

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

20<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2017

Present:

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

Councillors -

Sue Coakley Mrs. SL Jepson  
Alison Coggins MGE MacKenzie-Charrington  
C Hancock

Observers:

AR Brassington (invited to speak on  
Minute CAB.88)

CAB.85 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 for Officers.

CAB.86 MINUTES

**RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017 be approved as a correct record.**

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

CAB.87 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been submitted.

CAB.88 MEMBER QUESTIONS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, questions had been submitted, and responses provided, as follows:-

From Councillor AR Brassington to Councillor Sue Coakley, Cabinet Member for Environment

*'In relation to roadside litter will the Cabinet -*

1. *State what the response times are for clearing with such problems once a complaint is made? If there are different times for different roads please specify for each type.*
2. *Introduce a system of informing complainants when their complaint has been dealt with?'*

Responses from Councillor Coakley

- '1. There are no set timescales for dealing with a complaint regarding litter - it will be done as soon as possible. This can mean it is cleared within a few hours or it can take much longer depending on what it is and, more importantly where it is, as cleansing along highways requires specially trained crews, specific equipment and in some cases lane closures. Work will also be prioritised based on other issues at the time. Litter clearance also has to be managed in line with efficient service delivery and the budgets available so, for example, if a complaint is received but the location is planned for litter picking shortly anyway then the response may be delayed to tie in with the programmed litter pick.
2. When there is a need to respond to a complainant to provide them with information in relation to their complaint and the action that has been taken, then attempts will be made to contact them. We would not contact the complainants to tell them litter picking has occurred as this should be quite visible.'

Councillor Brassington thanked Councillor Coakley for her responses and stated that, with all due respect, he did not consider them to be satisfactory. Councillor Brassington asked the following supplementary questions:-

1. I accept that, if we have to close lanes to clear litter, it can take time but there is no reason why we cannot have a response time, for example two months. The Cabinet Member mentioned in her reply that budgets were a restraint; does this mean we do not allocate sufficient resources?
2. When anyone makes a complaint to the Council regarding litter or fly tipping, they are not informed of the progress of their complaint or even if it has been dealt with. Other Councils do, so why, if we are one of the most efficient Councils in the country, don't we?

In response, Councillor Coakley reiterated her response to the issue of budgetary allocation in relation to Councillor Brassington's first question. Councillor Coakley explained that incidences of roadside litter were usually addressed within a 24 hour period, and she expressed the view that, if this was publicised as the timescale, it was likely that the Council would receive complaints on those occasions when it was not achieved.

Councillor Coakley explained that the Council responded to all complaints regarding litter or fly tipping to acknowledge receipt of such complaints and to state that the complaints would be dealt with. Councillor Coakley expressed the view that it was not necessary to contact complainants again to advise them that the issue had been addressed as, she believed, customers trusted the Council to do what it said it would do. In conclusion, Councillor Coakley stated that the Council did not operate a system of automated responses.

CAB.89 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader explained that this would be his last Cabinet Meeting as he would be standing down as Leader of the Council at the Annual Council Meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2017, and he thanked his current and former Cabinet colleagues for their service during his time as Leader. The Leader thanked the Deputy Leader and Officers for their attendance and support, and he thanked the Committee Services Manager for his diligent recording of the Cabinet's decisions.

CAB.90 IMPLEMENTATION OF SELF-BUILD REGISTER ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report detailing proposals for the introduction of local connection and financial capability criteria for entry onto the Council's Self & Custom Build Register, and proposed fees for new applicants and an annual retention fee for the renewal of applications. The Cabinet Member drew attention to details of fees charged or proposed to be charged by a number of other local authorities which had been circulated to Members following publication of the Cabinet Agenda. The Cabinet Member explained that the Council was legally bound to introduce a Register, and amplified aspects of the circulated report in relation to charging, staff resources and Government funding.

It was considered that the criteria had been drafted to avoid, as far as possible, abuses of the system and that the proposed fees were appropriate to ensure that the Council covered its reasonable costs. It was further considered that a system would be required to manage the process and that the outcomes should be publicised in the fullness of time.

**RESOLVED that:**

- (a) it be agreed that local connection and financial capability criteria be introduced for entry onto the Council's Self & Custom Build Register;**
- (b) the fee structure detailed at paragraph 8 of the circulated report be introduced;**
- (c) the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, be authorised to review the fee levels as necessary and, in any event, in advance of the 2018/19 financial year in light of experience and having regard to fees set by other authorities;**
- (d) the New Burdens funding in a sum of £90,000 payable between 2016/17 and 2019/20 be allocated to resourcing in the Planning and Strategic Housing Service.**

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

CAB.91 RATE RELIEF

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report detailing proposals for a policy relating to the award of Discretionary Rate Relief under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended. The Leader explained that, if the Cabinet was minded to adopt the policy, such decisions would be delegated to the Group Manager Revenues and Housing Support Services. In response to a question from a Member, it was reported that further details of the national discretionary fund which was to be established were awaited from the Government.

**RESOLVED that:**

- (a) the policy to award Discretionary Rate Relief in special circumstances, as detailed in the circulated report, be adopted;**
- (b) the Group Manager Revenues and Housing Support Services be authorised to award the specific reliefs;**
- (c) the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to incorporate these changes into the Council's Constitution.**

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

CAB.92 CORPORATE STRATEGY 2016-19 - UPDATE

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report detailing an update to the Corporate Strategy 2016-19 for 2017/18, which would be referred to the Council for approval. The Leader amplified aspects of the circulated report, including in relation to the Council's overall ranking; improvements in the sickness absence rates; a reduction in the overall cost of Council services per head of population; and top tasks for 2017/18. It was considered that the Council had made some excellent improvements in sickness absence rates and service costs, and that it continued to deliver quality services across a range of areas.

**RECOMMENDED that the update to the Corporate Strategy 2016-19 for 2017/18 be approved.**

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

CAB.93 COTSWOLD COMMUNITY DEFIBRILLATOR PROJECT

The Cabinet Member for Health and Leisure introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a report detailing proposals for an initiative to extend the provision of auto external defibrillators (AEDs) across the Cotswold District, alongside those already registered with the South West Ambulance Service Foundation Trust (SWASFT). The Cabinet Member amplified various

aspects of the initiative, drawing attention to the locations of existing AEDs; the proposed allocation of funding to Ward Members towards the cost of providing AEDs; and insurance and maintenance issues. In response to various questions from Members, the Cabinet Member confirmed that information on the locations of existing AEDs would be sought from Town/Parish Councils/Meetings; an information sheet would be provided to Ward Members in due course; planning permission would not be required in respect of the location of AEDs in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty but the Council's Conservation Team would have a role in the location of AEDs on Listed structures; and copies of the criteria and application forms would be forwarded to Town/Parish Clerks in due course.

It was noted that this initiative had already been welcomed by local communities and that a number of Town/Parish Councils/Meetings were keen to become involved. The Leader of the Council commented that, at a recent Meeting, the Operations Director of the SWASFT had expressed his commitment to this initiative. It was considered that it would provide a level of comfort for communities, particularly in light of current ambulance response times, and would make a positive contribution to community resilience. The Leader expressed the hope that Ward Members would take full advantage of their allocations.

The Leader commented that, currently, there was no requirement for developers to provide AEDs for new residential developments. The Leader considered that such provision would help to improve resilience in local communities and he undertook to write to the appropriate Government Minister to suggest that consideration be given to requiring the provision of AEDs in respect of new developments comprising 20 or more residential units where such developments were over 20 metres away from an existing AED.

**RESOLVED that:**

- (a) Officers be authorised to work with the South West Ambulance Service Foundation Trust to identify locations for placing new AEDs across the Cotswold District;**
- (b) the initiative includes the promotion of Community First Responders alongside the placing of AEDs, together with public awareness campaigns;**
- (c) the Cabinet Member for Health and Leisure be authorised to allocate funding in a maximum sum of £2,000 towards the cost of purchasing and locating AEDs within each Ward, the maximum contribution towards each AED being set at £500.**

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

CAB.94

**SUMMARY FINANCE/SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT - 2016/17  
QUARTER 3**

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 third quarter of the 2016/17 financial year.

Arising thereon:-

- (i) Financial Performance (Revenue) (paragraph 2.5) - in response to comments that income targets for Building Control fees and Water Sampling income were currently underperforming, the Cabinet Member for Environment reported that Water Sampling income was now back on target and that Officers were working to increase the market share in relation to Building Control applications.
- (ii) Revenue Budget Monitoring Summary (page 46) - it was noted that the revenue expenditure was broadly in line with the budget. The Leader commented that the review undertaken in relation to the budget for 2016/17 had been successful, and that the Council should aim to set robust budgets which could be delivered on target.
- (iii) Overview and Scrutiny Committee - this report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017. It was noted that membership of that Committee was from across the political spectrum and that the Committee had not identified any problems in relation to service delivery or performance by the Council.

**RESOLVED that service and financial performance for Quarter 3 of the financial year 2016/17 be noted.**

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

Note:

The Head of Paid Service and Strategic Director were requested to pass on congratulations from the Cabinet to Officers for their performance during 2016/17.

CAB.95 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 Cabinet Member for Forward Planning, and the Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships.

CAB.96 ISSUE(S) ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY AND/OR AUDIT

There were no issues arising from Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit, apart from the Summary Finance/Service Performance Report - 2016/17 Quarter 3.

CAB.97 DECISION TAKEN BY THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

It was noted that, following consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member for Health and Leisure, the relevant Ward Member and appropriate Officers, the Head of Paid Service had exercised his emergency powers (in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 38) to accept the terms of a grant offer from the Heritage Lottery Fund in respect of the 'Stone Age to

Corinium' Project (a grant of up to £676,900 was awarded towards the total eligible project cost of £1,315,770).

The deadline set for acceptance of the grant terms was 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017, which was before the date of this scheduled Cabinet Meeting, and the use of the emergency powers had been sought to secure the grant funding and enable progression of the project, without delay.

CAB.98      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)