesses, and visitors".

Council requests that Cabinet consider the recommendations of the Cycling and Walking Scrutiny Group, and include provision for a consultation exercise in the 2016/17 corporate work plan to establish where there is potential for 20 mile per hour limits in Cheltenham and that the Council use its best endeavours in conjunction with Gloucestershire County Council to work towards trials in suitable areas where public support exists."

**13. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS**

None received.

**14. ANY OTHER ITEM THE MAYOR DETERMINES AS URGENT AND WHICH REQUIRES A DECISION**

At this point the Deputy Mayor left the chamber.

The Mayor reported that a motion had been submitted by Councillor Chris Nelson in relation to the call in on the SD2 site/decision. He explained that he had determined the motion as urgent as it could not be delayed to another meeting of Council and related to business and matters already under consideration in terms of the Joint Core Strategy.

Councillor Chris Nelson then proposed the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Chard :

This Council requests the Leader of the Council to write urgently to the National Planning Casework Unit in support of the SD2 Call-In request by Alex Chalk MP and Laurence Robertson MP, highlighting the need to await the recommendation of the JCS Examination in Public on Local Green Space.

The following amendment had been proposed by Councillor McKinlay and seconded by Councillor Jordan and circulated prior to the meeting:

Delete working of motion and replace with:

"This Council requests the Leader of the Council to write urgently to the National Planning Casework Unit in support of a SD2 call in request, in relation to Tewkesbury Borough Council Planning decision 14/00838/FUL consistent with the original letter of objection to this application sent by the Borough Council on the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2015"

As the amendment was accepted in full by Councillor Nelson, he then spoke to the amended substantive motion. He explained that it was important that the council wrote to the NPCU in support of the call in request as this would add weight to it and highlight the cross border issues which it raised. He explained that it had been supported by LEGLAG, CPRE and 3 Parish Councils. Whilst the amended motion referred to the Borough Council's original letter of objection to the application on 6 July a previous letter had been submitted on 1 December 2015. Councillor Nelson explained that the original motion had made specific reference to the local green space issue and referred to the fact that when Council signed up to the JCS in April 2014 the Leader spoke about the

importance of the Local Green Space Application and the wish to see this considered in Leckhampton and North West Cheltenham. He reported that there had been agreement in principle of the need to examine Local Green Space in the ongoing JCS examination in public and an interim statement on Local Green Space was expected in January 2016.

He believed that if the council wanted the JCS process to be conducted in a proper manner, there was a need for the examination in public to take place and be concluded so the Secretary of State could consider the issues strategically.

Councillor Nelson stated that given the Council's emphasis on Local Green Space and the Local Green Space consultation exercise which had taken place across the borough, there was a good case for it to be included in the letter.

As proposer of the accepted amendment Councillor McKinlay expressed his support for cross party working. It was important that Council did support the request to be consistent with the fact that it was fighting a planning appeal on the rest of the site. He believed his amendment had provided that consistency and highlighted that representations had been made to Tewkesbury Borough Council in December 2014 and July 2015. In terms of references made thus far to green space he believed the amendment was consistent with previous statements to Tewkesbury which made specific references to the green infrastructure strategy rather than Local Green Space.

The Director Planning, Tracey Crews, was invited to address Council. She confirmed that Local Green Space had not been referenced in the letters to Tewkesbury to date as the issue related to a more comprehensive green infrastructure strategy. The Local Green Space argument could however be used in the context of the recent appeal. She made reference to the long debate which Planning Committee had had when discussing their approach to defending their reasons for refusal at Leckhampton and whilst the Committee believed the green space argument should be included, the legal advice was not to include this as this was well defined by the Parish Council and LEGLAG. She explained however that if the Secretary of State were to accept the call-in there would be a further opportunity to raise it.

In the debate that followed it was recognised that the decision taken by Tewkesbury Borough Council directly affected and was of great concern to the residents of Leckhampton. They acknowledged that being consistent was a sensible approach and was a natural progression of Cheltenham's position. Some Members believed that partners in Tewkesbury had not fully understood the sensitivities of the site.

A Member recognised the issues but highlighted the housing need in the town with 3000 people on the housing waiting list and thus it was vital that the JCS kept moving forward.

The Director Planning was invited to address Council on the impact supporting the call-in request would have on the progress of the JCS and the Local Plan. She explained that signing up to the principle of the objection would not undermine progress.

In his closing remarks Councillor Nelson thanked Councillor McKinlay and the Director Planning but again highlighted his belief that TBC did not give thorough consideration of a complex issue. It was important to support the call in request to ensure that there was review at a strategic level. He understood the issue of consistency in the council's approach but requested that emphasis was given in the Leader's letter to the density argument and the importance of Local Green Space areas.

**RESOLVED THAT**

**This Council requests the Leader of the Council to write urgently to the National Planning Casework Unit in support of a SD2 call in request, in relation to Tewkesbury Borough Council Planning decision 14/00838/FUL consistent with the original letter of objection to this application sent by the Borough Council on the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2015"**

**15. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 -EXEMPT INFORMATION  
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)**

**16. EXEMPT MINUTES**

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2015 were approved and signed as a correct record.

Duncan Smith  
**Chairman**

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