



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

11 July 2019

7.00 pm – 8.50 pm

Council Chamber, Ebley Mill, Stroud

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Minutes

Membership:

Councillor Doina Cornell (Chair)	P	Councillor Steve Robinson	P
Councillor Martin Whiteside (Vice-Chair)	P	Councillor Mattie Ross	P
Councillor Nigel Cooper	P	Councillor Tom Skinner	A
Councillor Stephen Davies	P	Councillor Chas Townley	P
Councillor Nick Hurst	P	Councillor Ken Tucker	P
Councillor Keith Pearson	P	Councillor Debbie Young	P
Councillor Simon Pickering	A		

P = Present A = Absent

Officers Present:

Chief Executive	Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Interim Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer	Head of Asset Management
New Homes and Regeneration Manager	Democratic Services and Election Officer

Councillor Cornell stated that Agenda Item 7, the Redevelopment of Brimscombe Port would be brought forward on the Agenda and taken after Agenda Item 4.

SRC.017

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Pickering and Skinner.

SRC.018

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Young declared an interest in Agenda Item 7, Redevelopment of Brimscombe Port because she had worked with many of the local businesses.

The Interim Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6, because he may apply for the Director's post within the new structure. He would leave the Council Chamber prior to the item being discussed and return after the item had been concluded.

SRC.019

MINUTES

RESOLVED

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2019.

SRC.020**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were none.

SRC.021**REDEVELOPMENT OF BRIMSCOMBE PORT**

The New Homes and Regeneration Manager outlined the above report which sought approval of three of the tender documents for the procurement of a developer partner for the redevelopment of Brimscombe Port. A further report would be presented to the Committee at their next meeting to review and approve the remaining procurement documents including arrangements for the Community Centre when the Heads of Terms for this and the Development Agreement are presented. The planning application was being loaded onto the Council's portal.

Councillor Hurst had been involved with the project from the beginning and supported the report. Councillor Whiteside commended the Officers on the amount of work that had been undertaken by them and also the cross-party project board for their involvement.

During debate Councillor Pearson raised his concerns regarding the completion of the canal from The Ocean to Brimscombe Port.

On being put to the vote, the Motion was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED

- a) i) **To approve the Output Specification.**
- ii) **To approve the Value for Money Protocol.**
- iii) **To approve the Commercial Principles Paper for the procurement of a development partner for Brimscombe Port; and**
- b) **To delegate authority to the Head of Property Services in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Strategy and Resources to make minor amendments to these documents prior to finalising the documents for the launch of the procurement process.**

SRC.022**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA) CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN**

The Chief Executive outlined the above report and action plan resulting from the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback Report that had been to full Council on 16 May 2019. There were 8 actions within the plan, 4 for immediate attention with the last 4 being reliant on the Council dealing with the first 4. Action 2, the Corporate Delivery Plan had already been completed and had been presented at May's meeting of full Council. Work is progressing and a further report will be presented to a future meeting of the Committee, together with regular performance monitoring reports.

A standing item would be placed on all future Agendas for the current civic year to keep on top of delivery. The Corporate Peer Review Team will be invited back within the next 2 years.

RESOLVED

- a) **To agree the Action Plan; and**
- b) **To note that progress reports will be brought to future Strategy and Resources Committee meetings.**

The Interim Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer left the Council Chamber.

SRC.023**SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

The Chief Executive explained the background to the report which stemmed from Action 1, in the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan. This requested the recruitment of 3 Strategic Directors, with an increase in current pay and also a 4th Director for Transformation for a set period of time. At the moment the Council was financially able to invest money into the recruitment of senior management and in the long term invest to save, with costs anticipated to go down in the future.

The LGA are supportive of the suggested structure and the remuneration band and this was reflected in a paragraph in the report. The Chief Executive advised that the Council needed to be able to compete with our neighbouring authorities to attract and keep Directors. The Director of Transformation will modernise our resources and liaise with all of the managers across the organisation. The Chief Executive stressed the need to move towards a one team culture for members and staff, because we are all part of Stroud District Council.

In reply to Members' questions the Chief Executive confirmed the following:-

- We did have 3 Directors, 1 retired in March, 1 is on long term sick and there is 1 in post.
- The two remaining Directors will be issued with a notice of redundancy, invited to apply for a Director's post and will automatically be shortlisted.
- The Interim Director of Finance will have to apply for the permanent post, but will not be automatically shortlisted and if unsuccessful will have a post to return to.
- Legal advice had been sought and the statutory process is being followed. The affected Directors are fully aware of the situation.
- A budget for any redundancies will come from the Transformation Reserve.
- Once the new structure is in place performance is expected to be high.
- When the new Chief Executive arrived some work was already underway and has continued, e.g. the local plan and reviewing the planning service.
- The titles for the Directors is open to suggestions but needed to describe their areas of work.

Members agreed with the report and the need for the Chief Executive to have the right senior management around her if we aspire to be an exemplar Council. A balance was needed to attract the top talent and keep our salary range fair.

Councillor Pearson suggested that the title for the Strategic Director of Place be entitled the 'Strategic Director of Public Realm'.

Councillors Townley and Ross recalled that in the past there had been a Chief Executive and Senior Officer Panel which would have looked at this report in the first instance.

On being put to the vote, the Motion was unanimously carried.

RESOLVED

- a) To agree the recruitment and remuneration of 3 Strategic Directors of Communities, Place and Resources as set out in this report.**
- b) To agree the recruitment and remuneration of a Director of Transformation for a fixed term period of 2 years, as set out in this report; and**
- c) To agree the use of the Transformation Reserve to meet the additional costs arising from those appointments.**

The Interim Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer returned to the Council Chamber.

SRC.024**UNITE CONSTRUCTION CHARTER**

Councillor Pearson objected that this Agenda Item had been published onto the Agenda for Council before Members' had made a decision. It gave the public the impression that a decision had already been made. He found this unacceptable and would not take part.

The Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer accepted Councillor Pearson's point and said that it was a matter of timing because of the need to publish the Council Agenda.

Councillor Cornell confirmed that originally the report had been in the form of a Motion.

The Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer confirmed that it was his understanding that if agreed, the Charter would be appended to the procurement process, and was a statement of principle, with no anticipated costs.

Councillor Cornell confirmed that the Charter would authorise Trade Unions to enter sites to ensure that good health and safety practices were being adhered to. The Charter had already been adopted by other Councils in the South West.

Councillor Davies stated that paragraph 1.4 of the report was in conflict with local businesses.

The Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer stated that the Charter would be dealt with on a case by case basis and he did not believe it would conflict with procurement.

A discussion ensued. Confirmation was given that legislation was already in place regarding health and safety.

During debate concerns were raised by Councillor Cooper, particularly paragraphs 1.4 – 1.7 of the report. Some contractors may be put off by the Charter and he felt that the Charter was unnecessary and could be damaging to the Council.

Councillor Hurst thought it had the potential to undermine what this Council was trying to do. The signing of this Charter may damage the Brimscombe Port project. He outlined reasons against each of the paragraphs within the Charter, stating that there would be no benefit to the delivering of our services for our Council tax payers.

Councillors Cornell and Townley had met with Unite, who are not just about Health and Safety but also encouraged apprenticeships. Councillor Townley outlined reasons for Members' to support the Charter.

Councillor Whiteside respected Members' concerns and would feel concerned if the Brimscombe Port redevelopment was jeopardised. There is already a lot of legislation and procedures in place and we need a pragmatic rather than dogmatic approach. It is very important that we are flexible.

Councillor Hurst was very concerned that if Members agreed to the Charter the Council would be unable to cherry pick which projects it applied to or not. It would be included in our Procurement Procedure.

In summing up Councillor Cornell confirmed that some Councils had already adopted the Charter and that Trade Unions spent 99.9% of their time improving the work place.

With the Chair using her casting vote, it was carried.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- a) It adopts the Unite Construction Charter, and
- b) Requests the Leader to sign the Charter on behalf of the Council.

SRC.025 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The following items were added to the Committee's Work Programme:-

- 3 October 2019 – Constitution Working Group and LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan Update.
- Work Programmes would be based on the Corporate Delivery Plan. Officers are currently working on this project and all Work Programmes for Committees would be updated.
- Invite GFirstLep to a future meeting to update on emerging projects, eg the Industrial Strategy and Energy Strategy.

In response to a question from Councillor Davies, Councillor Cornell confirmed that the Carbon Neutral 2030 report had been presented at the last meeting of the Environment Committee. A report will be coming back to Council. The Chief Executive confirmed that the parent committee was the Environment Committee and the Director of Development Services was working with the County Council to influence the plan.

SRC.026 **MEMBER OFFICE REPORTS**

- a) Performance Monitoring – a report was circulated via email prior to the meeting. Councillor Cooper confirmed that he and Councillor Pearson were satisfied with the performance and thanked the Interim Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer for improving the monitoring process.
- b) Investment and Development Panel – the meeting in July had been cancelled the next meeting was scheduled to take place on 2 September 2019.
- c) Leadership Gloucestershire Update – Councillor Cornell confirmed that the Forest of Dean District Council were leading on Vision 2050 and she would be attending a meeting tomorrow.
- d) On Monday the Western Powerhouse would be launched and Councillor Cornell would send an email to Committee regarding this.

SRC.027 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

There were none.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

Chair