

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

24TH FEBRUARY 2015

Present:

Councillor Clive Bennett - Chairman
Councillor Mark F Annett - Vice-Chairman

Councillors -

JGK Birch (until 12.20 p.m.)	RL Hughes
DC Broad	Mrs. Sheila Jeffery
Sandra Carter	EGJ Jenkins (until 12.32 p.m.)
Sue Coakley (until 1.58 p.m.)	Mrs. SL Jepson
PCB Coleman	Ms JM Layton
DE Collier	AJ Lichnowski
Mrs. VB Crosbie Dawson	DJ Nash
BS Dare	Mrs. Carolyn Nicolle
RW Dutton	Jim Parsons
David Fowles (until 1.45 p.m.)	NJW Parsons
BD Gibbs	David Penman
JA Harris	Mrs. M Phillips
C Hancock	Mrs. MS Rickman
Mrs. DE Hicks	Lee Searles
Mrs. JL Hincks (until 1.52 p.m.)	Lynden Stowe
SG Hirst (until 12 noon)	R Theodoulou
PR Hodgkinson	Mrs. CH Topple
Sir Edward Horsfall	M Wardle (until 12.43 p.m.)
RP Hooper	LR Wilkins
JP Hughes	

Apologies:

Julian Beale
John Burgess

GM Selwyn

CL.38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(1) Declarations by Members

- (i) Councillor SG Hirst declared an 'other' interest in respect of Agenda Item (8) - Budget 2015/16 - as a Governor of the Sir William Romney School, Tetbury.
- (ii) Councillor BD Gibbs declared an 'other' interest in respect of Agenda Item (8) - Budget 2015/16 - as a Governor of the Sir William Romney School, Tetbury.
- (iii) Councillor BS Dare declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in respect of Agenda Item (10) - Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16, because he had

investments in some of the counterparties referred to in the circulated report, and he left the Meeting during the consideration and determination of that item.

(iv) Councillor R Theodoulou declared an 'other' interest in Agenda Item (10) - Treasury Management Strategy 2014/15.

(v) At the relevant point in the Meeting, Councillor PR Hodgkinson declared an 'other' interest in Agenda Item (10) - Treasury Management Strategy 2014/15.

(vi) At the relevant point in the Meeting, Councillor C Hancock declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in respect of Agenda Item (17) - Cirencester Property - Possible Disposal - and he left the Meeting during the consideration and determination of that item.

(vii) Councillor Lee Searles declared an 'other' interest in respect of Agenda Item (17) - Cirencester Property - Possible Disposal.

(viii) Councillor David Fowles declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in respect of Agenda Item (18) - Property Matter, Cirencester - and he left the Meeting during the consideration and determination of that item.

(ix) At the relevant point in the Meeting, Councillor Lynden Stowe declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in respect of Agenda Item (18) - Property Matter, Cirencester - and he left the Meeting during the consideration and determination of that item.

(x) At the relevant point in the Meeting, Councillor R Theodoulou declared an 'other' interest in respect of Agenda Item (18) - Property Matter, Cirencester.

(xi) At the relevant point in the Meeting, Councillor AJ Lichnowski declared an 'other' interest in respect of Agenda Item (18) - Property Matter, Cirencester.

(2) Declarations by Officers

There were no declarations of interest by Officers.

CL.39 MINUTES

RESOLVED that, subject to the amendment of the Record of Voting in respect of Minute CL.37 to read 'for 33, against 0, abstentions 2, absent 9', the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 16th December 2014 be approved as a correct record.

Record of Voting - for 35, against 0, abstentions 6, absent 3.

CL.40 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, LEADER OR HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

(i) Last Council Meeting of the Municipal Year and Council Term - the Chairman stated that, as this was not only the last scheduled Council Meeting of the current year but also of the four-year term, he would like to take the opportunity to hope for a fair election campaign on the part of those who were seeking re-election, and to

proffer every best wish for good health and prosperity to those who were standing down (or who might be unsuccessful at election). However, as was now customary, he hoped that all Members could meet up again at the Annual Meeting in May, in whatever guise.

(ii) Andy Fotherby - the Chairman explained that the Meeting marked a happy yet sad occasion, in that it was the last event when all Councillors would come together before Andy Fotherby left the Council, to take a well-deserved retirement after almost 41 years' service in local government, all of which had been with Cotswold District Council.

The Chairman explained that Andy had joined CDC on 29th July 1974 as a Junior Draughtsman, and had worked out of the Police Buildings in North Way in Cirencester. He had become a Planning Assistant in 1978 and then Tourism Officer in 1987. His first management role had been in 1994 when he had been appointed as Economic Development Manager. He had become Head of Customer Services and Economic Development in 2002, and then Head of Customer Services Group in 2005 as part of the then new Corporate Team. In 2007/8, he had become Director of Customer Services and then, in 2010, the Strategic Director for Planning and Customer Services. His current Strategic Director role covered Development Services and Democratic Services.

The Chairman stated, however, that such a brief resume could not paint the true picture of what Andy had achieved for the Council - he had delivered and managed many services, including Forward Planning, Car Parks, Community and Economic Development, Tourism, Corporate Services, Business Improvement and E-Government; and had also represented the Council at various public/private sector partnership initiatives, and had worked tirelessly with communities.

On behalf of the Council, the Chairman thanked Andy for his outstanding work, and endless energy and commitment to the Council and its residents over many years. The Chairman commented that Andy's career was truly remarkable in terms of service to a single employer and, while not unique, was something that would rarely be repeated; and wished him well.

Councillor JA Harris echoed such sentiments on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group. He commended Andy on his dedication, commitment and exemplary service, and wished him a long and happy retirement. He also wished to draw particular attention to the help and assistance he had given to Cirencester residents at recent times of flooding, always there and always ready to help.

Andy thanked Members for their kind words, sentiments and wishes. He had thoroughly enjoyed his time at the Council, and had been privileged to have served the community over such a period. He wished the Council well in all its future endeavours.

(iii) Council Business - the Chairman drew attention to what was quite a full agenda with some very important items, and explained that whilst he did not wish to stifle debate, he would ask Members to be disciplined in their comments, avoid repetition and be succinct and to the point. He stated that, in general, Members would be allowed to speak only once on a particular item, and for no longer than the time limit prescribed by the Constitution, even on the Budget.

(iv) Budget and Council Tax Items - the Chairman reminded Members that all of the votes relating to the Budget and Council Tax, including on any amendments put forward, were required by legislation to take the form of Recorded Votes.

(v) Motion 1/2015 - the Chairman explained that, as previously advised to Members, he had decided that, once formally Proposed and Seconded, Motion 1/2015 would stand referred to the Cabinet for consideration. The item was likely to be placed on the agenda for the Cabinet's March Meeting.

(vi) Filming/Recording of Proceedings - the Chairman explained that the Council had previously received a 'standing' notification from a member of the public that he intended to film Council Meetings, and stated that although nothing specific had been received regarding that day's proceedings, the Council would make its own audio recording of the Meeting if filming did take place.

(vii) Civic Service - the Chairman wished to place on record his thanks to those who had attended, or who had helped in any way with, his recent Civic Service.

CL.41 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10, questions had been submitted, and responses provided, as follows:-

(1) From Mr. AR Brassington of Cirencester to Councillor Lynden Stowe, Leader of the Council:-

'Can the Leader tell me -

1. *What the annual budget was for street cleansing, which includes litter collection and removal of fly tipping, for the last 3 financial years and how much of that was actually spent in each year; together with what the budget is for 2015/16?*
2. *Whether he considers this is sufficient to meet one of the Council's top three priorities as stated in its corporate strategy "to maintain and protect our environment as one of the best places to live, work and visit".'*

Response from Councillor Stowe

'In accordance with our Constitutional requirements, I have asked Councillor Sue Coakley to respond to your questions, as the Cabinet Member with responsibility for street cleansing matters. Her responses are as follows, and she will also deal with any supplementary question(s) that you may have.'

1. The budget figures and actual spend details for the last three complete financial years are set out below, along with the budget figure for the current year. At the current time, I am obviously unable to provide an actual spend figure for 2014/15 as we are still in that financial year.

<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>
2014/15 - £852,340	current year
2013/14 - £827,221	£749,663
2012/13 - £783,410	£837,734
2011/12 - £827,880	£942,258

The draft budget for 2015/16 is £846,727.

2. The street cleansing service is managed to ensure planned and reactive cleansing is undertaken as efficiently as possible, in order to maximise the finite resources available. The service does ensure good standards are maintained and efforts are also made to deter littering through education and enforcement action. It should also be remembered that street cleansing is just one element of many that we use to protect our environment.'

Mr. Brassington thanked Members for their answers. However, he remained concerned about the litter problems that still existed despite the monies being expended. He remained unconvinced about the Council's approach at addressing one of its three main priorities; so wished to reiterate his previous question as to whether the spend and approach was enough.

In response, Councillor Coakley reiterated that the Council operated a proactive programme of street and road cleansing involving a team of workers who also responded to alerts from local residents and Councillors when a local issue needed attention. That said, the service was also demand-led and, due to the efforts of Ubico Ltd, efficiency savings from the waste collection service could be used to fund additional street cleaning when the need arose. The key was to ensure the effective use of resources at all times.

Councillor Coakley also acknowledged the help received from local communities that were willing to undertake their own litter picks, whereby CDC provided gloves, pickers, bags and high visibility jackets and also arranged to collect the filled bags after the event. She stated that the Council was very fortunate to have extremely efficient and proactive environmental service professionals, and also many residents who took such great pride in the appearance of the District and wanted it to look its best, at all times of the year. The Council also participated in the national Big Tidy Up initiative, which encouraged all communities to undertake local litter picking.

In response to a further question, Councillor Coakley stated that she would be happy to join Mr. Brassington on a local litter pick; and the Leader also confirmed his willingness to get involved.

(2) From Mr. M Harris of Cirencester to Councillor NJW Parsons, Deputy Leader of the Council:-

'In July 2007 you reported to Cabinet that the Corn Hall sale (para 3.2 of the closing report) included Covenants to retain its community use. Community use included under 3.3(ii) "Provision of evening entertainment. This provides fifty-four evenings a year, on Fridays and Saturdays for music events, local bands, private parties etc., six days/evenings a year for larger/original bands and three evenings a week (every week) for local club use.'

Would you please tell me how much community evening entertainment has taken place at the Corn Hall as provided for by 3.3(ii) of your report since August 2007 to the last reporting date?'

Response from Councillor Parsons

'A list of the type and range of events that have taken place in the Corn Hall since its sale, as supplied by the developers, is attached. These events have been delivered as a consequence of a number of covenants attached to the sale by the Council to try to ensure the continued provision of an events venue

for Cirencester residents. The markets, for example, have been successfully retained and as noted recently in the Wilts and Gloucester Standard the retention and redevelopment of the Corn Hall has been a major success with extremely well attended events on a daily basis.'

Mr. Harris stated that he was very disappointed with both the number and range of events that had actually taken place in recent years under the heading of community/evening events. He believed that the Council should have done more to enforce the covenants in respect of community use, to ensure the availability of the facility for the public; and asked what would be done in the future in this regard.

The Deputy Leader drew attention to some of the problems experienced, including a lack of permanent toilet facilities, access difficulties, and lack of bar during the period in question - which had undoubtedly affected usage. He expressed the hope that things would improve, and would liaise with the owners in an attempt to ensure that community availability and use was maximised.

CL.42 MEMBER QUESTIONS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, questions had been submitted, and responses provided, as follows:-

(1) From Councillor PR Hodgkinson to Councillor Lynden Stowe, Leader of the Council

'In the financial year starting this April, this Council will receive £2.5 million as a 'New Homes Bonus' out of a total of £6.2 million from the Government. How many new homes have been built in the Cotswolds since 2011 which have led to this cash windfall?'

Response from Councillor Stowe

'The New Homes Bonus grant recognises net additional dwellings in the Council Tax base. This is calculated by subtracting effective stock (total stock less long-term empty homes and demolitions) as recorded on the Council Tax Base return in one year from the previous year. A £350 bonus is also paid for each additional affordable unit. The affordable homes data is taken from the "Affordable Housing Supply in England" government publication and the additional number of permanent traveller caravans (where applicable).

The statistical data used to calculate New Homes Bonus for each year since 2011/12 is set out below:

	Net additional dwellings in the council tax base	No of affordable units
2011/12	200	N/A
2012/13	424	67
2013/14	487	242
2014/15	427	202

2015/16	442	74
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The New Homes Bonus is funded through a top slice of Revenue Support Grant so in this regard should not be regarded as a windfall.'

Councillor Hodgkinson referred to the fact that around 2,000 new build properties had been constructed in the District since 2011/12, which had led to significant funding for the Council. However, little had been reinvested in affordable housing. In addition, the lack of a Local Plan provided for a disjointed approach to future provision which, in turn, could impact on the financial position of the authority. Councillor Hodgkinson questioned the appropriateness of such approach.

In response, the Leader explained that, in many ways, New Homes Bonus funding replaced other previous funding that had been removed from the Council's Revenue Support Grant. There were no restrictions, or ring-fencing terms, in respect of how the monies could be used; and different councils used such funding in different ways.

(2) From Councillor PR Hodgkinson to Councillor Lynden Stowe, Leader of the Council

'My motion to this Council in December 2014 called for better mobile phone coverage across the Cotswolds and received unanimous support. It called for the Chief Executive to contact mobile phone providers and OFCOM to find out what plans are afoot to improve coverage. What is the latest update on progress with this?'

Response from Councillor Stowe

'In accordance with the Council's wishes, the Chief Executive wrote to the four main mobile phone providers - EE Limited (which includes Orange and T-Mobile), Hutchison 3G UK Limited (Three), Telefónica UK Limited (O2), and Vodafone UK. In addition, letters were sent to the Chairman of Ofcom, the Chairman as well as the Chief Executive Officer of BT Group plc, and to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

Formal responses have now been received from EE, Three, Vodafone and Ofcom, details of which will be circulated to Members. A response has been promised by Telefónica in time for the Council Meeting. A representative of BT Group plc has confirmed that the company cannot do anything to assist as, at the present time, it does not have a mobile phone operation.

We will now need to review the responses received, and identify the next steps to be taken in order to ensure that the momentum is maintained.'

In thanking the Leader for the update, Councillor Hodgkinson stressed the need to bring pressure to bear on the providers, and other agencies, to ensure better provision as soon as possible. He suggested that, following on from the May elections, a meeting be held of the various parties, including representatives of the District and County Councils and the local MP.

The Leader fully supported the need to secure better mobile phone and broadband coverage across the Cotswolds, both for residents and businesses. Whilst beholden to

the providers, he was content to be part of, or support, any initiative that might enable improvements to be made.

(3) From Councillor JA Harris to Councillor Chris Hancock, Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships

'How much money did the District Council take in parking charges during the free parking trial (Monday's and Tuesdays 1pm until 8am the following day) in January and February this year?'

Response from Councillor Hancock

'The Council has run a very successful promotion for free afternoon parking on Monday and Tuesday afternoons during January and February. The car parks have been very busy and we have received some very positive feedback from drivers benefitting from this offer. Survey results show an average 75 more spaces taken per afternoon across Cirencester on the Mondays and Tuesdays compared to the Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

It was unfortunate that signs did not go out early enough on the first Monday of the promotion and some people paid the parking charges unnecessarily. We are now in the 7th week of the promotion and we can report that a few drivers are still paying. Week 1 shows income of £1,717.63, week 2 £407.58, week 3 £466.52, week 4 £477.88, week 5 £344.00 week 6 £338.88 and week 7 £526.67. This shows that other than week 1, when the figures were distorted by lack of signs, overpayments have amounted on average to less than £20 per car park per day.

As soon as we realised people were paying unnecessarily full refunds were offered and the promotion extended by an additional Monday in March.

We are not sure why drivers are still paying during these free periods as there are multiple signs in every car park. There are 2 very clear signs on each pay machine and 1 on each board next to each machine. This promotion is across 13 car parks and people appear to have paid in each car park suggesting a random selection of drivers have paid with no clear pattern or apparent lack of information/signs in any particular car park.'

In referring to the approximate sum of £4,000 that had been paid by motorists during the free specified parking periods, and acknowledging the difficulties of providing refunds to the people in question, Councillor Harris asked whether Councillor Hancock would be willing to donate the car park income received to the Chairman's charities.

In response, Councillor Hancock stated that he was content with the principle, subject to confirmation/clarification that this was acceptable from a legal/procedural point of view.

(4) From Councillor JA Harris to Councillor NJW Parsons, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Forward Planning

'What discussions have you had with the Bathurst Estate, the Earl Bathurst or their representatives regarding the proposed Chesterton development?'

Response from Councillor Parsons

'In the light of the petition relating to the Chesterton Strategic Site, and the Public and Member Questions on the subject, submitted to the Council Meeting on 23rd September 2014, The Earl Bathurst wrote seeking a meeting with the Council given what he acknowledged as 'considerable concern about what is perceived to be proposed regarding the Chesterton development.'

A meeting was held on 10th November 2014, at the CDC Offices. The meeting was attended by The Earl Bathurst and one of his representatives; and by the Chief Executive, Strategic Director, Head of Planning and Strategic Housing, and myself on behalf of the Council. This is the only occasion on which I have attended a meeting and/or had discussions with The Earl Bathurst, The Bathurst Estate or their representatives regarding the Chesterton Development.'

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Harris attempted to ask a question that had previously been rejected by the Head of Democratic Services on the basis that (i) any answer would require the disclosure of confidential information, having regard to the rules in respect of client confidentiality by which Councillor Parsons was professionally bound by virtue of the Solicitors Regulatory Authority; (ii) such principle would relate not only to Councillor Parsons but also the firm for whom he worked; and (iii) the fact that such rules applied irrespective of the answer to the query.

Notwithstanding this, Councillor Parsons confirmed to the Meeting that he was well aware of the need to declare relevant interests and, indeed, the consequences of not doing so; and that he had declared all interests in line with the requirements of the Code and supporting regulations.

CL.43 PETITIONS

No petitions had been received.

CL.44 BUDGET 2015/16

The Leader of the Council presented this item.

The Leader requested that the Council consider recommendations from the Cabinet in respect of the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period 2015/16 to 2018/19, the Capital Programme for 2015/16 to 2017/18, the Budget for 2015/16 and the Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16.

The Leader stated that the report before Members demonstrated robust budget management and the culture, embedded within the organisation by the administration over the previous twelve years, which reflected the need to drive efficiencies and deliver value for money whilst protecting front-line services. Against such background, another impressive financial out-turn was expected to be achieved which, in turn, enabled the presentation of another prudent budget.

The Leader wished to place on record his thanks, not only to the Chief Executive and the Chief Finance Officer, but to all of the Council's Officers for rising to the challenges faced; and to leading the way nationally by enabling the Council, for the third year running, to have delivered, proportionately, the biggest Council Tax cut in the country.

The Leader explained that the circulated figures provided for a balanced Budget, and one which proposed a further reduction in Council Tax, and no increases in car parking charges, garden waste charges, pest control charges or in most of the leisure charges, for at least the next 12 months. In addition, the budget contained a further allocation of £100,000 from the Council Priorities Fund to provide partnership funding for vital flood mitigation works, with the prospect of further funding being made available should appropriate schemes come forward.

The Leader also wished to emphasise the Council's commitment to car parks in the District, explaining that the budget provided for over £1m of capital investment over a five-year period. The Leader considered that, alongside the reduced charges implemented in recent months and the fact that the half-hour charge had remained unchanged for 10 years, this represented excellent news for residents, visitors and traders alike.

In the light of sound financial management, and the strong financial position achieved, the Leader stated that he wished to Propose three changes to the budget outlined in the circulated report, as follows:-

(i) It had been evident that the Building Control service had not performed as well as had been hoped, in financial terms. As a result, the Leader Proposed a 10% reduction in the fee structure, which would hopefully ensure that the excellent team who delivered the service had the best opportunity to compete against other providers and regain some of the lost market share.

(ii) In referring to his belief that Ward Members were best placed to allocate resources to their local communities, as had been proven by the initiation of the Youth Activities and WWI Commemoration funding, the Leader Proposed that, from the May 2015 elections, every Ward Member should receive an allocation of £2,000 for local environmental 'impact work'. By way of illustration, the Leader explained that such monies could fund four days' work by Ubico operatives to keep Wards clean, or could be allocated to various initiatives such as dog bins, litter picking, road sweeping. The annual cost of the proposal was £68,000.

(iii) Finally, the Leader wished to return to Council Tax and reminded Members of the guiding policy of his administration to leave money in the pockets of taxpayers. In doing so, he stated, he would make no apology for reminding the Council of the appallingly high year-on-year increases which the Council had seen during its 'rudderless years' between 1997 and 2003 when there had been no administration. Council Tax rises during that time had been as high as 10% a year while, at the County Council under a Liberal-Labour coalition, increases had been as high as 13% in a single year - this had been totally unacceptable. Two years' ago, the Leader had been pleased, for the first time, to reverse some of those rises by cutting the Council's share of Council Tax by 5% - the biggest cut in Council Tax of any Local Authority in the country. In the current year, a further cut of 3% had been implemented; and although a similar reduction had been identified for 2015/16, the Leader believed that, given the financial position, more could be done - he therefore Proposed an overall cut of 5%. The Leader stated that, as far as he was aware, this would again be the largest cut in Council Tax in the whole country. The Leader reminded Members that, in 2011, the administration had promised to freeze Council Tax for four years but, in reality, levels had been reduced such that in real terms, after allowing for inflation, the cuts made had represented an overall 25% cut which, in cash terms, had meant that over £2m had been left in Council Tax payers' pockets and the local economy.

The Leader stated that his Group's proposals delivered on promises made, and concluded by Proposing the Budget as outlined (details of which were circulated at the Meeting). The Leader also asked the Council to note the Chief Finance Officer's comment that she was satisfied with the approach, and the budget as now proposed.

The Proposed Budget was Seconded by Councillor Sir Edward Horsfall, who did not otherwise speak on the Proposal.

Councillor JA Harris, the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, was invited to respond to the Proposed Budget. He requested that the Council adjourn for a period of time to allow Members time to consider and discuss the updated budget proposals.

The Chairman agreed to the request and adjourned the Meeting.

When the Meeting reconvened, Councillor Harris thanked the Chairman for allowing the adjournment. Councillor Harris stated that his Group supported any move by the Council to comply with the Government's policy of freezing Council Tax. However, Councillor Harris reminded Members that the financial position remained uncertain, and whilst the current outlook appeared positive there would be major challenges ahead, with no guarantees that the Council would not continue to receive tough settlements from the Government year-on-year and be forced to stretch what money it did have even further. Councillor Harris therefore questioned whether there should be a cut in Council Tax in such times of uncertainty, and argued that such a proposal was pure electioneering.

Given that the Council faced an uncertain future, with no guarantees as to Government funding, Councillor Harris felt that some new ideas and a new direction were required, in order to enable a stronger economy and a fairer society. He believed that a freeze on Council Tax would help to preserve what was currently being provided, but that a cut was inappropriate and amounted to economic incompetence on the part of the administration. Councillor Harris suggested that if monies were available, the Council should seek to freeze Council Tax and cut parking charges, as this would help to create an economic environment in which communities could thrive. In addition to its opposition to a further cut in Council Tax, the Liberal Democrat Group wished to Propose a number of Amendments to the budget proposals.

In advance of Proposing the first budget amendment, Councillor Nash stated that he wished to address some of the points raised by the Leader. Councillor Nash explained that he did have sympathy with some of the Leader's comments but disagreed with a 5% cut in Council Tax. He was of the opinion that a 13% cut over the three years, after a freeze of two years, was short-sighted and not prudent. He drew attention to the forthcoming elections on 7th May, which were likely to result in a change in Government. Councillor Nash stated that a Labour Government or Labour-led Coalition was likely to enhance preferential funding to urban Councils, whilst a Conservative Government or Conservative-led Coalition was likely to make further cuts in funding. With such uncertainty, and the potential for even harsher settlements, Councillor Nash felt that a freeze in Council Tax was right, but a further cut had significant potential to have an adverse impact in the future.

Councillor Nash believed that any surplus monies should be spent on cutting Sunday parking charges in the Brewery Car Park, a proposal that would equate to less than 1% of the income generated, and one which would remove the significant confusion caused by the levying of such charges.

Accordingly, Councillor Nash Proposed the following Amendment:-

'To cut Sunday parking charges in the Brewery Car Park, at a cost of approximately £20,000 per annum.'

Councillor PCB Coleman Seconded the Amendment, and stated that the charge was an anomaly, given that it was over four years since the parking review had been carried out, since when increases in charges had been cut back and further cuts had been made, apart from this. He firmly believed that it would be easier for people to know charges did not apply on Sundays across all of the car parks, and it would be consistent if this charge was removed. Councillor Harris expressed his support for the Amendment, stating that it was bizarre and illogical for charges to apply in only one Cirencester car park on Sundays.

Councillor Hancock, the Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships, stated that only a small amount of money was involved but the charges had been kept as the intention was to reflect economic activity in the town on Sundays. He drew attention to other initiatives that had been introduced, such as free parking on Monday and Tuesday afternoons during January and February, which had benefitted the whole District. Councillor Hancock pointed out that Sunday charging also reflected the impending development in the town, and questioned why people who shopped should not pay to park. He indicated that he would not support the Amendment.

A Member questioned the application of the 'user pays' principle, given that charges only applied in one car park, with the others being free. He felt that the charges created uncertainty and inconvenience, were unpopular and non-profitable, and should be removed, especially as the car park was usually fairly empty on Sundays.

Councillor Nash then summed up, stating that the charge was nonsensical, impractical and uneconomic, particularly given the activity in other parts of the town where parking was free.

On being put to the vote, the Amendment was LOST.

Note:

In accordance with legislative requirements, a Recorded Vote was taken in respect of the Amendment. The Record of Voting was as follows:-

For: - Councillors PCB Coleman, JA Harris, Mrs. JL Hincks, PR Hodgkinson, RP Hooper, JP Hughes, EGJ Jenkins, Ms JM Layton, AJ Lichnowski, DJ Nash, Lee Searles and M Wardle - Total: 12;

Against: - Councillors Mark F Annett, Clive Bennett, JGK Birch, DC Broad, Sandra Carter, Sue Coakley, DE Collier, Mrs. VB Crosbie Dawson, BS Dare, RW Dutton, David Fowles, BD Gibbs, C Hancock, Mrs. DE Hicks, SG Hirst, Sir Edward Horsfall, RL Hughes, Mrs. Sheila Jeffery, Mrs. SL Jepson, Mrs. Carolyn Nicolle, Jim Parsons, NJW Parsons, David Penman, Mrs. M Phillips, Lynden Stowe, R Theodoulou, Mrs. CH Topple and LR Wilkins - Total: 28;

Abstentions: - Mrs. MS Rickman - Total: 1

Absent: - Councillors Julian Beale, John Burgess and GM Selwyn - Total: 3.

Councillor PR Hodgkinson then Proposed the following Further Amendment:-

'That the Council invests a further £40,000 for increased litter picks on A and B roads around the Cotswolds.'

Councillor Hodgkinson reminded Members of the experience of litter advanced by Mr. Brassington as part of his public question earlier in the Meeting, and expressed his surprise that the Cabinet Member had stated that she was delighted with the current service.

Councillor Hodgkinson stated that everything needed to be done to keep the District clean and clear of unsightly rubbish, and reminded Members that this was one of the top three priorities for the Council, which was quite understandable given our unique, world-famous area. Whilst welcoming the Ward Member initiative proposed by the Leader, he felt that his proposal would be an enhancement and be more proactive - particularly as there might be limited capacity in urban Wards to spend the Ward Member allocations on litter picking, with rural Wards needing more frequent picks; and community picks could only achieve so much, dependent upon the number of volunteers.

Councillor Ms JM Layton Seconded the Further Amendment. She stated that whilst community picks gave a sense of pride, it was too dangerous to do them on some roads like the Spine Road due to the volume and speed of traffic. She believed that the Council should work with the County Council to keep roads clean and tidy, particularly as litter, mud, rubbish and waste often led to verges being flooded. Councillor Ms Layton felt that more should be done to encourage good practice - keeping roads clean would discourage people from dropping litter in the first place and from fly tipping, which in turn would reduce the cost of clearing up. She also felt that a more pro-active approach was required to enforcement, especially in relation to dog fouling.

In response to a question, Councillor Hodgkinson confirmed that his Amendment sought an annual, rather than one-off, allocation.

Councillor Sue Coakley, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Communities, clarified that, in her earlier comments, she had stated that she had been delighted with the support from Ubico Ltd., as the same level of service was now being delivered at a lower cost. She believed that residents and visitors contributed to the litter problems, confirmed that picking programmes were monitored, and accepted that community activity could lead to a change in people's behaviour. Nevertheless, the reality was that some roads were difficult for community picking due to the volume and speed of traffic, which needed to be accepted and an alternative solution sought. Councillor Coakley also referred to the co-operation and joint working through the Joint Waste Committee and Joint Waste Team, including on enforcement.

A number of Members sought to differentiate between the two proposals being mooted, and the financial benefits of each. Some felt that the Ward Member initiative was capable of delivering more, particularly in terms of 'available days' from Ubico operatives. Others, whilst welcoming the Ward Member initiative, felt that more needed to be done, and that the further allocation would enable more generic work to be undertaken and help address the wider issue as to how the Council could maintain the quality of road spaces between towns.

A Member suggested that it might be better to spend money on educating people not to throw litter, whether through general campaigns or targeted exercises, for example with schools, rather than spending more money on clearing up. Change was required, and it was not sustainable to continue to rely on volunteers to pick.

Another Member referred to the requirement to maintain verges to a reasonable standard and expressed the view that the current level of service was inadequate. He suggested that the Council should follow the best practice implemented in West Oxfordshire, by introducing a routine programme for picking. This opinion was challenged by the former Portfolio Holder for the service, who confirmed that there was a programme for picking across the Cotswold District as in other areas, and that Ubico responded quickly to complaints.

In summing up, Councillor Hodgkinson explained that his Amendment was complementary to the Leader's proposal, and would fund an extra 80 days of work, which would make a huge difference. He suggested that his Amendment would pump prime to give extra focus to the issue; and, notwithstanding some of the comments made, suggested that there were examples of good practice that could be 'imported' from West Oxfordshire District Council in this matter.

On being put to the vote, the Further Amendment was LOST.

Note:

In accordance with legislative requirements, a Recorded Vote was taken in respect of the Further Amendment. The Record of Voting was as follows:-

For: - Councillors PCB Coleman, JA Harris, Mrs. JL Hincks, PR Hodgkinson, RP Hooper, JP Hughes, EGJ Jenkins, Ms JM Layton, AJ Lichnowski, DJ Nash, Lee Searles and M Wardle - Total: 12;

Against: - Councillors Mark F Annett, Clive Bennett, JGK Birch, DC Broad, Sandra Carter, Sue Coakley, DE Collier, Mrs. VB Crosbie Dawson, BS Dare, RW Dutton, David Fowles, BD Gibbs, C Hancock, Mrs. DE Hicks, SG Hirst, Sir Edward Horsfall, RL Hughes, Mrs. Sheila Jeffery, Mrs. SL Jepson, Mrs. Carolyn Nicolle, Jim Parsons, NJW Parsons, David Penman, Mrs. M Phillips, Lynden Stowe, R Theodoulou, Mrs. CH Topple and LR Wilkins - Total: 28;

Abstentions: - Mrs. MS Rickman - Total: 1

Absent: - Councillors Julian Beale, John Burgess and GM Selwyn - Total: 3.

Councillor Mrs. MS Rickman then Proposed a Further Amendment, as follows:-

'That the Council sets aside funding in the sum of £40,000 to support approved initiatives in the Cotswolds which are designed to reduce isolation and hardship.'

Councillor Mrs. Rickman stated that she applauded efficiencies to keep Council Tax at the same level but felt that such an approach could not continue indefinitely. She believed that there was now an ideal opportunity for the Council to show its support for the many people in local communities who felt isolated. In this connection, she proposed that a sum of £40,000 be set aside for use to combat hardship and

isolation, in essence to fund people access services. Councillor to health issues, and how such most in need.

worked-up schemes which would help Mrs. Rickman drew attention to the links money could be directed towards those

The Further Amendment was Seconded by Councillor Mrs. JL Hincks, who stated that isolation and hardship existed in towns and rural areas and included socialising as well as attending appointments. She believed that the financial allocation proposed would help to eradicate isolation and hardship across all communities.

Councillor Mrs. CH Topple, the Cabinet Member for Health and Leisure, supported the sentiments expressed, and confirmed that the Health and Well-Being Board was addressing such issues as a priority. She gave details of the partners involved and some of the initiatives, including lunch clubs, transport and walks. Funding was received from the Lottery and other national sources, and also from the Police and Crime Commissioner.

A number of Members supported the proposed initiative, and its potential to address a wide range of very real issues. It was felt that the Council needed to engage more with its communities and address its duty of care. A proactive approach was advocated, so that support groups could be funded to deliver and extend schemes.

Other Members, however, were concerned over the risk of duplication of effort and spend. It was suggested that funding could be considered for any proven projects coming forward rather than a generic allocation being made. These Members also considered that the main thrust should be through the County Council's Adult Care service, which received devolved money from the NHS. It was considered that the broader issue was best dealt with in partnership with the County Council, with support as necessary through the Council Priorities Fund.

In summing up, Councillor Mrs. Rickman reiterated the real needs in this area and welcomed any monies/support that could be given from whatever source.

On being put to the vote, the Further Amendment was LOST.

Note:

In accordance with legislative requirements, a Recorded Vote was taken in respect of the Further Amendment. The Record of Voting was as follows:-

For: - Councillors PCB Coleman, JA Harris, Mrs. JL Hincks, PR Hodgkinson, RP Hooper, JP Hughes, EGJ Jenkins, Ms JM Layton, AJ Lichnowski, DJ Nash, Lee Searles and M Wardle - Total: 12;

Against: - Councillors Mark F Annett, Clive Bennett, JGK Birch, DC Broad, Sandra Carter, Sue Coakley, DE Collier, Mrs. VB Crosbie Dawson, BS Dare, RW Dutton, David Fowles, BD Gibbs, C Hancock, Mrs. DE Hicks, Sir Edward Horsfall, RL Hughes, Mrs. Sheila Jeffery, Mrs. SL Jepson, Mrs. Carolyn Nicolle, Jim Parsons, NJW Parsons, David Penman, Mrs. M Phillips, Lynden Stowe, R Theodoulou, Mrs. CH Topple and LR Wilkins - Total: 27;

Abstentions: - Mrs. MS Rickman - Total: 1

Absent: - Councillors Julian Beale, John Burgess, SG Hirst and GM Selwyn - Total: 4.

Councillor JA Harris then Proposed a Further Amendment, as follows:-

'That the Council freezes its element of Council Tax for 2015/16.'

Councillor Harris reiterated his belief that the Council should freeze Council Tax rather than reduce it, for the reasons previously advanced by a number of Members during the debate. He was concerned that the Council faced an uncertain financial future, and that the proposed cut would have a negative impact whilst a freeze would give a foundation to move forward after the election.

The Further Amendment was Seconded by Councillor Lee Searles, who believed that a 5% cut was in keeping with the administration's approach but was the wrong move given the associated risks detailed in the circulated report - it would reduce the Council Tax base, which was already £850k lower than it would have been, and it would be impossible for the Council to recover that if it was faced with any problems; the Council relied on novel funding mechanisms; the RSG would reduce after the next election regardless of which party was in Government; New Homes Bonus would disappear under a Labour Government and the Council would do badly under the RSG arrangements; the Business Rates Pool was uncertain as it would be affected by any successful appeals against Business Rates; interest rates would be uncertain in the future and it would be optimistic to predict that they would increase in the next financial year; and inflationary increases had been built into the budget from 2016/17 onwards for fees and charges. In summary, he felt that, given the heavy reliance on fees, charges and New Homes Bonus, a 5% cut in Council Tax was not appropriate; and that people would prefer to pay the same if it meant that services would not be eroded any further.

The Leader of the Council stated that he was not in favour of the Further Amendment. He reiterated that the Council continued to protect its front-line services; and the pounds being saved for every Council Tax payer had a cumulative impact - £7 for the coming year; £5 this year; £8 last year. He reaffirmed his commitment to keep the tax bill down and to protect services. The Council Tax savings added up to £20 per household, and would allow people to spend money how they wished. He stated that the Further Amendment would cost £23 more than the administration's proposal, yet no new services were being introduced. The Leader also reminded Members that the 2020 Vision project would save money without cutting services, and expressed the view that residents should have some benefit from the savings made. He believed that after a number of years of freezing Council Tax, followed by successive cuts in levels, the proposed further reduction was a prudent move, not an election stunt. Furthermore, given that the Council was on the cusp of delivering the biggest underspend ever, it was correct to cut Council Tax and to leave more money in people's pockets.

A Member expressed concern at what he considered to be a blinkered view that the Council did not face financial difficulties. In essence, the Council was only able to consider a cut in Council Tax due to growth in comparable funding from the Government over the past four years, primarily through the New Homes Bonus. However, he believed that such funding was not sustainable, and that it would be wise for the Council to recognise this and cap its New Homes Bonus spending.

Some other Members questioned whether the proposed Council Tax cut was prudent and/or irresponsible, as opposed to representing good financial management. It was pointed out that the actual sums involved were small and would make little difference to most residents, particularly when viewed against the charges that had been imposed by the administration over the years. Attention was also drawn to the

significant risks regarding future New Homes Bonus and Business Rates monies, given the uncertainties surrounding the forthcoming general election.

Other Members felt that the revised budget proposed by the Leader was a balanced and prudent one, which took account of the risks identified whilst ensuring the continuation of service provision and a reduction in the monies payable by local residents. Furthermore, a number of projects had been put forward and implemented, including reduced parking charges and the kerbside collection of plastics.

In summing up, Councillor Harris reiterated his belief that a Council Tax freeze was the most prudent approach for the Council to take at this stage, given the significant uncertainties over future funding, and the relatively small impact that the proposed cut in Council Tax would have in real terms for the majority of residents.

On being put to the vote, the Further Amendment was LOST.

Note:

In accordance with legislative requirements, a Recorded Vote was taken in respect of the Further Amendment. The Record of Voting was as follows:-

For: - Councillors PCB Coleman, JA Harris, Mrs. JL Hincks, PR Hodgkinson, JP Hughes, Ms JM Layton, AJ Lichnowski, DJ Nash, Mrs. MS Rickman and Lee Searles
- Total: 10;

Against: - Councillors Mark F Annett, Clive Bennett, DC Broad, Sandra Carter, Sue Coakley, DE Collier, Mrs. VB Crosbie Dawson, BS Dare, RW Dutton, David Fowles, BD Gibbs, C Hancock, Mrs. DE Hicks, RP Hooper, Sir Edward Horsfall, RL Hughes, Mrs. Sheila Jeffery, Mrs. SL Jepson, Mrs. Carolyn Nicolle, Jim Parsons, NJW Parsons, David Penman, Mrs. M Phillips, Lynden Stowe, R Theodoulou, Mrs. CH Topple and LR Wilkins - Total: 27;

Abstentions: - None - Total: 0

Absent: - Councillors Julian Beale, JGK Birch, John Burgess, SG Hirst, EGJ Jenkins, GM Selwyn and M Wardle - Total: 7.

The Council was then invited to consider the initial Proposition, as Proposed by Councillor Stowe, and Seconded by Councillor Sir Edward Horsfall.

The Leader confirmed that he did not wish to add anything further, and other Members suggested that the Meeting should proceed to the vote.

RESOLVED that:

(a) subject to resolutions (e)-(h) inclusive set out below, the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2015/16 to 2018/19, detailed in Appendix 'A' to the circulated report, be approved;

(b) subject to resolutions (e)-(h) inclusive set out below, the Capital Programme for 2015/16 to 2017/18, as detailed in paragraph 11 of the circulated report, and in Appendix 'B' to the circulated report, be approved;

- (c) subject to resolutions (e)-(h) inclusive set out below, the Net Budget Requirement for 2015/16, detailed at paragraph 9.1 of the circulated report, and the Detailed Budget attached at Appendix 'B' to the circulated report, be approved;**
- (d) the Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16, attached at Appendix 'D' to the circulated report, be approved.**
- (e) the reduction in council tax be increased to 5%, making the District Council's Band D council tax £126.40;**
- (f) £515,000 of the revised budget surplus (£515,237) be allocated to the Council Priorities Fund to fund the priorities set out in resolutions (g) and (h) over the life of the Medium Term Financial Strategy;**
- (g) a budget of £68,000 be established to fund local environmental issues; with each Ward Member having access to up to £2,000 per annum to spend in their ward area on issues such as street cleansing, litter removal or other environmental service functions currently provided on behalf of this Council by Ubico Ltd;**
- (h) building control fees be reduced by 10% (with the building control income budget being reduced commensurately by £32,000);**
- (i) the Council's Chief Finance Officer be given delegated authority to update the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Detailed Budget in accordance with the decisions at resolutions (e)-(h) inclusive set out above.**

Note:

In accordance with legislative requirements, a Recorded Vote was also taken in respect of the Substantive Motion. The Record of Voting was as follows:-

For: - Councillors Mark F Annett, Clive Bennett, DC Broad, Sandra Carter, Sue Coakley, DE Collier, Mrs. VB Crosbie Dawson, BS Dare, RW Dutton, David Fowles, BD Gibbs, C Hancock, Mrs. DE Hicks, RP Hooper, Sir Edward Horsfall, RL Hughes, Mrs. Sheila Jeffery, Mrs. SL Jepson, Mrs. Carolyn Nicolle, Jim Parsons, NJW Parsons, David Penman, Mrs. M Phillips, Lynden Stowe, R Theodoulou, Mrs. CH Topple and LR Wilkins - Total: 27;

Against: - Councillors PCB Coleman, JA Harris, Mrs. JL Hincks, PR Hodgkinson, JP Hughes, Ms JM Layton, AJ Lichnowski, DJ Nash, Mrs. MS Rickman and Lee Searles - Total: 10;

Abstentions: - None - Total: 0;

Absent: - Councillors Julian Beale, JGK Birch, John Burgess, SG Hirst, EGJ Jenkins, GM Selwyn and M Wardle - Total: 7.

CL.45 COUNCIL TAX 2015/16

The Leader of the Council introduced this item and drew attention to the updated report which reflected revised recommendations to take account of the Budget for 2015/16 approved by the Council under the previous item of business (incorporating a 5% reduction in the District Council element of Council Tax); together with a further

parish precept notification that had been received subsequent to the circulation of the original agenda papers (in relation to Condicote).

It was duly Proposed, Seconded and

RESOLVED that:

- (1) for the purposes of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 Section 35(2), there are no special expenses for the District Council in 2015/16;**
- (2) it be noted that, using her delegated authority, the Chief Finance Officer calculated the Council Tax Base for 2015/16:**
 - (a) for the whole Council area as 37,250.50 [item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and**
 - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish Precept relates as in Schedule 1 to the updated report;**
- (3) the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2015/16 (excluding Parish Precepts) is £126.40;**
- (4) the following amounts be calculated for the year 2015/16 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:-**
 - (a) £52,005,537 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils and any additional special expenses;**
 - (b) £45,007,327 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act;**
 - (c) £6,998,210 being the amount by which the aggregate at 4(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 4(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act);**
 - (d) £187.87 being the amount at 4(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (2(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses);**
 - (e) £2,289,786 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act as per Schedule 2 to the updated report;**
 - (f) £126.40 being the amount at 4(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 4(e) above by Item T(1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish Precept or special item relates;**

- (g) the amounts shown in Schedule 2 to the updated report being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 4(f) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area shown in Schedule 2 divided in each case by the amount at 2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate;
- (h) the amounts shown in Schedule 3 to the updated report being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 4(f) and 4(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;

(5) it be noted that for the year 2015/16 the Gloucestershire County Council and the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated below:-

Valuation Band	Gloucestershire County Council	Police and Crime Commissioner
	£	£
A	727.00	138.49
B	848.17	161.57
C	969.33	184.65
D	1,090.50	207.73
E	1,332.83	253.89
F	1,575.17	300.05
G	1,817.50	346.22
H	2,181.00	415.46

(6) the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in Schedule 4 to the updated report as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2015/16 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings;

(7) the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2015/16 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992;

(8) the Chief Finance Officer, Legal Officer/Trainee Legal Executive, Joint Head of Revenues and Benefits, Joint Operations Lead Officer, Joint Operations Manager, Joint Support Lead Officer, Overpayments Officer, Senior Recovery Revenues Officer, and Recovery Officer be authorised to:-

- (a) collect and recover any National Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax, and
- (b) prosecute or defend on the Council's behalf or to appear on its behalf in proceedings before a magistrate's court in

respect of unpaid National Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax.

Note:

In accordance with the Council's Procedure Rules, a Recorded Vote was taken in respect of the Proposition. The Record of Voting was as follows:-

For: Councillors Mark F Annett, Clive Bennett, DC Broad, Sandra Carter, Sue Coakley, PCB Coleman, DE Collier, Mrs. VB Crosbie Dawson, RW Dutton, David Fowles, BD Gibbs, C Hancock, Mrs. DE Hicks, RP Hooper, Sir Edward Horsfall, RL Hughes, Mrs. Sheila Jeffery, Mrs. SL Jepson, AJ Lichnowski, NJW Parsons, David Penman, Mrs. M Phillips, Lynden Stowe, R Theodoulou, Mrs. CH Topple and LR Wilkins - Total: 26;

Against: Councillors JA Harris, Mrs. JL Hincks, PR Hodgkinson, Ms JM Layton, Mrs. MS Rickman and Lee Searles - Total: 6;

Abstentions: Councillor JP Hughes - Total: 1;

Absent: Councillors Julian Beale, JGK Birch, John Burgess, BS Dare, SG Hirst, EGJ Jenkins, DJ Nash, Mrs. Carolyn Nicolle, Jim Parsons, GM Selwyn and M Wardle - Total: 11.

CL.46 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2015/16

The Chairman of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee introduced this item, and requested that the Council consider the draft Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16.

The Chairman of the Committee explained that, in commending the Strategy to the Council, the Committee had requested that, in the future, the Cabinet should look at direct investment in property alongside investment in property funds. This would be debated in due course.

Attention was drawn to the table in paragraph 2.1 of the Strategy document (page 84 referred), and it was explained that the figures in the column headed '2014/15 Budget' were incorrect. A revised page was circulated, containing the correct figures (which identified capital expenditure of £4,787,000).

RESOLVED that the Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16 be approved.

Record of Voting - for 32, against 0, abstentions 0, interest declared 1, absent 11.

CL.47 MEMBER DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURE 2015/16

The Council was requested to consider possible changes to the Member decision-making structure with effect from the 2015/16 Municipal Year given that the Council would operate with 34 Members from that time as a result of the outcome of the District Electoral Review (DER); and to ensure that arrangements remained fit-for-purpose and represented good practice.

The following Options had been presented for consideration, such options having been devised having had regard to the joint submission of the CDC

Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups as part of the DER relating to future Council Size, together with almost two years' operation of the current structure:-

- (i) Option 1 - retain the existing structure, and amend membership numbers accordingly;
- (ii) Option 2 - largely retain the existing structure but revert to a standalone Audit Committee and a standalone Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and amend membership numbers accordingly;
- (iii) Option 3 - combine the Planning and Licensing Committees into a single Regulatory Committee. In addition to a strategic role, the combined committee would take on the development control role. Operational sub-committees would be established for (i) licensing (2003 Act matters, e.g. premises licences, temporary event notices); (ii) licensing (hackney carriage/private hire/street trading matters); and (iii) current appeals committee business (if retained as a Member function).

The financial costs of the various Options were identified.

There was general support for the main committee structure identified within Option 3. However, a number of Members felt that a standalone Appeals Committee should be retained, in order to ensure greater independence and transparency.

RESOLVED that:

(a) with effect from the 2015/16 municipal year, the Committee structure (beneath the Council) shall be as follows:

- **Cabinet (numbers at the discretion of the Leader subject to the legislative requirements)**
- **Planning and Licensing Committee - 15 Members**
- **Audit Committee - 5 Members**
- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 7 Members**
- **Appeals Committee - 3 Members (ad hoc appointments as existing);**

(b) with effect from the 2015/16 municipal year, Special Responsibility Allowances for Committee Chairmen etc. roles shall be as follows:

- **Chairman of the Planning and Licensing Committee - £6,000**
- **Vice-Chairman of the Planning and Licensing Committee - £2,000**
- **Chairman of the Audit Committee - £2,000**
- **Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee - £2,000;**

(c) the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to (i) implement the changes and (ii) make the relevant amendments to the Council's Constitution arising from the decisions of Council (as necessary).

Record of Voting - for 33, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 11.

CL.48 ANY OTHER ISSUES ARISING FROM THE CABINET

There were no other issues arising from the Cabinet.

CL.49 ISSUES/REPORTS ARISING FROM AUDIT AND SCRUTINY

There were no issues/reports arising from Audit and Scrutiny.

CL.50 NOTICE OF MOTION

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12, the following Motion (No. 1/2015) had been Proposed by Councillor PR Hodgkinson and Seconded by Councillor JA Harris:

'This Council takes huge pride in the Cotswolds and wants to see it kept clean and tidy. It is saddened by the amount of litter along the verges of our country roads and lanes. It therefore calls for a more proactive approach to litter picking to be taken so that A and B roads in the Cotswolds receive more regular, programmed litter picks than is currently the case so that our area is kept free from unsightly rubbish.'

The Chairman of the Council stated that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12, once Proposed and Seconded, the Motion would stand referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

In Proposing the Motion, Councillor Hodgkinson explained the he was calling for Cotswold District Council to be more proactive in clearing the area of unsightly rubbish. He stated that, at present, the Council picked up litter in some areas regularly but many rural roads faced long waits between visits by waste collectors; and that, at this time of year, with the verges clear of leaves, litter could be seen strewn everywhere, to the extreme detriment of our unique area.

Councillor Hodgkinson also suggested that, because the Council's litter collections were so infrequent, people were taking the matter into their own hands and doing litter picks themselves - he too had taken part in such activities. He was heartened by the fact that so many people did take huge pride in the Cotswolds and wanted to see it kept clean and tidy, but was saddened by the amount of litter along the verges of country roads and lanes, and felt that it was time for action to be taken.

Councillor JA Harris formally Seconded the Motion. Councillor Harris suggested that it was not just the rural roads which were a problem, with litter also spoiling the District's towns. He had organised two litter picks recently around Cirencester with students from the Royal Agricultural University, and all those involved had helped to make the area cleaner. Whilst grateful for the support received, he believed that the Council should be doing much more to resolve the problems.

At this juncture, the Motion stood referred to the Cabinet for consideration, it being noted that the Proposer and Secunder would be invited to present the Motion to the Cabinet in due course.

CL.51 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

RESOLVED that the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to all contracts, conveyances and any other documents necessary for carrying into effect all resolutions passed by the Council.

Record of Voting - for 34, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 10.

CL.52 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and Press be excluded from the Meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph (3) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the said Act (information relating to financial or business affairs) and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information concerned.

Record of Voting - for 34, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 10.

CL.53 CIRENCESTER PROPERTY - POSSIBLE DISPOSAL

The Deputy Leader of the Council presented the report and recommendations of the Cabinet relating to the disposal of a property owned by the Council in Cirencester.

The Deputy Leader amplified various aspects relating to the proposed disposal, including the various constraints on the site, the supplementary payment, and the options to achieve additional car parking as part of any future redevelopment of the site; and also responded to a number of questions from Members.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the open market disposal of the whole of the site identified at paragraph 1 of the circulated report, or any part of that site, be approved;**
- (b) offers for the whole site, or any part of that site, be considered and evaluated in terms of both financial and non-financial benefits, including car parking;**
- (c) if car parking is lost from the site under the most advantageous offer, all or part of the capital receipt received from its disposal be allocated for the provision of additional car parking within Cirencester;**
- (d) an allocation be made within the Capital Programme for the payment of the supplementary purchase price for the site;**
- (e) further to resolution (d) above, payment of the sum be agreed in full and final settlement with the Secretary of State under the Supplementary Purchase Price Agreement, and Officers be instructed to complete the necessary legal agreements;**
- (f) the Strategic Director (Resources), in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships, the Head of Legal and Property Services, and the Chief Finance Officer, be authorised to agree the final terms for any disposal, legal agreements and allocation of capital receipt for future car parking if required.**

Record of Voting - for 31, against 0, abstentions 1, interest declared 1, absent 11.

CL.54 PROPERTY MATTER - CIRENCESTER

The Council was requested to consider an offer received by the Council for the disposal of and owned by the Council in Cirencester, to enable the redevelopment of a large assembled site.

The circulated report set out details of the affected land; the development proposals; car parking implications; impacts during construction, and on an adjacent enterprise; the offer made; and valuation advice, including issues regarding disposal at an undervalue and State Aid rules.

The Deputy Leader amplified various aspects relating to the offer made, and presented a recommended way forward, drawing attention to various options therein.

In the light of the information available and the advice received, Members agreed that (i) the current offer should be rejected; (ii) any disposal should not be at an undervalue; and (iii) as part of any further negotiations, either a freehold sale or lease would be acceptable. It was also suggested, and agreed, that all Cirencester District Ward Members should be consulted on the final terms for the disposal and associated land transactions and legal agreements.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) based on the information set out within the circulated report and advice from the Council's Valuers, the Council rejects the offer made for the Council's land interest identified within the circulated report;**
- (b) the Council is not willing to agree to a disposal of its land interest at an undervalue;**
- (c) Officers be instructed to continue negotiations with the Developer to seek to agree a satisfactory financial consideration for the Council's land interest, which can be signed off following valuation advice, with disposal to be either by way of a freehold sale or a lease;**
- (d) subject to the satisfactory conclusion to negotiations under resolution (c) above, the Strategic Director (Resources), in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships, the Ward Members for Cirencester, the Head of Legal and Property Services and the Chief Finance Officer, be authorised to agree the final terms for the disposal and associated land transactions and legal agreements;**
- (e) any capital receipt be reinvested in either commercial property or a property fund to protect the Council's revenue position.**

Record of Voting - for 28, against 0, abstentions 1, interests declared 2, absent 13.

The Meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m., adjourned between 10.45 a.m. and 11.00 a.m. and then again between 12.55 p.m. and 1.00 p.m., and closed at 2.05 p.m.

Chairman

(END)