

CABINET	<i>Gloucestershire County Council</i>
27 January 2021	
Minutes	

PRESENT

MEMBERSHIP:

Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	- Leader of Council
Cllr Richard Boyles	- Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Early Years
Cllr Carole Allaway Martin	- Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Commissioning
Cllr Tim Harman	- Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities
Cllr Patrick Molyneux	- Cabinet Member for Economy, Education and Skills
Cllr Nigel Moor	- Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning
Cllr David Norman MBE	- Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Parking and Libraries
Cllr Vernon Smith	- Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood
Cllr Lynden Stowe	- Cabinet Member for Finance and Change
Cllr Kathy Williams	- Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care (Delivery)

1. Apologies

No apologies

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 16 December 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

The Leader of Council noted that it was UK Holocaust Memorial Day and a moment of silence was observed.

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

4. Questions at Cabinet Meetings

A total of 8 public questions and 19 member questions were submitted for consideration in advance of the meeting.

The following supplementary questions were asked at the meeting.

Question 1: Chloe Turner asked if clarification could be given that the target date for carbon neutrality was 2045 as different answers had been given to questions. She asked whether in the week that global ice sheets were seen retreating in line with worst case scenarios this was the appropriate response.

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor (Cabinet Member Environment and Planning)

It was clarified that the target should be 2045 and that the member felt that this was an appropriate response, noting the Council's own commitment to being carbon neutral in 2021.

Question 3: Max Wilkinson asked if the member could explain the disconnect between the LTP and Gear Change report and why the Cheltenham cycle network was not being taken forward.

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor (Cabinet Member Environment and Planning)

It was outlined that the priority was for the Gloucester Cheltenham cycleway, but that did not exclude further work in future years.

Question 5: Karl Hobley asked for clarification of whether the concept of a joined up cycle network for Cheltenham had been taken forward in the LTP.

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor (Cabinet Member Environment and Planning)

The member explained that while this was a future priority, the priority for 2021 was related to the cycleways detailed in the report.

Question 6: Karl Hobley asked whether it was correct that none of the existing infrastructure complied with standards set out in the Government's Gear Change report.

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor (Cabinet Member Environment and Planning)

The member stated that the first phase of Gloucester to Cheltenham cycleway development did comply with that report. He made a public commitment to start on the next phase over the coming summer.

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Question 7: Karl Hopley asked would the member commit to work with the districts relating to school street schemes where community and school support could be demonstrated?

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor (Cabinet Member Environment and Planning)

The member gave that commitment outlining that trials were currently running and evidence from that would be evaluated. He said that the Council was seeing the value of wide spread consultation with districts and local communities.

Question 8: Carol Kambites asked, if Stroudwater was to be considered alongside other options could that be reflected in the Stroud district part of the LTP?

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor (Cabinet Member Environment and Planning)

The member understood the strong support but stated that he could not prejudge the work being done. He would not give a view until the conclusion of the robust assessment work being carried out.

Question 1: Cllr Phil Awford asked whether consideration would be given to working with English Severn and Wye Regional Flood and Coastal Committee to look at future opportunities to alleviate flooding.

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor (Cabinet Member Environment and Planning)

The member gave that commitment.

Question 2: Cllr Iain Dobie asked whether he could conclude that zero trees had been planted against the one million target?

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor (Cabinet Member Environment and Planning)

The Cabinet Member would provide Cllr Dobie with a figure and outlined that he had been working with Gloucestershire Nature Partnership and would share the nature of that work in due course.

Question 6: Cllr Iain Dobie asked if the member could share full feedback from Department for Transport as to why the Council's bid was unsuccessful.

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor (Cabinet Member Environment and Planning)

The Cabinet Member was happy to share the feedback with the member.

Question 7: Cllr Iain Dobie asked how much money would the County Council allocate to realise active travel schemes that had passed the prioritisation process.

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Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor (Cabinet Member Environment and Planning)

Cllr Moor stated that the Council would continue to bid at every opportunity to take forward those schemes.

Question 8: Cllr Iain Dobie asked whether there would be any funding for unsuccessful active travel schemes?

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor (Cabinet Member Environment and Planning)

The Cabinet Member explained that the priority was to start the next phase of the Gloucester to Cheltenham scheme, which was a commitment of over £10 million. Following that other schemes would be explored as funding opportunities become apparent.

Question 9: Cllr Iain Dobie stated that the Council would not fund a 'shovel ready' scheme in his division, as well as not committing to priority schemes, or additional active travel schemes. He asked if the member was embarrassed by how little the administration was giving to active travel.

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor (Cabinet Member Environment and Planning)

The Cabinet Member reiterated that the Gloucester to Cheltenham scheme amounted to over £10million investment and suggested that the Member's scheme was not 'shovel ready'; and still had issues to resolve.

Question 10: Cllr Iain Dobie outlined that at the Joint Health and Care Scrutiny and Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny meeting it had been proposed and agreed, that the Council would take the lead on compiling an account of how Gloucestershire had responded to the pandemic. He asked if the County Council would also include how it had handled the first phase of that including the approach with care homes.

Response by: Cllr Tim Harman (Cabinet Member Public Health and Communities)

The Cabinet Member stated that the account would be looking at the whole picture. It had been noted at the meeting that there was an audit trail of reports that had come to scrutiny and cabinet throughout the period. He paid tribute to the amazing work carried out by the Council and NHS and stated that alongside that there would be lessons to be learned.

Question 11: Cllr Iain Dobie asked whether the Cabinet Member would share the results and conclusions of the latest version of the Containment and Outbreak Management Plan?

Response by: Cllr Tim Harman (Cabinet Member Public Health and Communities)

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The Cabinet Member stated that he would share what he was able to more widely would be and noted the item on the agenda later in the meeting. He explained that the Council worked closely with partners and Districts as well as through the Engagement Board.

Question 12: Cllr Nigel Robbins asked whether more detailed figures could be provided in relation to adult social care savings. He stated that Annex 1.1 of the report did not provide figures. He asked for them in the new few days.

Response by: Cllr Carole Allaway Martin

The Cabinet Member stated that she hadn't appreciated how little was in the document and that the additional breakdown list on the savings that had been provided to scrutiny members had been comparable with other directorates. Many of the themes were still developing and when more information was available it would be provided.

Question 17: Cllr Nigel Robbins referred to specific reductions in the research fund in the HealthWatch contract and asked for figures that would help members judge whether it had been providing good value for money and whether withdrawing funding had been a good decision or not?

Response by: Cllr Kathy Williams

More details would be provided. It was noted that staff were working in relation to the pandemic and so that was the priority, so the figures would be provided when they had an opportunity to do so.

5. Scrutiny Task Group Report - Public Participation

Cllr Shaun Parsons presented the report outlining the recommendations made by the group. He spoke briefly on the use of technology for virtual meetings.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne thanked members for the report and stated that the recommendations were a good framework to take this forward to improve engagement opportunities. A response would be provided.

6. Scrutiny Task Group Report - Taxi Licensing

Cabinet noted the report from the task group, which had been chaired by Cllr Kate Haigh. Nigel Moor thanked the members for the report, noting the recommendations and confirming that a written response would be provided. Cllr Patrick Molyneux, stated that the report had been received by the Joint Economic Growth Committee as it included recommendations for District Councils.

7. Recommendation to Council - Medium Term Financial Strategy and Council Strategy 2021-22

Cllr Lynden Stowe, Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, presented for approval, the Council Strategy, the Medium Term Financial Strategy, (MTFS), and the final revenue and capital budget proposal for 2021/22, for recommendation to County Council on 17 February 2021.

In making his recommendations, Cllr Stowe highlighted that the budget represented an increase in revenue spending of around £13m. Referring to Children's Services he outlined that there was a continuing increase in the numbers of children being looked after by the Council. He explained that the budget was about investing in people as well as investing in 'place'. Embedded within the budget was the response to climate change and he stated that since 2006 the Council had cut corporate CO2 emissions by 97%. He referred to the commitment to plant 35 million trees in ten years. The strategy was now more explicit regarding the response to climate change in response to the points raised by scrutiny.

He outlined the current financial pressures leading to a £1.7 million overspend but stated that the figure was continuing to improve and senior management understood the need to reduce it further.

Cllr Shaun Parsons brought members attention to the minutes and summary from the budget scrutiny session held by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He thanked all the Cabinet Members and Officers who were in attendance. It had provided an opportunity for members to clarify points and gain a greater understanding of the budget.

Cabinet Members thanked Cllr Stowe for his commitment to the budget, prudent financial management and for providing a budget that would respond to climate change. They commented on how the budget would provide all the elements to support their portfolios in particular in children services and in adult social care. It was stated that national funding had been provided to help support the Council during the Covid-19 pandemic. Delivery in relation to Highways and the £150m investment had continued throughout the year despite the challenges of the pandemic. Members noted the investment in flood alleviation, with the Cabinet Member thanking highways officers for their hard work and support.

The Leader of Council thanked Cllr Stowe and reflected on the funding from national government that had supported the Council in relation to the pandemic. He stated that the settlement reflected the amount of work carried out by local government and the challenges going forward. He emphasised the importance of the investments made by the Council and the way that funding was used to provide real investment in the front line and in community infrastructure. He outlined one amendment to the budget relating to inconsistencies to the target date for achieving a carbon neutral county, confirming that those would be amended to reflect the 2045 commitment.

Having considered all of the information, including the outcomes of the council's formal budget consultation, the due regard statement relating to the decision and the observations from the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee meeting on 7 January 2021, Cabinet noted the reasons for the recommendations and,

RESOLVED to:-

1. To approve the Refreshed Council Strategy for submission to County Council (Appendix 1).
2. To approve changes to the draft budget and to approve the MTFS and final revenue and capital budget for 2021/22 for recommendation to County Council, including all of the proposals set out in the annexes of the detailed MTFS (Appendix 2).
3. To consider the outcome of the budget consultation as set out in Appendix 3 and the report from the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) in Appendix 4.
4. To note the schools funding allocations, the provisional local government finance settlement and forecast reserve movements as summarised in this report and set out in the MTFS.
5. To recommend to Council a revenue budget of £481.755 million, a band D council tax of £1,409.22 and consequential precepts on District Councils.
6. To note the Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy & Investment Strategy as set out in Annexes 7 & 10 of the detailed MTFS.
7. To note the Risk Management Policy Statement & Strategy as set out in Annex 11 of the detailed MTFS.

8. Financial Monitoring Report

Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, Cllr Lynden Stowe, gave an update on the year-end forecasts for the County Council's Revenue and Capital Budgets 2020/21.

The forecast revenue year end position as at end November 2020 (Period 8) was a £1.730 million overspend all of which was non Covid-19 related. This was an improvement of the position reported to Cabinet in December, which was £4.461m overspend

A balanced position was forecast in relation to Covid-19 expenditure and income.

He emphasised that the monitoring of overspending was having a positive impact with work being carried out to produce a balance position.

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The forecast Capital year end position was £123.280 million – this reflected in year forecast slippage of £183k.

In total an additional £3.086 million increase in the capital programme was recommended for approval in this report.

Having considered all of the information, Cabinet noted the report and,

RESOLVED to:

1. Note the forecast revenue year end position based on actual expenditure as at the end of November 2020 and December 2020 (Period 9) forecasts for the 2020/21 financial year including Covid-19 forecast is an overspend of £1.730 million, all of which relates to non Covid-19 expenditure, as we are forecasting a balanced position in relation to covid expenditure and income.

2. Note the forecast capital year end position as at the end of November 2020 of £123.280 million against the current budget of £123.463 million.

3. Approve the £3.086 million increase to the capital programme as outlined in section B of the report.

9. Containment Outbreak Management Fund

The Leader of Council noted that the figures for Gloucestershire had exceeded 1,000 deaths related to Covid-19. He noted that in the future there would be time for the Council and partners to remember all of those names and he expressed his sadness. A moment of silence was observed.

Cllr Tim Harman, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities, sought Cabinet's approval for the allocation of the Local Authority Contain Outbreak Management Fund.

It was explained that the report asked for approval in delegating individual spending decisions relating to the allocation of the COMF to the Cabinet Member and the Executive Director of Adult Services and Public Health in consultation with the Cabinet Member. The allocation was linked to the Tier system and detailed within the report.

The indicative budget was set out across heading areas defined by the Department for Health and Social Care. Funding would be allocated to initiatives tackling Covid 19 and the effects on the communities of Gloucestershire. This included projects focussed on prevention of the disease and resources to aid compliance with the regulations The Cabinet Member outlined that this included an additional £200,000 for the purchase of IT equipment for young people that needed support. Cllr Dave Norman provided a commitment that the Fire and Rescue Service would get

involved in the distribution of equipment. Cllr Richard Boyles detailed the work being done in Children's Services to identify those children that needed resources such as laptops and connectivity over the lockdown periods.

Members noted the Due Regard Statement accompanying the report.

Having considered all of the information, Cabinet noted the report and,

RESOLVED to:

Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities and the Executive Director for Corporate Resources to allocate the Local Authority Contain Outbreak Management Fund in order to deliver the objectives in the Local Outbreak Management Plan in accordance with the Council's standing orders and procurement legislation.

10. Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan 2021-2041

Cllr Nigel Moor, Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning, set out the updates made to the draft LTP following public consultation and sought Cabinet's approval to take forward for proposed adoption at County Council in March 2021, the Gloucestershire LTP (2020-2041) as set out in *Appendix A*.

Gloucestershire's LTP had been reviewed and a public consultation on the draft document was held in early 2020. The stakeholder feedback received was largely positive and covered themes such as improved connectivity, the environment and scheme delivery. A key comment from the public consultation was that the LTP document was too long and cumbersome to navigate.

The Council had responded to stakeholder feedback and revised the draft LTP to shorten and re-structure it, without loss of the overall policy context, and within the parameters of the public consultation and the requirements of the Integrated Sustainability Assessment (ISA) process. In addition, an LTP Summary – 'At a Glance' document would be produced.

The revised LTP set out the commitment to respond to climate change, bringing forward the LTP target to 2045 and recognised the need for further supporting work to achieve this commitment. This supported GCC's decision to sign up to the UK100 Pledge and adopt the pledge guidance to be a net zero county by 2045.

The LTP put a stronger emphasis on active and sustainable transport schemes. There were now in total 152 LTP schemes; 57 were Active Travel and Health & Wellbeing, 38 were Public Transport, and 57 were Highway schemes which were primarily historic schemes or schemes that mitigate adopted Local Plans. This included vital, strategic highway infrastructure, such as the A417 Missing Link, M5 J10, M5 J9 and A46 improvements.

The Cabinet member outlined a number of policies and initiatives that had already been identified and were starting to be delivered. He thanked officers for their work in preparing the plan.

Members endorsed the plan and commented on the success of existing and proposed schemes and projects in reducing carbon emissions. The Leader thanked the Cabinet Member for his commitment and expertise in this area and stated that the plan showed the ambition of the County Council.

Having considered all of the information, Cabinet noted the report and,

RESOLVED to:

Approve the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan (2020-2041) for recommendation to the County Council at its meeting on 17th March 2021.

11. Gloucestershire Economic Recovery Plan 2021-24

Cllr Patrick Molyneux, Cabinet Member for Economy, Education and Skills, presented the Gloucestershire County Council Covid-19 Economic Recovery and Action Plan and sought approval of the plan, action plan and associated resource requirements.

It was explained that Covid-19 and the associated restrictions had had a serious impact on Gloucestershire's economy. The recovery plan set out the particular challenges faced by Gloucestershire and identified the ways in which strong local leadership and investment could make a difference to the county's residents, businesses and communities.

The Member thanked partners and the Gloucestershire Joint Economic Growth Committee and Joint Scrutiny Committee for their work.

The plan identified three themes against which the County Council would deliver positive outcomes: people, place and connectivity, skills and employment and infrastructure economy and growth. The themes were intended to complement the plans and actions taken at a locality level across the districts of Gloucestershire and GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership. The action plan set out interventions to be taken in the short, medium and longer term. It was explained that the aim was to deliver a well-connected low carbon county.

Members emphasised the importance of the plan given the impact of the pandemic on people's lives. The plan covered the needs of young people and adults and the importance of the 'skills' and 're-skilling' agenda. Collaboration, communication and confidence was important in ensuring the success of the plan.

Members noted the Due Regard Statement accompanying the report.

Having considered all of the information, Cabinet noted the report and,

RESOLVED to:

Approve the Gloucestershire County Council Covid-19 Economic Recovery and Action Plan.

12. Preparing for Adulthood Strategy

Cllrs Richard Boyle, Kathy Williams and Carole Allaway Martin sought Cabinet's approval for the Preparation for Adulthood Strategy for Gloucestershire.

It was explained that the strategy had been developed jointly with adult services, partners and the parent forum and focused on preparing young people for adulthood rather than transferring young people into adult services. It was acknowledged that not all young people would meet the threshold for adult services and where this was the case the Council would ensure that young people and their families understood the options available to them when they left children's services. This would include opportunities for education, community engagement and housing.

Gloucestershire's guiding principles for effective transitions to adulthood were:

- Early identification and planning
- An holistic, young person focused approach
- Active involvement in young people and their families
- Raising aspirations
- Provision of information and advocacy
- Flexibility in transfer arrangements
- Working together to ensure integrated streamlined assessment and planning processes across all agencies.

Members commented that the strategy was long overdue and very welcome to help support young people as they transitioned into adulthood.

Members noted the Due Regard Statement accompanying the report.

Having considered all of the information, Cabinet noted the report and,

RESOLVED to:

(a) Approve and adopt the Preparation for Adulthood Strategy set out in the Appendix.

(b) Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Children's Services to implement the Preparation for Adulthood Strategy, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

13. School Admission Arrangements or 202/23 Academic Year

Cllr Richard Boyles and Cllr Patrick Molyneux sought approval for the School Co-ordination and admission arrangements set out within the report and its appendices.

It was explained that there needed to be a transparent, consistent system in which parents and carers could have confidence in. The Government regulated admissions through its statutory School Admissions Code 2014.

Each year the council had to determine the admission arrangements for entry to community and voluntary controlled schools in the following academic year, every year. The 2022 admission arrangements were almost unchanged from 2016, when a full consultation was completed. There were no significant changes to the proposed admission arrangements for 2022/2023 and therefore full public consultation was not required by law. It was recommended that Cabinet approve the proposed admission arrangements which had previously been subject to consultation.

The council had to also prepare a co-ordinated admissions scheme for all maintained schools and academies so that parents only needed to apply once – this included applications for infant/ primary schools for the reception year, transfer from infant to junior school and secondary schools at year 7. It was recommended that Cabinet approve the proposed admissions scheme, which had previously been subject to consultation.

Members noted the Due Regard Statement accompanying the report.

Having considered all of the information, Cabinet noted the report and,

RESOLVED to:

Approve the School Co-ordination and Admission Arrangements as set out in the documents referred to below:

Appendix 1 The Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for 2022 for all Primary/Infant/Junior/Secondary Schools and Academies

Appendix 2 The Admissions Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary/Infant/Junior Schools and Secondary School for 2022 (Including Published Admission Numbers)

Appendix 3 Protocol for pupil admittance over published admission number for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2022

Appendix 4 School Admissions guidance for children of UK service personnel and crown servants for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

Minutes subject to their acceptance as a correct record at the next meeting

Leader of Council

Meeting concluded at 11.40 am