

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

9TH JULY 2015

Present:

Councillor Lynden Stowe - Chairman

Councillors -

Sue Coakley Mrs. SL Jepson
C Hancock

Observers:

Miss AML Beccle Jim Parsons (invited to speak on
AR Brassington (from 4.15 p.m.) Minute CAB.19)
T Cheung

Apologies:

NJW Parsons

CAB.13 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 (Corporate Resources) declared an interest in respect of Exempt Agenda Item (12) (Review of Animal Control Service), because he was the Director of Finance for Ubico Ltd.

CAB.14 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 11th June 2015 be approved as a correct record.

Record of Voting - for 4, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 1.

CAB.15 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been received.

CAB.16 MEMBER QUESTIONS

No questions had been submitted by Members.

CAB.17 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements from the Leader.

CAB.18 COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a revised Cotswold District Local Development Scheme (LDS) for 2015, outlining the project plan for the production of the Local Plan.

The Leader referred to a forthcoming announcement from the Government regarding the Local Plan process, which could result in a shortening of the Local Plan content and timetable for adoption. In response, it was reported that the implications of any announcement would be carefully considered, given the volume of work already undertaken in respect of the emerging Local Plan and the desire to avoid any further delay. An update on the impact of any such announcement would be forwarded to Members at the earliest opportunity. It was noted that the Council's first priority would be to ensure that the Local Plan timetable continued to move forward and, in that context, the Programme Board had recently considered the options for progress and the intention was to publish the pre-submission (Regulation 19) version of the Local Plan in the Spring of 2016. In addition, a communication strategy was being developed and Members would be updated in that respect in due course.

Officers amplified aspects of the circulated report, including in relation to the Regulation 18 and 19 requirements, and Development Management Policy consultation and resource implications. It was reported that the timescales had been considered by the Programme Board, following a SWOT analysis, which had assessed four options for taking the Local Plan forward, and the taking of legal advice. It was AGREED that information be circulated to Members following each Meeting of the Programme Board. A Member explained that the intention was for the Programme Board to meet on a monthly basis, and commented that the current work programme was likely to still be the best solution going forward for the Council and for residents. However, the Member accepted that it might be possible to streamline the timetable as a result of the anticipated Government announcement.

RESOLVED that the Local Development Scheme be adopted and published on the Council's Web Site.

Record of Voting - for 4, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 1.

Note:

Officers were requested to update Members as soon as possible on the impact of the forthcoming Government announcement.

CAB.19 SUMMARY FINANCE/SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT - 2014/15 YEAR END

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet was requested to consider and comment on the Summary Finance/Service Performance report for the end of the 2014/15 financial year. The Leader congratulated staff on the delivery of a substantial underspend on budget.

Arising on the Circulated Report:-

- (i) Business Rates Gloucestershire Pool (Paragraph 2.8) - Officers reminded the Cabinet of the circumstances relating to the situation in respect of the Gloucestershire Rates Pool and the options available to, and future implications for, the Council in that regard.
- (ii) Operational Revenue Budgets (Paragraph 2.11) - Officers amplified aspects of the current situation relating to the repatriation of the Council's investment in the Icelandic Bank, Glitnir and the suggestion that a financial provision in a sum of £150,000 be established to cover potential exchange rate losses. Officers also amplified aspects of the current situation relating to a legal challenge in respect of personal searches and the suggestion that a financial provision in a sum of £99,323 be established in that respect.
- (iii) Detailed Variance Analysis (Paragraph 2.16) - Officers amplified issues in respect of Members' allowances and discretionary pension payments.
- (iii) Changes to Financial Rules (Paragraph 4.2) - in response to a question from the Leader, the Cabinet was reminded of the Council's current banking arrangements.
- (iv) Efficiency Measures (2014/15 End of Year) (Page 47) - it was noted that the Council's ranking had improved to '4' in relation to the percentage of Council Tax collection, with 98% of the Council Tax due having been collected by the end of the financial year 2014/15.

The figure of 8.9 days lost through sickness was higher than the public and private sector averages and it was noted that monitoring was on-going, including through the Joint Liaison Forum and the Joint Consultative Committee. It was further noted that the issue would be raised with individual Cabinet Members, as appropriate.

- (v) Summary of Financial Reporting 2014/15 (Page 52) - Officers amplified aspects of some transactions, items of one-off expenditure from earmarked reserves and non-fee earning work by staff in the Building Control Section.
- (vi) Other Issues - Officers responded to various questions from Members relating to recycling rates; staff resources; short-term debtors; and the early repayment of a long-term loan.
- (vii) Overview and Scrutiny Committee - this report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its Meeting on 1st July 2015 and a copy of the comments from that Committee was circulated at this Meeting.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was present and was invited to address the Cabinet. The Chairman explained that the Committee would carry out further investigations in relation to the Building Control Service. It was reported that the service had experienced increased competition during the recent recession and had not yet had sufficient time to adjust to a recent reduction in fees. It was also reported that the service would be subject to further scrutiny as part of the 2020 Vision, and that

consideration was being given to the introduction of a shared service across a number of the partner authorities.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee also explained that the Committee would be considering the processes relating to completion of Section 106 Legal Agreements.

(vii) General Comment - the Leader reiterate his previous comments in relation to the end of year outturn and underspend. The Leader noted that consideration of the budget for the financial year 2016/17 was due to commence in the autumn of 2015 and he requested that, in advance of that process, consideration be given to the options for cutting some budget headings on a permanent basis, rather than consistently delivering an underspend thereon.

RESOLVED that:

(a) service and financial performance in the financial year 2014/15 be noted;

(b) the establishment of a Business Rates Movement Reserve be approved, and a balance in a sum of £650,000 be allocated thereto, the use of the Reserve to be determined by the Council as part of the budget-setting process;

(c) a provision in a sum of £99,323 be agreed, to fund the settlement of the Land Charges legal challenge;

(d) an allocation from capital receipts in a sum of £100,000 be agreed to provide additional funding for the Community Projects fund;

(e) the changes to the Council's Financial Rules, approved by the Chief Finance Officer under delegated powers, be noted.

Record of Voting - for 4, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 1.

CAB.20 ISSUE(S) ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY AND/OR AUDIT

There were no issues arising from Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit.

CAB.21 OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business that was urgent.

CAB.22 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 items of business on the grounds that they involved likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A to the said Act set out below and that the public interest in maintaining the exemptions outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information concerned:-

<u>Item</u>	<u>Paragraph</u>	<u>Reason</u>
(12)	(1)	Information relating to an individual
(13)	(3)	Information relating to financial or business affairs

Record of Voting - for 4, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 1.

CAB.23 REVIEW OF ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICE

The Cabinet Member for Health, Environment and Communities introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report detailing options for the future delivery of the Animal Control Service.

Officers amplified aspects of the three options identified within the circulated report and responded to questions from Members thereon.

RESOLVED that the Animal Control Service be delivered through a Framework Agreement on a trial basis for twelve months and, subject to the success of this new method of service delivery, the service continues to be delivered through a Framework Agreement.

Record of Voting - for 4, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 1.

CAB.24 CONTRACT AWARD - OFFICE CLEANING AND FACILITY LOCKING SERVICES

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report detailing proposals for office cleaning at the Council's Abberley House and Black Jack Street, Cirencester offices and the Moreton Area Centre; and for office cleaning and facility locking services at the Council's Trinity Road, Cirencester offices.

RESOLVED that the appointment of the contractor identified in paragraph 5 of the circulated report to provide office cleaning and facility locking services for a three-year period commencing 1st September 2015, with an optional extension of two years, be approved.

Record of Voting - for 4, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 1.

The Meeting commenced at 4.00 p.m. and closed at 4.41 p.m.

Chairman

(END)