

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

4TH DECEMBER 2014

Present:

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

Councillors -

Sue Coakley Mrs. SL Jepson
C Hancock Mrs. CH Topple

Observers:

BD Gibbs (until 1.25 p.m.) AJ Lichnowski

CAB.58 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Lynden Stowe declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in relation to Exempt Agenda Item (15) (Minute CAB.71 referred), because a Company he was a Director of had a commercial relationship with the Lessee, and he left the Meeting while that item was being determined.

There were no declarations of interest under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

There were no declarations of interest under the Code of Conduct for Officers.

CAB.59 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 6th November 2014 be approved as a correct record.

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

CAB.60 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been received.

CAB.61 MEMBER QUESTIONS

No questions had been submitted by Members.

CAB.62 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements from the Leader.

CAB.63 2020 VISION

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report detailing interim arrangements, the strategic outline case and progress towards further shared working efficiencies for 2015/16.

The Leader explained that the proposals would build on the good working relationships with West Oxfordshire District Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and Forest of Dean District Council which had been established through existing joint working arrangements, including the GO Shared Services Partnership. The Council would be facing further challenges in the future, and possible further cuts in Government funding and the Leader commented that the Council's record in delivering efficiencies and savings over the past five years while protecting front-line services, and shared service initiatives to date, had opened up the potential to wider joint working initiatives. The Leader referred to the circulated business case and expressed the view that it could be an exemplar for future initiatives. The Leader drew attention to various aspects of that report, including value for money and efficiency priorities, and reminded the Cabinet that, to date, the Government had awarded £2.9m in funding for the proposal. The Leader considered that to be proof that the 2020 Vision constituted a robust and credible scheme. The Leader also drew attention to the potential annual savings that would accrue across the four Councils, and the costs associated with the Vision, and it was noted that the payback period was likely to be under one year.

It was considered that the 2020 Vision would enable the Council to deliver improved services and further savings, and that it represented a model which could be exported to other authorities. It had a financial, as well as a public value, imperative which was shared across the four local authorities and knowledge from the programme was being and would be shared with other local authorities in accordance with the Government's funding condition. The Leader drew attention to proposals for Forest of Dean, Stroud and West Oxfordshire District Councils and Tewkesbury Borough Council, to become shareholders in Ubico Ltd., and Officers explained the impact that would have on future savings for this Council. The Leader also drew attention to proposals to share a Strategic Director for Planning between this Council and West Oxfordshire District Council, through a joint appointment process, and he concluded by amplifying aspects of the Officer Recommendations.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) a shared services partnership venture be established in early 2015 between this Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, Forest of Dean District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council, managed by a Joint Committee operating under a Memorandum of Understanding, as detailed at Resolution (h) below;**
- (b) it be noted that a further report finalising the Memorandum of Understanding will be submitted to a future Meeting of the Cabinet;**
- (c) the 2020 Programme Board be authorised to allocate the principal roles of Interim Lead Commissioner and Interim Managing Director of the Partnership Venture, and to appoint the Programme Director;**

- (d) the principle of the two principal interim roles be agreed, with the Heads of Paid Service in each authority and the Programme Director sharing collective responsibility for the successful delivery of the programme;**
- (e) it be agreed that a project to develop effective commissioning arrangements for each authority, including exploring the potential for sharing commissioning functions where possible, be created;**
- (f) it be agreed that the statutory posts of Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer be reviewed during the course of the 2020 Vision Implementation Programme, including the potential for sharing, where appropriate and practical, with further reports being considered by each Council, as appropriate;**
- (g) the principles and recommendations proposed in the Activist report, as detailed at Appendix 'A' to the circulated report, be approved;**
- (h) a further report be submitted to the Cabinet in the autumn of 2015 in relation to any recommendations for the future governance arrangements of the Partnership Venture;**
- (i) the one-off transition costs and the estimated annual revenue savings detailed as part of the Strategic Outline Case be noted, and the Council be requested to consider a total allocation of £1.2m one-off funding over five years within its Medium Term Financial Strategy, through the budget consultation and approval process as its contribution to the 2020 Vision Programme;**
- (j) the latest position in respect of new shared service proposals (including those relating to shared Public Protection and Regulatory Services contained in a separate item on this Agenda) be noted and individual business cases be considered as and when appropriate;**
- (k) subject to the agreement of West Oxfordshire District Council, the revised senior management structure, as detailed at Appendix 'B' to the circulated report, be approved;**
- (l) the Chief Executive be authorised to finalise the Job Description and Person Specification for the new post, and to make the necessary arrangements to complete the appointment process, as detailed in the circulated report;**
- (m) the financial costs be reported to the Council, in accordance with the Pay Policy Statement.**

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

CAB.64

SHARED PROTECTION AND REGULATORY SERVICES

The Cabinet Member for Health and Leisure introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report detailing proposals for the future delivery of Public Protection and Regulatory Services across this Council, Forest of Dean District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council. The Cabinet Member

reminded the Cabinet of the background to, and amplified aspects of, the proposals, including the options for delivering a shared service across two or three Councils; the sharing of 'back office' functions with Cheltenham Borough Council; savings of £832,000 across the three authorities; and a pay-back period of less than four years. The Cabinet Member explained that, if the proposals were approved, implementation would begin in January 2015, and the shared services would become fully operational by December 2016 and it was noted that this would be the first 'true' test of delivering shared 'public-facing' services across the authorities.

The Cabinet considered that the proposals would lead to an in depth, better quality of service with improved resilience, and that Council Tax payers would benefit from the sharing of knowledge and expertise, as well as financial savings

RESOLVED that:

(a) the information in the business case attached at Appendix 'A' to the circulated report, be noted;

(b) the creation of shared Public Protection and Regulatory Services between this Council, Forest of Dean District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council and Cheltenham Borough Council, including a shared ICT platform, shared back office functions, vacancy management and specialist and residual functions, be approved;

(c) it be confirmed that the Shared Public Protection Development and Programme Manager has responsibility for the design and implementation of the new shared service, and also management of the services during the transitional period (from January 2015 until project close down).

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

Note:

The Chief Executive thanked the Shared Public Protection Development and Programme Manager for his work in leading this project across the four Councils. The Chief Executive commented that the Officer had developed models and templates which had enabled the design of the services and could have a far-reaching impact for other 'public-facing' services in the future.

CAB.65

PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE COUNCIL'S CAR PARKS

The Cabinet Member for Partnerships and Enterprise introduced this item.

The Cabinet Member amplified aspects of the circulated report, drawing attention to the various proposals which included changes to various parking tariffs and a study proposal. The Cabinet Member commented that the costs to the Council of the proposed changes to parking tariffs would be £15,000, which equated to 1% of the income from parking charges. The Cabinet Member also drew attention to the benefits that could accrue from the proposals to businesses, residents and visitors.

The Cabinet commended the proposed improvements, particularly the introduction of an 'off-peak plus' tariff and changes to charging periods on Sundays which, it was considered, would better reflect retail activity. In response to a question, it was reported that the recently-installed electric vehicle charging points at The Beeches Car Park, Cirencester and Old Market Way Car Park, Moreton-in-Marsh were due to go 'live' later this month and in January 2015 respectively.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the overnight parking charge in the Brewery Car Park, Cirencester between 6.00 p.m. and 8.00 a.m. be removed;**
- (b) a new off-peak 'plus' ticket be introduced, to include parking at weekends in any of the Council's car parks;**
- (c) the introduction of a £2.00 'all-day' tariff at the Old Market Way Car Park, Moreton-in-Marsh, be approved;**
- (d) the introduction of a £2.00 'all-day' tariff at the West Street Car Park, Tetbury, be approved;**
- (e) the charging periods on Sundays be changed from 8.00 a.m.-6.00 p.m. to 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m. across all of the Council's charging car parks to better reflect retail activity;**
- (f) a study be commissioned, to include consultation and the collation of data to inform the business case (including costs and service implications) of introducing alternative payment mechanisms in all the Council's car parks, and occupancy data, the cost of such study to be met from the Car Parks Reserve Fund;**
- (g) the new tariff changes be introduced with effect from 1st March 2015, or earlier if practicable, to allow for lead time for any changes needed to Parking Orders.**

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

CAB.66

**SUMMARY FINANCE/SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2014/15 -
QUARTER 2**

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report summarising the Council's performance in the second quarter of the financial year 2014/15, 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 drew attention to the underspend on the Council's budget of £600,000 as at the end of September 2014 and he congratulated all the Officers involved in achieving that underspend.

The Leader amplified various aspects of the circulated report, noting the current pressures being experienced in the Development Services Section and the Chief Executive commented on action proposed to address those issues. The Chief Executive also reminded the Cabinet that the Audit and Scrutiny

Committee had requested a study into the situation of the Building Control Section, explaining that a report thereon was due to be considered by that Committee at its Meeting which was scheduled to be held on 27th January 2015 and which would be reported to the Cabinet as part of the third quarter performance report. A Member expressed the view that the recruitment and retention measures identified by the Chief Executive represented a positive investment by the Council in front-line services, which could be met from income from planning services.

Arising on the Circulated Report

(i) A Member expressed concern at the number of working days being lost to sickness absence. In response, the Leader reminded the Cabinet that the number of days lost had fallen from 9.1 in the financial year 2012/13 to 5.93 in 2013/14. It was reported that positive action had been taken, with the Human Resources Partners working with Managers to identify trends and to offer support to staff where it was needed.

(ii) Concern was expressed at an apparent increase in the overall crime rate from 36.4 per 1,000 population in the financial year 2012/13 to 39.5 per 1,000 population in the current financial year, with the Council falling from 40th position to 70th position. The Leader requested that the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner be requested to comment on this issue and that crime data be sought on a Ward-by-Ward basis, for circulation to all Members.

A Member commented that the Police and Safer Communities Partnership had responded well to the increase in non-domestic burglaries involving sheds and garages.

RESOLVED that service and financial performance for the second quarter of the financial year 2014/15 be noted.

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

CAB.67 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, the Deputy Leader of the Council, and the Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships.

CAB.68 ISSUE(S) ARISING FROM AUDIT AND SCRUTINY

There were no issues arising from Audit and Scrutiny, apart from the Summary Finance/Service Performance report for the second quarter of the financial year 2014/15.

CAB.69 OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business that was urgent.

CAB.70 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under **Section 100A(4)** of the **Local Government Act 1972** the **public and Press** be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph (3) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the said Act (Information relating to financial or business affairs) and that the public interest in maintaining the exemptions outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information concerned.

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

CAB.71 CIRENCESTER PROPERTY REVIEW/DEVELOPEMENTS

The Deputy Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report detailing issues relating to an Agreement for Lease, a new Lease and a Deed of Variation for a property owned by the Council in Cirencester.

RESOLVED that:

(a) the lease and associated transactions, detailed in the circulated report, be approved;

(b) the payment and allocation within the Capital Fund for the acquisition of rights over land currently demised to a third party, be approved.

Record of Voting - for 5, against 0, abstentions 0, interest declared 1, absent 0.

Note:

Have previously declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in this item, the Leader of the Council left the Meeting while it was being determined. The Deputy Leader of the Council took the Chair in his absence.

The Meeting commenced at 12.30 p.m. and closed at 1.33 p.m.

Chairman

(END)