

CABINET	<i>Gloucestershire County Council</i>
14 October 2020	
Minutes	

PRESENT

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

1. Apologies

Cllr Vernon Smith.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 22 July 2020 were agreed as a correct record of that meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

4. Questions at Cabinet Meetings

A total of 11 member questions were submitted for consideration in advance of the meeting.

No public questions were submitted.

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

Please refer to the link here to view the responses to the questions.

The following supplementary questions were asked at the meeting.

Question 1: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

Agenda item 7: Cabinet Response to Council Motion 848 Tree Planting.

Cllr Hodgkinson asked why a higher tree planting figure was now being proposed after the suggestion made the previous year of planting 6 million trees had been dismissed.

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

Cllr Moor explained that at that time he had concerns about the financial implications of the commitment. Since then officers had carried out a great deal of work and there was a broad partnership in place that gave him the confidence to be ambitious. He added that this was not just about tree planting but also about woodland regeneration.

Question 2: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

Agenda item 7: Cabinet Response to Council Motion 848 Tree Planting.

Cllr Hodgkinson asked whether it had occurred to the Cabinet Member to start the work with partners when the suggestion of planting 6 million trees had been made the previous year?

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

Cllr Moor replied that officers had been working on this for a long time and had only just concluded the Gloucestershire Tree Strategy. He felt this was the right time to make the commitment.

Question 3: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

Agenda item 7: Cabinet Response to Council Motion 848 Tree Planting.

Cllr Hodgkinson asked if the Member could confirm that the Council would plant 1 million trees as part of the 35 million commitment.

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

Cllr Moor confirmed that this was the case.

Question 4: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

Agenda item 7: Cabinet Response to Council Motion 848 Tree Planting.

Cllr Hodgkinson asked how many trees the County Council had planted as part of its 1m commitment expressing concern about meeting this ambitious target.

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

Cllr Moor replied that he did not have the figures to hand but that currently tree planting had been impacted by a number of factors including the pandemic and he did not feel that was reflective of the trajectory of planting going forward.

Question 5: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

Agenda item 7: Cabinet Response to Council Motion 848 Tree Planting.

Cllr Hodgkinson asked what the early estimate was for the total costs across Gloucestershire of planting 35 million trees.

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

Cllr Moor replied that the Council was working with partners to calculate those costs and he would be bringing the results to council and cabinet subsequently.

Question 6: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

Agenda item 7: Cabinet Response to Council Motion 848 Tree Planting.

Cllr Hodgkinson stated that now was the time to plant trees when the ground was warm. There was a 6 month tree planting season and that worked out at 25,000 trees being planted each day. He asked where those trees would come from and how could we ensure this was realistic.

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

Cllr Moor explained that Forestry England was well advanced on their two major planting areas.

Question 7: Cllr Bernie Fisher

Agenda item 8: Real Time Passenger Information System

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

Cllr Fisher asked what impact the Covid-19 pandemic had had on the frequency of public transport use and what measures the Council was taken to encourage use.

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

Cllr Moor replied that the pandemic had had a devastating impact on the use of public transport. The Council had increased its financial support for community transport and commercial services.

Question 8: Cllr Bernie Fisher

Agenda item 8: Real Time Passenger Information System

Cllr Fisher asked for information on how the Council was doing in relation to increasing bus patronages and how best to understand the targets in place.

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

Cllr Moor replied that the target was to increase bus patronage and that Quarter 4 2019/20 showed more than 4.3m journeys a year on buses which was an increase since 2016 for the same quarter.

Question 9: Cllr Jeremy Hilton

Agenda item 7: Cabinet Response to Council Motion 848 Tree Planting.

Cllr Hilton asked if the Cabinet Member could confirm how many GCC personnel were responsible for trees along the highways network..

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

Cllr Moor replied that extensive work took place in this area but the most important work at the moment was on the Ash dieback programme.

Question 10: Cllr Jeremy Hilton

Agenda item 7: Cabinet Response to Council Motion 848 Tree Planting.

Cllr Hilton asked, of the trees felled last year, how many had the stumps 'ground out'? He provided an example from his own division of stumps that remained in the ground.

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

Cllr Moor advised the member to take up local issues with highways manager.

Question 11: Cllr Jeremy Hilton

Agenda item 7: Cabinet Response to Council Motion 848 Tree Planting.

Cllr Hilton asked what maintenance would be put in place for the trees that were being planted, providing examples of trees that were not being looked after appropriately.

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

Cllr Moor asked the member to contact him so he could follow up any issues he had.

5. Traffic enforcement camera contract

Cllr Dave Norman, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Parking and Libraries sought approval for the procurement of two contracts in relation to traffic enforcement cameras and maintenance that were used for enforcing bus lanes, cycle lanes, moving traffic and parking contraventions. Contract one related to a new contract to provide future traffic management hardware and software requirements. Contract two related to a direct award with the existing traffic management system provider to maintain existing hardware and software and last no longer than 5 years.

The value of the arrangement should not exceed £1.03m over the life of the contract and provision had been built into the decision to expand enforcement to include mobile enforcement vehicles, moving traffic contraventions and cycle lanes in line with the recent government announcements. Any expansion of camera enforcement activities would be subject to an options appraisal, communications strategy and Medium Term Financial Strategy capital funding bid at the appropriate time.

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

RESOLVED to: -

Delegate authority to the Executive Director: Economy, Environment and Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Public Protection, Libraries and Parking and Environment and Planning.

1. To conduct a competitive procurement process in respect of a contract for the supply and maintenance of traffic enforcement cameras and associated hardware and software. The proposed contract shall continue for an initial period of 5 years and include an option to extend its term for a further period of not more than 3 years.
2. To award such contract to the preferred tenderer.

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

3. To exercise the option to extend such contract for a further period of three years on the expiry of the initial five year term.
4. To enter into a 5 year contract via a direct award with the council's existing supplier of traffic enforcement equipment for the supply of maintenance and software services in respect of the council's current traffic enforcement cameras.

6. 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.

Cllr Stowe informed members that the total revenue year end position as at August 2020 (period 5) was a £9.948 million overspend. He referred members to the details outlined within the report. The forecast, excluding Covid-19 expenditure, was a £6.532 million overspend, largely due to a £9.410 million overspend in Children and Families which was partially offset by £2.651 million underspend in Technical and Countywide budgets.

Referring to the £3.4 million of the over spend relating to Covid -19, it was anticipated that the shortfall would be recoverable from the recently announced income reimbursement scheme for income lost as a direct result of COVID restrictions.

The capital year end forecast positions was reported at £136.279 million giving a forecast overspend £6.580 million as a result of bringing schemes forward.

The leader put on record his thanks to the Cabinet Member and officers for their work in this area during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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 July 2020 and August 2020 (Period 5) forecasts for the 2020/21 financial year including Covid-19 forecast is an overspend of £9.948 million. The forecast excluding Covid-19 is an overspend £6.532 million.
2. Note the forecast capital year end position as at the end of July 2020 of £136.279 million against the revised budget of £129.699 million.

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

3. Approve the £1.659million increase to the capital programme as outlined in Section C of the report.
4. Note progress on delivery of the £6.384 million of savings against a target of £10.545 million in 2020/21 or 60.54%.

7. Cabinet Response to Council Motion 848 Tree Planting

At the Full Council meeting on 27 November 2019, Council considered Motion 848 (Tree Planting). Council resolved to refer the motion to Cabinet.

The proposer for the motion Cllr Lesley Williams was invited to speak at the meeting.

Cllr Lesley Williams thanked everyone who had put in the work on this issue. She asked that there be included a planting programme for new build areas as well as consideration being given to training young people through apprenticeships as arborists.

Cllr Nigel Moor, Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning, stated that it was important to be ambitious and he would work with officers to consider the member's suggestions further. He stated that Cabinet had made clear the Council's commitment to respond to the climate emergency in the Strategy adopted in December 2019. This included significant levels of tree planting and the development of a Gloucestershire Carbon Offsetting Scheme.

To meet the requirements of the Motion would require an estimated 3,300ha of land, equivalent to almost a third of the size of the Forest of Dean. This was more land than the council owned, which included land farmed by around 80 separate farm tenants, which was therefore not available for large-scale tree planting. Forestry England estimated that, for Cabinet to unilaterally implement the motion, it would require over £118m for the land, tree planting and maintenance to 2030. It was clear that the Council could not deliver the requirements of the motion on its own, nor was the Council best placed to do so.

Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership had recently adopted its Gloucestershire Tree Strategy, with an ambitious vision for a thriving network of sustainably managed trees and woodland covering at least 20 per cent of the county by 2030, with the planting of 35 million trees.

He highlighted the recommendations within the report outlining that the named partners supported the approach, in particular to engage with landowners and support tenant farmers. Cabinet Members spoke in support of the work that was being taken forward and thanked the member for the work that had been carried out to develop these plans.

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

RESOLVED to: -

Endorse the approach outlined in the report, in particular that officers continue to work with the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership (GLNP) and constituent partners to:

- Engage landowners quickly and develop the action plan for delivering the Gloucestershire Tree Strategy and vision therein;
- Develop a Gloucestershire Natural Capital Investment Trust and associated carbon offsetting scheme;
- Develop the Community Tree Planting scheme; and
- Develop funding bids to the Climate Change & Air Quality Action Fund.

8. Real Time Passenger Information System

Cllr Nigel Moor. Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning sought approval to procure and award a Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) contract, through standard procurement methods (an OJEU compliant competitive procedure), to allow provision of a full RTPI service to include a licence for the necessary software and including a Case Management System as well as maintenance of hardware and installation services. The maximum total value of the five year contract was £700,000 if the optional extension was made use of.

Gloucestershire has had a bus real-time system since 2004, upgraded and expanded in 2015. The existing contract (with Trapeze Group UK) would come to an end in early July 2021. RTPI technology allowed the public to be informed about their services via bus stop displays, the Traveline website and various 3rd party apps. This was vital to help to grow public confidence of bus services, which in turn encouraged increased use. The reporting from the RTPI system was also vital to the Integrated Transport Unit as a key part of checking operator compliance on bus service contracts and assisting with complaints. RTPI has been successfully used for some years by almost all councils in the UK and was now expected by the travelling public as standard.

Communicating bus timetables (and other information) to the public was a statutory obligation for GCC. Having an RTPI system was a discretionary option, however it was a very important part of our information delivery. The decision did not commit GCC to any hardware purchase. Hardware could be added to the network whenever GCC had the funding and decided it was appropriate.

Cllr Moor explained that when considering a smart phone app for public transport it was important to recognise that websites already existed that provided that information to the public. His recommendation was not to develop an app or web

based solution for this functionality that already existed. The Leader suggested that there should be signposting to those existing applications and websites.

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

RESOLVED to: -

Delegate authority to the Executive Director: Economy, Environment and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning, to procure and award a contract, and to exercise the option to extend this new contract for a further period of two years on the expiry of an initial five year term, any extension will be subject to a performance review.

9. Adoption and implementation of a countywide Housing with Care Strategy

Cllr Carole Allaway Martin, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care (Commissioning), sought approval to adopt and implement a countywide Housing with Care Strategy for Gloucestershire.

This would fulfil the fundamental component of the Care Act, which was the 'suitability of accommodation' in meeting the home care and support needs of older and vulnerable people.

The strategy had been developed in collaboration with district councils to make sure future developments ensured a high standard of housing and quality of care, improve services for individuals with a whole range of needs and lifelong conditions and increase availability across the county. In addition Cllr Allaway Martin outlined the opportunity to maximise the use of the technology on offer to support people in their own homes, providing a viable alternative to residential care.

Cllr Kathy Williams, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care (Delivery) emphasised the importance of suitable housing to help individuals stay in their own homes for longer.

The strategy was underpinned by six District Plans that provide a detailed place-based analysis of the requirements for HWC for older people up to 2041, and people with a disability or mental health need up to 2035.

By ensuring there was sufficient housing with care developed across Gloucestershire to meet the current and future needs of local citizens, this would provide benefits to the housing, health and social care sector, local communities, and individuals. The types of accommodation defined as housing with care within the strategy were extra care housing and supported living.

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

RESOLVED to: -

Adopt and implement the Gloucestershire Housing with Care Strategy, as set out in Appendix 1

10. Extension of the adult drug and alcohol treatment service contract

Cllr Tim Harman, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities, sought approval to extend the existing contract for adult drug and alcohol treatment services for a further two years, as permitted in the contract.

The County Council had awarded the contract to Change Grow Live in 2016, commencing January 2017. The contract term was five years and three months, with an option to extend for a further two years from April 2022. The recommendation in the report was to give the required 12 months notice to extend the contract to March 2024. Extending the contract would ensure that the service continued to provide drug and alcohol treatment and support to around 2,600 vulnerable service users and their families each year.

Cllr Harman emphasised that performance levels were good and he had visited all of the CGL outlets. There had been particular challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic and the service had done well. Consistent feedback had been received from staff, service users and partner agencies emphasising that stability was vitally important in this sector.

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

RESOLVED to: -

Grant a 2 year extension to the contract with Change Grow Live for adult drug and alcohol treatment services from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2024.

11. Schedule of Proposed Disposals

Cllr Lynden Stowe sought approval for the schedule of disposals proposed to meet the three year capital receipts target of £33m up to 2020/21. Cabinet were being asked to approve the two schedules within the exempt appendices. Appendix A had been approved in March 2020 and confirmation was required by Cabinet that those sites not yet disposed on remained surplus to requirements and Appendix B was a new schedule recommended by Property Board as being surplus to requirements.

Prior to the discussion, members were advised that, should Cabinet wish to discuss the contents of the exempt information reported at Appendix A and Appendix B of

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

the report, consideration would need to be given as to whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting in accordance with Regulation 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

Cabinet agreed to consider this item without having to refer to the exempt information.

Approval of both Schedules of Disposals and the declaration of these sites as surplus to requirement, would deliver capital receipt targets. Asset Management and Property Services were working towards a three year capital receipt target of £33 million covering the period April 2018 to March 2021.

Having considered all of the information, Cabinet noted the report and, in line with the council's Policy for the Disposal of Property,

RESOLVED to: -

1. Confirm that those sites described at Appendix A (Exempt) which have previously been declared surplus by Cabinet in March 2020 and not yet disposed of, continue to be declared surplus to requirements
2. Declare the sites listed on the proposed Schedule of Disposals Appendix B (Exempt) surplus to the Council's land and property requirements

and in relation to both these schedules,

Delegate authority to the Assistant Director – Asset Management and Property Services to dispose of these sites in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change and the Council's Chief Financial Officer.

Leader of Council

Meeting concluded at 10: 50