



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 at the Facebook link at www.cotswold.gov.uk.

Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet held remotely on 12 April 2021

Councillors present:

Joe Harris - Chair

Tony Dale
Andrew Doherty

Jenny Forde
Mike Evemy
Lisa Spivey

Clive Webster

Officers present:

Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive
Legal Services Manager
Managing Director, Publica
Group Finance Director, Publica
Business Manager - Corporate
Responsibility
Business Manager Operation Services,
Revenue and Housing Support

Group Manager - Commissioning
Business Manager - Localities
Shared Tourism Services Manager, Tourism
Services
Forward Planning Manager
Cabinet Support Officer
Democratic Services

Observers: Councillors Stephen Andrews, Tony Berry, Patrick Coleman, Nikki Ind.

CAB.126 Apologies were received from Councillor Coxcoon.

CAB.127 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest by Members.

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

CAB.128 Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet of 1 March 2021 be approved as a correct record:

Record of Voting - for 7, against 0, abstention 0, absent 1.

CAB.129 Leader's Announcements

The Leader paid tribute to HRH Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, who passed away on Friday 9 April, aged 99. The Leader commented that HRH had contributed greatly to the monarch and the country as a whole.

He added that he had been fortunate to meet HRH at the Royal Windsor Horse Show in 2015 when he had shown a great interest in and knowledge of Cirencester.

Councillor Dale echoed the comments of the Leader and explained he had also been fortunate enough to once meet HRH in person.

CAB.130 Public Questions

No questions had been received from members of the public.

CAB.131 Member Questions

No questions had been received from Members.

CAB.132 Proposals for transferring current contract cleaning to Publica management and extending office-opening hours

The Cabinet received a report detailing a proposal for more flexible facilities management arrangements for the office-cleaning, opening and use of the offices at Trinity Road.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and highlighted various aspects.

The Cabinet expressed their support for the recommendations, particularly regarding the importance of ensuring Publica was seen to be paying the real living wage to employees and the flexible benefits there would be to both Members and Officers of extending the opening hours of the offices.

The Cabinet requested if the Deputy Chief Executive could review the arrangements for lock-up arrangements for the offices going forward and extended their thanks to the cleaning staff for their work over the last year in ensuring the offices were safe to be used.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the Cabinet request Publica undertake the cleaning service (with pay based on the Living Wage Foundation minimum living wage) at an estimated annual cost of £70,466 and one off Costs of £3,200, and that the Council;
- b) extend opening hours for officer and Member use between 7pm - 9pm weekdays and 9am - 1pm on Saturdays.

Record of Voting - for 7, against 0, abstention 0, absent 1.

CAB.133 Review of Tourism Service and Visitor Economy

The Cabinet was requested to review the work and impact of the tourism activity carried out by the Council including the Cotswold's Tourism Destination Management Organisation and The Visitor Information Centres and the role they played in supporting the local Visitor Economy.

The Cabinet Member for the Economy and Skills introduced the report and highlighted various aspects.

The Leader extended his thanks to the Cabinet Member and Officers for their work in relation to the review and commented upon the importance of ensuring tourism within the District was sustainable going forward.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- a) Establish with partners a joint Advisory Board to provide stronger governance over the activities of the Cotswold Destination Management Organisation;**
- b) Ask the officers supporting the Advisory Board to:**
 - i. Refresh the Destination Management plan and response to different visitor destinations, including Cotswold Water Park;**
 - ii. develop a range of key performance indicators to monitor impact;**
 - iii. prepare a prioritised action plan for a programme of work, including work to support the Green Economy, Sustainable Tourism, businesses transition to digital services and funding for visitor information services;**
 - iv. prepare a Communication Strategy;**
 - v. review the DMO business member levels and funding structure.**

Record of Voting - for 7, against 0, abstention 0, absent 1.

CAB.134 Publica Business Plan 2021-22

The Cabinet was requested to consider the Business Plan 2020-22, first approved in June 2020, to note progress and to recommend that the Leader approve the Plan.

The Managing Director of Publica was invited to address the Cabinet and explained that 2021 was the second year of the two-year Plan. He added that a review had been carried out which had confirmed the longer-term aims of the Plan remained unchanged, despite the effect of Covid-19, but that whilst good progress had been made, this had been limited due to the effect of the pandemic.

The Leader thanked Mr. Britton for his work but commented that he considered the cultural change of the organisation was taking place too slowly, but that the refresh of the Publica Board, including a new Chair, would, he hoped, enable change to happen more quickly going forward.

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommend that the Leader (as Shareholder) approve the Publica Business Plan 2020-22.

Record of Voting - for 7, against 0, abstention 0, absent 1.

CAB.135 Equality and Diversity Policy

The Cabinet received a report detailing the Council's legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and how the Council could comply as it continued to work in partnership.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing introduced the report and in doing so, extended her thanks to Officers for their work on the Policy. She added that it was important that as a public service provider, the Council represented all residents and groups of the District fairly and equally.

The Deputy Leader commented that the Policy was related to a Motion presented by himself and the Cabinet Member to Council at its meeting in July 2019, which covered a culture change the administration wished to undertake to the Council to ensure it was an inclusive organisation which set standards for others to follow.

In response to a question, the Managing Director of Publica confirmed that Publica's Equality Policy sat back to back with the policies of the four partner councils and that there was a large amount of agreement across the partnership.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve the Policy.

Record of Voting - for 7, against 0, abstention 0, absent 1.

CAB.136 Contribution towards a Business Case for the restoration of the former rail connection between Kemble and Cirencester

The Cabinet was requested to consider a report which sought a contribution by the Council towards the feasibility study of the proposals.

In the absence of the Cabinet Member from the meeting, the Cabinet Member for the Planning Department, Town and Parish Councils introduced the report.

The Forward Planning Manager was invited to address the Cabinet and advised that the Cirencester Community Rail Group had undertaken a high-level feasibility study and that Officers from the Council had been invited to be Board Members of the Group.

The Chief Executive reported that he had been speaking with Councillors regarding the project and that he considered it was one that had 'incredible merit'. He added that he would be ensuring the Council was holistic in providing solutions to any issues and that the project was likely to change and adapt as time moved on.

Councillor Berry, as the Ward Member for Kemble, was then invited to address the Council. He reported that the original feasibility study was £180,000 and that it had been decided to split this amount into two phases. He added that there was much excitement for the project and it was hoped that by leading the project as a 'pioneer', the project would receive significant funding from the Government for a project which was expected to have a lifespan of between 100 and 120 years.

The Cabinet expressed their support for the recommendations and commented that it was a vital element of infrastructure that was missing from Cirencester. Members also commented that the project would need substantial amounts of research and investment, but would complement other Council work such as the Green Economic Growth Strategy.

The Leader wished to place on record his thanks to Councillors Berry and Mark Harris and Mr. and Mrs. Gunner for their work on the project to date.

RESOLVED that Cabinet agree to contribute £10,000 towards the cost of the Strategic Outline Business Case and a Secondary Phase Feasibility Study.

Record of Voting - for 7, against 0, abstention 0, absent 1.

CAB.137 Bourton-on-the-Water Tourism Charge Consultation

The Cabinet received a report detailing the results of the Bourton-on-the-Water tourism charge consultation and to seek approval on how the proceeds of the tourism charge could be utilised.

The Deputy Leader introduced the report and advised it represented a follow-up to the Cabinet decision of December 2020, which had been implemented on 9 March 2021. He added that the Council had consulted with residents early in 2021, to which 265 responses had been received and that the main concerns related to the installation of bollards; additional enforcement and increased waste bin provision.

The Cabinet Member for the Economy and Skills extended his thanks to all residents who worked with visitors to the village, but commented that he considered the proposals of the report were defensive rather than proactively encouraging steps to prevent issues in the future.

Other Cabinet Members highlighted that this represented an ideal opportunity to pilot a model, which, if successful, could be extended and adapted to other tourism areas experiencing issues within the District and commented upon the high-level of responses received to the consultation.

The Deputy Leader responded that previous thought had been given to signage on the A429 highlighting parking space availability, but that in future the plan was to mitigate the problems and that he had been working closely with Bourton-on-the-Water Parish Council. He added that he was aware of other locations within the District that could benefit from assistance in the future and that it was hoped the Council would provide support to them.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve:

- a) **An increase in litter bins as set out in 3.2 of the report;**
- b) **an increase in officer presence through the Civic Pride project during peak visitor season;**
- c) **the installation of bollards opposite Rissington Road car park;**
- d) **an annual consultation with local residents and the Parish Council to inform decisions on other improvements for consideration**
- e) **that delegation be given to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, and Bourton-on-the-Water Parish Council to approve the spending of any balance of the £25,000 budget to help support Bourton-on-the-Water Parish Council initiatives.**

Record of Voting - for 7, against 0, abstention 0, absent 1.

CAB.138 Schedule of Decisions taken by the Leader of the Council and/or individual Cabinet Members

Cabinet noted the decisions taken by Cabinet Members since the previous Meeting of the Cabinet, which were set out in full in the agenda.

CAB.139 Issues arising from Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit Committee

There were no issues arising.

The Meeting commenced at 6.00pm and closed at 7.35pm.

Chair

(END)