

Cheltenham Borough Council

Cabinet

Minutes

Meeting date: 23 July 2024

Meeting time: 6.00 pm - 7.20 pm

In attendance:

Councillors:

Flo Clucas, Mike Collins, Iain Dobie, Rowena Hay, Martin Horwood, Peter Jeffries, Alisha Lewis and Izaak Tailford

Also in attendance:

Claire Hughes (Director of Governance and Customer Services and Monitoring Officer), Gareth Edmundson (Chief Executive), Sarah Farooqi (One Legal) and Richard Gibson (Head of Communities, Wellbeing and Partnerships)

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Atherstone.

2 Declarations of interest

There were none.

3 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last two meetings, held on 28 May and 11 June 2024, were approved as a true record and signed accordingly.

4 Public and Member Questions and Petitions

There were none.

5 To note the findings and recommendations from the Playing Pitch Strategy

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Wellbeing and Culture said the playing pitch strategy is the next stage of work started by former Councillor Wilkinson to set an overall vision for sport and physical activities in Cheltenham. The aim is to enable everyone, regardless of location, ethnicity or gender, to benefit from the huge variety of sport and physical activities available across the town, helping them to live healthy and happy lives. He said the first detailed assessment concerned sports buildings and this report covers fields and pitches, using approved Sport England methodology and input from national and governing bodies of each sport and detailed analysis of their usage. There is more work to be done, in particular around shortfall in some capacities and the need to improve specific pitches, and this will be brought back in the autumn. The overarching strategy needs to address how to build and improve capacity, involve a wider cross-section of communities, and fulfil the vision of involving everyone in sports activities in the town.

Members made the following comments:

- the report is interesting and detailed but includes some anomalies and inaccuracies which the Member will email to the report author - in particular, the lack of reference to Cheltenham rugby clubs that don't play in the borough, and concern that the excellent facilities at Cheltenham Tigers Rugby Club could become very overused;
- a lot of pitches are situated in Cheltenham's parks and greenspaces, supported by friends groups and volunteers. Hopefully there will be funding from national organisations such as the Football Association to support their work;
- it will be good to address and capture all the areas in need of investment, such as football pitches which already exist but are not fit for purpose.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Wellbeing and Culture thanked Members for their comments, and confirmed that further information needed to be fed into the refined report. He said input from Members and the public would be welcome, providing detailed local knowledge on clubs and pitches as appropriate.

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. the findings and recommendations of the Playing Pitch Strategy as set out in section 4.6 and attached as appendix 2 are noted;**
- 2. the Playing Pitch Strategy is shared with all the organisations and partners identified in the action plan for review;**
- 3. authority is delegated to the Director for Community and Economic Development, in consultation with the Cabinet Member Economic Development, Wellbeing & Culture, to make any final amendments to the Playing Pitch Strategy;**

- 4. an over-arching physical activity and sports strategy and accompanying action plan, that will deliver the council's vision and outcomes for physical activity and sports as set out in section 3, will be brought to Cabinet later this year.**

6 Household Support Fund Arrangements for 2024-25

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities, the Leader introduced her report, highlighting the main issues as set out. She thanked the officer team for a very informative report, saying that although it was not a happy read, it shows that the council is doing all it can to support our most vulnerable residents.

Members made the following comments:

- the funding is welcomed and clearly vital to many families, as the previous government's solution didn't solve the problem. This proposal includes £45,240 in food support alone, with huge additional donations from our partners and other providers across the town. It will be good to see how the new government deals with the cost-of-living crisis and the desperate level of poverty in our society;
- it is amazing that the sixth richest country in the world should find itself in this position, and shameful that we are unable to do anything to change the situation – a small amount of money helps but doesn't solve the problem. The solution lies at the heart of the government.

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. the Household Support Fund Delivery Plan for the award of grant made by Gloucestershire County Council on behalf of the Department of Works and Pensions under the Household Support Fund Programme 2024/25, as set out in para 4.9, is approved;**
- 2. authority is delegated to the Head of Communities, Wellbeing & Partnerships in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities to determine the agreed amounts to be awarded to individual organisations to deliver the Household Support Fund Programme 2024/25.**

7 Review of waste and recycling receptacles

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services, Recycling and Public Realm began by saying that CBC has a fantastic and successful kerbside recycling scheme, but has to budget £210k per year for receptacles. Looking for a sustainable solution, it is hoped that charging for new and replacement bins will reduce any unnecessary demand and promote a more careful attitude resulting in fewer breakages and losses. with the added bonus of reducing the high environmental impact of plastic usage. He confirmed that Ubico staff would be asked to be extra-careful when handling bins, and said that Stroud District Council has introduced similar charges, with careful monitoring of the impacts and residents' concerns confirming that recycling rates had remained high.

He explained the reasons for the various recommendations as set out in the report, and said that although the charges might not be popular with a lot of people, they were necessary for financial and environmental reasons, and he hoped that Members would support the recommendations.

In response to Members' questions, he confirmed that:

- replacement receptacles will be delivered by HVO-fuelled vehicles, using a zonal approach to ensure as few trips as possible;
- other councils in Gloucestershire are already successfully charging for replacement receptacles, and Stroud District Council has been used as an example for CBC's proposals;
- new householders moving into a new housing developments in Cheltenham can expect housing developers to provide sets of bins free of charge.

There was no debate on this item.

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. the introduction of a delivery charge for all waste and recycling receptacles, including garden waste bins is approved, with effect from Monday 5 August 2024, of £4.99 per item as set out in paragraph 2.5 of this report. A reduced charge of £2.99 per item will apply to residents in receipt of benefits listed in 2.5 of this report.**
- 2. an increase in the cost of garden waste bags to offset increased collection costs from £17.50 for 10 bags with a £4 delivery charge to £25 for 10 bags with a £4.99 delivery charge as set out in (1) above is approved;**
- 3. the introduction of a charge for receptacles payable by developers for planning applications granted for new developments on or after 5 August 2024 as set out in paragraph 2.5 of this report is approved;**

4. **the introduction of a charge for receptacles payable by landlords, including communal properties, from 5 August 2024, as set out in paragraph 2.5 of this report is approved;**
5. **the introduction of a waste and recycling collection charge for Air B&B's from 5 August 2024 is approved and authority is delegated to the Chief Executive to agree charges and take the necessary steps to implement the decision in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Public Realm.**

8 Levelling Up Fund Award

The Cabinet Member for Major Developments and Housing Delivery introduced the report which sought Cabinet approval to accept the £20m grant from the Levelling Up Programme. He thanked officers across the council for all their work in submitting this second successful bid, which he said would help fund the National Cyber Innovation Centre and Mobility Hub. Although the council's investment is over £140m, the benefit to the town will be astronomical over the years to come – it is the biggest development and growth item in Gloucestershire and the south west - this small grant is welcome, and he hopes that the new government will recognise the significance of the project and provide further funding.

There were no Member questions or debate on this item.

RESOLVED THAT:

1. **the allocation of £20m grant funding from the Levelling Up Fund for use towards development of the National Cyber Innovation Centre and Mobility Hub is accepted.**

9 Housing Strategy Action Plan Update

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services said this report presents an update on work over the last few years in housing and homelessness. She confirmed that work has already started, for example a development of 255 houses in her own ward will include 93 affordable homes. The council is doing the right thing for its residents and she hoped Members would continue to give their support

The Cabinet Member for Major Developments and Housing Delivery welcomed the update, and said that although the country may never completely solve its housing crisis, the council and its partners were doing all they could to alleviate it and improve people's lives.

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. the Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan update for 2024 is approved.**

10 Cabinet appointments to outside bodies

The Leader introduced the report, saying that the council makes nominations, with group leader agreement, to a variety of external organisations and groups, which then must decide whether to accept the nomination and make the appointment. If there is no group leader agreement, the matter would have to be referred to Council. There are also a small number of exceptions, such as Cheltenham Borough Homes, Gloucestershire Airport and the Cheltenham Trust, where the council has the right to make appointments to the board of directors. All appointments are for two years.

There were no Members questions or comments.

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. nominations to the outside bodies as set out in Appendix 3A and Appendix 3B are approved, in accordance with the following principles:**
 - all nominations are made on the basis that the nominee is a representative of Cheltenham Borough Council insofar as that is compatible with any overriding legal duty to the outside body;**
 - Cabinet / the Leader reserves the right at any time to withdraw/terminate a nomination which it has made; and**
- 2. Cabinet Member responsibilities for the bodies/groups listed in Appendix 3C are noted.**

11 Corporate Strategy - update

The Leader introduced her report, updating Members on the Corporate Strategy, and drew their attention to the highlights of the review report, to the end of March 2024. In addition to the Corporate Plan review, the end-of-year performance report sets out the key performance indicators with an end-of-year commentary, which confirmed that overall performance has been good, but there are some areas where it could be improved.

She said that the Corporate Plan requires regular monitoring and updating, and the re-integration of CBH require a refresh to reflect the new arrangement. This will take place over the coming months, and a new set of performance metrics to support the plan and measure success will be established .

She ended by saying that this year, to ensure continuity in performance

management, service managers will be asked to report on a streamlined set of performance metrics aligned to the priorities in the existing corporate plan.

The Cabinet Member for Major Developments and Housing Delivery said the depth and breadth of what the council does is amazing, particularly in the context of the pandemic, cost-of-living crisis and financial crisis. He looked forward to the revised plan in 2025.

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. the corporate plan review and end of year performance report is noted;**
- 2. the intention to refresh the corporate plan is noted.**

12 Detached Youth Work Grant

The Leader introduced the report, in the absence of the Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities, explaining the background of the Cheltenham Detached Youth Work programme. This was originally delivered by Inspire to Aspire, later passed to No Child Left Behind who, in view of ongoing concerns about young people's mental health and wellbeing, school absence and criminal exploitation, consider it vital to continue to deliver support. With its partners, it has developed a grant pot of £47,000 for this, and the recommendation is to award it to The Rock, which offers good understanding of the needs of local young people and expertise in working with this specific cohort, together with clearly stated ambitions and details of how they will work with partners to achieve their goals.

There were no questions or comments on this item, and the recommendations were approved unanimously, as set out in the report.

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. a grant of £41,000 to The Rock is agreed, to enable the delivery of a programme of detached youth work in the period August 2024 to March 2025;**
- 2. a grant agreement with The Rock is entered into, that will set out the terms and conditions for the delivery of the detached youth work, including monitoring against agreed outcomes;**
- 3. the delivery of the detached youth work project is monitored through the No Child Left Behind strategic board and brought back a report for consideration by Cabinet on completion of the funding period.**

13 Briefing from Cabinet Members

The Leader invited Cabinet Members to share recent briefings.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Wellbeing and Culture shared information on a number of items:

- a recent community event held by CBC focussed on strengthening local communities through grants the council receives from the NHS and disperses as health and wellbeing grants for local groups. Last year, £100k was distributed, mostly in grants of under £10k, and used to fund some amazing projects and extraordinary work, connecting people to their communities, encouraging them to be active, healthy and creative, and making a huge difference to individual. The next funding round will distribute £170k, starting in September. This fantastic success story is led by Richard Gibson, Head of Communities, Wellbeing and Partnerships, who does an exceptional job leading his team of officers;
- congratulations to Cheltenham Festivals on the conclusion of another successful event, the Cheltenham Music Festival, and to Gloucestershire Cricket Club on the recent cricket festival, which was enjoyed by many;
- the Cheltenham Paint Festival will take place on 27-28 July, and The Suffolks Sunday Market on 28 July;
- The Wilson is currently hosting the extraordinary and exceptional Radev exhibition, connecting to the Bloomsbury Group, British art history, LGBT history and more.

The Cabinet Member for Major Developments and Housing Delivery said he has picked up work on the social baggage strategy and hopes to bring a document to Cabinet at the end of the summer. He is also working on housing delivery, and will be sharing draft documents with colleagues soon, about how this can be accelerated.

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services, Recycling and Public Realm hoped that people would be enjoying Cheltenham's amazing parks and greenspaces over the summer, and was happy to report that seven parks across the town had all retained their green flag status. Pittville Park has also received green heritage site accreditation, supported by Historic England, in recognition of its management of its historic features. This is a testament to the dedication of volunteers, Friends of groups, Ubico and the Green Space team who work hard all year round to ensure everyone can get out and enjoy the parks. He thanked them for all their work.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets thanked the finance team and former portfolio holder for the incredible amount of work they have done to produce the outturn report presented to Council on 22 July, which, she said, was testament to a year of dedicated and sensible fiscal decision-making.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Building Control said he was lucky to have been invited to the opening of the Arle Court Transport Hub earlier in the day which is now completely open for business.

The Leader noted that BID has sponsored the painting of seven utility boxes which make a big difference and help deter graffiti. She also mentioned that the Cabinet Member for Major Development and Housing Delivery will soon be shaving his head and beard to raise funds for Cheltenham's food pantries; donations can be made via his Just Giving page.

The Cabinet Members for Climate Emergency and for Housing and Customer Services did not have any briefings to share on this occasion.

14 Cabinet Member decisions taken since the last meeting

12 June 2024: [Award of contract for provision of case management platform for CBC's Bereavement Services](#)

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Public Realm was happy to approve provision of a new technical system at the cemetery and crematorium, which would make things a lot more straightforward, simple and efficient for the user. It would also allow better record keeping, helping people find specific burial plots.

25 June 2024: [To agree the disposal of 12 Bouncers Lane, Cheltenham](#)

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets said she had made the decision to dispose of this property because although it is a high-value property, the cost of bringing it up to the required specification to be occupied is not considered worthwhile. The capital receipt from the sale will be used to provide good-quality housing elsewhere.

09 July 2024: [To allocate the third year UK Shared Prosperity Fund \(SPF\) climate funding \(total budget £87,944\)](#)

The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency said the lead monitoring officer had already confirmed that the third-year spend was appropriate and met grant fund guidelines, helping small and medium-sized local business to reduce their energy use. This work will continue through the third year, and include grants to homeowners to retro-fit their properties to make them more energy efficient.

15 Local Government Act 1972 - Exempt Business

RESOLVED THAT:

- in accordance with Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining agenda items as it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public are present there will be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 5, 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)

Paragraph 5: Information in respect of which a claim to legal, professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings. .

16 A Legal Matter

The Cabinet Member for Major Developments and Housing Delivery introduced the report. Members supported the recommendations.

RESOLVED THAT

The recommendations as outlined be approved.