



Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet held on Monday, 7 June 2021.

In accordance with relevant legislation, these minutes are a record of decisions taken. They are not intended to be a verbatim account of the meeting. A full recording of the meeting can be accessed by the Facebook link at www.Cotswold.gov.uk

Councillors present:

Joe Harris – Leader

Mike Every – Deputy Leader

Rachel Coxcoon

Andrew Doherty

Juliet Layton

Tony Dale

Jenny Forde

Lisa Spivey

Officers present:

Deputy Chief Executive
Interim Monitoring Officer
Managing Director, Publica

Economic Development Lead
Business Manager, Operational Services
Democratic Services

Observer: Councillor Nikki Ind

1 Apologies

There were no apologies for absence received.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers present.

3 Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet of 13 May 2021 be approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

- (a) CAB147, third paragraph, 'of which 28 were live', being amended to read 'of which 12 were live';
- (b) CAB.151, second paragraph, last line 'that the works were planned for October 2021', should read 'after October 2021'.

Record of Voting - for 6, against 0, abstention 2, absent 0

4 Leader's Announcements (if any)

No announcements were made.

5 Public Questions

There were none received.

6 Member Questions

There were none received.

7 Ubico Business Case for expansion and extension of the partnership to Gloucester City Council

The report presented Members with a proposal for Gloucester City Council becoming an equal shareholder in Ubico Limited along with the findings of a due diligence appraisal of the business case.

The Cabinet Member for the Environment, Waste and Recycling, Councillor Doherty introduced the report, and outlined the key opportunities for the Council. He advised that the partnership would benefit the Council, highlighted potential savings of £33,000 due to a reduction in overhead costs and explained that Publica would provide the back end services. He felt that it would make sense that all Council's would be using the same waste provider across Gloucestershire County. Councillor Doherty signposted Members to section 2 of the report which included the appraisal of the Business Case and explained how the Environmental Services Innovation Programme dovetailed into the project. He summed up by stating that the move would improve services, reiterated the small financial benefit, and he felt the risks were manageable.

Councillor Doherty, therefore, encouraged Members to approve this extension to the partnership and proposed the recommendations as laid out.

This was seconded by Councillor Evemy.

An alternative option was that the Council could choose to oppose GCi joining the Ubico Partnership as an equal shareholder however it was noted that the final decision would be made based on the majority.

Clarity was provided on the potential for future depot sharing and looking at how there may be potential for sharing vehicles across the partnership.

Having considered the report and having heard from the Members present, Cabinet

RESOLVED that the proposal contained within this report is endorsed and the Leader (As the Ubico Shareholder Representative) formally supports Gloucester City Council joining Ubico Limited, as an equal shareholder, subject to any comments it wishes to make.

Record of Voting – for 8, against 0, abstention 0, absent 0.

8 Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Discretionary Policy

Members received a report which outlined proposals to introduce a Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Discretionary Policy to assist the Council in making decisions when considering such applications from Council Tax payers in the district.

The report explained that Section 76 of the Local Government Act 2003 introduced Section 13A (Billing Authority's Power to Reduce Amount of Tax Payable) into the local

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Government Finance Act 1992. The amendments to the act, the discounts added or amended over the years and the support schemes were also outlined.

Members noted the main points, the financial and legal implications and the consideration that officers would take into account when applying the policy. There were no alternative options detailed in the report.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Evemy, introduced the report and highlighted how the policy would continue to help local residents who needed emergency assistance to help pay their Council Tax.

Members were advised that there were some minor grammatical errors within the Policy, which would be corrected and it was reiterated that if the Cabinet were to grant an individual decision making process, this decision would be taken at Member level in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive, and reported to Cabinet.

Councillor Coxcoon raised a query regarding the timescales for responding to applications and whether payments could be backdated. In response, officers confirmed that payments could be backdated and it would also be possible to suspend any recovery on the account until any award was given.

Having been proposed and duly seconded, Cabinet

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Discretionary Policy be adopted; and
- (b) the decision making process as detailed in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 of the report, be approved.

Record of Voting - for 8, against 0, abstention 0, absent 0.

9 Green Economic Growth Strategy - Six monthly update report

Councillor Tony Dale introduced the report which detailed the progress in the delivery of the Council's Green Economic Growth Strategy, over the past six months.

The report reminded Members that Cabinet had approved a draft Green Economic Growth Strategy for consultation in October 2020 and, following amendments made as a result of the consultation, was adopted by Cabinet in December 2020. The Strategy covered a four-year period from adoption and the December 2020 report undertook to provide six monthly updates to Cabinet. This report was the first such update. The report also reminded Cabinet that in the same report they had approved the establishment of the Cotswold Economic Advisory Group to oversee implementation of the actions contained within the strategy. The Group first met in February 2021 and was meeting on a bi-monthly basis.

The Economic Development Lead then provided an update, highlighting that an applied digital skill centre was being set up at Cirencester College, and was due to be finished early in 2022; data relating to footfall in Cirencester, Tetbury, Stow-on-the-Wold and adding Bourton-on-the-Water, was being put in place; an internship established and an appointment made; and none of the allocation of £500,000 had been used for

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Broadband. Councillor Dale confirmed that a further update would be given to Cabinet in six months and he proposed that the report be noted.

During discussions, Members made a number of comments including; what would be needed to deliver Broadband to some of the hardest to reach parts of the district and how figures from Gigaclear needed to be clarified; the carbon emission data relating to the missing link on the A417 and how the project dovetailed with the Climate Change Strategy; and more information was requested on the background to the digital skill centre.

Having considered the report and having heard from the Members present, Cabinet

RESOLVED that the progress against the actions identified in the Green Economic Growth Strategy is noted.

Record of Voting - for 8, against 0, abstention 0, absent 0.

10 Green Business Pledge

Members received a report which asked Cabinet to endorse the Council signing up to the Gloucestershire Climate Commitment and undertake to promote it to businesses in the District.

The report reminded Members that Council had declared a climate emergency and an ecological emergency and had signed up to the COP26 UK100 pledge, committing to net zero emissions from its own activities by 2030 and a net zero district by 2045 at the latest. The Green Economic Growth Strategy, adopted in December 2020, contained an action to “encourage local businesses to embed climate change objectives into their operations”.

Councillor Tony Dale introduced the report, which introduced the Green Business Pledge to encourage businesses to review their commercial environment and reduce their carbon footprint. A report to the Cotswold Economic Advisory Group had set out a number of tests that any pledge would have to meet and these were listed in full at section 2.2 of the report. Along with the climate change agenda, it was noted that businesses would need to have achievable targets. Councillor Dale reiterated that the pledge would be good for the planet as well as producing cost savings to businesses and the Council.

It was noted that small businesses would need support in achieving their targets, measuring their carbon footprint and advice as to the best way to deliver targets.

RESOLVED that Council endorses the Gloucestershire Climate Commitment and resolves to use its various communications with businesses in the District to sign up to it and commit to reducing their carbon emissions.

Record of Voting – for 8, against 0, abstention 0, absent 0.

11 Schedule of Decisions Taken by the Leader of the Council and/or Individual Cabinet Members

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The Schedule of Decisions taken by the Leader of the Cabinet and relevant Cabinet Members during the period 8 April to 11 May 2021 was noted.

12 Issue(s) Arising From Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit

Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Tetbury and Fairford Leisure Provision – Task and Finish Group

The Leader, introduced the item and highlighted that the report of the task and finish group had outlined failings with the process of outsourcing the leisure provision. He expressed his anger at the findings and how disappointed he was for the residents in Tetbury and Fairford. He felt they had been let down by the previous administration allowing these decisions to be made and proposed that the report should be presented to Full Council in order for a public debate to take place.

Members commented that when the schools were educational establishments and not set up to run leisure facilities and this should never happen again, they were concerned that the amount of money which was refused to the schools to help them and the lack of understanding of the viability of the centres.

Concern was also expressed at the amount of time the review had taken to set up and noted that it was two years since the schools had given notice that they needed to shut the centres.

It was proposed and seconded that the report and recommendations be presented to Council in July 2021.

RESOLVED that the report and recommendations be presented to Council on 14 July 2021.

Record of Voting – for 8, against 0, abstention 0, absent 0.

The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 7.30 pm

Chair