

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2014

Present:

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

Councillors -

John Burgess Mrs. SL Jepson  
David Fowles Mrs. CH Topple  
C Hancock

Observers:

BS Dare (from 4.14 p.m.) EGJ Jenkins  
RW Dutton AJ Lichnowski  
JA Harris Mrs. M Phillips  
PR Hodgkinson Mrs. MS Rickman

CAB.1 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.

The Strategic Director (Environment) declared 'other' interests in respect of Agenda Items (7) and (10) ('A 2020 Vision for Joint Working' and 'Summary Finance/Service Performance Report - Year End 2013/14'), because he was a Non-Executive Director appointed by the Council to the Board of Ubico Ltd.

CAB.2 MINUTES

**RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014 be approved as a correct record.**

**Record of Voting - for 6, against 0, abstentions 1, absent 0.**

Arising thereon:

Local Plan Matters - Cotswold District Council Statement of Community Involvement (CAB.120(1))

The Cabinet Member for Health and Communities reminded the Cabinet that a public consultation exercise was being carried out on the revised Statement of Community Involvement, which was available on the Council's Web Site.

CAB.3 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been received.

CAB.4 MEMBER QUESTIONS

No questions had been submitted by Members.

CAB.5 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader welcomed Councillor C Hancock to his first Meeting of the Cabinet in his capacity as Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships.

The Leader reminded the Cabinet of an e-mail, sent to all Members on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Forward Planning, relating to a Press Release and Inspector's Report on Stroud District Council's Local Plan and commented that work on this Council's Local Plan was progressing.

CAB.6 A 2020 VISION FOR JOINT WORKING

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report detailing proposals to extend joint working through a partnership with West Oxfordshire and Forest of Dean District Councils and Cheltenham Borough Council.

The Leader stated that the Council was in a fortunate position because of its original joint working arrangements and the opportunities for further joint working which it had subsequently taken up. The Leader considered that the financial and service delivery success of the Council's current joint working arrangements boded well for the future expansion of those arrangements.

The Leader referred to Annex 'A' to the circulated report which set out a vision for further joint working, and drew attention to the prospect of significant further savings that could accrue to the Council. The Leader explained all four Partner Councils would retain their independence, together with 'local' decision-making, which was important to electors and residents. The Leader considered that the proposals would achieve the potential savings and stated that the Council had a good track record of delivery on savings.

In response to various questions from Members, it was reported that each of the Partner Councils would be considering a similar report during June 2014, following which a detailed programme plan would be developed; further reports would then be submitted to the Partner Councils during the autumn of 2014 at which point each would decide whether or not to proceed with the suggested programme; and the 'expert' advisors would be identified to each of the Partner Councils, being shared across two Councils or specific to a single Council.

The Cabinet concurred with a view expressed by the Leader that this Council and West Oxfordshire District Council had been at the leading edge of joint working, having successfully shared a Chief Executive for eight years. The Environmental Services Company, Ubico Ltd., which had been established by this Council and Cheltenham Borough Council, was considered to have been an outstanding success and the current proposals for further joint working would deliver further savings for residents and for the Council in the future. The Deputy Leader of the Council welcomed the opportunity to move to the next phase of joint working, commenting that the current arrangements were appreciated by members of the public and that thanks to the Council for

freezing and then reducing its element of the Council Tax had been expressed at recent Parish Meetings.

**RESOLVED that:**

- (a) the contents and the broad strategic direction for joint working, as detailed at Annex 'A' to the 2020 Vision for Joint Working, be noted;**
- (b) the establishment of a 2020 Vision Programme Board, comprising one Councillor Representative from each of the Partner Council, be approved;**
- (c) the 2020 Vision Programme Board be authorised to develop a programme plan; business case; and to consider any efficiency savings that could be delivered for 2015/16, with a further report being submitted to the Partner Councils in Autumn 2014;**
- (d) the 2020 Vision Programme Board be authorised to submit applications to the Transfer Challenge Award for additional funding support;**
- (e) the allocation of the Transformation Challenge Award funding to support the development of the programme be approved;**
- (f) it be confirmed that Cheltenham Borough Council will act as Accountable Body for authorising expenditure against the programme on the unanimous recommendations of the 2020 Vision Programme Board.**

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

CAB.7

**APPROVAL OF INTER-AUTHORITY AGREEMENT FOR THE JOINT WASTE COMMITTEE**

The Cabinet Member for Environment introduced this item.

The Cabinet was requested to consider a revised Inter-Authority Agreement following a decision by Tewkesbury Borough Council to join the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Committee. The Cabinet Member welcomed the decision by Tewkesbury Borough Council and outlined the timetable for ratification of the revised Agreement. The Cabinet Member also stated that Stroud District and Gloucester City Councils, who were members of the Gloucestershire Waste Partnership, were supportive of the Joint Waste Committee, and he expressed the hope that those Councils would join the Committee in due course.

The Cabinet welcomed the decision by Tewkesbury Borough Council to join the Joint Waste Committee.

**RESOLVED that:**

- (a) a new Inter-Authority Agreement be completed to enable the addition of Tewkesbury Borough Council to the Joint Waste Committee;**

**(b) the Strategic Director (Environment), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, the Section 151 Officer and the Head of Legal and Property Services, be authorised to:-**

**(i) complete the new Inter-Authority Agreement on behalf of the Council;**

**(ii) make any subsequent amendments to the Inter-Authority Agreement, or to agree a new Inter-Authority Agreement, should further partners join the Joint Waste Committee in the future.**

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

CAB.8

**IMPROVEMENTS TO THE COUNCIL'S CAR PARKS**

The Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report detailing a programme of improvements to the Council's Car Parks. The Cabinet Member acknowledged the work already undertaken by the former Cabinet Member for Customer Services and amplified various aspects of the circulated report, drawing particular attention to the proposals relating to The Forum Car Park, Cirencester and a proposed three-year programme of improvements across the Council's remaining Car Parks.

In response to various questions from Members, it was reported that the proposed works to The Forum Car Park would be phased; motorists would be directed to alternative facilities during the period of the proposed works; Officers would work with Cirencester Town Council and local businesses in order to minimise disruption during the period of the proposed works; the introduction of payment by credit and debit card in The Brewery Car Park had been a welcome alternative and accounted for approximately 5% of transactions in that Car Park; it was anticipated that take-up would be higher in the longer-stay car parks; a further report in relation to improvements across the Council's remaining car parks would be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration towards the end of the current calendar year; and use of the proposed electric vehicle rapid chargers would be charged on a 'pay as you go' basis in order to ensure that the cost of the electricity used was covered.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the report, in particular the proposals for improvements to the car parks and the introduction of payment by credit and debit card. The Leader considered those elements to be good news for the town in general and users of the Council's car parks in particular.

**RESOLVED that:**

**(a) the commencement of the tender of works for the Forum Car Park, Cirencester improvements be approved;**

**(b) the replacement of Pay and Display machines, to be funded from within the existing capital budget, be approved;**

**(c) the Strategic Director (Environment), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships, be authorised to award**

**a contract for improvement works in The Forum Car Park, Cirencester, subject to budget;**

**(d) a detailed programme of car park developments be prepared, and quotations obtained, for improvements across the Council's Car Parks, to be rolled out over an approximate period of three years, with a further report to a future Meeting of the Cabinet to seek an additional capital allocation.**

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

CAB.9

**SUMMARY FINANCE/SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT - 2013/14 YEAR  
END**

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report summarising overall performance for the Council in 2013/14, with particular focus on progress towards achieving the Council's top tasks, and efficiency measures. The report also provided information on the Council's capital expenditure, capital receipts and use of reserves. The Leader of the Council asked the Chief Executive to pass on his thanks to all Officers for their performance during the year and the achievement of an underspend of £567,967 on the budget. The Leader commented that the Council had a good track record on achieving underspends on its budgets.

The Leader amplified various aspects of the circulated report, noting that the underspend in respect of Business Rates had been created by a technical issue and was not therefore available for re-allocation. The Leader welcomed the proposed allocation of £50,000 towards the legal costs associated with the defence of planning appeals at Fairford and Stow-on-the-Wold. The Leader considered that the Council was in a 'healthy' position financially, which was due to both the financial and efficiency measures which the Council had adopted. The Leader welcomed the reduction in sickness absence levels and responded to a question relating to take-up of the Local Authority Mortgage scheme. The Leader concluded by also expressing thanks to staff employed by Ubico Ltd. and within GO Shared Services who had helped the Council to achieve its financial and performance targets.

**RESOLVED that:**

**(a) service performance for 2013/14 be noted;**

**(b) the operational underspend of £567,967, which will increase the Council's General Fund Working Balance, be noted;**

**(c) the operational underspend (over achievement of income) of £529,598 in respect of business rates income be noted, but it be recognised that a timing issue has created this, and its use to offset the 2014/15 deficit be noted;**

**(d) an allocation of £50,000 be approved to provide for legal costs associated with defending planning appeals at Fairford and Stow-on-the-Wold.**

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

CAB.10 SCHEDULE OF 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.11 ISSUE(S) ARISING FROM AUDIT AND SCRUTINY

There were no issues arising from Audit and Scrutiny, apart from those relating to the Summary Finance/Service Performance Report - 2013/14 Year End.

CAB.12 OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business that was urgent.

The Meeting commenced at 4.00 p.m. and closed at 4.45 p.m.

Chairman

(END)