

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

6<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2014

Present:

Councillor Lynden Stowe                    - Chairman  
Councillor NJW Parsons                 - Vice-Chairman

Councillors -

John Burgess                                         Mrs. SL Jepson  
David Fowles                                         Mrs. CH Topple  
BD Gibbs

Observers:

DC Broad     Ms JM Layton  
PCB Coleman                                         DJ Nash  
Sir Edward Horsfall                                 Jim Parsons  
AJ Lichnowski

CAB.76         DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest under the Code of Conduct for Members or Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

There were no Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct from Officers.

CAB.77         MINUTES

**RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013 be approved as a correct record.**

**Record of Voting - for 7, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 0.**

CAB.78         PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been received.

CAB.79         MEMBER QUESTIONS

No questions had been received from Members.

CAB.80         LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements from the Leader.

CAB.81 RESPONSE TO PETITION FOR REMOVAL OF SUNDAY PARKING CHARGES AT THE BREWERY CAR PARK, CIRENCESTER

The Cabinet Member for Customer Services introduced this item.

Whilst appreciating the circumstances which had led to the submission of the petition, the Cabinet Member reminded the Cabinet of the background to the introduction of Sunday charging in the Brewery Car Park, Cirencester. In summary, Sunday charges in the Brewery Car Park, Cirencester were part of a package across all of the Council's Car Parks which had enable the Council to freeze parking charges for a period of two years; reduce tariffs in the Beeches Car Park, Cirencester; and introduce a half-hourly charge of 50p. The Cabinet Member expressed the view that these measures had been well-received by members of the public and he also reminded the Cabinet that no charges were levied on Sundays in the Council's other Cirencester town centre Car Parks. The Cabinet Member pointed out that other towns in the County also charged for parking on Sundays and he considered that the Council's policy was achieving what had been intended and was, therefore, sound.

It was noted that the Petitioner had been advised that this item was to be considered by the Cabinet, had been invited to attend the Meeting, but had been unable to do so.

In response to a question from a Member, the Cabinet Member reported that the petition had been supported by 70 signatories. The Cabinet Member also reminded the Cabinet of the options available to 'blue badge' holders in respect of on-street parking.

**RESOLVED that:**

**(a) the Petition seeking removal of Sunday parking charges at the Brewery Car Park, Cirencester, be noted;**

**(b) the previous decision, that current parking charges are appropriate, be reaffirmed.**

**Record of Voting - for 7, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 0.**

CAB.82 REQUEST FOR LOAN BY COTSWOLD WATER PARK TRUST

The Deputy Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Deputy Leader reminded the Cabinet of the support previously offered by the Council to the Cotswold Water Park Trust, and the reasons for the Council's decision to remove such support. The Deputy Leader also amplified aspects of the request submitted by the Trust which, he considered, would lead to a reduction in the number of lorry movements to and from the Gateway Visitor Centre, resulting in more efficiencies and a financial saving for the Trust.

A Member expressed the view that the condition of the car park at the Visitor Centre might be improved if there were fewer lorries using it.

**RESOLVED that:**

**(a) an 'in principle' loan be offered to the Cotswold Water Park Trust in relation to the Cotswold Water Park Trust Visitor Gateway Centre, subject to:-**

- (i) the Council being satisfied that there is adequate security for the loan in either the new Head Lease for the Gateway Centre or some other suitable asset;**
- (ii) the Council being satisfied with the outcome of a refreshed credit search on the Cotswold Water Park Trust;**
- (iii) the final details of the loan being agreed with the Cotswold Water Park Trust following completion of a procurement exercise for the treatment plant, and the loan not exceeding £60,000;**

**(b) the Head of Finance, Audit and GO Shared Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council and the Head of Legal and Property Services, be authorised to agree the final terms of the loan;**

**(c) further to resolution (a) above, the Council's draft Capital Programme 2014/15 be updated to include provision for the proposed loan, which will be financed from capital receipts.**

**Record of Voting - for 7, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 0.**

CAB.83

**BUDGET 2014/15**

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Leader referred to the public consultation undertaken, and updates from the Government in respect of the proposed Budget 2014/15. The Leader explained that the draft Budget included a further freeze in respect of Council Tax and he amplified aspects of potential, forthcoming pressures on the capital account. The Leader referred to various challenges which the Council would be facing during the next financial year, including acquiring an Environmental Services depot; the options for funding capital expenditure relating to Disabled Facilities Grants; and additional contributions in relation to pensions. The Leader also referred to the Pay Policy Statement 2014/15.

This report had been considered by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee at its Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014 and the comments from that Committee had been included in the circulated report.

A Member expressed the view that it was crucial for the Council to continue funding in respect of Disabled Facilities Grants as they were a key element of the 'care in the community' and 'health and well-being' initiatives.

**RECOMMENDED that the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period 2014/15 to 2017/18; the Capital Programme 2014/15 to 2016/17; the Revenue Budget 2014/15; and the Pay Policy Statement 2014/15 be approved.**

**Record of Voting - for 7, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 0.**

**CAB.84**      **CORPORATE STRATEGY AND CORPORATE PLAN - 2014/15 UPDATE**

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet was invited to consider an update in respect of the Corporate Strategy and Corporate Plan for 2014/15 and to make a recommendation thereon to the Council. The Leader reminded the Cabinet of the Council's Aim and Priorities and amplified aspects in respect of the updated tasks for 2014/15. The Leader reported that the Council's ranking in respect of its Aim to be 'the most efficient in the country' had improved from 9<sup>th</sup> in the previous year to 5<sup>th</sup> in the current year. There had been some instances of long-term sickness but it was anticipated, based on performance to date in 2013/14, that the sickness absence ranking would improve in the forthcoming year.

A Member considered the decision to freeze Council Tax, without having to cut 'front-line' services, to be a tremendous achievement for the Council. In response, the Leader referred to the Council's efficiency agenda and joint working initiatives, and expressed his view that it should be obligatory for all Councils of a similar size to this authority to make efficiency savings and to embark on joint working initiatives.

**RECOMMENDED that the updated Corporate Strategy and Corporate Plan 2012-15 be approved.**

**Record of Voting - for 7, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 0.**

**CAB.85**      **PROPOSED WARD MEMBER SCHEME - COMMEMORATION OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR**

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report detailing proposals for a grants scheme to commemorate the sacrifices made in the First World War. The Leader suggested that, if the proposal was approved, each Ward Member be allocated £500 to award in grants to help facilitate small projects/schemes across the District, which could also receive contributions from other sources, and that the 'pooling' of allocations would be acceptable. The Leader amplified aspects relating to the funding of the proposed scheme; its administration; and the types of projects that might be supported.

The proposal was supported by the Cabinet. It was suggested that the projects would be of interest to people of all age groups as many of the names on War Memorials related to people who still lived in the towns and villages. It was further suggested that that it would be helpful if Ward Members shared information/research with other Ward Members. It was noted that preparations had already commenced in respect of some commemoration activities.

**RESOLVED that:**

**(a) the proposal detailed in paragraph 3 of the circulated report be approved;**

**(b) funding for the scheme be made available from the Council Priorities Fund in the financial year 2014/15 only;**

**(c) the Leader of the Council be authorised to finalise the relevant application form and to determine applications for funding.**

**Record of Voting - for 7, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 0.**

CAB.86 DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND/OR INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBERS

The Cabinet noted a Schedule detailing decisions taken by the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Communities and Health.

CAB.87 ISSUE(S) ARISING FROM AUDIT AND SCRUTINY

There were no issues arising from Audit and Scrutiny, apart from those relating to the Budget 2014/15.

CAB.88 OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business that was urgent.

The Meeting commenced at 4.00 p.m. and closed at 4.40 p.m.

Chairman

(END)