

Council  
19/January2022



COTSWOLD  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of a meeting held of Council held on Wednesday, 19 January 2022.**

**Councillors present:**

Dilys Neill	Nikki Ind	
Stephen Andrews	Jenny Forde	Nick Maunder
Tony Berry	Joe Harris	Richard Norris
Gina Blomefield	Stephen Hirst	Nigel Robbins
Claire Bloomer	Robin Hughes	Gary Selwyn
Ray Brassington	Roly Hughes	Lisa Spivey
Patrick Coleman	Sue Jepson	Ray Theodoulou
David Cunningham	Julia Judd	Steve Trotter
Tony Dale	Richard Keeling	Clive Webster
Andrew Doherty	Juliet Layton	
Mike Evemy	Andrew Maclean	

**Officers present:**

Angela Claridge, Monitoring Officer  
Caleb Harris, Strategic Support Officer  
Ben Patel-Sadler, Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Jenny Poole, Deputy Chief Executive  
Rob Weaver, Chief Executive

**48 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mark Harris, Rachel Coxcoon and Richard Morgan.

**49 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**50 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2021 were agreed as a true record subject to the following amendments:

At page 4 of the minutes, paragraph 8, the words 'free, casual use on a temporary basis' should be added to reflect that the Whiteway car park was opened a couple of weeks before Christmas on a temporary basis only.

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RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2021 were agreed as a true record subject to the above amendments being made.

**Record of Voting – for: 26, against: 0, abstentions: 4, absent: 3.**

## **51 Announcements from the Chair, Leader or Chief Executive (if any)**

The Chair of the Council, Councillor Dilys Neill welcomed Members, Officers and those public present and watching the meeting online to the meeting.

The Chair of the Council informed Members that the Council was looking to form a team to compete in the Relay for Life event which would take place in July 2022 and which was a fundraising event for Cancer Research UK. Volunteers, both Councillors and Officers, were encouraged to participate if possible.

Council noted that following Councillor Stephen Andrews' question to the Chair at the last Council meeting, the Chair suggested that Members debate the suggestion that the Council temporarily suspended the requirement for Members to attend at least one Council meeting every six months.

Following discussions with the CEO and Councillor Stephen Andrews, it was agreed that this was a matter for the Constitution Working Group and would be considered at the next meeting of that group which was in February 2022.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Joe Harris addressed Council and informed Members that small, remedial repair work would be undertaken by the Council at Brewery Court, Cirencester. This would result in the site not falling into further disrepair before it was redeveloped in the future.

The Leader of the Council welcomed two new members of staff, Max Thompson and Gemma Williams who would be supporting the CEO and the Leader of the Council respectively.

There were no announcement from the Chief Executive.

## **52 Public Questions**

Mr Gibson attended the meeting to pose two questions which had not been submitted in advance of the meeting.

The first question was posed to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Joe Harris and was in relation to the cost of the recently undertaken consultation on the 2022-23 Council budget. Reference was also made by Mr Gibson to the recent decision by Cabinet to amend car parking charges and to cease the operation of the 'free after 3pm' scheme in Cirencester.

Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance responded due to the question relating directly to his Cabinet Portfolio.

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Council noted that the member of the public who had attended the January 2022 Cabinet meeting to ask a question in relation to the proposed car parking charges and arrangements had been treated courteously and respectfully by Cabinet Members. The recording of this meeting was publicly available to view online.

Council further noted that the Cabinet was required to take decisions in order to safeguard the Council's financial position. The results of the consultation were considered before any proposals and decisions on car parking charges were taken by the Cabinet. The Cabinet and the Council recognised the challenges facing businesses in the District.

Council noted that the recent budget consultation had yielded the highest number of responses since the commencement of the exercise.

The second question was in relation to the 2022-23 budget, specifically in relation to 'no value added' expenditure.

Council noted the detailed budget setting procedures which were adhered to on an annual basis so that balanced budgets could be produced. The Corporate Plan was adhered to from a financial perspective (via the alignment of finances to the Corporate Plan). The Deputy Leader of the Council informed the meeting that Members of the opposition were able to submit suggestions in relation to proposed budgets (along with an alternative budget) and the public could participate via the annual budget consultation exercise.

### **53 Member Questions**

A record of Member questions and answers are available in the schedule attached to these minutes.

Questions were asked by:

Councillor Julia Judd to Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council (two questions).

Councillor Gina Blomefield to Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance.

### **54 External Audit Contract**

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Mike Evemy introduced the report and highlighted the benefits of the procurement of external audit services from 2023/24 through the National Procurement Framework using Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd. It was the responsibility of the Council to appoint its external auditors.

Council noted the current shortages of auditors across the country at this time. This was a contributing factor as to why the latest external audit report had not yet been submitted.

The Deputy Leader of the Council proposed the recommendations as outlined in the report.

This was seconded by Councillor Patrick Coleman.

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RESOLVED that the Council approves the procurement of external audit services from 2023/24 through the National Procurement Framework using Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd.

**Record of Voting – for: 30, against: 0, abstentions: 0, absent: 3.**

## **55**     **Gambling Act 2005 - Review of the Statement of Principles**

The Cabinet Member for Development Management and Licensing, Councillor Juliet Layton introduced the report and informed Council that it was a requirement for the Statement of Principles to be reviewed every three years. The last review had taken place in 2019 and so this was the appropriate time for Council to consider this report.

Council noted that there were no fundamental changes proposed to the existing Statement of Principles, with the adoption of a ‘no casino’ resolution remaining.

The Council further noted the consultation which had been undertaken in advance of the production of the current version of the Statement of Principles.

Council agreed that where changes were made to documents/policies, the tracked changes are included so Members can see immediately where amendments have been made.

Councillor Juliet Layton proposed the recommendations as outlined in the report.

This was seconded by Councillor Ray Brassington.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The reviewed Statement of Principles, attached at Annex ‘A’ to the circulated report, be approved;
- b) that the Council continues to adopt a “no-casino resolution” for inclusion in the published Gambling Act 2005 Licensing Policy Statement.

**Record of Voting – for: 30 , against: 0, abstentions: 0, absent: 3**

## **56**     **Cotswold District Council Draft Schedule of Meetings 2022-23**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Joe Harris introduced the report with the Council noting that the meetings for May 2023 were not being confirmed at this point due to the elections taking place that month. The May 2023 meeting dates would be submitted for consideration at the November 2022 Council meeting.

Council noted that the first meeting following the completion of the May 2023 election would be a meeting of Full Council to select the Leader.

Council noted that the 2022-23 calendar of meetings reflected the 2021-22 schedule and sought to avoid meetings taking place in school holidays (wherever possible).

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Council further noted that meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been scheduled during the civic year 2022-23 so that appropriate scrutiny of performance information could take place sufficiently in advance of Cabinet meetings.

Council noted that the 2022-23 meeting dates would be circulated to Members via Outlook invitations, subject to them being agreed at this meeting.

A revised version of Annex A would also be circulated to Members which would include the existing meetings taking place in May 2022.

The Leader of Council proposed that the dates as outlined in the report be approved by Council, noting that the May 2023 meeting dates would be submitted for consideration at the November 2022 meeting of Council.

This was seconded by Councillor Mike Evemy.

**Record of Voting – for: 29, against: 1, abstentions: 0, absent: 3.**

## **57 Notice of Motions**

Members had been given notice of a number of Motions, detailed on the agenda.

### **a) Motion - Armed Forces Covenant Re-Endorsement**

Proposed by Councillor Stephen Andrews, Seconded by Cllr Julia Judd

Nearly a decade ago, in February 2012, Cotswold District Council, along with its partners within Gloucestershire, local NHS representatives, and the Police and Crime Commissioner, signed the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

On the 15th December 2021 Royal Assent was given to the Armed Forces Act 2021 enshrining the Armed Forces Covenant in law for the first time.

The Covenant is a statement of mutual support between the civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. It encourages support for the Armed Forces Community residing in Cotswold District and recognises and remembers their sacrifices. This includes in-service and ex-service personnel, their families and widow(er)s, reservists, their partners and their families in Cotswold District.

It is important that we continue to work with veterans in the District and that we place on record our appreciation and gratitude to those organisations which work tirelessly with our local Veterans and their families.

For the District Council and those Organisations that it works with within Gloucestershire, the Armed Forces Covenant presents an opportunity for us all to continue sharing our knowledge and experience of how Local Government is structured and how it works, with the local bases in South Cerney and where appropriate, Fairford, in order to assist and advise our military neighbours and their families in practical ways when they might need our help or advice. It also represents an opportunity to work with Service Charities on aspects relating to the welfare of Service Families and Veterans resident in Cotswold District, including those who may be based, or previously based, at sites outside of Cotswold District, such as at RAF Brize Norton or the Defence Academy at Shrivenham.

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**MOTION:**

Now, with the passage of the Armed Forces Covenant into law, this Council believe that the time is right to update and reinforce the commitment of this Council to the Covenant.

Therefore, this Council proposes that in 2022, on the 10-year anniversary of the original signing, this Council re-sign it, highlighting our continued commitment to working with, and honouring, the Armed Forces Community.

Councillor Stephen Andrews introduced the Motion with Council noting the difficulties associated with armed forces personnel leaving active service and transitioning to civilian life. The Motion was aimed at all categories of armed forces personnel, not just those who had experienced combat.

Council acknowledged the importance of ensuring that appropriate help and support in relation to housing and health and wellbeing was available to existing and ex-service personnel and their families who were living within the District.

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Lisa Spivey who addressed the Council, noting the links between the District and the armed forces. The Council was committed to working with and supporting serving and ex armed forces personnel and their families.

Councillor Mike Every addressed Council acknowledging how armed forces personnel and their families were active members of communities across the District.

Council acknowledged the announcement by the Government who had commissioned a review into historic injustice against LGBT people in the armed forces.

Council recognised the importance of acknowledging the contribution of all serving and ex members of the armed forces who had served their country.

Members noted the Council's inclusivity policy and the importance of ensuring every person in the District was treated equally.

Councillor Julia Judd addressed the Council and noted the importance of local communities being aware of the armed forces and the work they undertook. An event arranged by the Army and attended by Councillor Judd had sought to provide as much information as possible about the organisation. Council noted that the Army were seeking to integrate within local communities within the District.

Council noted the importance of ensuring ex armed forces personnel were provided with appropriate employment opportunities when leaving the service.

The Council noted the important role the armed forces played in serving and protecting the public.

Councillor Roly Hughes addressed the Council, with Members noting the amounts of money collected via donations in the District and the importance of providing appropriate housing for veterans and their families.

Councillor Richard Keeling addressed the Council, supporting the Motion.

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Council voted to support the Motion.

**Record of Voting – for: 30, against: 0, abstentions: 0, absent: 3**

**58**    **Next meeting**

16 February 2022 – 6pm

The Meeting commenced at 2pm and closed at 3.20pm

Chair

(END)