



Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of meeting of the Cabinet

Held on **WEDNESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2017**

**PETER BUNGARD
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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

CABINET MINUTES	Gloucestershire County Council
13 December 2017	

Present:

Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	Leader of the Council
Cllr Richard Boyles	Children and Young People
Cllr Tim Harman	Public Health and Communities
Cllr Nigel Moor	Fire, Planning and Infrastructure
Cllr Vernon Smith	Highways and Flood
Cllr Lynden Stowe	Economy, Skills and Growth
Cllr Ray Theodoulou	Finance and Change
Cllr Kathy Williams	Adult Social Care Delivery

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Roger Wilson, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Commissioning.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2017 were confirmed and signed as an accurate record of that meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting,

4. Questions at Cabinet Meetings

Public Questions

No public questions were considered at the meeting.

Member Questions

A total of 14 member questions were submitted in advance of the meeting.

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Please refer to the link below to view the responses to the questions: -

<http://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/documents/b13851/Member%20Questions%20and%20Answers%20-%202013%20December%202017%20Wednesday%2013-Dec-2017%2010.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=9>

If you are unable to access the document at the above link, please go to the link below and select the 'Cabinet Questions and Answers' PDF document at the top of the web page: -

<http://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=8412&x=1>

The following supplementary questions were asked at the meeting.

Question 1: Cllr Iain Dobie

Agenda Item 9: To establish a new Secondary School for Cheltenham
(Pages 145 to 154 of the agenda pack)

Cllr Dobie referred to the response to the question "I know Cllr Dobie has previously suggested county council use land it owns in Leckhampton as a site for a new academy" and stated that this was untrue and had never been suggested.

Cllr Dobie explained that, to build on Leckhampton Fields was a highly controversial matter within his division, and by using such words, Cllr Stowe was mischievously seeking to hand his political opponents a stick with which to beat him with during the upcoming Cheltenham Borough Council elections. Cllr Dobie asked Cllr Stowe to agree to delete the words from the formal record?"

Response by: Cllr Lynden Stowe: Cabinet Member for Economy, Skills and Growth

Cllr Stowe advised that the comments referred to in his response had been taken from the minutes of a meeting of full council last year. Cllr Stowe suggested this should have been the time to challenge the comments and agreed to forward a copy of the words to Cllr Dobie. Cllr Stowe suggested Cllr Dobie engage with Democratic Services, if not satisfied with this response.

Question 2: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

Agenda Item 5: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 (Pages 9 to 114)

Cllr Hodgkinson stated that Council Tax had been increased by 4 per cent and asked if the Cabinet Member felt the 9.4 % reduction in the Central Government Funding was acceptable? He also asked if Cllr Theodoulou agreed with the reduction?

Response by: Cllr Ray Theodoulou: Cabinet Member for Finance and Change

Cllr Theodoulou stated “We are, where we are. If there is no money, we cannot spend it”. Making references to how he felt the position reflected the real world, Cllr Theodoulou referred to the sorrow and misery brought about the previous Labour Government overspend.

Question 3: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

Agenda Item 5: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 (Pages 9 to 114)

Cllr Hodgkinson enquired what specifically the additional money from the transfer of funds to the transformation reserve would be used for in respect of the A417. Cllr Hodgkinson related his question to the fatal accident on the A417 that day.

Response by: Cllr Ray Theodoulou: Cabinet Member for Finance and Change

Cllr Theodoulou informed Cllr Hodgkinson that the reserve would be used to pump and prime start up points for work on the A417. He advised members that the Prime Minister had recently expressed her support for the project and that he believed the project would go ahead.

Question 4: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

Agenda Item 5: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 (Pages 9 to 114)

Cllr Hodgkinson stated that the Highways Local Budget was to be reduced from £30k to £10k per member. Cllr Hodgkinson asked the Cabinet Member to justify the reduction.

Response by: Cllr Ray Theodoulou: Cabinet Member for Finance and Change

Cllr Theodoulou explained that the £30k funding allocated via the Highways Local Scheme was still there, and would continue to be available to improve roads and other local issues. As stated during previous discussions with Cllr Hodgkinson, Cllr Theodoulou felt there was a real need to promote community engagement. He also felt there was a need to comply with government legislation. Cllr Theodoulou considered this a good compromise.

Question 5: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

Agenda Item 5: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 (Pages 9 to 114)

Cllr Hodgkinson noted that the general reserves fund was anticipated to reduce to £18m and enquired, how, with the need to use more reserves, this could be sustainable if the reserves continued to reduce?

Response by: Cllr Ray Theodoulou: Cabinet Member for Finance and Change

Cllr Theodoulou advised of the numerous calls on reserves, including those from the Liberal Democrats. He clarified how important it was to be careful with the council's spending and that general reserves should be between 4 and 6 per cent. However, if costs overran this year, reducing general fund balances even further, it may be necessary to use reserves. .

Question 6: Cllr Jeremy Hilton

Agenda Item 5: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 (Pages 9 to 114)

Cllr Hilton clarified that his question referred to the Highways Local Scheme and not the Lengthsman or the Growing our Communities Schemes. Cllr Hilton stated that the Lengthsman Scheme did not work in his area and that he was very disappointed about the proposed cuts in the Highways Local Scheme.

Cllr Hilton asked why the cabinet member considered it necessary to reduce funding from £30K per county division per year to £10K per annum?

Response by: Cllr Vernon Smith: Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood

Cllr Smith informed Cllr Hilton that the Lengthsman Scheme would continue as part of the new Highways Contract, a decision welcomed by many Councillors.

He said that the Highways Local Scheme was a fantastic scheme. Overall, each member would receive £60k for their division, more than the amount allocated by the Highways Local Scheme. Cllr Smith advised that this provided an opportunity for members to decide where they wanted to spend more money in their areas and to prioritise local needs.

Question 7: Cllr Jeremy Hilton

Agenda Item 5: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 (Pages 9 to 114)

Cllr Hilton noted the breakdown in Public Health spending given in the answer to Question 13. Questioning the response to this question, Cllr Hilton said re-commissioning was meaningless without the details on how it was achieved and asked if he could be provided with specific details on how the services listed had been re-commissioned to save £640,000?

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

Cllr Harman stated that re-commissioning included re-shaping services, using the money more effectively and in different ways. On visits to local services, Cllr Harman had been impressed by the high standards being delivered.

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Question 9: Cllr Jeremy Hilton

Agenda Item 5: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 (Pages 9 to 114)

Cllr Hilton suggested that the projected savings were more modest than those that had been suggested by the Leader three years ago on BBC Radio Gloucestershire.

Noting that the Strategic Waste Reserve had been £12m in March 2012 and was set to rise to nearly £38m by March 2018, an increase of just under £26m in six years, Cllr Hilton repeated his question and asked if Cllr Moor planned to increase the reserve further during the life of the council?

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor: Cabinet Member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure

Cllr Moor stated Cllr Hilton had received the answer to this question many times before.

Question 10: Cllr Jeremy Hilton

Agenda Item 5: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 (Pages 9 to 114)

Cllr Hilton enquired if budgeted savings of £167,000 in respect of household recycling centres included reduced opening hours during winter months?

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor: Cabinet Member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure

Cllr Moor referred to his original answer and confirmed no decision had been made. A review of household recycling centre opening hours would be made next year.

Question 11: Cllr Jeremy Hilton

Agenda Item 5: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 (Pages 9 to 114)

Cllr Hilton noted the opening hours of the Hempsted Household Recycling Centre, (open daily from 9:00 am to 6:15 pm except for Christmas Day and New Year's Day), and questioned why cabinet would want to reduce the opening hours at the centre. Cllr Hilton enquired what impact this might have on staff contracts?

Response by: Cllr Nigel Moor: Cabinet Member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure

Cllr Moor expressed his disappointment at Cllr Hilton's question and said the comments were unnecessary and would raise anxieties amongst operatives.

Question 13: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

Agenda Item 5: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 (Pages 9 to 114)

Cllr Hodgkinson noted proposed budget reductions of 13 per cent in Sexual Health, 33 per cent in NHS Health Checks and 11 per cent in Public Mental Health. Cllr Hodgkinson asked, taking into account repeated announcements from the Prime Minister and the Government about the importance of tackling mental health, how the cabinet member could justify the cuts in the mental health spending?

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

Cllr Harman advised Cllr Hodgkinson that the services he referred to were in the process of being re-commissioned.

Acknowledging the importance of mental health, the Leader of the Council informed members that the council did a great deal more than was suggested by the Public Health contribution.

Members noted that at the last cabinet meeting, it had been announced that the council was working on an exercise, (including a special meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board in January 2018), to review the effectiveness of the council in providing public health services.

Question 14: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

Agenda Item 5: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 (Pages 9 to 114)

Cllr Hodgkinson expressed concern that, within the Highways Budget there was nothing to rectify the major issues on the old A40 near Northleach and on the A435 from Cheltenham to Charlton Kings. Cllr Hodgkinson asked why there no specific budget had been set to address these issues.

Response by: Cllr Vernon Smith: Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood

Cllr Smith hoped Cllr Hodgkinson agreed with him that the draft budget presented very positive highways proposals. In respect of the old A40, he said that the issue related to a landslip, classified as 'catastrophic', for which further geological surveys were required. On the A435, there had been 4 different landslips, all of which were being looked at. Cllr Smith explained, it was very difficult to put a specific amount in the budget for either of these issues until the surveys had been completed and a decision on what solutions there might be.

Oral Questions

One oral question was asked at the meeting.

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Cllr Tom Coole, (Gloucester City Councillor for Matson and Robinswood and Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the City Council), asked the following question:

Item 9: To establish a new Secondary School for Cheltenham

Would the Cabinet Member: Economy, Skills and Growth consider publishing the feasibility study carried out on expanding existing schools, including Bournside, Balcarras and Millbrook, as an alternative to the proposals laid out within the report?

Cllr Lynden Stowe, Cabinet Member for Economy, Skills and Growth, confirmed there would be a review of these schools, (plus other schools), in Spring 2018. The data used during the feasibility study was robust, drawing information from a wide source. This was backed up by strong evidence.

Cllr Stowe said he would take on board Cllr Coole's question and would advise of the outcome of the study after the meeting.

Written response provided to Cllr Coole by email after the meeting: -

Further to your question to Cabinet, I can confirm that the additional assessment information relating to the potential expansion of other Cheltenham Schools is being collated into a single document and will be published on the Council's dedicated webpage for [Cheltenham School Places](#) next week (15 January 2018).

The Strategic Review of Gloucester place planning is being undertaken in the Spring and will be made available upon completion.

5. Medium Term Financial Strategy - 2018/19 to 2020/21

Cllr Ray Theodoulou, Cabinet Member for Finance and Change presented, for consultation and scrutiny, the proposed detailed budget 2018/19 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy, (MTFS), for the period covering 2018/19 to 2020/21.

Cllr Theodoulou referred to the detailed analysis sections of the report, (Annexes 1 to 8), and advised members that the council would need to be ready to respond positively to any amendments required as a result of the financial settlement due the following day and to meet any educational needs arising from the work in response to the Ofsted Inspection earlier in the year.

He explained that the Draft MTFS and budget proposal 2018/19 had been prepared using best estimates from available data, pending the provisional financial settlement due in December. Any amendments required as a result of the financial settlement would be included in the final budget document submitted to County Council in February 2018. Alongside the settlement, it was anticipated there would be other significant changes that could impact on Local Government that could potentially affect the financial forecasts. These included the move to 100%

Business Rate Retention and proposed Business Rate Pilots, and the Fair Funding Review.

Cllr Theodoulou reported a proposed revenue budget for 2018/19 of £407.16 million, a net reduction of £0.54 million from 2017/18. He said the revenue budget was made up of £28.72 million of investment in services, to be offset by £29.26 million of savings and efficiencies.

The £407.16 million budget was based on a 1.99% Council Tax increase. In addition, there would be a continuation of the 'adult social care precept' allowing upper-tier authorities to increase council tax levels by up to 2%, (an increase to specifically fund Adult Social Care Services). The 2% adult social care precept was anticipated to raise an additional £5.42 million for Adult Social Care.

Cllr Theodoulou explained that the proposed budget contained provision to fund key budget pressures, including unavoidable contractual inflation; nationally agreed pay awards; and increases in demand led services. In addition, the budget included funding for key administration priorities and additional funding for Children & Families, following the recent OFSTED inspection.

Cllr Theodoulou stated that the highest areas of risk continued to be the council's demand led services, in particular; care for older and vulnerable people, and Children in Care, where demand continued to rise. It was agreed the recent Ofsted Judgment was having a notable impact. Although additional resources were being invested in these areas under proposed 2018/19 budget options, funding was limited by the core funding and local taxation alternatives available to the Council.

Investment in Adult Social Care included funding aimed at addressing the impact of demographic influences; the National Living Wage; duties under the Care Act, (no longer funded by a specific grant); investments in employment and transitions for those with learning disabilities, and in additional approved mental health professionals.

Budget risks had been considered during preparation of the budget, in particular, funding constraints going forward. The level of reserves had been examined and would continue to be closely monitored during the period of preparing the MTFs, in the context of protecting the Council from existing and future liabilities, particularly the financial risks associated with backdating sleep-in allowances following recent case law; backdating Ordinary Residence cases and the higher than anticipated pay awards.

Cllr Theodoulou advised that balancing the budget during a period of financial constraint produced a series of major challenges. Whilst robust management plans had been put into place to deliver savings, (evidenced by performance during the past three years), it was inevitable there would be an element of residual risk.

Consideration to funding pressures within the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) High Needs Block Funding were noted. Cllr Theodoulou informed members that, whilst the Council had put in place a programme to resolve this issue, if the High Needs

Block continued to overspend, initial funding would need to be taken from DSG balances, followed by other measures put in place aimed at reducing expenditure. Ultimately, if such measures were unsuccessful, there could be a risk this particular liability could fall on the Council.

Referring to Paragraph K of the report, Cllr Theodoulou highlighted the elements of risk associated with the two largest budgets, (Adult Social Care and Children's Services), and informed members that reserves were anticipated to fall slightly. In spite of this, at 4.56% of the net budget, (2017/18), this was considered acceptable.

Additional one-off investments

Cllr Theodoulou reported a number of one-off investments within the 2018/19 budget proposals, funded from the Transformation Reserve.

These included:-

£1.59 million - Growing Our Communities Fund

The proposed £1.590 million reflects a sum of £30,000 available to each Councillor over a three year period, (2018/19 to 2020/21), to fund community based investments

£0.53 million – Lengthsman Scheme

Following the success of the Lengthsman Scheme, and additional one off funding in 2017/18, the MTFS proposed an additional one off £0.53 million in 2018/19 to continue the scheme, after which time, the scheme will become incorporated into the new Highways Contract.

£2.74 million - A417 Reserve

Given the Cabinet's commitment to the £4 million support to the A417 Highways Safety Improvement Work, a further £2.74 million was proposed to add to the A417 Reserve, creating a total funding commitment of £4.0 million. It was noted that the Prime Minister had been made aware of this intention and had supported the proposal.

Capital

The Capital Programme provided estimated investment for the county totaling £490.09 million over the life of the programme. This will be made up of £167.59 million of new capital investment in 2018/19, and £322.50 million of existing capital schemes. The main investment related to Communities and Infrastructure (£256.92 million), Schools and facilities for children (£149.86 million), Business Support (£58.84 million), and Adults (£24.47 million).

Cllr Theodoulou informed members that the proposed capital programme included a significant amount of local investment, with the vast majority of projects funded from government grants or capital financing budgets. New internal borrowing was only planned for two major investment projects; a new Secondary School for Cheltenham, (the council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school

placements); and Highways investment to fulfil the manifesto promise of investing £150 million in highways over the next 5 year period.

Council Strategy 2018/19

Cllr Theodoulou advised that, alongside the MTFS, a refreshed Council Strategy would be considered at the cabinet meeting in January 2018. (The existing strategy runs to March 2018). The refreshed strategy will set out how the council intends to address the issues in the short-term, as well as setting out a clear directive for the next generation. The strategy will describe how the council intends to deliver the 5 priorities reflected in Section B of the MTFS, and how it will measure and report progress.

Consultation

Following publication of the budget proposals, consultation would be launched between 14 December 2017 and 17 January 2018. Stakeholders to be asked to submit their views on overall priorities, council tax levels, Adult Social Care Levy and the council's 2018/19 budget proposals. This would take into consideration announcement of the provisional settlement expected in January 2018.

A Due Regard Statement would be updated in January 2018, to include the evidence base about service users and workforce, and final budget proposals.

Cllr Theodoulou concluded by stating the council would continue to strive to become more self-reliant. It would also continue to dispose of assets to reduce external debts. The proposed budget was tight, but achievable. Along with continued self-discipline, the budget provided an opportunity for much needed investment.

Leader of the Council, Cllr Mark Hawthorne, highlighted the challenges of producing a realistic and manageable budget. The Leader stated how important it was to focus on protecting the vulnerable of Gloucestershire and to continue to invest in those service areas experiencing the most challenges, namely Adult Care and Children's Services.

Noting the £150 million commitment for highways in the Conservative Manifesto, Cllr Hawthorne stated this would bring huge improvements to Gloucestershire's infrastructure.

Recognising the huge amount of work involved in responding to the requirements of the Ofsted Inspection, the Leader thanked Cllr Richard Boyles for his hard work and commitment, following his appointment as Cabinet Member: Children and Young People.

The Leader also recognised the ongoing support for the most vulnerable, which had always been a clear commitment and would continue.

Cabinet members summarised the key investments within their budget portfolios. Speaking positively about the proposals, members confirmed that the financial commitments within their budgets were in response to meeting the budget challenges and priorities for their areas.

Having considered all of the information, including known proposals and the reasons for the recommendations, Cabinet noted the report and,

RESOLVED to: -

Approve for consultation and scrutiny, the proposed detailed budget for 2018/19 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy, (including Dedicated Schools Grant, which will be considered by the Schools Forum), and the Treasury Management Strategy.

6. Financial Monitoring Report 2017/18

Cllr Ray Theodoulou, Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, gave an update on the year-end forecast for the 2017/18 County Council's Revenue and Capital Budgets.

Cllr Theodoulou reported a forecast revenue year end position with an underspend of £0.214 million, including a number of significant variances within the following budget areas:-

The Adult Services Budget reported a forecast underspend at the year end of £0.420 million. (This was after making use of the Adult Social Care Levy and the Adult Social Care Support Grant). Cllr Theodoulou proposed drawing down £0.921 million from the Ordinary Residence Reserve to fund any backdated Ordinary Residence cases.

The Children and Families Budget reported a forecast overspend of £9.38 million. Cllr Theodoulou explained that this position was prior to applying £3.05 million from the Vulnerable Children's Reserve. When applied, this would reduce the overspend to £6.33 million. It was noted that the increase in the overspend from the previous report was due to increased costs for safeguarding staff and youth support services. Members were advised that the financial pressures were largely due to the increase in the number of children coming into care and the increasing pressure against external agency placement and safeguarding budgets. The number of children coming into care increased from 479 in April 2014 to 645 in October 2017.

Financial pressures within the Children and Families Budget were being offset by positive variances within corporate budgets.

Cllr Theodoulou reported a forecast capital year end position of £109.277 million against the re-profiled budget. The re-profiled capital budget for 2017/18 was £106.730 million, £13.993 million lower than the capital budget and after seeking new approvals at the cabinet meeting in November 2017.

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Cllr Theodoulou proposed increases totalling £0.136 million, achieved from a combination of revenue contributions and external contributions.

Cllr Theodoulou informed members that the current financial position was anticipated. If it should continue, it was likely the budget would result in a balanced budget.

Cllr Vernon Smith, Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood, expressed his appreciation and thanks to the Highway Team and to Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service for their commendable efforts during the recent period of bad weather.

Having considered all of the information, including known proposals and the reasons for the recommendations, Cabinet noted the report and,

RESOLVED to: -

- 1. Note the forecast revenue year end position, as at the end of October 2017 for the 2017/18 financial year, of a net £0.214 million underspend.*
- 2. Approve the drawdown of £0.921million from the Ordinary Residence (OR) Reserve to fund a back dated OR payment*
- 3. Note the forecast capital year end position, as at the end of October 2017, of £109.277 million against a re-profiled budget of £106.730 million resulting from additional planned scheme spend of £2.546 million with additional funding expected to be confirmed within the next month*
- 4. Note a capital budget re-profiling exercise that has taken place since the previous Cabinet Finance Monitoring report – as outlined in Section B of this report. This re-profiling has been approved in accordance with the formal scheme of delegation to officers and there is no impact on the overall value of the approved capital programme.*
- 5. Approve the revenue contribution to capital of £0.123 million from the Highways Locals Budget to the Highway Capital Budget to support the completion of capital schemes*
- 6. Approve the allocation of £0.013 million Section 106 developer contributions towards St Paul's Primary garden room capital project*
- 7. Note the overall increase to the Capital programme taking into account the above changes of £0.136 million*

7. Procurement of Corporate Insurances and Related Procurement of a Broker

Cllr Ray Theodoulou, Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, sought approval to tender for the council's corporate insurance policies and to award a contract for such policies with effect from 24 June 2018. Cllr Theodoulou also sought approval

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to award a contract for insurance brokerage services to the incumbent supplier of such services, (to specifically assist in the procurement of the contract for corporate services and claims handling).

Cllr Theodoulou confirmed that the council's current insurance contract was due to expire on 23 June, 2018. The policies being tendered included; Property, Liability, Motor, Fidelity Guarantee, Personal Accident, School Journey and Travel and associated claims handling.

Although several options had been considered, Cllr Theodoulou advised of only one serious option; to tender and make a direct award through the Crown Commercial Service Insurance Framework to Marsh, the Council's existing insurance broker.

The cabinet member expressed concern at the reduced number of companies currently wishing to tender.

Having considered all of the information, including known proposals and the reasons for the recommendations, Cabinet noted the report and,

RESOLVED to authorise the Director of Strategic Finance to: -

a) Conduct a legally compliant competitive procurement process through the Crown Commercial Service's Insurance Framework (RM3731) for the supply of Corporate Insurance policies; and for the Director of Strategic Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, to award the contract to commence on 24 June 2018 and continue for a period of 3 + 2 years or 5 years if more cost efficient, in accordance with the terms of the tender process; and to

b) Make a legally compliant direct award of a contract for brokerage services to the incumbent supplier of such services (namely " Marsh Limited") through the Crown Commercial Service's (CCS) RM3731 framework, specifically to assist in the procurement of the contract for Corporate Insurances and claims handling.

8. Energy Contract Award (Electricity) for Gloucestershire County Council Estate and Schools (including Academies)

Cllr Ray Theodoulou, Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, sought approval to modify the term of the contract for the supply of electricity to the Council and participating schools.

Cllr Theodoulou advised members of the council's success in procuring energy using a public buying organisation, (combining the council's consumption with other public bodies and negotiating optimum rates for all participants).

With the contract due to expire in September 2018, the council was now in a position to extend the arrangement for a further year. Cllr Theodoulou explained that, to re-procure a short-term interim contract at this present time would incur

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significant economic inconvenience and duplication of cost, hence the decision to seek to modify the current contract to run from 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019.

Having considered all of the information, including known proposals and the reasons for the recommendations, Cabinet noted the report and,
RESOLVED to: -

Authorise the Director of Strategic Finance, in compliance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015, to enter into negotiations and conclude an agreement with WME to modify the term of the current electricity energy contract to include the period 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019 inclusive.

9. Establish a new Secondary School for Cheltenham

Cllr Lynden Stowe, Cabinet Member for Economy, Skills and Growth, presented a report on a proposal to establish a new secondary school for Cheltenham.

Cllr Stowe outlined the statutory requirement for the council to ensure sufficient school places are available within the county for every child of school age whose parents/carers wish them to have one. Expressing his confidence in the integrity of the data obtained from a strategic review of secondary education for Cheltenham, Cllr Stowe confirmed there would be a shortage of secondary school places by 2019/20, increasing in 2021/22.

Proposing a £30 million capital investment for the establishment of a new school, Cllr Stowe said he believed the investment was the right decision for Cheltenham.

Following consideration of a number of sites for the school, Cllr Stowe confirmed that Cheltenham Borough Council had agreed that the preferred site of Farm Lane, Leckhampton would be included within the pre-submission for the consultation for the emerging Cheltenham Local Plan, (as agreed by Cheltenham Full Council the previous week).

Conscious of the sensitivity involved in the proposal and the potential for local concerns, Cllr Stowe outlined the criteria for the proposed site and the need to consult widely. Responding to questions, Cllr Stowe confirmed a good robust travel plan would be included in the planning process, with recommendations for walking and cycling routes as alternative modes of transport for travelling to and from school.

In presenting the information, Cllr Stowe proposed an amendment to recommendation 1) of the decision report, proposing that the establishment of the new secondary school be *subject to approved funding by Council in February 2018*. Recommendations 2 and 3 to remain unchanged, as set out by the report.

Having considered all of the information, including known proposals, the reasons for the recommendations, and the proposed amendment to recommendation 1;

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Cabinet noted the report and,

RESOLVED that: -

1. Cabinet approve the establishment of a new 900 place secondary school for Cheltenham families, subject to approved funding by Full Council in February 2018;

2. Cabinet delegate authority to the Head of Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy, Skills and Growth, to:

a) hold a free school presumption competition in accordance with the Department for Education's advice contained in, "The free school presumption" (February 2016).

b) upon conclusion of the competition, to recommend to the Secretary of State the findings of the Local Authority's assessment to enable her to decide upon the most suitable proposer to take forward the new free school

3. Cabinet delegate authority to the Head of Property Services to acquire land to establish a new 900 place school in Cheltenham, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change.

Note:

Nigel Riglar, Commissioning Director: Communities and Infrastructure, declared an interest in item 9 as Director of the Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust (CBAT). The Commissioning Director withdrew from the meeting for consideration of the item and confirmed he had been excluded from all previous discussions.

Leader of Council

Meeting concluded at 11.20 am