

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
(HELD AT CIRENCESTER BAPTIST CHURCH,
CHESTERTON LANE, CIRENCESTER)

19TH OCTOBER 2017

Present:

Councillor Mark F Annett - Chairman
Councillor NJW Parsons - Vice-Chairman

Councillors -

Sue Coakley MGE MacKenzie-Charrington
SG Hirst

Observers:

SI Andrews Juliet Layton
AW Berry (until 2.10 p.m.) NP Robbins
AR Brassington (invited to speak on
Minute CAB.41)

Apologies:

C Hancock

CAB.38 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.39 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 14th September 2017 be approved as a correct record.

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

CAB.40 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been submitted.

CAB.41 MEMBER QUESTIONS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, a question had been submitted, and a response provided, as follows:-

From Councillor AR Brassington to Councillor C Hancock, Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships

'The use of electric cars and hybrids is likely to increase faster than originally predicted due to the announcement by central government of the phasing out of fossil fuelled cars from 2040, and an announcement from major car manufacturers that they will do so earlier than this. Will the Council therefore reconsider its position on the installation of electric charging points in Council car parks and offices, and introduce them at all these sites as soon as practically possible?'

The following response had been provided by Councillor Hancock:-

'We have two public electric charging points installed at the Beeches car park, Cirencester and the car park in Moreton-in-Marsh, and a single point at the Trinity Road offices. We are actively looking at how we expand this facility to provide a network access across the Cotswolds. In particular, we are currently working in partnership with Members at WODC to look at opportunities and procurement options for installing additional EVCP's both in public sites such as Council car parks and at the Council offices across both Districts. We will be looking at options that are future-proofed and can be expanded as the demand for these increases in the coming years.'

Councillor Brassington thanked Councillor Hancock for his response and expressed his view that the Council had been slow in addressing the issue given the enormous increase in new registrations of electric and hybrid vehicles, which had been up by 30% in the first half of 2016. Councillor Brassington commented that the Council was 'in danger of missing the boat' and, by way of a supplementary question, asked if the Council would consider changing its fleet to electric or hybrid vehicles.

In the absence of Councillor Hancock, Councillor Sue Coakley, the Cabinet Member for Environment, explained that her service had the largest fleet of vehicles. Councillor Coakley stated that the fleet was due for replacement in 2019 and that Officers were already looking at the potential use of alternative fuels.

CAB.42 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements from the Leader.

CAB.43 100% BUSINESS RATES RETENTION SCHEME PILOT - GLOUCESTERSHIRE

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet was requested to consider proposals for the Gloucestershire local authorities to submit a bid to become a 100% Business Rates Retention Pool pilot in 2018/19, and Officers amplified various aspects thereof.

In response to a question from a Member, it was reported that expert modelling had been undertaken; the best and worst case scenarios had been detailed in the circulated report; and, if the Cabinet was minded to support the submission of a bid, such bid should be conditional on a 'no detriment' clause

in respect of the NHS Foundation Trust Claim. It was further reported that the pilot scheme could potentially run for two years, and that, if the bid was successful, the existing Rate Pool would not be available to the Council.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the risks and opportunities associated with membership of a 100% Business Rates Retention Scheme Pool Pilot be noted;**
- (b) the Council takes part in the Gloucestershire Pool Pilot bid;**
- (c) the Gloucestershire Pool Pilot bid should be conditional upon a 'no detriment' clause relating to the NHS Foundation Trust claim.**

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

CAB.44

COUNCIL TAX WRITE-OFF IN EXCESS OF £5,000

The Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet was requested to consider the writing-off of a Council Tax debt where the defaulter had absconded, in a total sum of £5,240.93.

Officers amplified aspects of the case and it was noted that, if the debtor reappeared at any time in the future, the debt would be written back onto the system for recovery action to commence. A Member expressed frustration that the debtor had been granted a further extension, and expressed the hope that Officers would take the appropriate action to prevent similar cases arising in the future. In response, the Cabinet was reminded that, sometimes, an extra chance made a difference and that the Council achieved a high collection rate in respect of Council Tax, with few debts being written-off.

RESOLVED that the writing-off of a Council Tax debt in excess of £5,000 be approved.

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

CAB.45

ACCREDITATION STANDARD - MUSEUM SERVICE POLICIES

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure introduced this item.

The Cabinet was requested to consider revised Collections Development, Documentation and Care and Conservation Policies, which the Council was required to renew every five years in order for the Museum Service to attain/retain the Accreditation Standard and access external funding

RESOLVED that the revised policies be approved.

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

CAB.46

LOCAL NATURE RESERVES

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Licensing Services and Cirencester Car Parking Project introduced this item.

The Cabinet considered a request from Cirencester Town Council to delegate to it the power to restore a local nature reserve at City Bank and the Old Nursery, Watermoor, Cirencester. The Cabinet was also requested to consider the delegation of future, similar requests.

It was considered that, as the Town Council owned the land in question, this request should be approved. However, it was felt that the suggested delegation should only be exercised in those cases where the land was owned by the appropriate Town/Parish Council and that, if this Council's land interests were impacted, the decision should revert to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED that:

(a) the Council delegates its powers/functions under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 to Cirencester Town Council in this one instance, such that the Town Council is able to pursue the establishment/designation of a Local Nature Reserve in respect of land it owns at City Bank and the former Abbey Nursery, Cirencester (as defined in the plan attached at Appendix 'A' to the circulated report);

(b) the Cabinet Member for Planning and Licensing and Cirencester Car Parking Project be authorised to consider future, similar requests from Town/Parish/Community Councils to delegate to them the power to establish/designate Local Nature Reserves in respect of land where the Town/Parish/Community Council is the landowner.

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

CAB.47 SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND /OR INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBERS

The Cabinet noted a Schedule detailing a decision taken by the Leader of the Council.

CAB.48 ISSUE(S) ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY AND/ OR AUDIT (IF ANY)

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

CAB.49 OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business that was urgent.

The Meeting commenced at 1.50 p.m. and closed at 2.12 p.m.

Chairman

(END)