

# Cheltenham Borough Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee Minutes

**Meeting date:** 27 February 2023

**Meeting time:** 6.00 pm - 7.00 pm

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**In attendance:**

**Councillors:**

John Payne (Chair), Steve Harvey (Vice-Chair), Graham Beale, Nigel Britter, Jackie Chelin, Tabi Joy, Julian Tooke, Emma Nelson and Suzanne Williams

**Also in attendance:**

Claire Hughes (Monitoring Officer), Darren Knight (Executive Director of Place and Communities) and Louis Krog (Head of Public Protection and DEPLO), Representation from Gloucestershire Police

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## 1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Fifield.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Nelson to the committee. She was replacing former Councillor Savage who had stood down as a councillor in December.

## 2 Declarations of interest

Councillor Nelson declared a personal interest in Agenda item 10 – the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel update.

## 3 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record.

## 4 Public and Member questions, calls for actions and petitions

There were none.

## **5 Cabinet Briefing**

The Deputy Leader confirmed that he did not have a briefing for Members at this time since updates had been provided at the recent Council meeting.

In response to a question from a Member on whether the council had received feedback on why the Levelling up bid project proposal had not been supported, the Deputy Leader explained that there had been some conversations between officers and the MP but no official feedback had been received.

## **6 Matters referred to committee**

There were none.

## **7 Race week**

The Head of Public Protection provided an update to the published report circulated with the agenda. He reported that 22 expressions of interest (including from 7 businesses and 13 residents) with respect to the 'war on wee' campaign. The paint would be purchased the following day and be delivered early the following week. Officers were in direct contact with participants in terms of logistics and a press release would be issued supporting the campaign. There was significant interest in this initiative, particularly from the press and radio.

He then referred Members to the appendices of the report which outlined deployment timings of the Police and Police Community Support officers on Evesham Road during race week following a request from Members at the last meeting of Overview and Scrutiny. The police deployment would be supplemented by council neighbourhood officers and in discussions with the police a formal enforcement approach had been agreed in as far as CBC would lead on issuing fixed penalty notices (FPN). It was hoped that with the 'love the turf' campaign including the 50 marshals, the police and the neighbourhood team, it would be enough to deter anti-social behaviour.

Also included in the appendices were the locations of all the toilets around the town. In total, 25 additional toilets would be installed, mainly around the Pittville area.

Finally, the Head of Public Protection informed Members that rail strikes would cause disruption from Wednesday to Sunday. Three mitigating measures had been put in place to avoid significant gridlock in the town:

- Up to 120 national express coaches coming, mainly, from London, Birmingham and Bristol had been blocked booked and would enter the area via M5 Junction 9 to avoid the town
- A coach park had been created at the racecourse on the Southam Lane side, adjacent to the helipad

- Additional car parking capacity had been created with an increase in drop off provision and GCC parking enforcement would be monitoring the situation

Further to questions the following responses were provided :

- From experience crowds left the racecourse at approx. 5.45 pm, hence police deployment from 5.45 pm. This time would be adjusted should problems be experienced on the Tuesday
- More police had been allocated than ever before with 10 or 11 pairs of officers who would be on New Barn Lane, Swindon Lane and Albert Road. This additional resourcing gave the police flexibility.

Members felt reassured that the experience of those policing the event and the flexibility would give them the ability to cope with most eventualities. They thanked both the police and CBC officers for the work undertaken in preparation.

## **8 Scrutiny topic request - outside bodies**

The Chair introduced the Monitoring Officer to provide the background and the constitutional position on the issues raised.

The Monitoring Officer explained that there was provision in the constitution for annual reporting from Members who sit on outside bodies but historically the process had varied. All Members who currently sit on outside bodies should now have received an email reminding them to complete the form which would form the basis of this annual report.

She explained that Councillor Flynn (who was not present) had raised some valid points and a better understanding of outside bodies was required. This was a constitutional issue and already featured on the work plan for the constitution working group (CWG) to look at in June. As Councillor Flynn was a member of this group she would be part of those discussions. There was therefore little for O&S to input on this.

The Chair asked the committee whether they wished to make any comments on the process which could be fed into the CWG.

In response the following comments were made :

A Member said that participation on outside bodies broadly enhanced working processes and provided an opportunity to work constructively with these organisations. All Councillors could benefit from the learning and what is discussed. It was right that due diligence should be carried out to ensure we have the maximum impact and that we are reacting appropriately to whatever needs arise within the community. This was a partnership and should be something O&S can monitor.

A Member questioned the tone of the scrutiny request document but recognised the positive elements raised by his colleague.

Members agreed (with one abstention) that the issue be referred to CWG for clarification on the role of councillors appointed to outside bodies.

The Deputy Leader was invited to address the committee. As a member of CWG he suggested that, in the spirit of collaboration, input is sought from O & S on this.

## **9 Information Governance**

The Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer introduced the item and explained that she was the Data Protection Officer for the Council. She had been undertaking a review of information governance, i.e. of all the processes and systems data the council manages and an updated policy report would be taken to Cabinet in May.

She reported that robust management systems were in place but there were areas that had been identified for improvement. This included a new data protection policy to encompass tighter parameters in terms of data sharing, a new records management overarching policy and a data quality policy to ensure our data quality and accessibility meet requirements. An action plan had been drafted and once the above policies were approved by Cabinet in May training of officers would take place. She thanked Councillor Chelin for identifying the reputational risk of not having such policies embedded in the organisation.

In response to Member questions the following responses were given :

- The same robust structure in terms of regulation of document retention did not apply to local government, that said best practice was shared across the sector
- Data sharing agreements were in place with external contractors
- CBC was confident that recognising it was a fast paced environment cyber security arrangements were in place to protect the organisation
- The authority was required to have a record of processing activities (ROPA), a formal, documented, comprehensive and accurate record based on a data mapping exercise that is reviewed regularly.
- A data audit would be undertaken – this represented a huge piece of work
- A further briefing on business applications could be provided to the committee to raise awareness of how they are used, updates and security
- GDPR changes were expected next year but this should not prevent this work from progressing

Members requested a further review of information governance which could in fact be a joint meeting of O&S and the Audit, Compliance and Governance (ACG) committee. This was supported by the Chair of ACG as he was in attendance.

## **10 Feedback from other scrutiny meetings attended**

The update reports were noted.

The Chair wished at this point to put on record his thanks to the Deputy Leader for taking forward his request to contact the Chair of the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to child dental health provision.

### **11 Updates from scrutiny task groups**

The Chair updated the meeting on the Scrutiny Task Group report on tackling multiple deprivation. Due to the complexity and number of the issues involved, further input from officers was required to filter the actions which can be addressed. The intention was to bring the report back in April.

### **12 Review of scrutiny workplan**

The Chair explained that the meeting in April may look slightly different due to reports not being available for O & S, in particular relating to the Minster Exchange and the Cheltenham Trust. The Chair's group would discuss this at their briefing meeting.

Councillor Tooke raised the issue of looking at disabled access.

### **13 Date of next meeting**

17 April 2023