

Public Document Pack



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Friday, 26 November 2021

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CABINET

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held in the Council Chamber at the Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester on **Monday, 6 December 2021 at 6.00 pm.**

Rob Weaver
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Cabinet
(Councillors Rachel Coxcoon, Tony Dale, Andrew Doherty, Mike Evemy, Jenny Forde, Joe Harris, Juliet Layton and Lisa Spivey)

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Cabinet, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Committee Administrator know prior to the date of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of interest from Members and Officers, relating to items to be considered at the meeting.

3. **Minutes (Pages 7 - 12)**

To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 1 November 2021.

4. **Chair's Announcements (if any)**

5. **Public Questions**

To deal with questions from the public within the open forum question and answer session of fifteen minutes in total. Questions from each member of the public should be no longer than two minutes each and relate issues under the Committee's remit.

6. **Member Questions**

To deal with written questions by Members, relating to issues under the Committee's remit, with the maximum length of oral supplementary questions at Committee being no longer than one minute. Responses to any supplementary questions will be dealt with in writing if they cannot be dealt with at the meeting.

7. **Financial, Council Priority and Service Performance Report - 2021-22 Quarter Two (Pages 13 - 102)**

Purpose

To provide an update on progress on the Council's priorities and service performance.

To provide information on the Council's financial position.

Recommendation

That Cabinet reviews overall progress on the Council priorities, service delivery and financial performance for 2021-22 Q2.

8. **Review of Grant Funding & Service Level Agreements for Existing Grant Maintained Visitor Information Centres (Pages 103 - 120)**

Purpose

To review the work and impact of the grant maintained Visitor Information Centres across the District.

To understand the role they play in supporting businesses in the local Visitor Economy & how this could be improved in future.

To understand the impact of the Covid pandemic on the Centres & visitor journey with a focus on digital engagement.

To consider the future direction for Visitor Information Centres & how they can help support the Council's tourism priorities.

Recommendation(s)

To seek approval to continue to provide financial grants at current levels to the four existing grant maintained Visitor Information Centres for an 18 month period. Total financial commitment of £81 000 (1/4/22 – 30/9/23).

To use the 18 month period as an opportunity to baseline and work with the current Centres to trial a change to a criteria-based commissioned grant system with key objectives relevant to the town/village & helping towards the Council & Cotswolds Tourism objectives.

Have a longer term aim to shift Visitor Information Centre provision to being proactive, digitally enabled and working to improve the visitor economy of the local town/village and surrounding area.

9. **Parish and Town Council Election Costs (Pages 121 - 128)**

Purpose

To consider the option of recharging the costs of elections to Town and Parish Councils.

Recommendations

That the Council agrees to recharge Town and Parish Councils for contested 4-yearly elections with effect from the May 2023 elections.

That the Council agrees to recharge Town and Parish Councils for contested by-elections at all elections called on or after 1 April 2023.

10. **Local Plan and Community Infrastructure Levy - Update (Pages 129 - 302)**

Purpose

Consider the publication of an early stage Local Plan consultation document and updated Conservation Area Appraisals for public consultation;

Note latest monitoring data on planning contributions on Section 106 Legal Agreements (S106) and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL);

Consider the internal Council processes for the allocation and spend of the Council's CIL funds; and

Consider updated terms of reference for two Programme Boards.

Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- a) Approves Annexes (A) and (B) for a public consultation in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement;
- b) Grants delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning to agree any minor amendments, including refining consultation questions, and typographical changes to Annexes (A) and (B) ahead of the public consultation;

- c) Approves CIL governance framework (Annex C);
- d) Notes the publication of the data in the CIL and S106 reports of the Infrastructure Funding Statement (Annex D);
- e) Approve the publication of the Infrastructure List (contained in part one of the Infrastructure Funding Statement - Annex D);
- f) Approves updated Terms of References for the Local Plan and Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan Programme Boards (Annexes E and F); and
- g) Approves drawdown of £108,000 from the Council Priorities Fund reserve to initiate and / or remunerate programmes of work identified in paragraph 7.4.

11. Green Economic Growth Strategy - Six Monthly Update (Pages 303 - 310)

Purpose

To update Cabinet Members on the progress in delivering the Council's Green Economic Growth Strategy.

Recommendations

That progress in delivering the Green Economic Growth Strategy is noted.

12. Options for Parking Enforcement (Pages 311 - 320)

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide options in relation to the expiry of the (APCOA) Parking Enforcement contract.

Recommendation(s)

- (a) Cabinet agrees to bring the Enforcement service back in-house.
- (b) Cabinet delegates to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance the decision on whether to lease or buy the vehicles associated with this decision and approves the allocation of £45,000 from the Electric Vehicle Charging point budget within the Capital Programme to fund the purchase if necessary;
- (c) Cabinet approves an allocation of £12,000 from the Council Priorities Fund to fund the start-up costs for the in-house service.

13. The Future Use of Cotswold District Council's Offices at Trinity Road, Cirencester (Pages 321 - 356)

Purpose

To consider high level options and agree the future use of the Cotswold District Council's Offices at Trinity Road, Cirencester.

Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet agrees that:

- a) Based on the high level option appraisal, the Council reduces its occupation of the Offices and actively markets the estimated 30 - 40% spare space generated for commercial tenants, providing both revenue savings and a revenue return for the Council.

b) A further report setting out capital costs to make changes to building configuration, access, security etc. will be presented to the Cabinet once the final allocation of Council services to specific space within the building is agreed.

c) Funding of up to £13,000 is allocated from the Council Priorities Fund earmarked reserve to fund a feasibility study to assess options for roof repairs or replacement, incorporating options for insulation and reduction in heat loss, and that a further report is brought back to the Cabinet.

d) To support implementation of option 2a, £308,000 of capital funding is included as part of the forthcoming budget setting process to fund works to install solar PV, lighting and smaller measures in the Office buildings which should achieve a reduction in Carbon emissions of approximately 59CO₂t per year (20%).

e) A 20% contingency sum is allocated for recommendation (d) £62,000 to allow for equipment or installation costs above estimates or unforeseen works with authority delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to draw on that funding.

14. Cotswold Club (Pages 357 - 368)

Purpose

To consider options and agree the future use or disposal of the Cotswold Club, Cirencester.

Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet agree that:

- a) The Cotswold Club be marketed for disposal in existing condition as set out within the report; and
- b) Capital receipts from the sale be earmarked for investment in carbon zero affordable housing developments on other sites in the District.

The Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance have delegated authority to agree the final terms for the disposal of the property.

15. Schedule of Decisions taken by the Leader of the Council and/or Individual Cabinet Members (Pages 369 - 370)

16. Issue(s) Arising From Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit

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COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet held on Monday, 1 November 2021.

Councillors present:

Rachel Coxcoon
Tony Dale
Andrew Doherty

Mike Every
Jenny Forde
Joe Harris

Juliet Layton
Lisa Spivey

Officers present:

Caroline Clissold, Housing Manager
Mandy Fathers, Business Manager, Operational Services
Caleb Harris, Strategic Support Officer
Anwen Hughes, Strategic Housing Manager
Jasmine McWilliams, Estates Manager
Ben Patel-Sadler, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Jenny Poole, Deputy Chief Executive
Joseph Walker, Community Partnership Officer
Robert Weaver, Chief Executive

Observers:

Councillor Stephen Andrews
Councillor Patrick Coleman

40 Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

41 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

There were no declarations of interest from Officers.

42 Minutes

RESOLVED that, subject to the following amendments, the minutes of the meeting of the 4 October 2021 be approved as a correct record:

- At page 8 of the minutes (minute 38), the wording should reflect that the urgent decision was taken in August 2020.

Record of Voting – for: 8, against: 0, abstention: 0, absent: 0.

43 Chair's Announcements (if any)

At the request of the Chair, Cabinet Members and those in attendance stood for a minute's silence in memory of the Conservative MP Sir David Amess who had been killed at his constituency surgery in Essex.

The minute's silence was also held to remember and honour armed forces members who had died in the line of duty.

Cabinet noted the importance of regularly reviewing the safety and security of all Elected Members and Council Officers.

The Chair and Cabinet Members wished Her Majesty the Queen a speedy recovery and acknowledged the stability Her Majesty provided to the British people and others around the world.

In relation to the upcoming COP 26 conference, Cabinet acknowledged the work being undertaken by the Council to help address the climate emergency.

Cabinet noted that Members had completed carbon literacy training which would also be rolled out to Officers across the Council.

The Chair would be attending the conference to represent the Council.

44 Public Questions

There were no public questions.

45 Member Questions

There were no Member questions.

46 Consideration of Notice of Motion 6/2020/21 Flytipping

Councillor Andrew Doherty introduced the report.

Cabinet noted that because locations of flytipping across the District were spread over a wide area, there would be a practical difficulty and a high cost of installing CCTV cameras across all sites.

Because of the often random nature of flytipping, Cabinet noted that there were not specific areas where cameras could be installed which would guarantee offenders would be recorded.

Cabinet further noted the intricacies of the regulations surrounding the use of covert cameras.

Cabinet noted that an appropriate method to tackle the issue of flytipping was the use of Council Officers to monitor sites and to gather evidence when the practice occurred (significant evidence was crucial if individuals were to be prosecuted for flytipping).

A view was expressed that the installation of static CCTV cameras would not deter people from flytipping and that potential instances of cameras being vandalised/destroyed would place an additional cost burden on the Council.

Cabinet noted the existing Council strategy in relation to combatting flytipping including the Clean and Green Programme.

RESOLVED that Councillor Andrew Doherty proposed that Cabinet do not support the provision of overt or covert CCTV to support flytipping prosecutions but continue with the present approach to investigating flytipping. This was seconded by Councillor Tony Dale.

Record of Voting – for: 8, against: 0, abstention: 0, absent: 0.

47 Freedom of Information Act Requests

Councillor Joe Harris introduced the report and emphasised the importance of the Council being as open and transparent as possible.

Cabinet noted the investment which had been made in relation to webcasting with the intention of ensuring that all decisions taken by the Council were as accessible as possible.

In relation to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, Cabinet noted that the Council was committed to ensuring that any FOI requests were responded to within statutory timescales and that the information contained in any replies was easily accessible to the public.

Cabinet acknowledged that that on occasions, FOI requests were not always necessary in order for residents to obtain information from the Council.

Cabinet noted that as much detail as legally permissible would be provided when the Council replied to any FOI requests.

Cabinet further noted that Publica and Ubico, along with other local authority owned companies, were subject to FOI requests.

Cabinet noted that further work was being undertaken by the Council via IT updates to ensure that more data and information could be shared with the public as a matter of routine. Member expenses were published online alongside all Council payments.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

a) Noted the report;

b) Supported the publication of quarterly statistics on the Council's website as set out in paragraph 4.1 of this report;

c) Requested that the Business Manager for Corporate Responsibility undertakes further research into the options available for publishing all Freedom of Information requests on the Council's website and reports back to Cabinet in January 2022; and

d) Whilst the options for recommendation c) were being considered, supported the creation of a frequently asked Freedom of Information requests webpage as set out in paragraph 4.3 of this report.

Record of Voting – for: 8, against: 0, abstention: 0, absent: 0.

48 HomeseekerPlus Policy Update

Councillor Lisa Spivey introduced the report.

Cabinet noted that HomeseekerPlus was the mechanism used to allocate social housing within the District.

The policy had been in operation for several years and so the opportunity had been taken to ensure that it now reflected any legislative changes/updates within the social housing sector.

Cabinet noted that a consultation exercise had been undertaken which had been open to residents. The changes made following the completion of the consultation were included in the report.

Cabinet further noted the shortage of social housing within the District and noted that further work around the policies would be undertaken with partners going forwards.

Cabinet noted that the current administration were committed to providing additional social housing.

Cabinet noted the importance of having a robust social housing policy in place so that properties could be allocated based on need.

Cabinet wished to place on record their thanks to the Council's Housing Team for the work they undertook to ensure that those who most needed accommodation were provided with it wherever possible.

Cabinet noted that a member(s) of the armed forces who had served anywhere in the United Kingdom could apply for social housing within the District.

Cabinet noted that having rent arrears would not preclude an individual(s) from being provided with a property. Officers would work with applicants to ensure that any offered and available properties were affordable for the individual(s) and that a plan was in place to pay down any rent arrears.

Cabinet noted that in addition to partners funding, housing associations also provided funding to support the designated Officer and associated IT infrastructure. Partner's payments were determined according to size of area and the number of social housing properties held.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- a) Approved the Policy for adoption
- b) Gave approval for the HomeseekerPlus Management Board to:
 - 1) Confirm the date for adoption once all partners had approval through their individual authorities governance structure (likely to be early 2022)
 - 2) Professionally formatted the Policy prior to publication.

Record of Voting – for: 8, against: 0, abstention: 0, absent: 0.

49 Cotswold District Council Community Housing Fund (CHF)

Councillor Lisa Spivey introduced the report, with Cabinet noting the support of the Council in relation to community-led housing.

Cabinet noted that a mechanism was in place to ensure that any groups wishing to access community-led housing funding could be supported appropriately in their endeavours.

Cabinet noted that several community-led housing trusts were currently in operation across the District.

Cabinet noted that the Council was committed to ensuring that housing schemes were affordable and also that they worked towards achieving the net zero carbon target.

Cabinet further noted that Officers would use some of the available funding for publicity purposes in helping to ensure that Town and Parish Councils were made aware of the Community Housing Fund (CHF).

RESOLVED that Cabinet agreed:

- a) That the Council agree to authorise the determination of allocations from the Council's CHF small grants fund to an Allocations Panel, to consist of the Group Manager for Commissioning, the Strategic Housing Manager, the Community-led Housing Enabler/Housing Enabling Officer, and the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness

Record of Voting – for: 8, against: 0, abstention: 0, absent: 0.

50 Community Funding for the 2022 Queens Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Councillor Jenny Forde introduced the report with Cabinet expressing the view that such celebrations should be community and not Council-led.

Cabinet expressed a view that the communities across the District would undoubtedly participate in appropriate celebrations to mark the occasion of Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

If event organisers wished to apply for funding to assist in hosting celebrations to mark this occasion, then the County Council along with Town and Parish Councils could be contacted

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to direct individuals to potential funding providers. The District Council could assist with advice in relation to the closing of roads and any potential licensing requirements for events.

Cabinet noted that Crowdfund Cotswold was also a potential route for event organisers in relation to securing funding for events.

Cabinet noted that the Council should be proactive in terms of readying itself for an influx of enquiries as the event drew nearer. Being able to signpost residents to the correct organisations/bodies/groups would be key so that celebrations could be organised held appropriately. There was already a dedicated webpage on the Council's website which gave advice on the arranging and hosting of community-led events.

RESOLVED that Cabinet agreed that it is appropriate to signpost community groups to either their local Town or Parish Council for small value contributions to the 2022 Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations or to Crowdfund Cotswold for larger projects that require a financial contribution in excess of £500.

Record of Voting – for: 8, against: 0, abstention: 0, absent: 0.

51 Issue(s) Arising From Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit

There were no issues arising from Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit.

52 Property Works - Cirencester

At this point of the meeting the Chair requested that members of the public now left before Cabinet formally considered agenda item 13 which was in relation to proposed property works in Cirencester. The item was classed as exempt under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972'.

This was proposed by Councillor Mike Evemy and seconded by Councillor Joe Harris.

Record of Voting – for: 8, against: 0, abstention: 0, absent: 0.

Following discussions, Cabinet noted the reasons as to why the property works were required and approved the expenditure related to these works.

Record of Voting – for: 8, against: 0, abstention: 0, absent: 0.

The Meeting commenced at 6pm and closed at 07:20pm

Chair

(END)

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 6 DECEMBER 2021
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 07
Subject	FINANCIAL, COUNCIL PRIORITY AND SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT – 2021-22 QUARTER TWO
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	All relevant Cabinet Members
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive Email: robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To provide an update on progress on the Council's priorities and service performance To provide information on the Council's financial position
Annexes	Annex A - Council Priorities report Annex B - Performance indicator report Annex C - Revenue Summary and Variances Annex D - Summary of gross capital expenditure
Recommendation(s)	<i>That Cabinet reviews overall progress on the Council priorities, service delivery and financial performance for 2021-22 Q2</i>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delivering our services to the highest standards ● Responding to the challenges presented by the climate crisis ● Providing good quality social rented homes ● Presenting a Local Plan that's green to the core ● Helping residents and communities access the support they need for good health and wellbeing ● Supporting businesses to grow in a green, sustainable manner, and to provide high value jobs
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	None



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Corporate Plan 2020-24 was adopted by the Council in September 2020, and includes recovery work in response to the impact of Covid-19.
- 1.2. A high level commissioning statement was approved by Cabinet in January 2020 which sets out the relationship between Publica and the Council and their respective responsibilities. Publica must ensure that it provides the necessary information to the Council so it can assess whether the commissioned services are being delivered in accordance with the agreed quality and standard. The Council's Chief Executive is responsible for reviewing and approving the information provided in this report prior to its publication.
- 1.3. The Council's Chief Executive has received a report on progress towards achieving the Council's priorities and service performance. He has assessed performance in line with the high level commissioning statement. He has noted the progress that has been made to deliver the actions in the Corporate Plan; and where a reduced level of operational performance has been identified, the actions that are being taken to improve performance. He has drawn particular attention to the following:
 - 19 July marked the lifting of all Covid-19 restrictions, and some staff have returned to the office but most are working in a hybrid style or mainly from home in line with Publica's Agile Working Strategy 2020. Whilst we need to ensure that staff are available to deliver services whether in the office or not, the change to more flexible working practices has presented an opportunity to review office space requirements and identify any space that can be repurposed. Draft office layouts have been developed for Trinity Road with proposals for desk layouts, meeting rooms, breakout areas and new tenanted areas. The Chief Executive will be consulting with Members on the proposals shortly;
 - It is encouraging to see that leisure visits and gym memberships are operating at around 80% of previous levels, and that marketing plans are in place to increase throughput and membership to pre-Covid levels. Furthermore, the Museum welcomed over 18,000 visitors including 169 pupils visiting since the start of the school term;
 - The Council's business rates collection figure (in year) continues to be affected by the impact of Covid-19 on businesses, as is the case with other councils throughout the country. The Government supported certain businesses with 100% business rate relief last year, but there are still businesses which are struggling financially. At the end of June 2021, the relief was reduced to 66% which will run until the end of the financial year;
 - Customer satisfaction ratings for services delivered by phone have continued to remain high throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Face to face surveys which only restarted in



July are also indicating that satisfaction is high with this channel, although the number surveyed was low due to low footfall;

- The website satisfaction indicator has been suspended while the service explores other methods for assessing the effectiveness of this communication channel. The Council recognises that it needs to focus on the ability to provide more options for accessing the Council's services including the potential for channel shift to quicker and more cost effective methods of communication where possible, such as the website. The Channel Choice project has commenced, and processes are beginning to be reviewed in those service areas that receive high volumes of calls;
- At its meeting in September 2021, Cabinet agreed to the formation of a Task and Finish Group which would focus on performance management and reporting. At a recent meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it had been recognised that the performance across all areas of the Council should be displayed clearly and be easily understandable. The work of the proposed Task and Finish Group would seek to identify any performance trends, both positive and negative.

2. COUNCIL PRIORITY REPORT

2.1 Progress on actions in the Corporate Plan include:

- In July 2021, Cabinet agreed to pledge to issue a Local Climate Bond using the Community Municipal Investment (CMI) model; and was one of the first five UK councils to become part of the Green Finance Institute and Abundance Investment's Local Climate Bond campaign. The CMI model is a way for local communities to invest in climate change projects to support the Council to meet its climate change targets. Progress is being made with Abundance on the legal elements of the bond as we move towards an issuance next year;
- Gloucestershire's district authorities have been awarded grant funding for a collaborative project to build capability in delivering support to able-to-pay owner-occupiers, supporting them to invest in energy efficiency and decarbonisation works in their own homes. The Council is leading the workstream on market analysis and business planning;



- The Council's new approach to community grants, Crowdfund Cotswold has proven to be one of the most successful schemes in the country facilitated by Spacehive. The first funding round ended in June 2021, and 15 out of 16 projects that launched on the platform achieved their targets. In total £271,043 was pledged by 1110 backers. The Council invested £72,054 into the projects, in addition to Gloucestershire County Council grant funding of £22,456, totalling £94,510;
- The Community Wellbeing team worked in partnership with the local voluntary and community sector to deliver the 'Holiday Activity and Food programme' (HAF) during the summer school holidays aimed at children in receipt of free school meals. The programme's purpose was to make sure children were entertained, active, educated, safe, and fed between Monday 2 August and Friday 27 August 2021. The team is planning the HAF provision for the Christmas holidays in partnership with the County Council, and will incorporate learning from the Easter and Summer schemes;
- The Council has been allocated a further £81,144 from the 'Welcome Back Fund', which is an extension of the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund which runs until the end of March 2022. Cabinet has approved indicative allocations of £50,000 for physical works to town centres and £30,000 to create a 'virtual high street' to assist town centres to be more digitally resilient. A range of town centre projects submitted by Town and Parish Councils have already been approved;
- Town and Parish Councils were invited to attend forums in October, one at Trinity Road, and the other at Moreton. Twenty-eight participants attended the event at Trinity Road, and 21 at Moreton. The focus was on improving relationships, working together and supporting each other as well as other topics such as planning and the budget. Looking ahead, a schedule of engagement events has been drafted which includes both forums for discussing topics such as 'Clean and Green', and community projects as well as the provision of training on items such as planning. The next forum is scheduled for January/ February 2022.

2.2 The Council Priority report is attached at Annex A.

3. SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT

3.1 Performance continues to be mixed for a third consecutive quarter. The main issue has been lack of capacity due to both high workloads as a result of both internal (improvement work /new systems) and external factors (Covid-19 related, economic, 'stamp duty holiday') and vacant posts in some services.



3.2 Additional resources have been secured in particular over the last quarter to support services to reduce the backlog of work, and services are reporting that workloads have become more manageable, although it will take time for performance to improve. In the planning service we have had a successful recruitment campaign with a total of 20 appointments made across the partnership many of which were internal, encouraging the retention of a significant number of existing staff. A second round of recruitment has now commenced to complete the consequential vacancies created from the first round and bring the teams up to the new increased resource levels.

3.3 Concurrently, improvement work and programmes are on-going. The Planning service has an improvement programme in place which has already delivered significant improvements in the validation of applications, and a service re-designer has commenced work to improve processes in Land Charges. Although it is difficult to resolve the resilience issues in Customer Services, the switch in focus to improving digital take up is expected to reduce call volumes.

3.4 Some of the performance indicators that are falling short of their targets or showing a downward trend are considered below together with rectifying actions:

- There was an improvement in the average call wait time in Q2; the average reduced from around two and a half minutes to two minutes which is comfortably within the three minute standard considered good for local authorities (GovMetric). Staff in this service are more likely to apply for internal promotions which results in a temporary reduction in capacity.

Resolution: The Customer Service team is continuing to recruit to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to deliver the service, however, we need to be mindful that it takes up to six months to train new staff. In tandem, a framework is being developed to measure digital take-up so that a better understanding of the impact of digitisation on demand for customer services can be gained. The Channel Choice project has commenced, and the processes in services with high call volumes will start to be reviewed to reduce the need for customer contact and to reduce call length time.

The service is also identifying 'quick wins' to reduce call waiting time, for example, improvements to call waiting messages were implemented in Q2. Callers now receive a tailored message for the service they are calling about that signposts to easier ways to complete the transaction, which will be digital/online in most cases.

- The average days to process Council Tax Support new claims has reduced slightly since the end of the last quarter but remains high at just over 45 days; (against target of 20 days) while the average for Council Tax Support changes has increased over the last six months from 6.78 days to nearly 41 days. The reduced performance was primarily due



to high workloads related to the increase in Universal Credit claims since the start of the pandemic (with much of the New Claims time delays beyond our control), the implementation of the new benefits system, Covid-19 related work, and supporting the administration of discretionary housing grants to the most vulnerable residents in the District. The backlog of work that was created following the implementation of the new benefits system was exacerbated by a software failure that prevented the automatic upload of changes of circumstances. Although a partial fix was applied nationally, all councils are awaiting a further fix which is expected to be released in November. In the interim, some cases are being processed manually.

Similarly, the average days to process Housing Benefit changes of circumstances also increased further over the last quarter, from 16.95 days to 22.2 days.

Resolution: With the injection of additional resources during the quarter, the backlog of work is being managed and reduced. In addition, three experienced temporary staff have either taken up their positions or will do shortly. A recovery plan is in place which should result in an improvement in performance although this will not be notable this year, aided by the software release as well as the soft launch of the open portal in November. The open portal provides a facility for clients to self-serve, which will reduce the burden in the back office.

- The percentage of planning applications determined within timescales has been falling since summer 2020 when the number of applications (in particular 'Other' applications which include householder applications) coming through started to increase in line with the national trend. The increase in demand coincided with reduced capacity due to vacant posts creating a backlog of applications awaiting determination.

Resolution: Given the anticipated ongoing nature of increased workloads, the Council agreed two additional posts to support the team and provided an improved career structure to support the recruitment and retention of planning staff. The recent restructure of the planning service provided a much needed opportunity to review service needs to ensure that it is fit both now and for the future. Two additional principal posts have been filled internally, which alongside the two additional posts and some internal promotions has created further vacancies, the majority of which have also now been filled. A recruitment exercise to seek to mop up the remaining unfilled or recently created vacancies commenced mid-November. The increased capacity over the next few weeks will help to restore performance to previous levels, however, new staff will need to undergo training and the backlog of applications will need to be cleared before this can happen. We expect to see an improvement in performance in Q4. The planning improvement programme is underway, and improvements have been made to the validation process which has resulted in reduced backlogs.



- The number of land charge searches increased by 45% during the ‘stamp duty holiday’ compared to the five quarters prior to the ‘stamp duty holiday’. In spite of the increase in searches, in addition to responding to customer queries, performance targets were achieved until Q4 when there was a significant reduction in capacity in the service. An injection of additional resources to support the service and the recruitment of two new posts in Q1 resulted in improved performance in July which the service was unable to sustain as some aspects of the role are more complex and are dealt with by experienced staff.

Resolution: The new starters in the service will undergo further training in October on the more complex processes which will reduce delay; and the additional resources brought in to support the service in Q1 will remain in place as a temporary measure. Furthermore, a service re-designer has started to review the land charge search process to identify where improvements can be made especially around the way customers communicate with us.

3.5 In spite of the challenges this quarter, there have been a number of areas where indicators have improved or are noteworthy:

- The council tax collection rate appears to have rebounded. The service collected 59.14% of the council tax due in the year compared to 57.62% a year ago;
- The Council’s customers are highly satisfied with services delivered by phone, with nearly 95% of customers responding positively. Once again, the Council made it into the top 10 councils on the GovMetric Telephone Channel Satisfaction Index for August 2021;
- The Food Safety team is prioritising inspections for high risk premises and new businesses in line with the Food Standards Agency’s recovery plan. The small backlog of high risk premises inspections that built up during the Covid-19 lock downs has been cleared and all new ones are being completed within the 28 day timescale;
- The number of missed bins per 100,000 is showing improvement in spite of a national shortage of HGV drivers, and high staff turnover in the service as staff choose to take up roles closer to home in a buoyant job market. Typically, missed bins rise when new crew members /agency staff are utilised due to their lack of local knowledge. The implementation of In-Cab technology in April 2021 appears to be having positive benefits on waste and recycling collection rounds. The technology provides drivers with the information they need to work efficiently and provides the waste depot with real-time issues and performance information.

3.6 A full report is attached at Annex B.



4. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Financial Performance (Revenue)

- 4.1 This report sets out the profiled income and expenditure variances for the period April to September 2021 against the Council's budget.
- 4.2 At 30 September 2021, the Council had spent £6,493,102 against its net profiled budget of £6,786,170. After taking account of lower than expected income from Government grants of £127,744 which is related to the sales, fees and charges income compensation scheme, the overall underspend against the budget at the 30 September 2021 was £165,324.
- 4.3 The continuing impact of the pandemic has meant that demand has continued to be lower for some of the Council's income generating services, especially car parking and the leisure management fee whilst planning and garden waste demand has improved. In addition, the Council has continued to face pressures on its expenditure budgets. In particular, continuing to provide emergency accommodation for individuals and families facing homelessness, collecting additional waste and recycling materials and until July 2021 providing financial support to the Council's leisure contractor to enable the District's Leisure Centre and Corinium Museum to open to the public whilst complying with social distancing restrictions.
- 4.4 A full list of all cost centres and budget variances is attached to this report at Annex C and includes commentary against the most significant variances. This report highlights a number of budget variances across a range of service areas; excluding those where the income and expenditure variance are comparable and offset each other (net nil variance).

Income

- 4.5 Income from car park fees, fines and permits was significantly impacted by Covid-19 with the 2020/21 outturn position being only 38% of original budget for the year. In Q1 this trend continued with performance to budget sitting at 58%, £315,000 less than budget. In the second quarter of 2021/22, as lockdown restrictions have eased, income has improved to 91% of the quarterly budget although dipped back to 81% of budget in October 2021. The impact of this is partially offset by the Government's sales fees and charges compensation grant as detailed at 4.7.
- 4.6 Conversely, at the end of the second quarter £155,000 more income has been received in respect of garden waste annual subscriptions in comparison to the full year budget as a result of higher take up than anticipated. Planning income has also performed well with £131,000



more income than budgeted received in the period to 30 September 2020.

- 4.7** The Government will reimburse authorities for 75% of Covid-19 related income losses for the first quarter of 2020/21 (after the first 5% of losses is absorbed by local authorities) only. To qualify, income losses must be related to the delivery of services. The compensation scheme excludes commercial and rental income. The Council submitted a claim to the Government in October 2021 and expects to receive £228,000, reducing the impact of Covid-19. This is £127,744 less than estimated due to income losses being lower overall than anticipated when the 2021/22 budget was set.
- 4.8** Income from recycling has also exceeded budget, recycling credits at 30 September 2021 were £26k higher than estimated. Income from the sale of recycled material is £24k higher than budgeted due to an increase in the commodity price for paper and cardboard.

Expenditure

- 4.9** Repairs and maintenance expenditure in relation to Corinium Museum remained below budget with an expenditure underspend at the end of September 2021 of £17,740. The Moreton in Marsh Office repairs and maintenance expenditure exceeded budget by £14,445 due to reception and atrium lighting upgrade work.
- 4.10** Homeless expenditure has continued to exceed budget but is matched by an increase in grant funding which is expected to be utilised during the financial year.
- 4.11** There were no significant planning appeals during the first half of the financial year, resulting in an underspend in the appeals costs budget of £42,000.
- 4.12** The budget for processing recycling was increased by £80,000 in 2021/22 to reflect the expected increase in processing recycling. However, these costs have not materialised resulting in a £40,000 saving on expenditure at 30 September 2021.
- 4.13** The Council has continued to work with SLM, its leisure centre and museum contractor, to manage the financial impact of Covid-19. Council approved a further financial support package for SLM for the period April to July 2021 at a total capped cost of £280,403. This has been paid on an open book basis and has resulted in expenditure of £178,000 for the period to 30 September 2021. This is to be funded from the 2020/21 underspend on support for SLM and grant funding of £104,000 received from the National Leisure Recovery Fund.



- 4.14** The management fee payable by SLM was also waived as part of the financial support package for SLM agreed for the period April – July 2021. 71% of this fee is recoverable via the Government sales, fees and charges income compensation scheme with the remainder funded through the 2020/21 underspend on support for SLM and grant funding. At the end of Q2, this results in an underachievement of income against budget of £52,000.
- 4.15** Discretionary pension payments paid to Gloucestershire LGPS to the 30 June 2021 were £50,000 less than budgeted.
- 4.16** The 2021/22 budget includes contingency funding for expenditure related directly to the impact of Covid-19 and reduced income from fees and charges. The contingency budget is funded from Government Covid-19 grants. The largest expenditure impact is from the Council's contract for environmental service provision with Ubico Ltd. As Ubico Ltd is a wholly local authority owned company, the Council pays for the actual cost of service delivery. Due to a combination of additional waste being presented by households for collection and Ubico Ltd needing to protect its own employees in response to Covid-19 health and safety requirements, Ubico Ltd incurred unavoidable additional costs. These costs including agency staff, hire vehicles and personal protective equipment have amounted to £303,000 in the first half of the financial year.

Forecast

- 4.17** We are expecting the financial outturn to be broadly in line with the position reported at the end of Q2. Despite increases in expenditure due to Ubico costs associated with Covid-19 which continue to exceed budgetary provision and car park income continuing to perform below budget, overall the position at the end of the second quarter is positive with a variance of £165,234
- 4.18** This provides the Council with some contingency following the end of the government sales, fees and charges compensation grant scheme.
- 4.19** **Annex C** provides a high level forecast year-end position for the most significant variances identified at the end of the second quarter. This indicates that additional cost pressures will exceed income. The table below outlines the key movements in the forecast variance to budget expected in the second half of 2021/22.



Movements in Forecast Variance to Budget

	£
Underspend to budget 30 September 2021	(165,234)
Car Park income below budget	298,980
Licensing income in excess of budget	(11,179)
Planning income in excess of budget	(83,000)
Recycling credit income and income from sale of recycling materials	(50,000)
Ubico Covid-19 charges	240,000
Recycling contract and processing costs lower than budgeted	(81,000)
Discretionary pension costs lower than budgeted	(49,000)
Provision for Cost of Living Pay Rises expected to backdated to 1 April 2021	175,000
	274,567
Use of Covid Contingency included in 21/22 budget	(447,748)
Forecast year end Outturn 31 March 2022	(173,181)

Capital Activity

- 4.20** The Council's capital budget for 2021/22 is £26,060,000. A total of £530,128 has been spent against these schemes at the end of Q2 with a further £1,468,491 committed.
- 4.21** The most significant variances include £15.2m (Recovery Investment Strategy – nil expenditure against budget), opportunities and options are being explored by officers, and detailed reports seeking approval will be presented to Cabinet and Council as appropriate.
- 4.22** A further variance of £4.3m (nil expenditure against budget) is reported in relation to the 'Investment in Strategic Property Acquisition'. Discussions with the landowner are on-going.
- 4.23** A variance of £1.2m (£15k expenditure against budget) has been reported in respect of the BEIS decarbonisation project. A contractor has now been appointed and detailed costs agreed. Orders for specialist equipment commenced in October with installation expected to commence in Q4.



- 4.24** A full list of expenditure and explanation for variances against budget is attached to this report at Annex 'D'.

Capital receipts and disposals

- 4.25** During Q2 a capital receipt of £23,000 was received for the scrap value of a road sweeper vehicle following its disposal. This will be transferred to the capital receipts reserve.

5. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 5.1** This summary performance report was reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 30 November; and any comments from the Committee will be reported to the Cabinet

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** As described in Section 4 of the report

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** There are no legal implications arising directly from this report

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1** Contained in this report

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 9.1** None



10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Contained in this report

11. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

11.1 None

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:

These documents will be available for inspection at the Council Offices at Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX during normal office hours for a period of up to 4 years from the date of the meeting. Please contact democratic services via democratic@cotswold.gov.uk

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COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL PRIORITIES REPORT
July 2021 - September 2021

Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-24

Our Aim

To rebuild the Council so it can be proactive and responsive to the needs of our residents and businesses in a fast changing environment, building for the future whilst respecting our heritage

Our Priorities



Our Principles

- rebuilding trust and confidence in the council by promoting a culture of openness and transparency
- providing value for money for our residents and businesses by using our resources wisely and investing in the district's fabric and future
- listening to the needs of our community and acting on what we hear

Executive Summary Highlights

- Town and Parish Councils were invited to attend forums in October, one at Trinity Road, and the other at Moreton Area Centre with a focus on improving relationships, working together and supporting each other as well as other topics such as planning and the budget. Twenty-eight participants attended the Cirencester event, and 21 at MAC. Looking ahead, a schedule of engagement events has been drafted which includes both forums for discussing topics such as 'Clean and Green', and community projects as well as the provision of training on items such as planning. The next forum is scheduled for January/ February 2022;
- In July 2021, Cabinet approved the creation of a flood warden programme, the scope to be agreed by key officers, the lead Cabinet Member and key Members and supported by Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) who will deliver the programme. The towns and parishes that were severely affected in winter 2020/21 will be approached first with a view to recruiting volunteer flood wardens in these areas;
- The Council's electric vehicle charging point delivery partner is under contract and close to reporting recommendations for the first locations in Council car parks, along with recommendations for pricing for charge point users;
- In July 2021, Cabinet agreed to pledge to issue a Local Climate Bond using the Community Municipal Investment (CMI) model; and was one of the first five UK councils to become part of the Green Finance Institute and Abundance Investment's Local Climate Bond campaign. The CMI model is a way for local communities to invest in climate change projects to support the Council to meet its climate change targets. Progress is being made with Abundance on the legal elements of the bond as we move towards an issuance next year.
- Gloucestershire's district authorities have been awarded grant funding for a collaborative project to build capability in delivering support to able-to-pay owner-occupiers, supporting them to invest in energy efficiency and decarbonisation works in their own homes. The Council is leading the workstream on market analysis and business planning;
- The £1.2m Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme contractor has now presented an Investment Grade Proposal providing near-certainty over cost commitment, and the Council is close to entering into contract for the installations. Work will begin on Cirencester and Bourton on the Water leisure centres before Christmas;
- Bromford was selected as the preferred Registered Provider for the Joint Contractual Venture (JV) for the delivery of social housing, starting with the Kemble site. Currently, the legal agreements are being negotiated for the JV;
- A planning application was submitted for the Stockwells development, Moreton-in-Marsh to be delivered by Bromford Housing Association, which will be the first social rented, Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) net zero homes within the District;

- The Council's new approach to community grants, Crowdfund Cotswold has proven to be one of the most successful schemes in the country, facilitated by Spacehive. The first funding round ended in June 2021, and 15 out of 16 projects that launched on the platform achieved their targets. In total £271,043 was pledged by 1110 backers. The Council invested £72,054 into the projects, in addition to Gloucestershire County Council grant funding of £22,456, totalling £94,510;
- The Community Wellbeing team worked in partnership with the local voluntary and community sector to deliver the 'Holiday Activity and Food programme' (HAF) during the summer school holidays aimed at children in receipt of free school meals. The purpose was to make sure children were entertained, active, educated, safe, and fed between Monday 2 August and Friday 27 August 2021. The team is planning the HAF provision for the Christmas Holidays in partnership with the County Council, and will be incorporating learning from the Easter and Summer schemes;
- Cotswolds Tourism has continued to work with businesses to encourage better online presence and online bookings. One hundred and twelve Cotswolds Tourism businesses and experiences are now bookable online via Tourism Exchange Great Britain; and their online digital training videos have been watched over 300 times;
- The Council has been allocated a further £81,144 from the 'Welcome Back Fund', which is an extension of the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund which runs until the end of March 2022. Cabinet has approved indicative allocations of £50,000 for physical works to town centres and £30,000 to create a 'virtual high street' to assist town centres to be more digitally resilient. A range of town centre projects submitted by Town and Parish Councils have already been approved;
- The construction of the Applied Digital Skills Centre at Cirencester College is moving on at pace and is anticipated to be completed early in the New Year. The new Applied Digital Skills Centre will give the District a great opportunity both to develop a workforce with the digital skills needed in the 21st century, and also to grow its digital and cyber sectors.

Deliver services to the highest standard



The Context

The Council aims to create services that are inclusive and flexible which meet the diverse and changing needs of its residents and communities. To achieve this, it will be important to listen to residents to understand what is important to them, identify the areas in which they need support, and adapt. In the context of reducing budgets over the last ten years and the phasing out of incentivised income streams such as New Homes Bonus, which has been further exacerbated by the impact of Covid-19, the Council will need to take a strategic approach, and make the best use of the available resources.

The Council will work with a range of public and private sector partners to help deliver its aims and objectives and to provide services seamlessly. The emphasis will be on efficiency and effectiveness whilst remaining true to the Council's commitments on climate change and a green economy.

Actions we are taking

In September 2020, the Council adopted the Recovery Investment Strategy 2020-24 which sets out the framework within which the Council can invest in the infrastructure of the District including the acquisition of commercial property. The framework supports the delivery of Council Priorities whilst also closing the emerging budget gap. The Asset Management Plan sets out how council owned assets including service and commercial properties will be managed, and includes an Acquisition and Disposal Strategy. The current AMP is being reviewed and updated and will support the implementation of the investment strategy. In addition, an Investment Brief was prepared in August which sets out the criteria including investment return, profile, sectors and location when considering opportunities and work has commenced on identifying investment opportunities that fit with the requirements of the Recovery and Investment Strategy, and aligns with Council Priorities. A property by property approach will be taken.

The Council is taking steps to move to cashless parking including contactless, card, by phone or using an app at all council owned car parks using a phased approach which will enable the Council and its service provider, PayByPhone, to promote the change and assist users over an extended period. Moving to cashless parking has multiple benefits; it will support our carbon reduction commitment and reduce the costs associated with cash collection and vandalism of pay and display machines. The first two phases have been completed and include car parks at Rissington Road, Bourton on the Water; Mangersbury Road, Stow on the Wold; and Beeches car park, Cirencester from March 2021; and from the Abbey Grounds, Old Station and the Leisure Centre from June 2021. Due to increase in car park usage over the summer in particular at Rissington Road Car Park in Bourton-on-the-Water, there have been some complaints regarding the ability to pay for car parking by payment card at the payment machines, and some customers have experienced problems with downloading the pay by phone application to mobile phones as a result of poor mobile phone signal strength in the car park. Officers have placed an order for a router to

boost the mobile phone signal strength. In addition, some payment machines have been upgraded to use “roaming sims” which will provide a more consistent connectivity. Officers are also working with Metric, the manufacturer of the payment machines, to resolve intermittent problems with the machines in some car parks. Phase 3 of the project has been delayed until technical issues have been resolved by the suppliers and the in-house broadband has been upgraded.

The Council recognises that communication is key to establishing excellent working relationships and working alongside our partners to deliver services, as well as engaging our communities and supporting them to take responsibility for the environment around them. Town and Parish councils were invited to attend one of the two Town and Parish forums taking place at Trinity Road, Cirencester and Moreton Area Centre (MAC) in October. Twenty-eight participants attended the Cirencester event, and 21 at MAC. The focus of the events was on improving relationships and sharing good practices, and how the Council can support Town and Parish Councils more generally; although other topics that arose on the night included planning and the budget. Participants were asked to complete a survey at the end; the results of which will be reported in the next quarter. Looking ahead, a schedule of engagement events has been drafted which includes both forums for discussing topics such as ‘Clean and Green’, and community projects as well as the provision of training on items such as planning. The next forum is scheduled for January/ February 2022.

In March 2021, the Cabinet approved the creation of the Civic Pride Programme for a two year period, which has now been rebranded ‘Clean and Green’. The key strategic outcome of this proposal is to achieve a reduction in enviro-crime within the District, delivering the benefit of a high quality environment where economic growth is supported and where the Council positively engages with the community to not only solve immediate issues, but to prevent further recurrences. Two new Clean and Green officers have been appointed and are expected to start in early November, supporting the Lead Enviro-crime Officer. The team will act as the link between the Council, Councillors and communities developing and delivering initiatives, campaigns and educational programmes as well as supporting and working with partners and organisations. In addition, a village warden for Bourton on the Water has been recruited and will start in October. The aim of the role is to ensure visitors, businesses and residents respect the local area; and to improve the local environment and promote community cohesion.

Some areas of the District are susceptible to flooding, causing distress and anxiety to those affected. During winter of 2020/21 several locations in Cirencester, South Cerney and Bledington and properties in Siddington, Mickleton, Moreton in Marsh, Daglingworth, Coberley and Adlestrop were severely affected by flooding. One of the Council’s aims is to support both residents and businesses by providing advice and guidance, and promoting and delivering flood mitigation measures where it is able to. In July 2021, Cabinet approved the creation of a flood warden programme as a way that the Council can provide a supportive role, whilst capitalising on the wealth of local knowledge and experience that can be harnessed through volunteer programmes. The programme would be delivered by Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) who would work with the Council to agree the scope and priority areas for engagement, with those areas severely affected in winter 2020/21 to be approached first with a view to recruiting volunteer flood wardens in these areas. Key deliverables would include facilitating discussions with Town and Parish councils in relation to seeking volunteers; promoting, recruiting and inducting Flood Wardens; ensuring registration and induction forms are completed; and undertaking focussed work with the identified Parishes/Towns on developing their resilience and preparedness.



Respond to the climate crisis

The Context

The national regulatory and policy context for the Council's action on the climate crisis is largely unchanged from that reported in the previous quarter, although political announcements ahead of the 26th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) in November in Glasgow have further reinforced government commitment to the net zero carbon objective. An example is the early October announcement by the prime minister that the UK electricity system would be decarbonised by 2035.

The key high level climate change document published since the previous quarter's report is AR6 – the first part of the UNFCCC Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC's) 6th Assessment Report, titled 'Climate Change 2021 – The physical science basis', released at the start of August (the high level summary for policymakers can be found here: https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM.pdf). Scientists are notoriously cautious in their language, but in AR6 they state "It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land" – a vital step forward from the "very likely" expression used in the previous version of this report, AR5, in 2013. Other headline statements include "Unless there are immediate, rapid and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, limiting warming to close to 1.5°C or even 2°C will be beyond reach", and "Strong and sustained reductions in emissions of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases would limit climate change. While benefits for air quality would come quickly, it could take 20-30 years to see global temperatures stabilize."

The evolution of zero carbon technology and business models continues to move fast. Examples are a £3bn investment into UK hydrogen production from wind and solar sources announced in October; an international industrial coalition plan to fully decarbonise steel, shipping and aviation, and global cement producers' pledge to achieve net zero carbon by 2030.

The key announcement in UK policy, expected very soon, is the government's long awaited Heat and Buildings Strategy. This will clarify the government's proposed approach to supporting households and non-domestic building owners to retrofit homes to reduce energy use and carbon emissions. It will impact the Council's approach to supporting retrofit for homeowners.

Actions we are taking

The Council's Climate Emergency Strategy of September 2020 identified the Council's different spheres of influence over carbon emissions in the District. These range from those that are relatively easier to tackle (actions under the direct control of the Council, such as decarbonising the Council's own buildings, fleet and operations), which have relatively limited impact on District-wide emissions, through to those that are hard to tackle, but which could

have greater impact on District-wide emissions (enabling District-wide action and engaging with all stakeholders, such as issuing so-called ‘climate bonds’ to invest in carbon reduction activity).

Direct Control

The key projects are the comprehensive decarbonisation of the District’s leisure centres, opportunities for reducing carbon emissions from the Ubico waste fleet, minimising carbon emissions as a result of changes to the use of Trinity Road offices, improving the energy performance of Council property currently let to commercial tenants, and providing ‘carbon literacy’ training to Council officers and Members.

The £1.2m Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding has enabled the procurement of a contractor to install the energy efficiency and carbon reduction technologies at Cirencester and Bourton on the Water leisure centres, Moreton in Marsh Area Centre and the Museum Resources Centres at Northleach. The contractor has now presented an Investment Grade Proposal providing near-certainty over cost commitment, and the Council is close to entering into contract for the installations. Work on the design and contracting stage has been completed for the two leisure centres, and work on site will start in Q4, with completion by the end of the first quarter of 2022-23. The leisure centres will in the future be heated with almost no gas consumption, with heating instead provided by electrically powered air source heat pumps resulting in both savings in carbon emissions and energy costs for the Council.

A selection of Publica staff have now received ‘carbon literacy’ training, with plans to roll the training out more widely across the partnership starting in November.

Indirect Control

The Council’s agile working policy has reduced carbon emissions from staff commuting (although, it is difficult to accurately measure the savings achieved), and the Council is in the process of procuring electricity sourced from renewable generation. In addition, discussions are continuing with the developers of ground-mounted, utility-scale solar farms in the District, offering the potential both for Council investment and supply of solar power to Council premises, through projects that will deliver substantial carbon savings for the District.

Place Shaping

The Council’s electric vehicle charging point delivery plan was adopted by Cabinet in January 2021, and an electric vehicle charge point installer procured in April. The roll-out is underway starting with Council-owned public car parks and Council offices; the contractor is expected to report back shortly on the first detailed locations. The project illustrates one of the key challenges faced by many carbon reduction projects, namely grid connection. As more processes in society become electrified (particularly transport and heat), as well as building new ‘distributed’ renewable electricity generation such as solar or wind farms, greater pressure will be put on the electricity distribution networks – both in terms of physical infrastructure and the ability of network operators to respond to increasing numbers of queries and requests for new connections, at domestic and commercial scale. At District-wide scale, the renewable energy resource and policy study will report before Christmas and feed into the Local Plan partial update process.

District-wide enabling

In July 2021, Cabinet agreed to pledge that it will issue a Local Climate Bond, using the Community Municipal Investment (CMI) model; and was one of the first five UK councils to become part of the Green Finance Institute and Abundance Investment's Local Climate Bond campaign. The CMI model is a way for local communities to invest in climate change projects to support the Council to meet its climate change targets. Initially, the Local Climate Bonds will be linked to Electric Vehicle Charging Point roll-out, with other investment opportunities being added in due course. Progress is being made with Abundance on the legal elements of the bond as we move towards an issuance next year.

A Gloucestershire-wide Local Authority partnership is taking forward a joint, 18-month project to build LA capacity to deliver support to able-to-pay owner-occupiers, supporting them to invest in energy efficiency and decarbonisation works in their own homes. The project has been awarded grant funding and is now underway with this Council leading the workstream on market analysis and business planning for a future one-stop-shop retrofit service for Cotswold residents.

The Net Zero Carbon Toolkit developed by Publica Councils has been well received across local government. The Handbook fills a gap in the market for well designed, visually appealing, direct, authoritative guidance based on the latest understanding of Net Zero Carbon policy and technology, and is aimed primarily at small scale builders, architects, contractors and allied trades, although it is also accessible for householders. Work begins shortly on the revised Cotswold Design Guide and heritage retrofit guidance. Linked to the home retrofit support is the development of the 'Solar Together Gloucestershire' scheme which, if adopted by Council, will give Cotswold District residents access to least-cost high quality rooftop solar PV.

Engaging

This is a very important part of the Council's overall climate crisis response, and there is much work to do to help build confidence and momentum among all District-wide stakeholders, from residents to businesses and public sector bodies. We envisage the creation of a District-wide network of individuals and organisations interested in the climate challenge, supported by the Council's (soon to be procured) digital engagement platform.



Provide socially rented homes

The Context

The high quality natural and built environment makes the District a desirable place to live. Cotswold District has a high number of properties owned outright (37.8%, vs 30.6% national average) reflecting the attractiveness of the District as a place to retire or to purchase a second home.

House prices and rents are relatively high. It has been reported that the stamp duty holiday which will start to be phased out at the end on 30 June 2021 has driven up house prices in particular in rural areas. At the end of December 2020, the median property price in Cotswold District was £385,000, 54% higher than the median property price in England and Wales, while the median monthly rent was £850 in 2020-21, over 16% higher than the national median (Private rental market summary statistics - April 2020 to March 2021, Valuation Office Agency). There is a shortage of good quality rented accommodation that is genuinely affordable. Affordable housing helps to meet the District's housing needs and can include low cost home ownership or rented accommodation which typically has a discount of around 20% on the market rent, however this may still not be truly affordable for some residents. Social rented homes have a rent that is lower than affordable rent and therefore provides homes for those on lower incomes or in receipt of full Housing Benefit.

The high house prices and high rents, coupled with the lower than average earnings from local jobs, means housing affordability is a significant challenge for residents in the District which may result in the out migration of young people or alternatively encourage people to commute into Cotswold for work, while living in areas where housing is cheaper.

Actions we are taking

The Council's Affordable Housing Delivery Strategy and action plan was adopted by Cabinet on 8 February 2021 and sets out the delivery strategy for the Council to accelerate provision of social rented and affordable homes for local people. The current focus is to facilitate the affordable housing identified within the Local Plan and through rural exception sites and community-led housing opportunities, and to work with Housing Associations to maximise affordable housing delivery. The Council plans to go further and bring forward additional affordable homes through enabling and direct intervention which may include provision of land and other funding. In addition, any development the Council acquires or builds must be carbon zero in support of the Council's Climate Change emergency commitment. Although this will increase the cost of affordable housing, it will reduce ongoing revenue costs for tenants. Based on the outcomes from the Member workshop in October 2020, discussions with local Registered Providers, and a review of delivery options, Officers recommended that the Council establishes a formal partnership with one lead Registered Provider.

The February Cabinet report also sets out the options for delivery of the Kemble site. Legal advice was commissioned and obtained on the most suitable partnership model i.e. a Contractual Joint Venture (JV). During April, there was an expressions of interest exercise which was twin tracked with the preparation of a draft contractual JV. The expressions of interest were evaluated and Bromford was selected as the preferred Registered Provider. The

Kemble site is being taken forward via the Joint Venture partnership with Bromford, and the legal agreements are being negotiated. Both the Council and Bromford are looking at potential timelines for delivery which may be constrained by the slow worms on site which will need to be relocated.

Officers undertook an options appraisal for future use of Sheep Street Cottages and the Cotswold Club. These options included the potential use for service delivery with regard to homelessness accommodation and other housing options. In addition, the Council commissioned Energy reports to understand the feasibility of achieving carbon zero. Both buildings were viewed by a housing provider for use as specialist accommodation, however, the findings indicated that it was not an affordable option. The Cotswold Club options appraisal is being updated and a report is being prepared for Cabinet in November.

In March 2021, an allocation of approximately £332,000 from commuted sums grants was approved for a scheme of 14 homes at Sunground, Avening, which will deliver this rural exception site as a 100% low carbon affordable housing development. The scheme has received Homes England funding through Bromford which is developing the scheme on behalf of Gloucestershire Rural Housing Association (GRHA). The scheme will provide nine social rented and five shared ownership homes for local people, incorporating rainwater harvesting, air-source heating, solar panels and bio-diversity measures. The development has been delayed due to underground utility issues but is expected to proceed shortly. The grant agreement has been prepared for sign off.

In July 2021, Full Council approved the allocation of commuted sums grants for 28 social rent homes at Stockwells, Moreton-in-Marsh to be delivered by Bromford Housing Association. The Stockwells regeneration scheme represents an opportunity for the Council and Bromford to create the first social rented, Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) net zero homes within the District. With funding support from the Council, Air Source Heat Pumps will replace traditional gas boilers, reducing CO2 emissions from heating and hot water by around 80%. In addition, the introduction of a large solar PV system will reduce net carbon emissions of the development to zero. A planning application was submitted in Q2 for the redevelopment, and a decision is awaited.

One of the Council's aims is to reduce reliance on bed and breakfast and hotels for emergency homeless accommodation. In June 2020, Cabinet approved funding to implement a 'Housing First' model to help reduce rough sleeping within Cotswold District. 'Housing First' is an approach aimed at people with multiple needs who have faced persistent challenges in sustaining accommodation; they are supported by intensive case management and a personalised approach to live in their own, permanent home. This approach has been well documented in the USA and Sweden for many years. The UK is gradually adopting the approach which is strongly recommended by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

The funding is being used to identify and place six individuals with the most complex needs into a permanent tenancy, supported by Housing Benefit and/or Universal Credit. Service level agreements have been agreed with Bromford and Aspire (support provider), and a dedicated staff member is providing one to one support for the four clients that have been successfully accommodated. The team is currently searching for the right properties for the two remaining places on the scheme due to the changing circumstances of the initial clients placed. The contract for the support element for this project will end in December 2021, therefore the Housing Team is exploring matched funding options with both Aspire and Bromford. The Council set aside a healthy amount for the project in 2020 so the current underspend for year one can be utilised for our 'matched' funds element to extend the project into a second year.

The Housing Team continues to actively participate in a number of countywide funding bids, including Rough Sleeper Initiative round 5 (RSI5) which is due to be launched around October 2021. A working group will be set up once details of the fund have been released, with further updates available next quarter.

The Council had identified one of its own properties as a potential opportunity to be converted into supported accommodation which was discounted due to the costs and difficulties in changing the use of the building; and a second property identified as suitable for supported housing has now been pledged to the Afghanistan Resettlement Programme. The Housing Team will continue to work with colleagues in Estates and wider countywide partners to formulate a plan to address the gap in supported accommodation in the District.



Make our local plan green to the core

The Context

In July 2020, the Council made a further commitment to the environment by declaring an Ecological Emergency. Key to the commitments made in both emergencies is the partial update to the Local Plan and making it green to the core.

Since the adoption of the Local Plan in August 2018, the National Planning Policy Framework has introduced new guidance. The guidance increases the importance of climate change adaptation and mitigation and the role that Local Plans play. In the next few months the Environment Bill and the Agricultural Bill is expected to receive Royal Assent. Along with the Clean Growth Strategy they represent the Government's ambition to combat climate change and give the environment a bigger mandate.

Actions we are taking

The adopted Local Plan has been reviewed and at a meeting of Full Council in June 2020, members unanimously resolved to partially update the Local Plan. A review of Local Plan policies is the first step in the Local Plan process and reveals which policies can be left as they are and which policies are likely to need updating. The process of updating the Local Plan will consider the options available to the Council and local communities. Along with international and national pledges made by the Government, the update will reflect the work being undertaken by other services across the organisation. The Renewable Energy Strategy is a good example of this.

The Local Plan can be seen as the glue that holds various corporate objectives together and provides physical action; it also translates national legislation to a local level. The partial update of the Local Plan will aid the building of new homes, in the right place, with suitable green infrastructure that promotes the transition to carbon neutrality. It will assist in providing services and opportunities to enhance the area both for the wellbeing of the people living here as well as its visitors. It will also provide the tools to enhance, create and protect the local environment and the biodiversity of the District and its neighbours.

During Autumn 2020, Cabinet took a decision to pause the formal and regulatory plan making process until there was clarity on the Government's Planning for the Future White Paper and transitional arrangements from the old system to the new, and consequent change to the National Planning Policy Framework. Specific details are available in the November Cabinet paper and also as part of the Council's response to the government consultations, as well as the Council's Local Plan webpages. Cabinet also confirmed the funding to take forward the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan.

In February 2021, the Government provided clarity on the District's future housing needs, which has returned housing need to previously anticipated levels; e.g. approximately 490 homes per year down from the proposed 1,200 homes per year. As a result, the Council has recommenced its programme of work to undertake a partial update of the Local Plan. The project will be supported by an updated project plan called the Local Development Scheme (LDS) that sets

out key stages in the local plan making process and a Local Plan Programme Board, that has membership of all political parties, will monitor the progress of the Local Plan partial update. For example, a statutory public consultation is programmed for December 2021.

The Council has begun the process of updating its evidence base and studies to support the partial update of the Council's Local Plan, including:

- the draft Cotswold District Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy, which was open for public consultation during July and August. The GI Strategy forms part of the Local Plan evidence base and responds to the Council's Climate and Ecological emergencies and corporate priorities to improve health and wellbeing. A summary of comments received together with a final edit of the Strategy will be carried out during Autumn 2021;
- an updated Sustainability Appraisal - this is a statutory and iterative process in the production of the Local Plan; it helps to ensure policies promote sustainable patterns of development;
- a Habitats Regulation Assessment - like the Sustainability Appraisal this is a statutory and iterative process; it will examine the effect of proposed development on protected habitats;
- a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment - a key piece of evidence that helps to ensure proposed development is located away from areas that flood.
- a Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) which seeks to identify land that could be suitable for allocation in the updated Local Plan. This will be made publically available towards the end of the year, and local communities will be able to comment on the document through the Local Plan consultation scheduled in December 2021.

Work continues on the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan project which was officially rebooted in January 2021 and work has already begun on revising the Town Centre Strategy contained in the Council's Local Plan. The Council will be carrying out feasibility studies with Cirencester Town Council during 2021 to assist with the eventual Masterplan options and also to support Cirencester Town Council's emerging Neighbourhood Plan. Consultants were appointed in May to carry out an assessment of possible changes to retail and other uses in the town centre and to provide scenarios that will assist with anticipating future parking demand. The Council's Cirencester Town Centre Health Check is currently being updated by Council and Cirencester Town Council officers and will be published in Autumn 2021. The Council will be commissioning the next stage of the Masterplan in Autumn 2021 which will bring the project to life and invite local communities to engage and shape the future of their town centre.

In March 2021, the Council appointed its first Sustainable Transport Strategy Lead officer, responsible for developing and delivering a new Sustainable Transport Strategy to support the partial update of the Local Plan and the transition to a carbon zero future. The Lead officer's work will involve supporting local community groups, parish and town councils in taking local action to support low carbon travel, as well as considering the integration of sustainable travel into the Council's objectives on supporting the visitor economy and economic development. The Sustainable Transport Strategy will also assist the preparation of a new Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan.

Support health and well-being



The Context

The Health and Wellbeing of our residents is generally good and above the England and County average in most measures. We are one of the safest districts with very low crime levels and are surrounded by beautiful countryside. However, we do face some challenges. Cotswold District has an ageing population; over the last 10 years, it has experienced greater growth across all 65+ age groups compared to England and Wales. Many of our older residents live alone, and coupled with the rurality of the District, loneliness and access to services are issues for the District.

We also need to take into account the wider determinants of health - social, economic and environmental factors such as unemployment, low income, poor housing, and lifestyles which have an impact on people's health and wellbeing. This means that we need to work with a wide range of partners, to pool resources and to apply a whole systems and asset-based approach to address challenges together.

Actions we are taking

We want Cotswold District to be the best in the country for health and wellbeing, and promoting healthy lifestyles and providing opportunities for people of all ages to be active is key. A Leisure Strategy determined by local priorities and outcomes was developed with the aim of providing effective and sustainable physical activity and sport opportunities for local communities via investment in our stock of leisure facilities and other non-facility interventions. In March 2021, Cabinet authorised officers to work in partnership with other organisations on the feasibility of the projects in the Strategy. Specialist Leads for each of the three themes (Healthier District, Connected Community and Active Environment) have since been identified and are now in the process of developing action plans for each area. In addition, a Programme Board has been established and had its first meeting in September.

Concurrently, a leisure management options appraisal which also includes the Council's Corinium Museum is being undertaken to determine the most suitable delivery model, contract scope and contract terms for the Council's leisure facilities, when the current contract expires. The first Members working group was held in July to determine the key drivers for undertaking a Leisure Management Options appraisal, for example to increase participation, which has been used to form part of the consultant's brief to help narrow down the number of potential operating models for consideration. Max Associates has been selected to undertake the work with a kick off meeting scheduled for October 2021.

The Council's new approach to community grants, Crowdfund Cotswold, launched in Q4, with the first funding round ending in June 2021. Fifteen out of 16 projects that launched on the platform have met their targets. In total £271,043 has been pledged by 1110 backers. In addition, the Council invested £72,054 into the projects, with further grant funding from Gloucestershire County Council of £22,456, totalling £94,510. Crowdfund Cotswold has proven to be one of the most successful schemes in the country, facilitated by Spacehive. The deadline for project ideas for Round 2 was 15 September. Our delivery partner,

Spacehive, is currently verifying applications, so we don't yet know how many projects will go 'live' on Crowdfund Cotswold, but interest remains strong, and a wide range of projects have come forward.

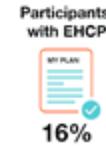
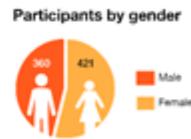
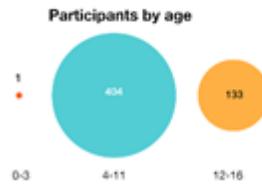
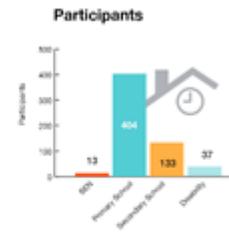
In line with other Districts across the county, the Council received £100,000 grant funding from Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group to work with the local Integrated Locality Partnership and others, to build on our community focussed work to reduce health inequalities. The community wellbeing team will lead this work and collaboration with voluntary and community sector organisations and our communities will feature heavily. The scheme will work in partnership with 'We Can Move' and we will involve residents and relevant community groups in its development and implementation. The aim of the scheme is to enable and support Cotswold residents to access physical activity by making use of existing assets across the District, creating new activity opportunities and working alongside partner organisations and the wider community. There will be a robust pathway to physical activity that is person-centred, underpinned by behavioural change and motivational support with a focus on empowering people to be more independently and habitually physically active, whilst also creating more resilient, inclusive and connected communities. This three year project sits under the umbrella of the Council's leisure strategy and will involve the following work streams: community engagement/involvement (will commence in September 2021); asset-mapping and gap analysis to identify existing opportunities for referral into physical activity; develop a menu of referral opportunities within the community and leisure centres; support development of new community-based opportunities using and building on existing assets; development of instructor/exercise professionals network across the District; development of physical activity pathway initially targeting specific long term health conditions; exercise professionals skills and capacity audit (supported by Active Gloucestershire); and increased number of exercise professionals through upskilling in partnership with Active Gloucestershire.

The Council is taking a range of actions to improve equal access to quality services across the District including actions to tackle food poverty and investing and supporting youth engagement work. The Council has applied for and secured just under £73,000 from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to improve employment outcomes or prospects of future employment outcomes for long-term unemployed young people and groups facing the most complex and intractable barriers to work. The Council and Cirencester Town Council in partnership with the wider Cotswold Youth Network, voluntary and community sector, will offer an innovative and responsive service to young people between the ages of 16 -25 who are not currently involved in education, employment or training. 'Cotswold New Start', which is funded for 18 months initially, will provide a holistic service to support young people across the District offering a personalised support programme tailored to individual needs. Two youth workers were recruited over the summer and started their roles in September. A project Steering Group has been set up involving a range of external key stakeholders and partners; and meetings with relevant service providers, the DWP and Job Centres will take place in October. The aim is to take the first referrals from Cirencester and Cheltenham Job Centres by the end of October 2021.

The Community Wellbeing team has been commissioned by Gloucestershire County Council and has worked in partnership with the local voluntary and community sector to deliver the 'Holiday Activity and Food programme' (HAF) during the summer school holidays aimed at children in receipt of free school meals. The County Council secured match-funding which enabled us to have an open access offer for all young people locally to create a more inclusive offer without losing the focus on disadvantaged young people and children. The scheme was funded by the Department for Education, and the purpose of the programme was to make sure children are entertained, active, educated, safe, and fed between Monday 2 August and Friday 27 August 2021. The infographic

below shows how the programme has performed. The team is in the process of planning the HAF provision for the Christmas Holidays in partnership with the County Council which will incorporate learning from the Easter and Summer schemes.

Children & Families Commissioning Hub
HAF Project Cotswolds Summary [2/8/21-31/8/21]



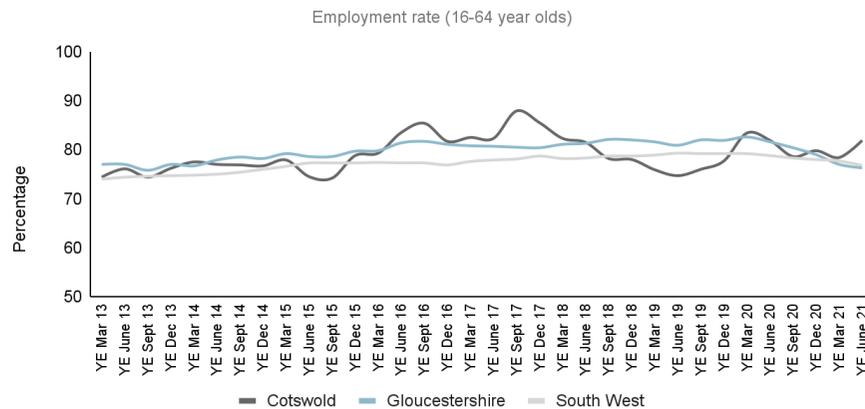
*EHCP – Education and Health Care Plan



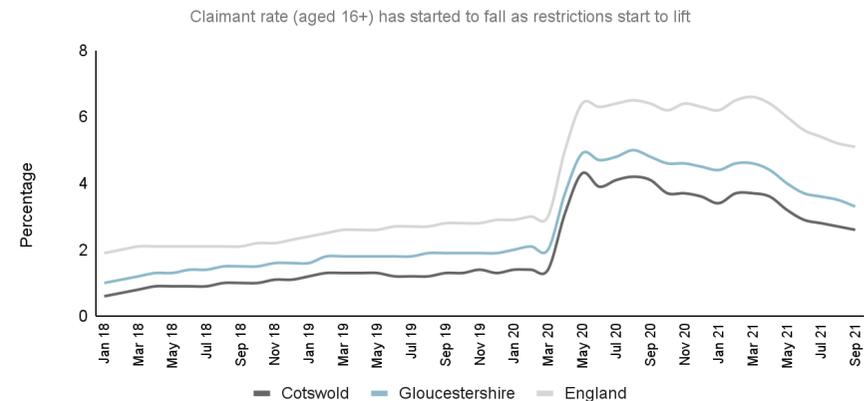
Enable a vibrant economy

The Context

The District supports an economically active population of around 47,700 and has strengths in Finance and Business Services, ICT including Science and Technology, Retail, and Accommodation and Food Services. A large proportion of businesses are small enterprises employing less than 10 people. Median wages for people working in the District are below the national average, and affordability of housing is a significant issue for the District, which can result in skill and labour shortages. Historically, unemployment has been relatively low but has risen since the start of the pandemic, although has fallen back in recent months. The true picture has been masked by the Job Retention Scheme (furlough) which was extended until the end of September 2021, but Cotswold District has seen one of the sharpest reductions in people on furlough indicating the economy has bounced back sharply since restrictions have been eased.



Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey



Source: ONS, Crown Copyright Reserved (Nomis)

The Cotswolds is well-known as a popular visitor destination and the visitor economy accounts for a significant proportion of the local economy - 7000 jobs or 18% of the total. Many of these jobs were furloughed during the pandemic, but with restrictions now eased that number has fallen sharply. The number of job postings in the District in August 2021 was at its highest since January 2019, indicating both that the economy has bounced back sharply but

also highlights the issues being faced with recruitment in some key sectors like hospitality, agriculture and care. There are also many companies at the cutting edge of innovation and the opportunity to grow key sectors like agritech, cyber and digital, medical equipment and environmental technologies.

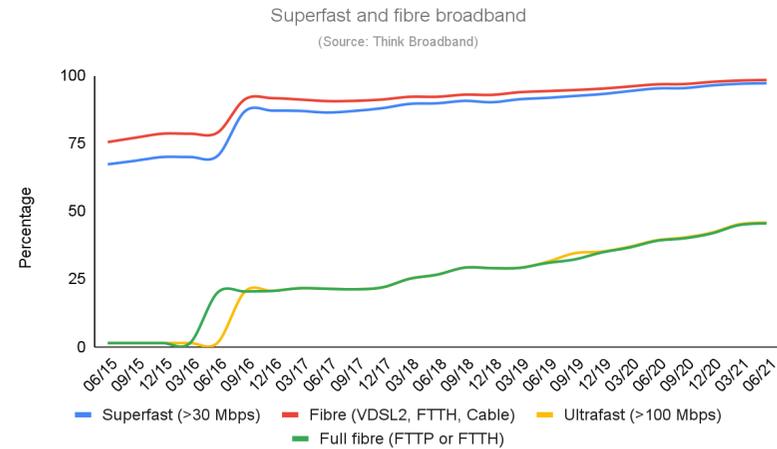
The lack of a reliable broadband connection especially in rural districts can add to social isolation as well as reduce opportunities to be economically active. Openreach is currently working in Cirencester and has recently announced plans to deliver full fibre to Tetbury, South Cerney, Lechlade, Northleach, Fairford and Bourton-on-the-Water by 2026 at the latest. A detailed timetable is awaited. Gigaclear is also onsite in Cirencester and Westonbirt. However, there are still some areas where broadband is poor and even superfast connectivity is not sufficient for some businesses to operate in the way they wish to. The District Council is working with the Fastershire Project to address these areas.

Much of our work to enable a vibrant economy will be achieved in partnership with key stakeholders ranging from the County Council, GFirst LEP, Chambers of Commerce and other business groups, Town and Parish Councils, institutions like the Royal Agricultural University and Cirencester College and individual businesses.

Actions we are taking

The draft Green Economic Growth Strategy was adopted at the Cabinet meeting in December 2020. The Strategy sets out the challenges and issues for the District, and how they will be addressed. It identifies the key areas that will deliver growth in the District, as well as a recovery plan for the local economy. The Cotswold Economic Advisory Group which was set up to advise, oversee and challenge the implementation of the Strategy; and provide a link to the main institutions and the wider business community in the District continues to meet regularly and provide valuable advice and assistance. The group has representation from key stakeholders including Cirencester College, the Royal Agricultural University, Campden BRI, St James's Place, the Federation of Small Businesses and Corin Medical. Most recently the Group received a presentation from Fastershire on the progress of broadband rollout and updates on the 'Welcome Back Fund' projects and the Green Business Pledge.

Much of the focus over the last year has been on preparing town centres to reopen following multiple lockdowns and restrictions as well as supporting businesses to adapt to the changed environment e.g. to transact more digitally where possible. Social media, newspaper and digital campaigns have promoted safety messages and encouraged customers to continue to support local businesses whenever they can and return to town centres in a safe way when they reopen, supported by the Government's Reopening High Streets Safely fund. The Council has been allocated a further £81,144 from the 'Welcome Back Fund', which is an extension of the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund which runs until the end of March 2022. Cabinet has approved



indicative allocations of £50,000 for physical works to town centres and £30,000 to create a 'virtual high street' to assist town centres to be more digitally resilient. The Council has approved a range of town centre 'beautification' projects submitted by Town and Parish Councils. An Economic Recovery intern was recruited for an initial 10-week period and her contract has been extended until the end of October to assist with the delivery of 'Welcome Back Fund' projects. Part of the intern's work was to assess the health of town centres across the District and, in particular, to assist with the town centre health check as part of the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan. Her work showed that Cirencester has a town centre vacancy rate of 11%, 3% below the national average of 14%. Of the 38 vacant units, 15 were either under offer or have strong interest shown in them. The smaller towns within the District have much lower vacancy rates and none of these are of concern at this time, although we need to be mindful of the pace of change on the high street.

The Council has also been working with GFirst LEP to deliver a digital grant scheme to assist businesses with a grant of up to £3,000 for a project to improve their digital capability, which has been funded by each District Council contributing £60,000 from the Government's Additional Restrictions Grant; the scheme is being administered by the LEP. At the time of writing, just over £50,000 of bids for Cotswold District had been approved in principle and due diligence is being undertaken.

The visitor economy accounts for a significant proportion of the local economy. Overall, the local visitor economy was extremely buoyant during the summer with record levels of demand. Visits to the tourism website (www.cotswolds.com) hit record levels with unique visitor numbers, 94% up on pre-pandemic figures in 2019. There were almost 250,000 unique visitors to the website in August alone.

Tourism businesses generally reported very high levels of interest from the public and uptake, especially those businesses with a significant amount of outdoor space. However, those businesses reliant on overseas visitors, and the business and events market or group visits, did not do so well. The tourism team has been supporting businesses in trying to adapt their offers for the domestic leisure market.

Almost all local visitor economy businesses have had staffing issues, which has been particularly acute in catering posts. For many, these shortages have had a knock-on effect on operating capacities and the services they are able to offer. While there is no short-term solution, the introduction of online bookings (and dedicated time slots) has enabled many businesses to better manage visitor flows and staffing levels. The Cotswolds Tourism team has been continuing to work with businesses to encourage a better online presence in general and online bookings in particular. One hundred and twelve Cotswolds Tourism businesses and experiences are now bookable online via Tourism Exchange Great Britain; and the team's online digital training videos have been watched over 300 times.

The 'Escape to the Cotswolds' digital marketing campaign, the result of a successful £73,000 bid to Visit England's Destination Management Organisation (DMO) Recovery Fund, allowed the Tourism team to market with major online national publications, such as the Times and Independent, as well as specialist niche markets and funded social media influencer visits resulting in boosted social media presence with over 150,000 followers.

A key focus of the Tourism team is to improve the dispersal of visitors across the Cotswolds, increasing visitors to less visited towns and to encourage less visits to places struggling at peak times to cope with visitor numbers. Work to better spread visitors across the area continues with an enhanced web

presence for towns earmarked for visitor growth (Cirencester, Tetbury and Northleach) and measures to help alleviate issues in villages with large visitor numbers such as two waymarked walks for Bourton on the Water to help circulate visitors away from the crowded village centre.

Another key work area is Sustainable tourism; the first of a number of projects is a partnership with Cotswolds National Landscape working with local businesses and their customers to encourage appreciation of place, better business practices and sign up to the 'Caring for the Cotswolds' grant scheme, a way in which businesses, residents and visitors can give something back to ensure the environment is taken care of.

In addition to the Covid-19 related work that has taken place during the quarter to support businesses, as well as promoting tourism, the Council is working with partners to bring sites forward which will support the Council's ambition to grow high value, highly skilled, low environmental impact businesses in key areas including agritech, digital/cyber, medical equipment and environmental technologies, and to enhance the opportunities available for local people, particularly young people. The Council is working with:

- the Royal Agricultural University and their development partner Henry Boot Developments (HBD) to bring forward their Triangle/University Gate site.
- the prospective purchaser of the Mitsubishi site at Watermoor. The purchaser is proposing to continue with the existing uses, albeit with a new tenant or tenants.
- ZeroAvia which has relocated from Cranfield to Cotswold Airport. ZeroAvia is a leading innovator in decarbonising aviation, and is developing a hydrogen-electric powered aircraft. The Council is working with the Inward Investment Team at GFirst LEP to support ZeroAvia which has increased its staff numbers from 10 to 50 with the potential to continue to grow significantly.
- Bathurst Developments in relation to the first phase of employment land at The Steadings development. They have appointed a developer partner who is confident about the demand for the units.

The construction of the Applied Digital Skills Centre at Cirencester College moves on at pace and is anticipated to be completed early in the New Year. The new Applied Digital Skills Centre will give the District a great opportunity both to develop a workforce with the digital skills needed in the 21st century, and also to grow its digital and cyber sectors. The Council continues to work closely with the College, particularly to identify partnerships with business which would be mutually beneficial. The College has also been awarded just over £2.5m of funding from the Government's T-Level Capital Fund for a new T-level building which will help to provide high level skills in the District. T Levels are based on the same standards as apprenticeships, designed by employers and approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education. It is equivalent to 3 A-levels and involves an industry placement.

On infrastructure, the Development Consent Order (effectively the planning application) for the A417 Missing Link was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by Highways England in June 2021; a decision is likely to take some time to make. The project, which at around £450m, is the biggest infrastructure investment in the District and indeed the whole county for a generation, is designed to reduce congestion and improve road safety on this important link between Cirencester and Gloucester and, more widely, the M4 and M5 motorways. While new road building projects can be seen as environmentally damaging, much of our efforts have been focused on delivering opportunities for environmental improvements as well as economic benefits.

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COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

**PERFORMANCE REPORT:
July 2021 - September 2021**

A note on performance benchmarking

Benchmarking can be a useful tool for driving improvement; by comparing our performance with other similar organisations, we can start a discussion about what good performance might look like, and why there might be variations, as well as learning from other organisations about how they operate (process benchmarking).

A selection of readily available benchmarking data for the most recent period (2019-20) was included in the 2020-21 Q4 performance report on a trial basis. The 2020-21 benchmarking data has started to be released and will continue over the year until around December 2021. An annual exercise will be undertaken to update the CIPFA benchmarking charts and the Shire Districts' median /top quartile lines.

Two comparator groups that are commonly used to benchmark Councils' performance are: all shire district councils and CIPFA Nearest Neighbours (NN). The CIPFA NN Model is based on family groups; it adopts a scientific approach to measuring the similarity between councils taking into account a range of demographic and socio-economic characteristics. The standard model provides the 15 nearest neighbours to each council. In contrast, the all shire districts comparator group is a much larger dataset of 192 councils, and there will inevitably be a much greater variation between the councils in this group.

When we embark on performance benchmarking, it is important to understand that we are often looking at one aspect of performance i.e. the level of performance achieved. Although the CIPFA NN Model groups councils on the basis of similarity, these factors are external and based on 'place'. The model does not take into account how services are resourced or compare in terms of quality or level of service delivered, for example, how satisfied are residents and customers? Furthermore, each council is unique with its own vision, aim and priorities, and services operate within this context.

Therefore, benchmarking data should be viewed as a 'guide' and as a starting point for discussion. It is important to understand performance within context, and there will be a variety of internal factors that determine performance including costs, workloads and quality.

Note

The data benchmarks have been extracted from LG Inform, a benchmarking tool, which contains a range of routinely published data. The median and top (best 25%) quartile lines are based on annual outturns but applied to the quarterly data.

KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS

At a glance...

Summary of Performance



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OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Performance continues to be mixed for a third consecutive quarter. The main issue has been lack of capacity due to both high workloads as a result of both internal (improvement work / new systems) and external factors (Covid-19 related, economic, 'stamp duty holiday') and vacant posts in some services.

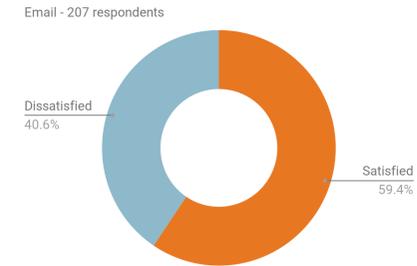
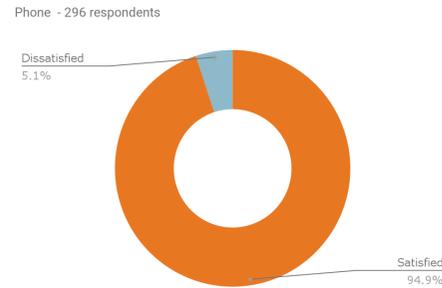
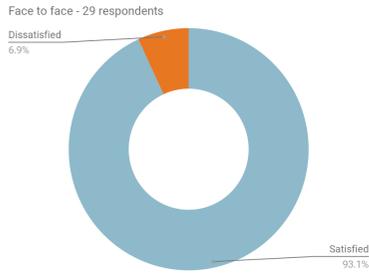
Additional resources have been secured in particular over the last quarter to support services to reduce the backlog of work, and services are reporting that workloads have become more manageable, although it will take time for performance to improve. In addition, some services have been successful in the recruitment to vacant posts.

The Planning service has an improvement programme in place which has already delivered significant improvements in the validation of applications, and a service re-designer has commenced work to improve processes in Land Charges. Although it is difficult to resolve the resilience issues in Customer services, the switch in focus to improving digital take up is expected to reduce call volumes

Indicators with targets	Status
Customer satisfaction - phones	Green
Customer satisfaction - F2F	Green
Satisfaction for Building Control service	Green
CT collection rate	Green
NNDR collection rate	Red
Average days to process CTS new claims	Red
Average days to process CTS change events	Red
Average days to process HB change events	Red
% HB overpayment	Orange
% major planning applications determined within time	Green
% minor planning applications determined within time	Red
% other planning applications determined within time	Red
Total planning income	Green
Pre-application advice income	Red
% planning appeals allowed	Green
Affordable homes delivered	Red
% land charge searches dispatched within time	Red
% high risk notifications assessed within time	Green
% high risk food premises inspected within time	Green
Residual waste per household (kg)	Awaiting data
% combined recycling rate	Awaiting data
Missed bins per 100,000 collections	Green
Leisure visits	Green
Gym memberships	Red
Parking enforcement hours	Green

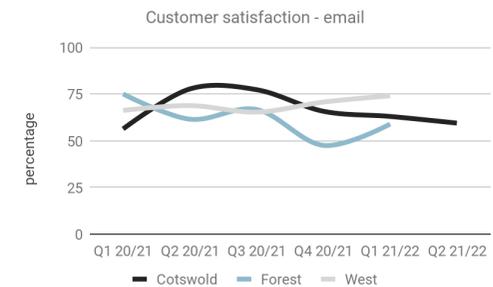
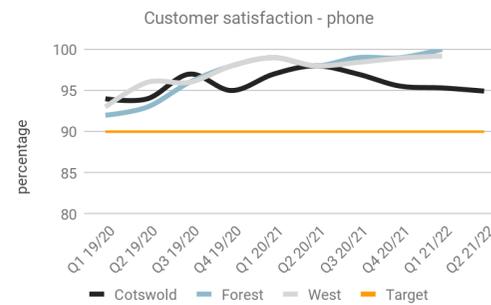
CUSTOMER SERVICE

Customer satisfaction



What's the trend?

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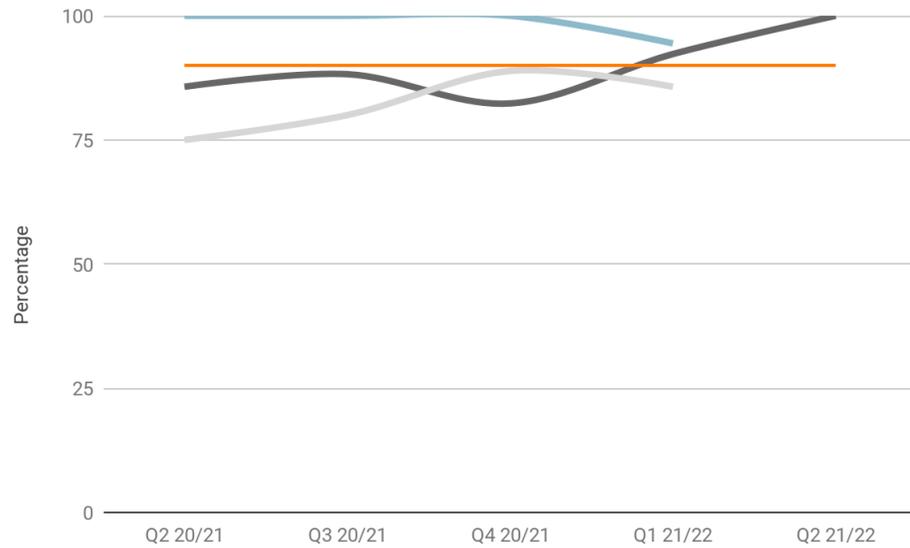
Trinity Road and Moreton Area Centre re-opened to customers from 12 April 2021, and although footfall continues to be relatively low, face to face surveys re-commenced at the end of July.

Overall, satisfaction ratings for services delivered via the phone continue to be high; Cotswold ranked within the top 10 councils on the GovMetric Telephone Channel Satisfaction Index for August 2021.

Satisfaction ratings for services delivered via email is indicating a slight downward trend which will need closer monitoring for signs of improvement over the next few months. It is difficult to ascertain the major causes of dissatisfaction due to the low number of comments (19 comments from 84 dissatisfied customers).

Reporting of website satisfaction has been suspended while the service looks into other methods for reporting on web based services and the website itself. It has been agreed that this indicator is not a good measure of satisfaction for services delivered via the website due to the extremely low number of responses, a large proportion of which is not accompanied by qualitative data to understand the nature of the dissatisfaction

Customer satisfaction for the Building Control service



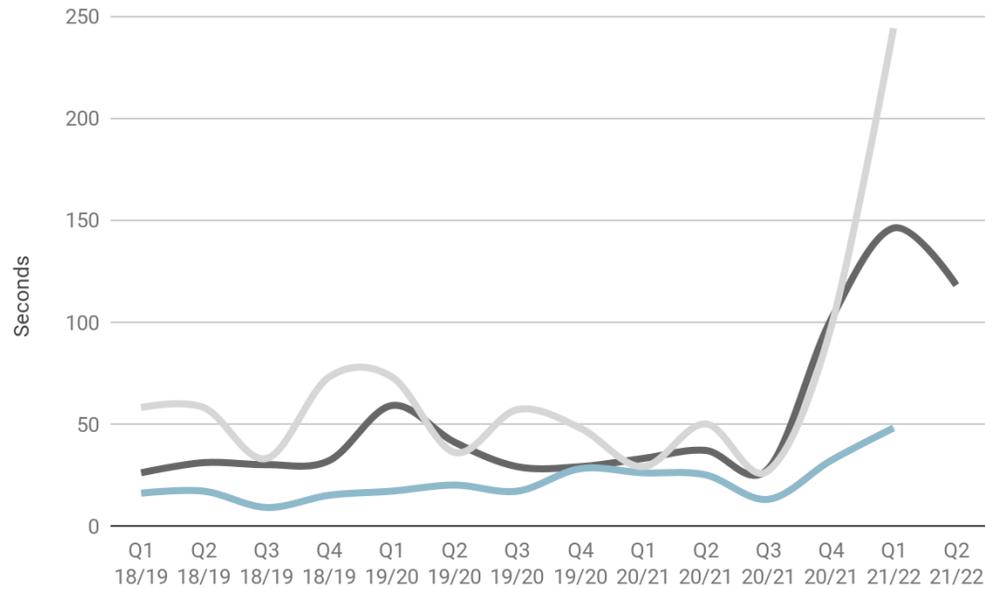
OBSERVATION:

Each month, the service conducts telephone interviews with customers who have received a completion certificate during the month. The customer rates the service on helpfulness of staff, quality of technical advice and other information, responsiveness, value for money, and overall satisfaction.

Due to work pressures in the service, only three customers were surveyed in Q2 and all three were fully satisfied with the service. It is difficult to assess satisfaction for the service based on such low numbers each quarter; however, the data captured over a longer period of time and presented as a trend can provide some indication of satisfaction.

Overall, the telephone survey is not yielding a high response rate. Mystery Shopping exercises will be conducted to increase customer response rates to the survey

Telephone calls - average waiting time



OBSERVATION

There was a small improvement in performance in Q2.

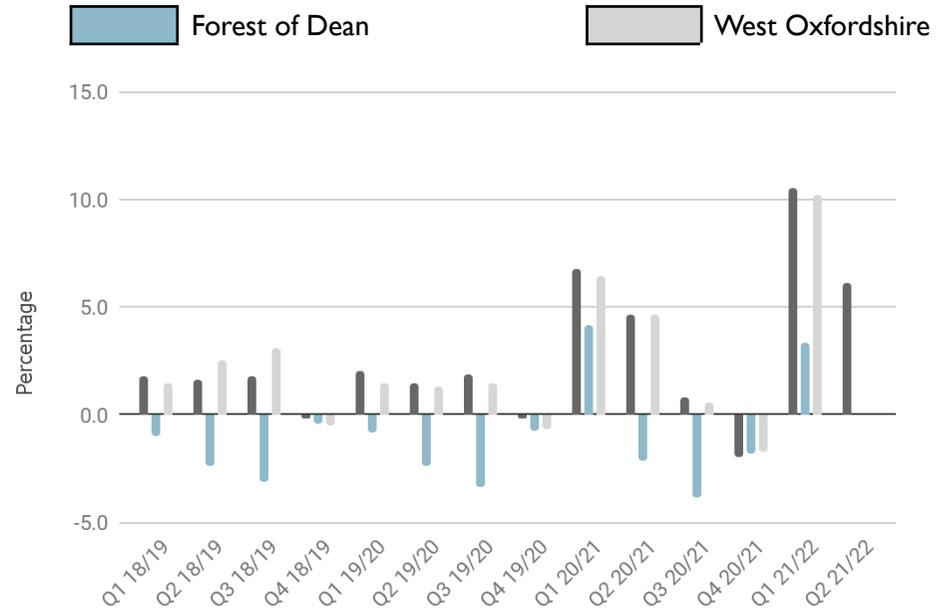
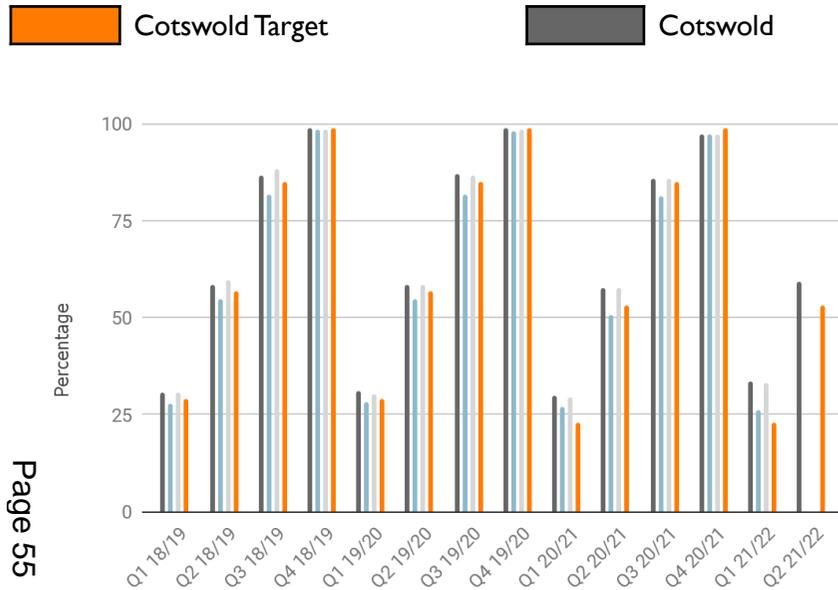
Many staff in this service take opportunities to progress in the organisation, and recruitment is ongoing to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to deliver the service, however, we need to be mindful that it takes up to six months to train new staff.

Although call waiting time has increased over the last three quarters, it is comfortably within the with the three minute standard considered good for local authorities (GovMetric). Although the service is continuing to collect this type of metric, the focus has switched to ensuring that satisfaction for our services remains high, and developing a framework for measuring digital take-up so that we can understand better the impact of digitisation on demand for customer services. The Channel Choice project has commenced, and the processes will be reviewed in services with high call volumes in order to reduce call length time as well as the need for customer contact.

The service is also identifying 'quick wins' to reduce call waiting time, for example, improvements to call waiting messages have been implemented. The caller now receives a tailored message for the service s/he is calling about that signposts to easier ways to complete the transaction, which will be digital/online in most cases

Revenues and Benefits

(Cumulative) Percentage of council tax collected & the difference between the percentage of council tax collected and the target

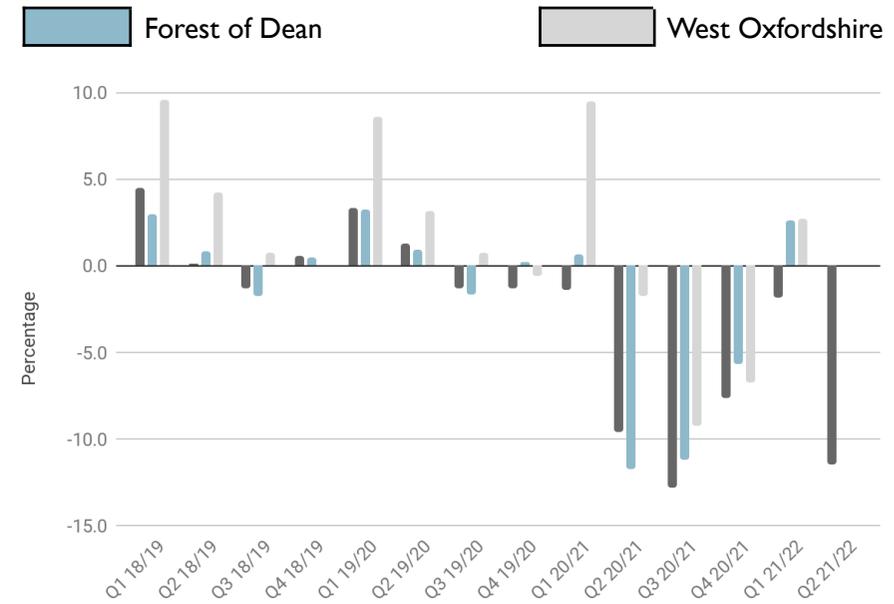
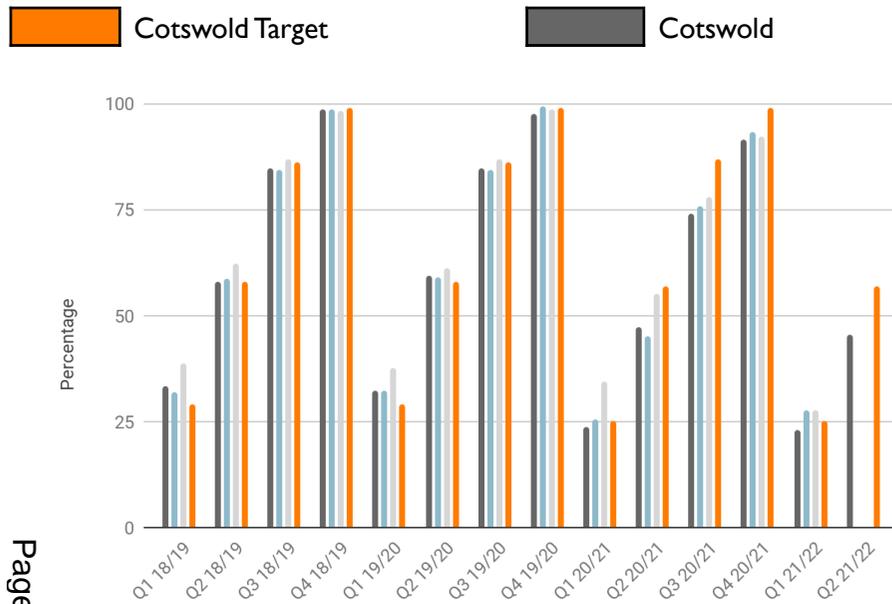


OBSERVATION:

The collection rate appears to be returning to more normal levels, and is up on the same period of the previous year; and historically. However, the end of furlough, the removal of the Universal Credit uplift, and higher utility costs could potentially affect the collection rate. The service continues to support residents, contacting customers by phone and email, as well as including a letter with reminders to encourage customers to contact the Council if they are experiencing problems with council tax payments.

Recovery action re-commenced at the beginning of Q1; and Magistrates Courts are open for liability order hearings

(Cumulative) Percentage of business rates collected & the difference between the percentage of business rates collected and the target



OBSERVATION:

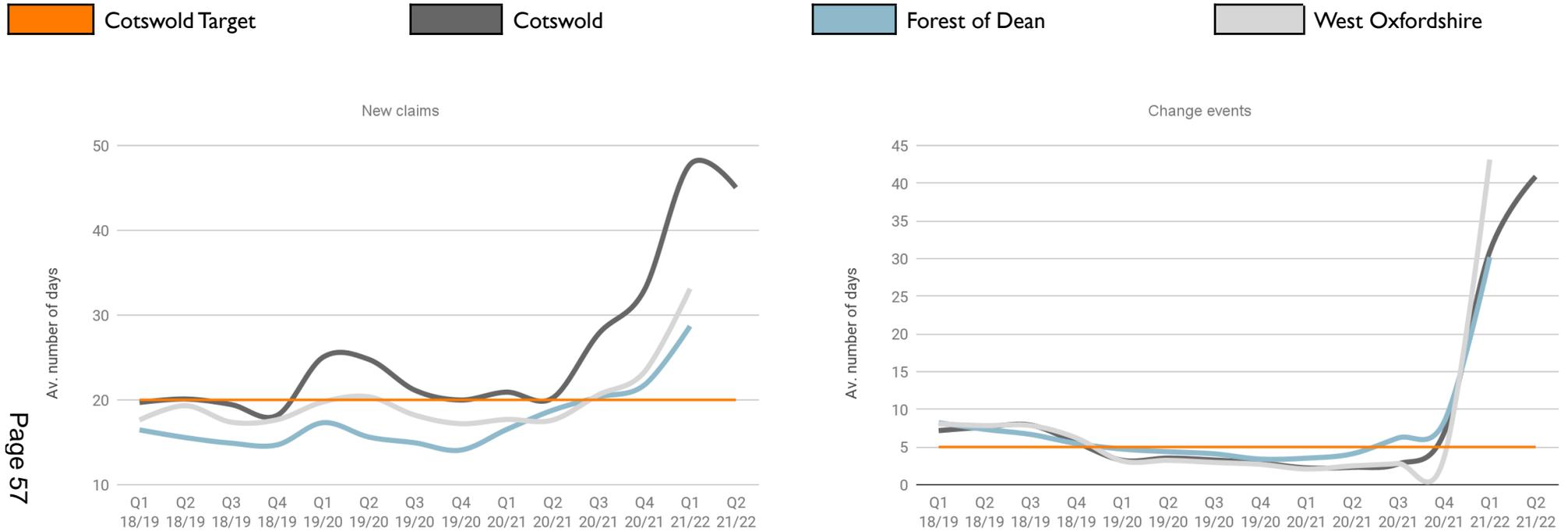
At the end of Q2, the collection of business rates continues to be lower than pre-Covid times. There is a backlog of business rates work due to the implementation of the revenues and benefits system and two members of the team (across the partnership) were allocated to supporting the distribution of business grants.

The collection rate is expected to remain depressed as the Council has had to make some refunds due to changes in rateable value, and some businesses are struggling financially.

The service is continuing to support businesses; sending out reminders, phoning and emailing businesses to encourage them to contact the Council so that we can support them via manageable repayment plans. The Magistrates Courts are open for liability order hearings which will mean the Council can take formal recovery action and enforce debts that are owed.

During the pandemic, the Government helped certain businesses with 100% business rate relief; which was reduced to 66% at the end of June 2021 and will be in place for the remainder of the financial year

(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process Council Tax Support new claims and change events



OBSERVATION:

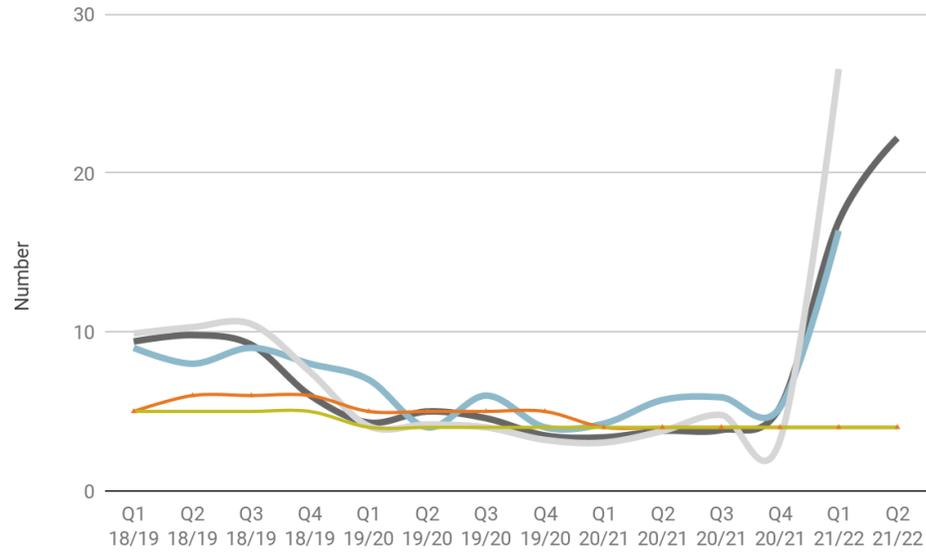
With the injection of additional resources during the quarter, the backlog of work is being managed and is reducing. In addition, three experienced temporary staff have either taken up their positions or will do shortly, and will work across the partnership.

The backlog was created following the implementation of the new benefits system, which was exacerbated by a software failure that prevented the automatic upload of changes of circumstances. Although a partial fix was applied nationally, all councils are awaiting a further fix which is expected to be released in November. In the interim, some cases are being processed manually. A recovery plan is in place which should result in an improvement in performance although this will not be notable this year, aided by the soft launch of the open portal in November; this facility will allow clients to self-serve, and therefore reduce the burden in the back office.

The team is still involved in systems work related to the new benefits system, processing 'Test and Trace' claims (until the end of March 2022) and supporting the administration of discretionary housing grants to the most vulnerable residents in the District

(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process Housing Benefit changes of circumstances

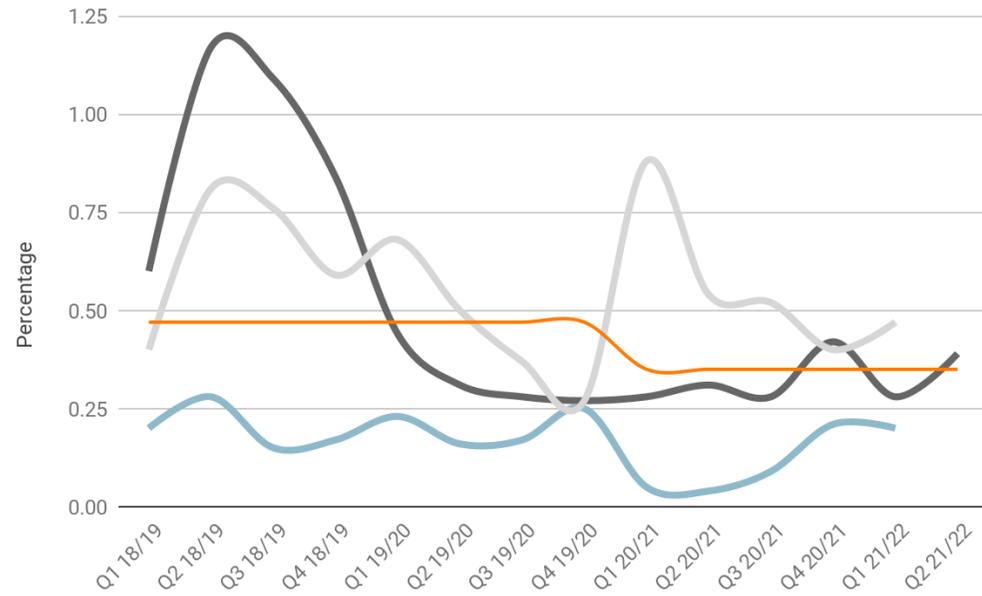
Cotswold Target
 Cotswold
 Forest of Dean
 West Oxfordshire
 Shire Districts' Median



OBSERVATION:
 Please see commentary for Council Tax Support new claims and changes

(Cumulative) Percentage of housing benefit overpayment due to LA error/Admin delay

Cotswold Target
 Cotswold
 Forest of Dean
 West Oxfordshire



OBSERVATION:

Performance is better than the national target of 0.47% despite the increase in workload, and is due to 'admin delay' rather than LA error. The delays were a result of the backlog of work created by the implementation of the new benefits system as well as the increase in benefit changes related to Universal Credit claims during Covid-19. The majority of changes are being assessed manually while all councils await a further system release in November. Once fixed, the majority of changes will be automated and processed the same day which will improve performance

Note: the national target is 0.47%. In 2020-21, the service set a more stringent target of 0.35%

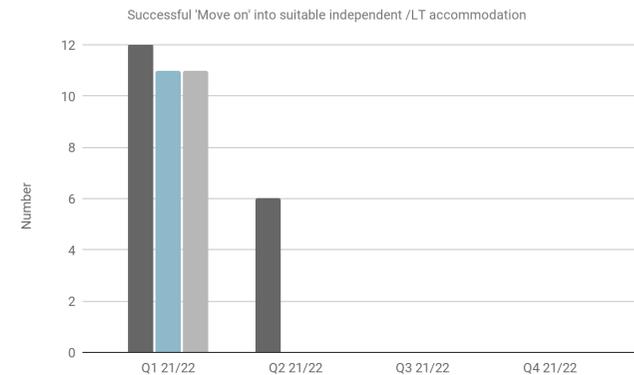
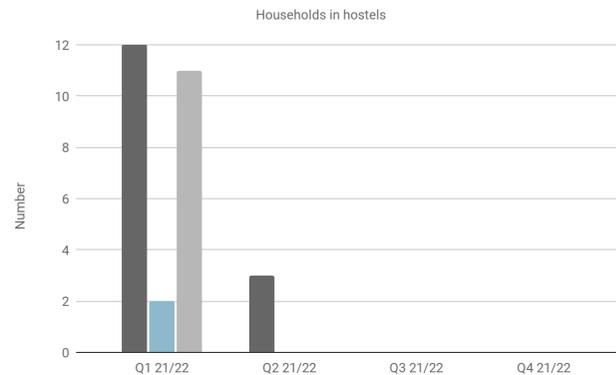
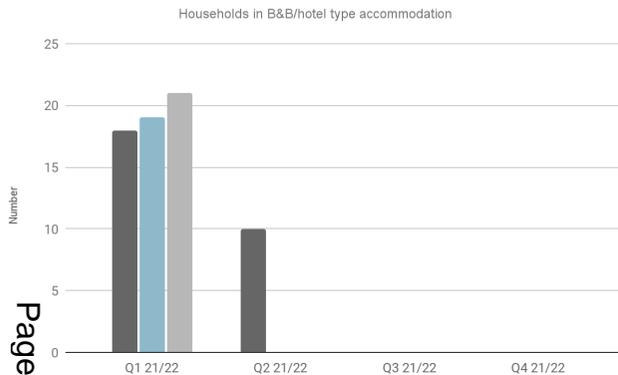
Housing Support

(Snapshot) Number of households in B&B/hotel-type accommodation & Hostels (LA owned or managed); and Number of successful 'Move On' into suitable independent/long-term accommodation from B&Bs/hotels/hostels

 Cotswold

 Forest of Dean

 West Oxfordshire



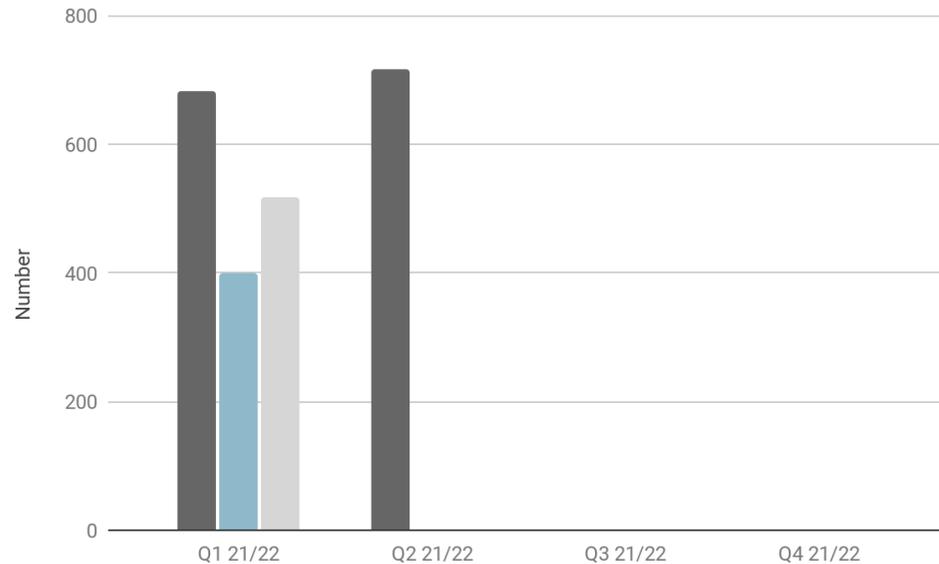
OBSERVATION:

The numbers in emergency accommodation are reducing due to a focus on prevention in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act; and the use of specialist temporary accommodation officers who are able to offer dedicated support and bespoke solutions for helping clients move on successfully from emergency accommodation.

However, the availability of social housing stock is low due to low turnover and households not moving as much due to the Eviction ban; and it is often difficult to place clients in private rented accommodation as these properties require a guarantor.

The Eviction ban was lifted on 1 October 2021 so numbers may rise with more families and domestic abuse cases coming through for re-housing. Going into the winter, the Council will need to make provision for rough sleepers as part of its Severe Weather Emergency Protocol response.

(Snapshot) Number of Long Term Empty properties (six months and over)



OBSERVATION:

Following the transition of the new Revenues and Benefits system from Northgate to Civica, inconsistencies in historical reporting were identified, and work to both cleanse and de-duplicate the data was undertaken, as well as improvements to the system to enable detailed analysis of the data. Therefore, reporting commences from Q1.

The relatively high numbers may be a result of delayed renovation works, sales and lets caused by Covid-19, and the retirement property market, in particular, was affected as this sector of the market was self-isolating. It is also likely that the Council has not been informed when new builds have sold, and there are some Housing Association properties that are awaiting demolition.

A range of proactive work is being undertaken to both reduce the number of LTE properties in the District as well as ensuring that the Council's data is up to date. The LTE officer contacts landlords, homeowners and builders to offer advice e.g. to explain discounts and the options available to them, and eligibility for reduced VAT on renovations. Those with properties empty for over two years have been specifically targeted with letters asking them to make contact with the Council.

The use of GIS mapping has helped to identify clusters and understand the broader picture, enabling more effective tackling of the issue. However, it is difficult to keep the numbers down as those properties that are removed from the LTE list, are quickly replaced with properties that have just moved into the LTE category

Planning and Strategic Housing

(Cumulative) Percentage of major planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within 13 weeks or an agreed timeframe

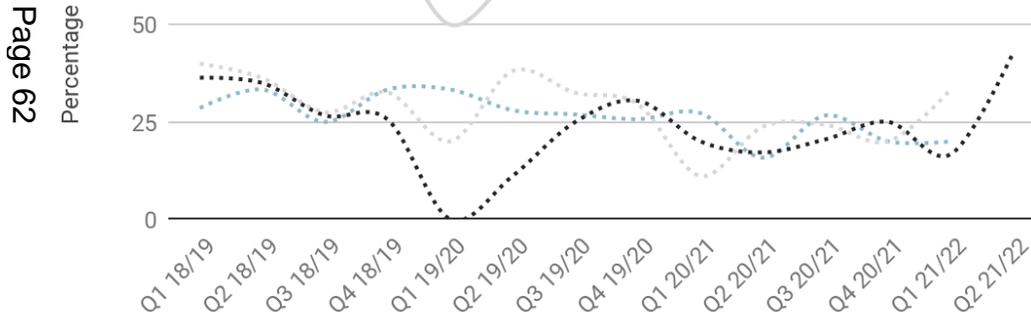


% of all application completed within 13 weeks

----- Cotswold

----- Forest of Dean

----- West Oxfordshire



Note

The charts for the planning performance measures have been separated to demonstrate the number of applications that are completed within the set time frames and the number that are completed as a result of an agreed extension of time.

Extensions of times are often a result of consultees requesting changes to the scheme or because the consultee response is essential but has not been received within the timetable. They are also used where officers are working proactively with applicants to improve schemes and make developments acceptable

OBSERVATION:

Seven major applications were determined in Q2, the same number as Q2 in the previous year.

Overall, there has been an increasing number of applications coming into the service, in particular householder applications. Given the anticipated ongoing nature of increased workloads, the Council agreed two additional posts to support the team.

The recent restructure of the planning service has provided a much needed opportunity to review service needs to ensure that it is fit both now and for the future. Two further principal posts have been appointed from the existing team, which alongside the two additional posts and some internal promotions created further vacancies, the majority of which have also now been filled. All recent appointments in the service are career graded posts with a wider pay scale band designed to help with staff retention.

Across the partnership, the recruitment campaign has been successful with a total of 20 appointments, many of which were internal, encouraging the retention of a significant number of existing staff. A second round of recruitment has now commenced to complete the consequential vacancies created from the first round and bring the teams up to the new increased resource levels.

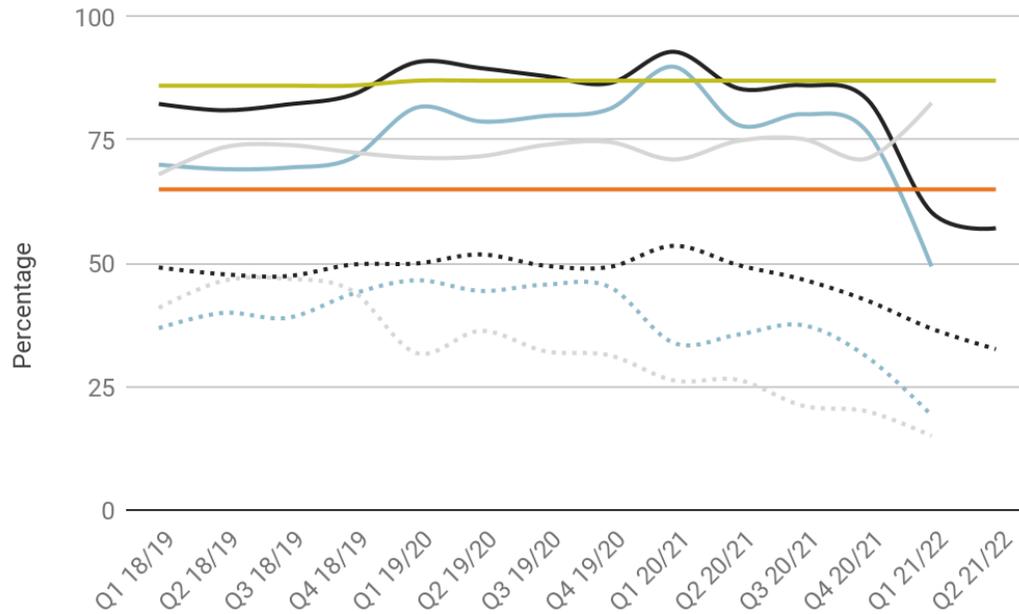
The increased capacity over the next few weeks will help to restore performance to previous levels, however, new staff will need to undergo training and the backlog of applications will need to be cleared before this can happen. We expect to see an improvement in performance in Q4

(Cumulative) Percentage of minor planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within 8 weeks or an agreed timescale



% of all applications completed within 8 weeks



OBSERVATION:

98 minor applications were determined in Q2 compared to 82 in Q2 of the previous year.

Due to high workloads and vacant posts, performance has fallen and a greater proportion of extensions of time is being used. Successful appointments during the quarter will increase capacity over the next few months but the backlog will need to be cleared before we see improvements

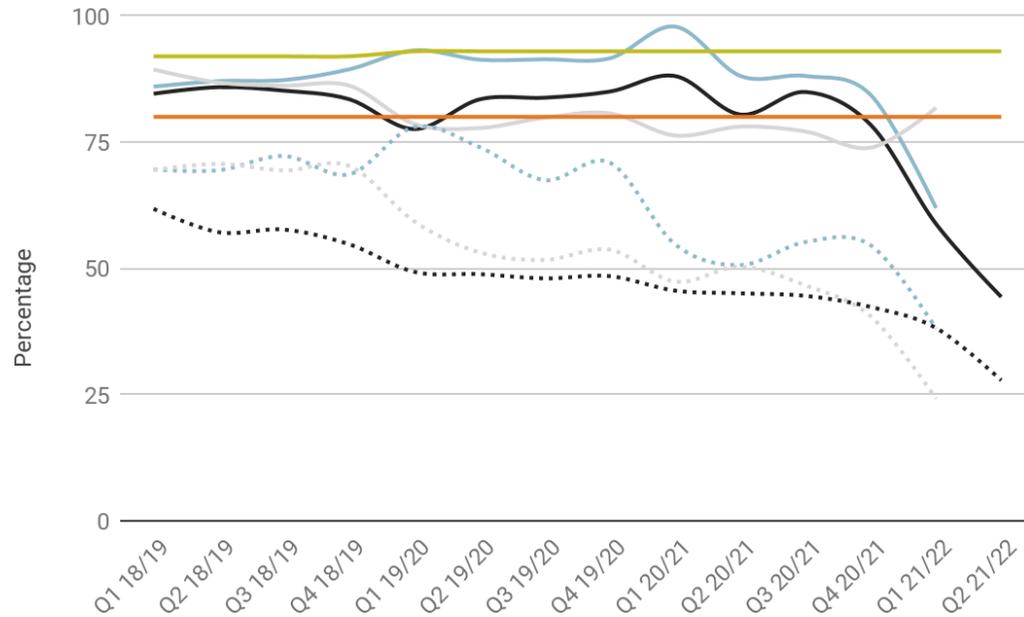
See Observation for Major applications for further explanation

(Cumulative) Percentage of other planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within 8 weeks or an agreed timescale



% of all applications completed within 8 weeks



OBSERVATION:

345 other applications were determined in Q2, 100 more applications than in Q2 of the previous year.

In the first six months of the year, a total of 709 applications were determined compared to 456 for the same period of the previous year, and 569 in 2019/20.

Due to high workloads and vacant posts, performance has reduced and a greater proportion of extensions of time is being used. Successful appointments during the quarter will increase capacity over the next few months but the backlog will need to be cleared before we see improvements.

An improvement action plan for the next 12 months is in place across the whole of the DM service which will be overseen by both the Group and Business Manager

See Observation for Major applications for further explanation

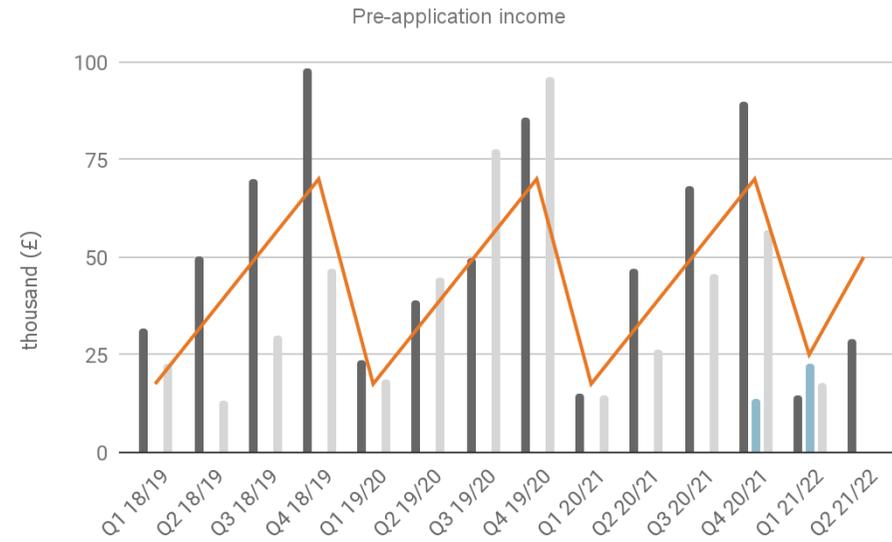
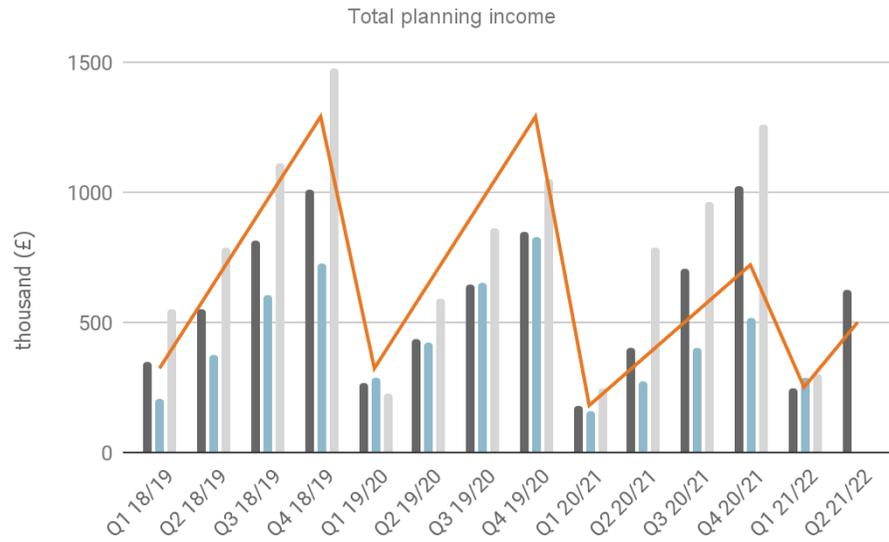
(Cumulative) Planning income

 Cotswold Target

 Cotswold

 Forest of Dean

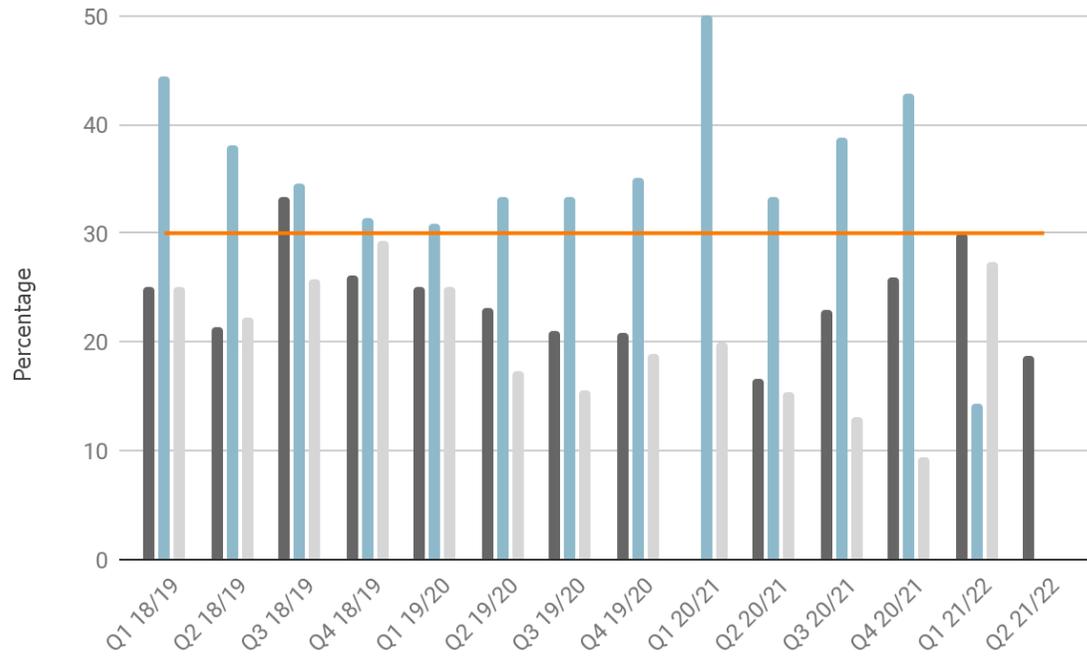
 West Oxfordshire



OBSERVATION:

At the end of Q2, total planning income was ahead of the target as well as exceeding the Q2 income of the previous three years. The service reports that higher volumes are continuing to come through

(Cumulative) Percentage of planning appeals allowed



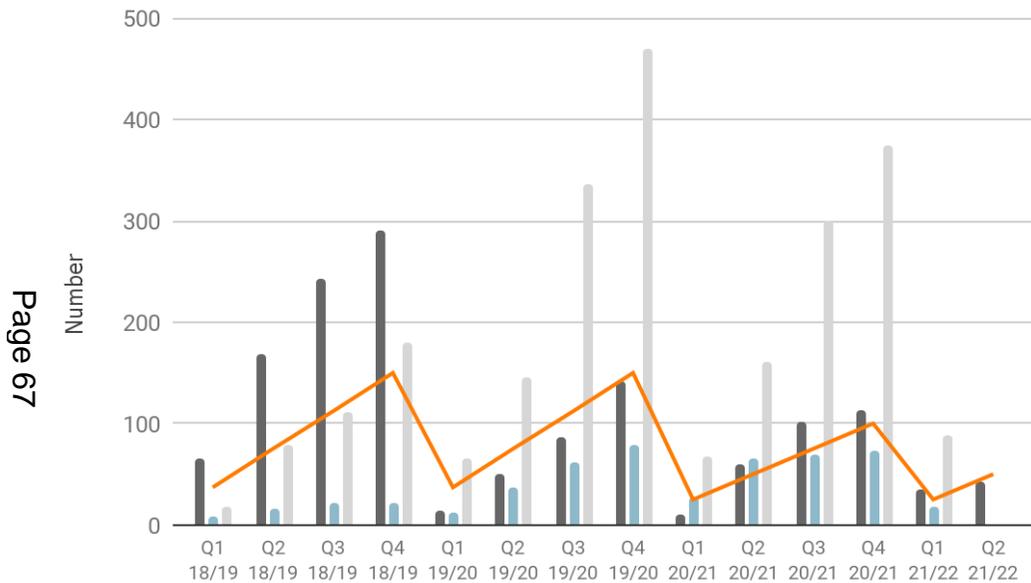
OBSERVATION:

This indicator seeks to ensure that no more than 30% of planning appeals are allowed.

In Q2, all six (100%) of the appealed decisions were supported.

Cumulatively, 13 out of 16 planning appeals were supported, and just three appeals were allowed in the first six months of the financial year

(Cumulative) Number of affordable homes delivered



Page 67

OBSERVATION:

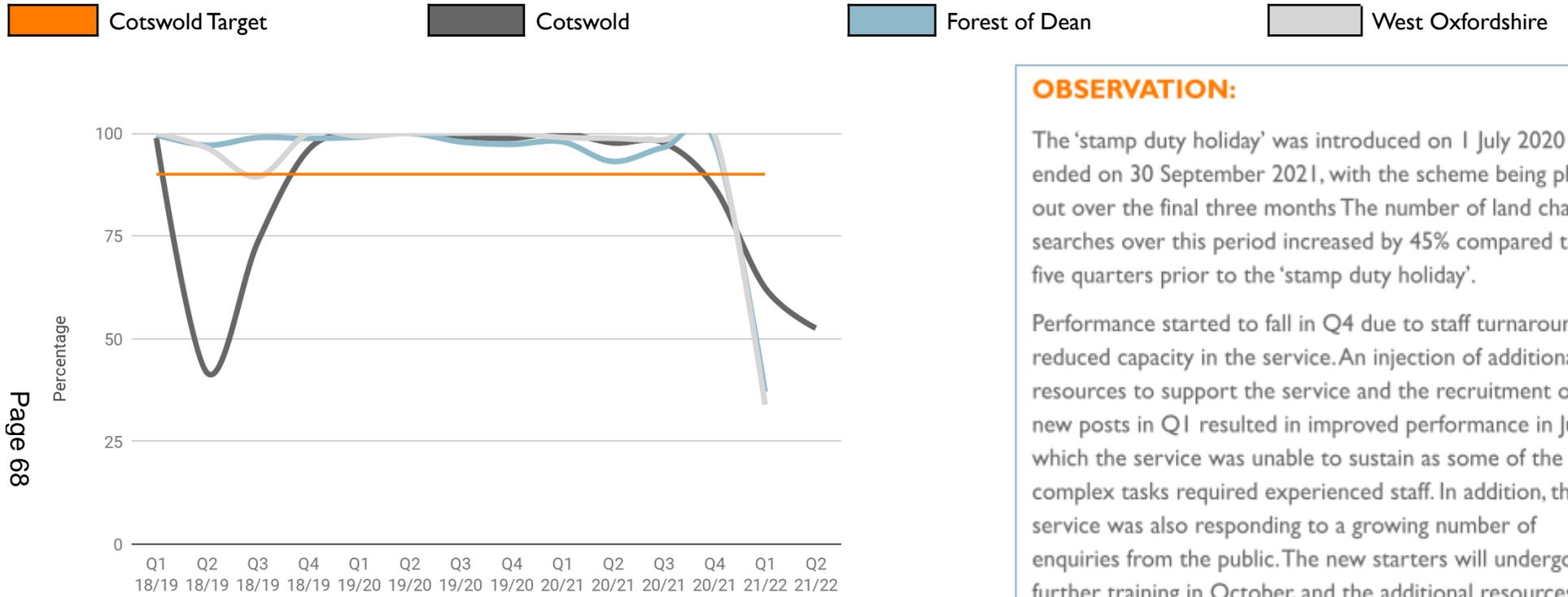
Eight affordable homes for local families were completed; two shared ownership and two social rented houses in South Cerney and four social rented houses in Moreton in Marsh. Whilst this is behind than the target, the completion of homes on construction sites does not occur evenly and the majority of completions this financial year are expected in Q4. The total for the first half of the year is 43 against a target of 50.

Construction has commenced on a further 21 social rented homes at the 100% affordable housing site at Quercus Rd in Tetbury and construction work is continuing on the regeneration schemes at Leaholme Court, Cirencester and Cross Tree Crescent/Oakley Flats, Kempsford.

The Council is continuing to work with Registered Provider partners to reach the target of 100 homes by the end of the financial year

Note: this data is collected cumulatively from the beginning of the financial year to account for peaks and troughs. Currently, completions are on target for 100% delivery at the end of the year

Percentage of land charge searches dispatched within 10 working days



OBSERVATION:

The 'stamp duty holiday' was introduced on 1 July 2020 and ended on 30 September 2021, with the scheme being phased out over the final three months. The number of land charge searches over this period increased by 45% compared to the five quarters prior to the 'stamp duty holiday'.

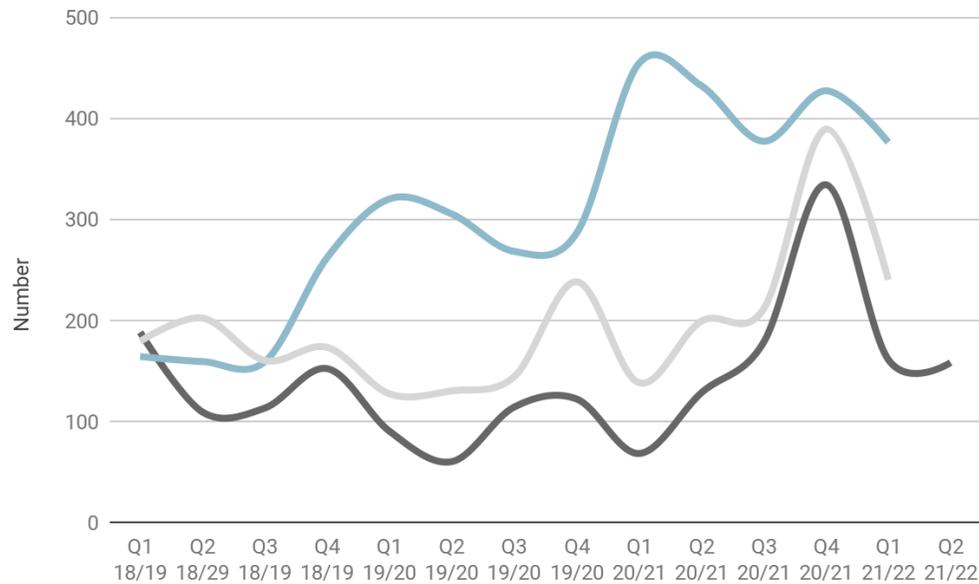
Performance started to fall in Q4 due to staff turnaround and reduced capacity in the service. An injection of additional resources to support the service and the recruitment of two new posts in Q1 resulted in improved performance in July which the service was unable to sustain as some of the more complex tasks required experienced staff. In addition, the service was also responding to a growing number of enquiries from the public. The new starters will undergo further training in October, and the additional resources to support the service will remain in place as a temporary measure. A service re-designer has started to review the land charge search process to identify where improvements can be made especially around the way customers communicate with us.

The service reports that land charges are in the main up to date and October's performance is exceeding the target. The number of land charge searches appears to have returned to more normal levels following the phasing out of the 'stamp duty holiday'.

Environmental and Regulatory

Number of fly tips collected

Cotswold Forest of Dean West Oxfordshire



OBSERVATION:

An increase in fly tips was reported nationally which coincided with the start of Covid-19, and this appeared to be reflected locally.

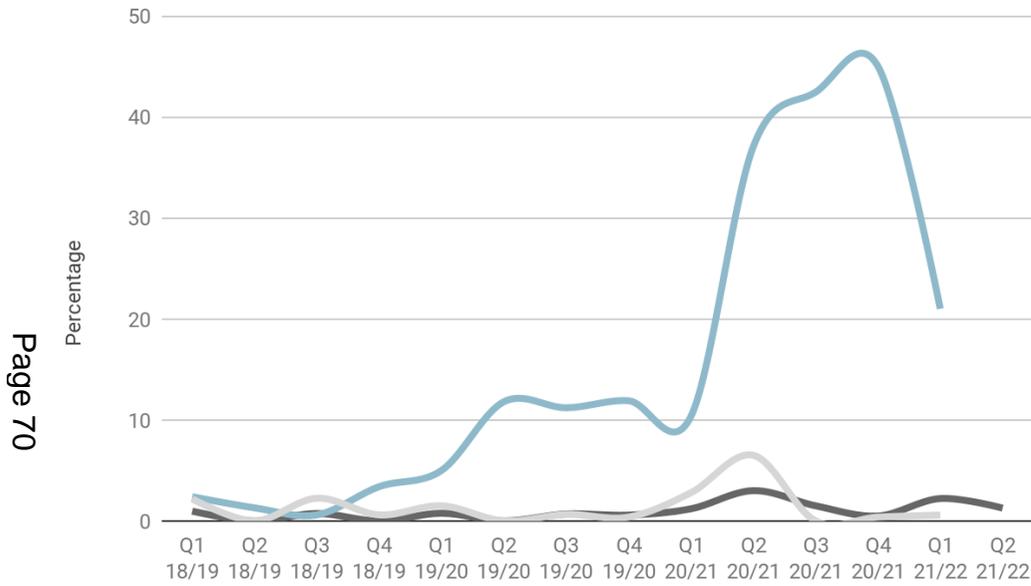
Over the last six months, the number of fly tip collected by Ubico has decreased which may reflect the lifting of restrictions.

The Council's 'Clean and Green' initiative is designed to tackle a range of enviro-crime including fly tipping, abandoned vehicles and dog fouling through engagement with communities and enforcement. The Lead Officer is carrying out duty of care work with businesses and households to support them to manage their waste responsibly; and more investigative work into fly tipping incidents is also being undertaken. Two new Clean and Green posts have been appointed and are expected to commence in November; and there will also be a new village warden for Bourton who will start later in the year.

Note: This data source does not contain all types of fly tips e.g. asbestos, at all locations e.g. bring sites. Forest of Dean appears to collect a higher number of fly tips than Cotswold and West as it counts fly tips at bring sites

Percentage of fly tips that result in an enforcement action taking place (defined as a warning letter, fixed penalty notice, simple caution or prosecution)

Cotswold
 Forest of Dean
 West Oxfordshire



OBSERVATION:

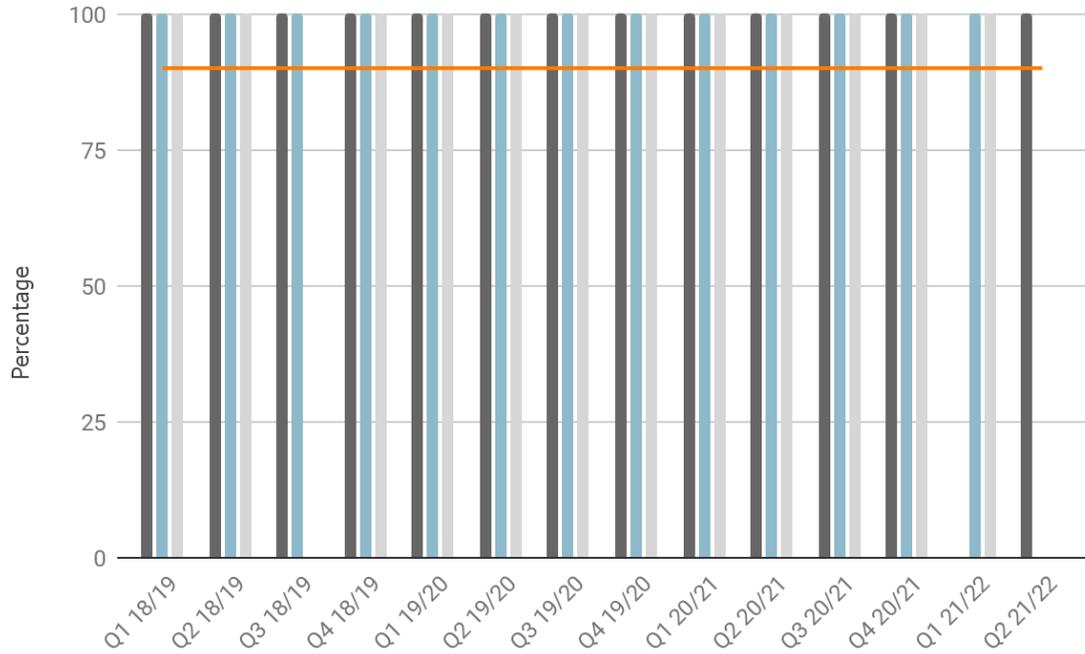
There were 237 notifications of fly tips, similar to the previous quarter, which resulted in three enforcement actions. The Lead Officer is undertaking duty of care work with businesses and households to support them to manage their waste responsibly as well as more investigative work into fly tipping incidents.

The Council will always take enforcement action if fly tipping is witnessed.

Currently, Cotswold and West operate a small multidisciplinary team. In addition, Cotswold has its own Lead Enviro-Crime officer who will shortly be joined by two Clean and Green officers.

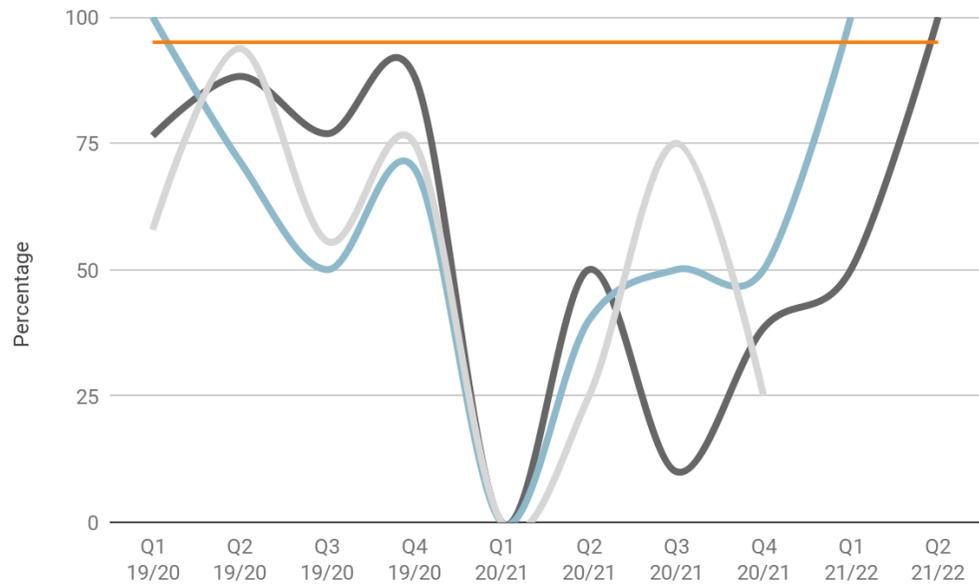
Forest of Dean has a dedicated Community Warden team

Percentage of high risk notifications (including food poisoning outbreaks, anti-social behaviour, contaminated private water supplies, workplace fatalities or multiple serious injuries) risk assessed within 1 working day



OBSERVATION:
During Q2, an E. coli notification was received and assessed within the one day

Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales



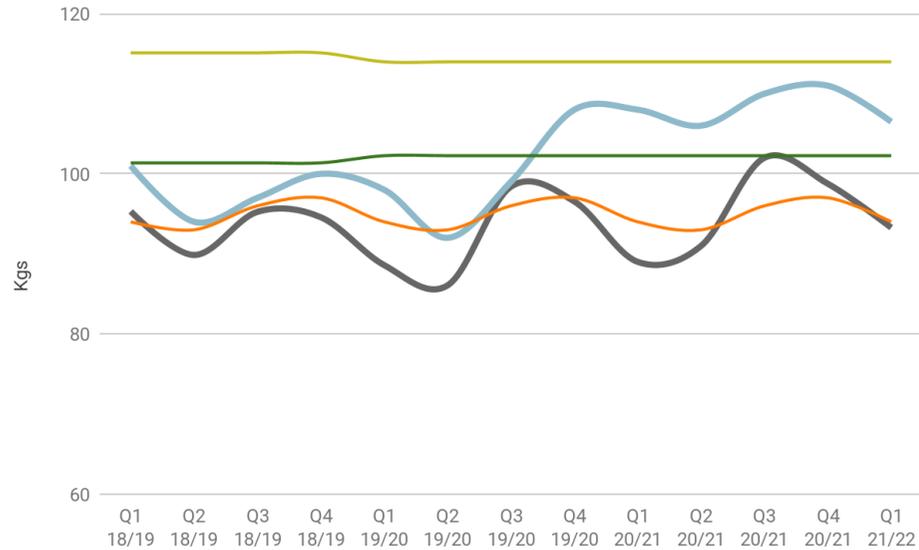
OBSERVATION:

During Q2, just one high risk food premise required an inspection which was completed within the target timescale.

The service is prioritising inspections for high risk premises and new businesses in line with the FSA recovery plan. The small backlog of high risk premises inspections that had built up during the Covid-19 lock downs has been cleared and all new ones are being completed within the 28 day timescale.

Previously, the service had been unsuccessful in recruiting to permanent senior posts, so as an interim measure, two contractors have been appointed to help reduce the backlog of medium risk inspections across the partnership whilst the service is in the process of recruiting to two career graded posts

Residual household waste per household (kg)



OBSERVATION:

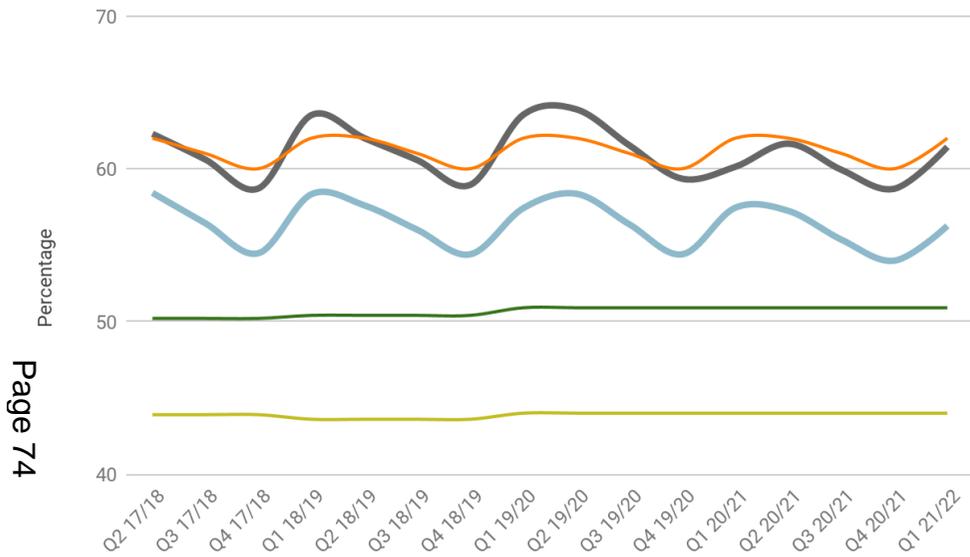
Waste management data not yet available for September.

Between April and August, the District produced 156.7 kg of residual household waste per household compared to 149.8 kg a year ago. During 2020-21, residual waste tonnages increased nationally due to home working and people self-isolating, which equated to a rise of about 7.5kg per household for this District, and appears to be continuing to rise in 2021-22.

Overall, this District produces a relatively low amount of residual waste per household compared to other local authorities. The latest waste management data shows that the District produced 369.7 kg per household compared to 475.8 kg per household in the SW, and 529.3 kg in England

Waste data is not available for West whilst a verification exercise takes place

Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled



OBSERVATION:

Waste management data not yet available for September.

The combined recycling rate to August was 61.95% compared to 61.21% in the previous year when the garden waste service was suspended between 26 March 2020 and 12 May 2020.

In comparison to 2019-20, the combined recycling rate at the end of August 2021 was down by two percentage points due to poorer composting rate which is affected by weather conditions, although it was offset by higher dry recycling rate.

In 2020-21, households produced more household waste (both residual and dry recycling) nationally due to Covid-19 and households working from home or self-isolating. In Cotswold District, residual waste increased by 3.5% and dry recycling by 16.3% which would have been facilitated by the expansion of the dry recycling service in March 2020.

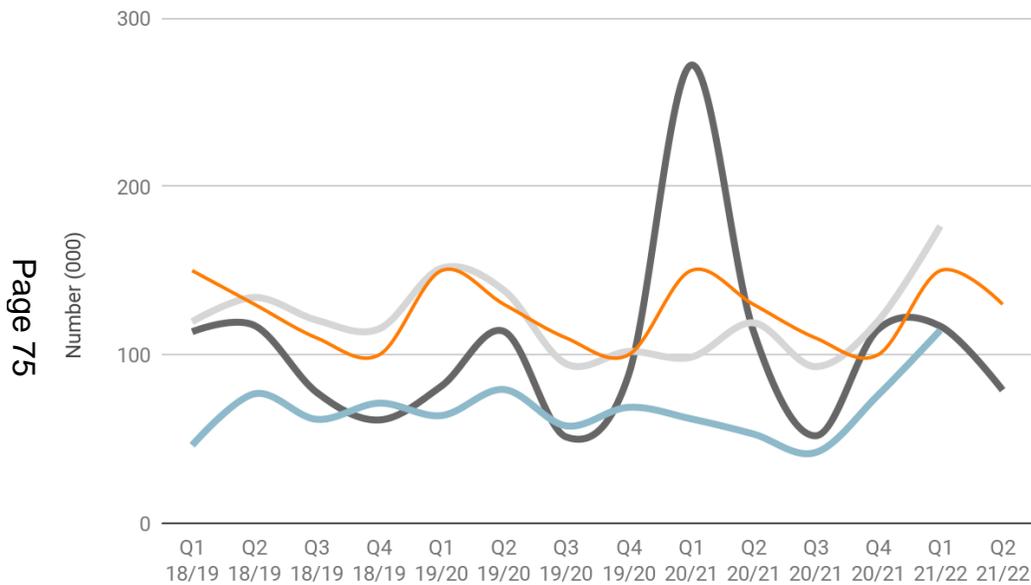
The first eight months of 2021-22 indicates that dry recycling tonnages have fallen by 4.5% compared to last year which may reflect workers returning to the office, however, residual waste tonnages has increased by around 4%.

Notes:

Composting and food waste was a single waste stream prior to 2020-21. The quarterly recycling targets are profiled to account for seasonal differences. The data is also presented cumulatively which will flatten out some of these differences

Waste data is not available for West whilst a verification exercise takes place

Number of missed bin per 100,000 scheduled collections



OBSERVATION:

The number of missed bins per 100,000 is reducing in the context of a national shortage of HGV drivers, and high staff turnover in the service as staff choose to take up roles closer to home in a buoyant job market.

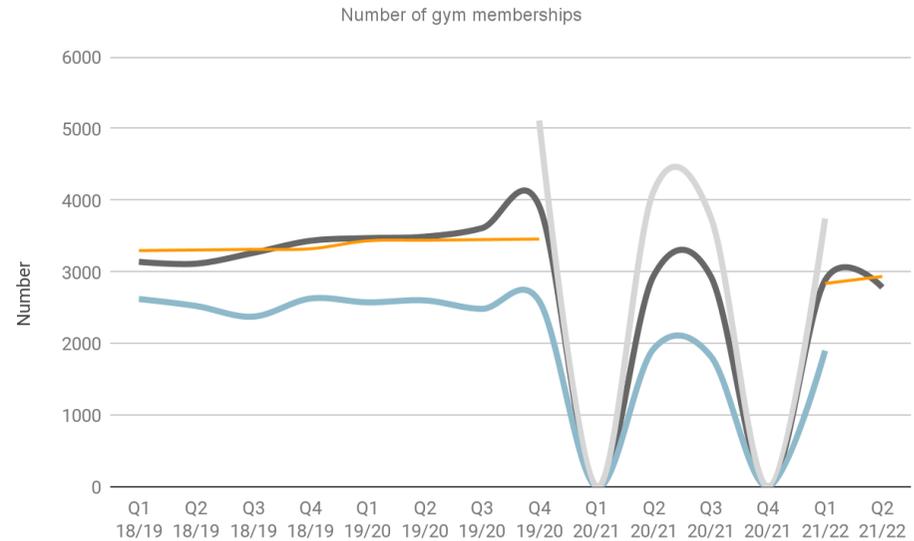
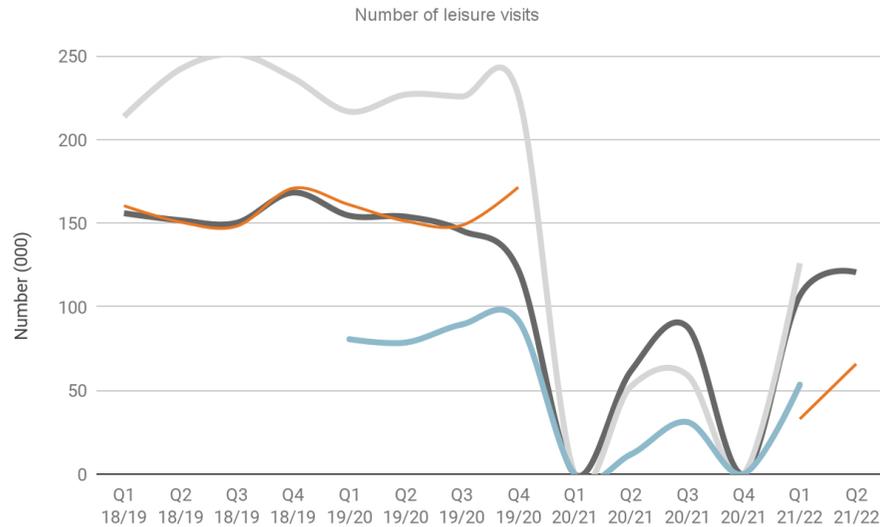
The implementation of In-Cab technology in April 2021 appears to be keeping the number of misses down as typically, missed bins rise when new crew members /agency staff are utilised due to their lack of local knowledge.

Following the introduction of the new waste and recycling service in March 2020, there was a spike in missed bins as residents and Ubico staff got used to the changes. Concurrently, there was an increase in the amount of waste being produced due to the large number of home-workers and others self-isolating or shielding

Note: since the implementation of In-Cab technology, the data source for missed collections is Alloy, In-Cab's back office system. This data source is more accurate than the previous data source

Leisure

Number of visits to the three leisure centres & (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships



OBSERVATION:

Leisure Centre usage for the three leisure facilities has been consistent this quarter, and is around 80% of that of the same quarter in 2019/20. The total number of active Gym Memberships has also been fairly consistent this quarter, with total membership numbers also at approximately 80% compared to this time in 2019/20.

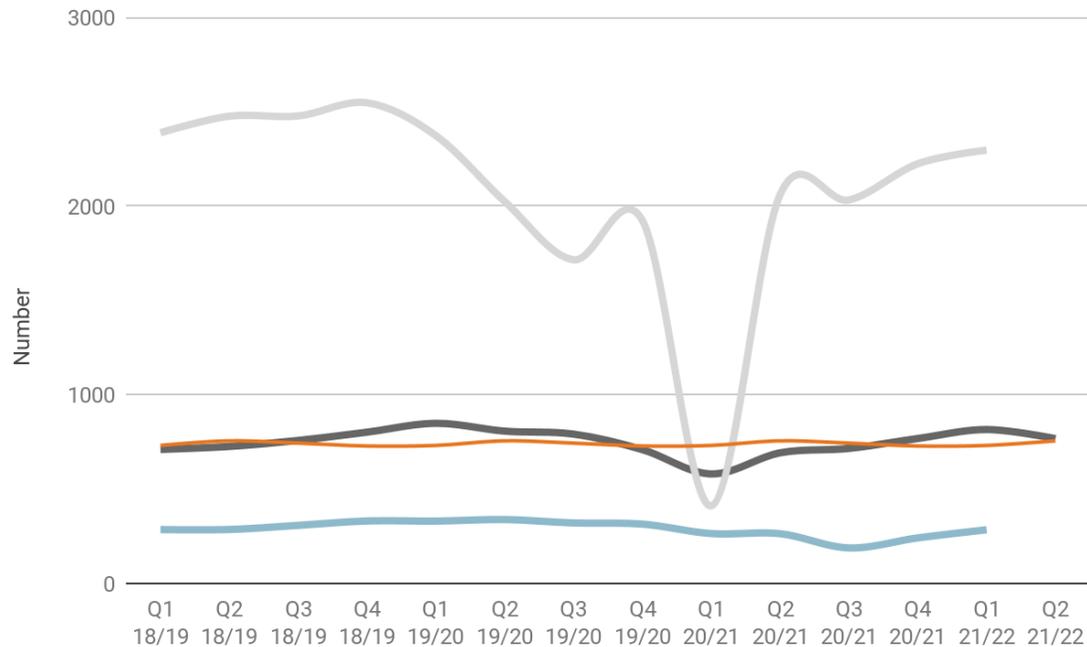
Some Covid protocols are still in place in the centres such as sanitising stations and nightly 'fogging' of areas, and mask wearing has become an advisory measure. Casual swimming continues to be operated in bookable sessions to prevent crowding in the changing rooms and this system seems to be preferable to a lot of swimmers as it makes visits more predictable (guaranteed lane space, changing/showering space etc.).

Some marketing campaigns have been scheduled including a 'Black Friday' promotion and a reduced price offer for December as this is traditionally a low sales month. Activities and programming are focussing on returning to the pre-Covid leisure offer, one exception to this is that the Café has not been re-opened in Cirencester Leisure Centre. Preparations are being made for any potential Covid issues in the coming months.

Note: Gym memberships were frozen during the first and third lockdowns. No targets were set for 2020-21

Parking

Total hours spent undertaking on and off-street parking enforcement visits



OBSERVATION:

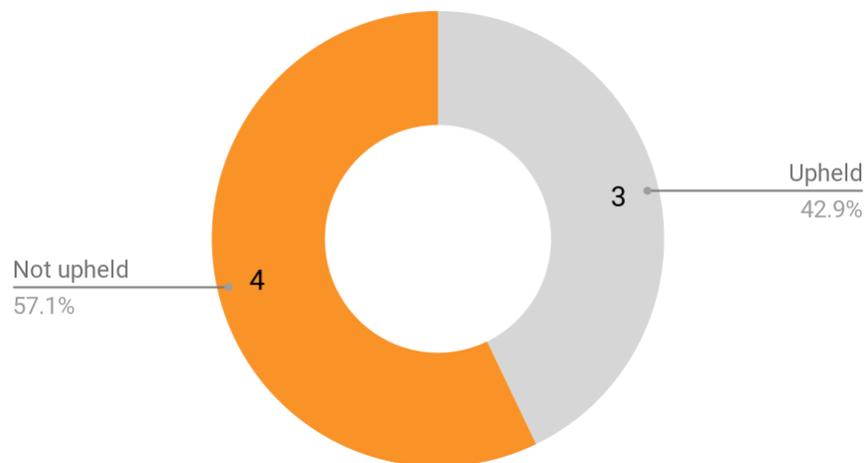
There was a slight increase in enforcement hours during the last six months to support the introduction of cashless parking.

Although car park usage has increased compared to a year ago, it is still lower than pre-Covid times. The volume of long stay workers appears to have reduced and people may be out for shorter periods of time. Overall, we may see some positive benefits on the District's carbon emissions.

One part-time post (on contract) is being held vacant while car park usage remains relatively low

COMPLAINTS - ARE WE DOING THE 'DAY JOB' REALLY WELL FOR OUR COUNCILS?

Complaints decisions at Stage 2



OBSERVATION:

A new Customer Feedback Procedure went live on the 1st July 2020. The Corporate Responsibility team is managing all complaints allowing services to focus on delivery.

The new process has the following stages:

Stage 1: Acknowledgement and Assessment

Stage 2: Investigation

Stage 3: Appeal

The complaints shown below only include upheld or partially upheld complaints

Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Stage	Decision	Response time (days)
Development Management	Complainant unhappy with delay in response to multiple planning applications.	It was agreed that the delays in determination of the planning applications were beyond what could be deemed acceptable. An apology was offered, and the application fee was refunded.	2	Upheld	9
Revenues & Benefits	Complainant unhappy with lack of response to a request for an account statement.	It was found that the complainant had waited an unacceptable amount of time for a response due to a backlog caused by changes to the revenues and benefits system. An apology was offered, and the matter was dealt with urgently.	2	Upheld	9
Development Management	Complainant unhappy with delay in determining planning application.	It was acknowledged that, whilst staff vacancies and a high workload have seriously impacted the team's ability to deal	2	Upheld	8

		with applications in a timely manner, the complainant had waited an unacceptable amount of time for a response. An apology was offered, and the complainant was assured that the planning officer would aim to provide a response by the end of the working week.			
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Cotswold District Council - Revenue Budget Monitoring

Budget Monitoring 2021/22 - 1st April to 30th September 2021

Annex C

Service Area	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget			Year end forecast	Comments
	£		£		£		£				
	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance		
Environmental & Regulatory Services	1,008,148	-605,720	487,301	-278,565	469,179	-284,028	-18,123	-5,463	-23,586	-22,358	Licensing income from premises and taxis exceeds profiled budget.
Business Support Services - Finance, HR, Procurement	2,245,722	-1,324,879	1,083,522	-579,961	1,053,954	-566,046	-29,568	13,915	-15,653	0	General underspend on supplies and services within business support
Business Support - ICT, Change & Customer Services	1,894,152	-96,957	911,248	-47,741	906,707	-56,225	-4,541	-8,484	-13,025	0	Underspend on Street Naming
Assets, Land, Legal & Property	1,521,862	-858,734	748,976	-428,720	742,148	-416,698	-6,828	12,022	5,193	0	
Chief Executive and Modernisation Costs	83,247	0	40,848	0	40,695	0	-153	0	-153	0	
Revenues & Housing Support	14,017,205	-13,714,739	6,996,008	-6,675,666	7,461,983	-7,138,128	465,975	-462,462	3,513	0	Increased expenditure and corresponding grant income in respect of homeless.
Revenues - Covid Grants	0	0	0	0	12,917,850	-12,942,850	12,917,850	-12,942,850	-25,000	0	Expenditure in relation to Covid Business Grants matched by grant funding. Variance relates to additional resource costs related to administering business grants, these expenses will be funded from additional new burden grant funding expected later in the financial year.
Environmental Services	9,484,708	-5,335,288	5,239,345	-3,019,390	5,131,689	-2,864,504	-107,656	154,886	47,230	229,583	Lower than forecast car park income as a result of continued impact of pandemic. Higher than budgeted income from garden waste. Lower contract fees for processing recycling and overachievement of income from recycling credits and sale of recycled materials due to higher than estimated commodity value.
Leisure & Communities	1,833,380	-105,269	595,575	-52,635	831,536	-184,054	235,961	-131,420	104,541		Support provided to SLM through open book and funding agreements. Additional leisure grant funding received through National Leisure Recovery Fund. National Leisure Recovery Fund Grant of £112k received offsets losses of £52k from waiving of SLM management fee in Q1 and Q2. Net overspend to be funded from underspend in relation to SLM set aside from 2020/21.
Planning & Strategic Housing	2,568,956	-1,021,487	1,331,332	-510,743	1,356,320	-677,240	24,988	-166,496	-141,508	-224,508	Planning income achieved higher than budgeted.
Democratic Services	998,214	-25,905	469,726	-11,953	744,735	-297,024	275,009	-285,071	-10,062	0	
Retained/Corporate Council Services	4,194,984	-2,105,523	1,379,197	-1,208,247	866,127	-1,224,049	-513,070	-15,802	-528,872	-823,767	Contingency for additional expenditure and income losses in relation to Covid income and expenditure as set out elsewhere in service areas. Discretionary pension payments lower than budgeted.
Retained/Corporate Council Services - Covid	0	0	0	0	553,051	-253,362	553,051	-253,362	299,689	539,689	£303k of additional Covid-19 Ubico charges, additional charges expected to continue through the financial year.
Cost of Services (Gross)	39,850,578	-25,194,501	19,283,078	-12,813,619	33,075,973	-26,904,208	13,792,895	-14,090,588	-297,693	-301,362	
Cost of Services (Net)		14,656,077		6,469,459		6,171,766					

Cotswold District Council - Revenue Budget Monitoring

Budget Monitoring 2021/22 - 1st April to 30th September 2021

	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget				Comments
	£		£		£		£		£		
Financing	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Net Variance	forecast	
Council Tax income		-5,867,996	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
NNDR income and expenditure	12,522,440	-13,343,154	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Section 31 NNDR grant income		-2,459,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Covid general grant		-377,000	0	-377,000	0	-377,437	0	-437	-437	0	
Sales, Fees and Charges Compensation grant		-356,181	0	-356,181	0	-228,000	0	128,181	128,181	128,181	Estimated income received from MHCLG Sales, fees and charges compensation scheme in place for Q1 of 2021/22 only. Income received less than budgeted due to level of income losses being lower than budgeted.
New homes bonus		-2,092,561	0	-1,046,280	0	-1,046,280	0	0	0	0	
Other government grants		-1,323,002	0	-661,488	0	-661,488	0	0	0	0	
Balance Sheet Adjustments and Reversals	-1,843,727	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
(Under)/overspend against the budget:	50,529,291	-50,433,594	19,283,078	-15,254,568	33,075,973	-50,433,594	13,792,895	-13,962,844	-169,949	-173,181	
				4,028,510		-17,357,621					

Environmental & Regulatory Services

For 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£		£		£		£			
		Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income		
BUC001	Building Control - Fee Earning Work	170,566	-360,000	81,037	-180,000	79,596	-181,141	-1,441	-1,141	-2,583	
BUC002	Building Control - Non Fee Earning Work	53,879	0	25,815	0	25,748	0	-68	0	-68	
BUC003	Dangerous Structures	2,500	0	1,250	0	441	5,099	-809	5,099	4,290	
	Building Control	226,945	-360,000	108,102	-180,000	105,784	-176,043	-2,318	3,957	1,639	
EMP001	Emergency Planning	22,918	0	11,337	0	6,428	0	-4,910	0	-4,910	
ESM001	Environment - Service Management and Support Services	103,924	0	51,962	0	45,592	0	-6,370	0	-6,370	
PSH002	Private Sector Housing - Condition of Dwellings	301	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
PSH003	Home Energy Conservation	212	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
REG002	Licensing	205,846	-190,720	100,958	-67,065	104,753	-82,039	3,795	-14,974	-11,179	Licensing income from premises and taxis exceeds profiled budget.
REG006	Caravan Sites - Itinerates	142	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
REG007	Caravan Sites - Licensed	142	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
REG009	Environmental Protection	192,018	-53,000	91,120	-30,500	89,977	-22,735	-1,143	7,765	6,621	
REG013	Polution Control	127,651	0	63,826	0	57,534	0	-6,291	0	-6,291	
REG016	Food Safety	126,279	-2,000	59,246	-1,000	58,986	-1,161	-259	-161	-420	
REG017	Health & Safety At Work	0	0	0	0	124	0	124	0	124	
REG021	Statutory Burials	1,642	0	750	0	0	-1,400	-750	-1,400	-2,150	
STC011	Abandoned Vehicles	128	0	0	0	0	-650	0	-650	-650	
	Public Protection	781,203	-245,720	379,199	-98,565	363,395	-107,985	-15,804	-9,420	-25,225	
	Environmental & Regulatory Services	1,008,148	-605,720	487,301	-278,565	469,179	-284,028	-18,123	-5,463	-23,586	

Pages

Business Support Services - Finance, HR, Procurement For 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£		£		£		£			
		Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income		
HLD499	S & S Holding Account	0	0	0	0	-1,933	0	-1,933	0	-1,933	
SUP009	Accountancy	481,136	-141,169	192,235	-23,485	182,977	-17,890	-9,257	5,595	-3,663	
SUP011	Creditors	101,757	-59,533	54,175	-29,767	50,742	-30,695	-3,433	-929	-4,361	
SUP012	Debtors	51,801	-12,951	29,197	-6,476	26,049	-7,497	-3,147	-1,022	-4,169	
SUP029	Financial Information	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
SUP035	Insurances	58,051	-51,969	29,025	-25,985	28,949	-23,818	-76	2,167	2,090	
SUP042	GO Support and Hosting	46,403	-36,000	23,202	-18,000	23,549	-18,000	347	0	347	
SUP403	CDC Counter Fraud Unit	56,672	-64,212	30,036	-2,570	30,815	5,140	779	7,710	8,489	
	Accountancy	795,820	-365,834	357,869	-106,281	341,148	-92,760	-16,721	13,521	-3,200	
SUP010	Internal Audit	107,302	-21,087	53,651	-10,544	53,451	-10,544	-200	0	-200	
SUP402	Glos. Counter Fraud Unit	462,261	-462,262	229,431	-241,699	219,743	-241,699	-9,687	0	-9,687	
	Audit	569,563	-483,349	283,082	-252,243	273,194	-252,242	-9,887	0	-9,887	
SUP003	Human Resources	514,910	-267,224	259,288	-133,612	256,936	-131,869	-2,352	1,743	-609	
SUP019	Health & Safety	112,407	-83,677	55,967	-25,428	56,301	-26,299	334	-872	-537	
SUP020	Training & Development	95,620	-29,292	45,835	-14,646	45,479	-14,646	-356	0	-356	
	Human Resources	722,937	-380,193	361,090	-173,686	358,716	-172,814	-2,374	872	-1,503	
SUP013	Payroll	100,395	-73,469	52,979	-36,735	51,960	-36,814	-1,018	-80	-1,098	
	Payroll	100,395	-73,469	52,979	-36,735	51,960	-36,814	-1,018	-80	-1,098	
SUP033	Central Purchasing	57,007	-22,034	28,503	-11,017	28,936	-11,416	433	-399	34	
	Procurement	57,007	-22,034	28,503	-11,017	28,936	-11,416	433	-399	34	
	HR, Procurement	2,245,722	-1,324,879	1,083,522	-579,961	1,053,954	-566,046	-29,568	13,915	-15,653	

Business Support ICT, Change & Customer Services For 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£		£		£		£			
		Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income		
SUP017	Business Improvement/Transformation	111,158	0	54,596	0	54,454	0	-142	0	-142	Street naming/signs expenditure in year to date lower than budgeted.
SUP021	Business Continuity Planning	21,147	0	8,804	0	8,780	0	-23	0	-23	
SUP023	Freedom of Information Act	10,747	0	5,373	0	5,359	0	-14	0	-14	
TMR001	Street Naming	30,524	-20,000	15,025	-10,000	3,045	-13,266	-11,980	-3,266	-15,246	
	Change and modernisation	173,576	-20,000	83,798	-10,000	71,639	-13,266	-12,159	-3,266	-15,425	
ADB001	Moreton-in-Marsh, Offices	78,863	-54,292	37,879	-26,996	32,016	-24,303	-5,863	2,693	-3,170	
COM420	FOH - Moreton	104,815	-3,665	50,131	-1,245	49,285	-63	-846	1,182	336	
COM421	Moreton - Stock Trading a/c	0	0	0	0	631	-1,856	631	-1,856	-1,225	
SUP401	FOH - Trinity Road	550,085	0	272,034	0	270,457	-6,477	-1,577	-6,477	-8,053	
CUSTSV	Customer Services	733,763	-57,957	360,044	-28,241	352,390	-32,698	-7,654	-4,457	-12,111	
SUP005	ICT	916,033	-19,000	432,016	-9,500	430,655	-10,261	-1,361	-761	-2,122	Overspend in respect of support and maintenance
SUP031	Application Support	70,780	0	35,390	0	52,023	0	16,633	0	16,633	
	ICT	986,813	-19,000	467,406	-9,500	482,678	-10,261	15,272	-761	14,511	
	ICT, Change & Customer Services	1,894,152	-96,957	911,248	-47,741	906,707	-56,225	-4,541	-8,484	-13,025	

Assets, Land, Legal & Property

For 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£		£		£		£			
		Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income		
ADB401	Trinity Road, Offices	499,573	-343,268	253,167	-171,634	248,985	-199,009	-4,182	-27,375	-31,557	Unbudgeted income from recharges to tenants of the west wing, will reflect in 22/23 budget. Reception and Atrium Lighting works - Budget is an allocation of the wider BMF. Underspends elsewhere within the BMF allocation will fund this overspend. Repairs and Maintenance lower than budgeted.
ADB412	Moreton-in-Marsh, Offices - Maintenance	43,235	0	21,618	0	36,958	0	15,341	0	15,341	
CUL411	Corinium Museum - Maintenance	41,350	0	20,675	0	7,117	0	-13,558	0	-13,558	
ENA401	Housing Enabling Properties	9,110	-23,476	3,740	-11,091	1,886	-13,073	-1,854	-1,982	-3,836	
FIE425	22/24 Ashcroft Road	28,534	0	10,267	0	6,771	0	-3,496	0	-3,496	
HLD421	T Barry Haulage Depot, South Cerney	0	0	0	0	0	-912	0	-912	-912	
	Asset Management	621,802	-366,744	309,467	-182,725	301,717	-212,994	-7,749	-30,269	-38,019	
LLC006	Local Land Charges	110,362	-250,704	52,539	-125,352	51,140	-111,883	-1,398	13,469	12,071	Land charge income lower than budgeted.
	Land Charges	110,362	-250,704	52,539	-125,352	51,140	-111,883	-1,398	13,469	12,071	
SUP004	Legal	467,627	-241,286	231,185	-120,643	222,222	-91,771	-8,963	28,872	19,909	Impact of changes to staffing within legal has resulted in reducing partnership income by £28k. There is a underspend across supplies and services
	Legal Services	467,627	-241,286	231,185	-120,643	222,222	-91,771	-8,963	28,872	19,909	
SUP025	Property Services	322,071	0	155,786	0	167,068	-50	11,282	-50	11,232	Variance in Publica contract due to agency staff costs within Property Services.
	Property Services	322,071	0	155,786	0	167,068	-50	11,282	-50	11,232	
	Land, Legal & Property	1,521,862	-858,734	748,976	-428,720	742,148	-416,698	-6,828	12,022	5,193	

Partnership Mngt & Programme Costs

For 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021

<u>Cost Centre</u>	<u>Cost Centre Description</u>	<u>Original Budget</u>		<u>Budget to Q2</u>		<u>Actual Position</u>		<u>Under / Over Budget</u>		<u>Net Variance</u>	<u>Comments</u>
		<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>		
		<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Income</u>		
COR011	2020 Vision	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
SUP026	Chief Executive	83,247	0	40,848	0	40,695	0	-153	0	-153	
	Managing Director & Support	83,247	0	40,848	0	40,695	0	-153	0	-153	
	Partnership Mngt & Programme Costs	83,247	0	40,848	0	40,695	0	-153	0	-153	

Revenues & Housing Support

For 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£		
		Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income		
HBP001	Rent Allowances	13,495,334	-13,183,091	6,741,791	-6,553,715	7,029,502	-6,834,276	287,711	-280,561	7,150	
	Benefits	13,495,334	-13,183,091	6,741,791	-6,553,715	7,029,502	-6,834,276	287,711	-280,561	7,150	
HOM001	Homelessness	126,663	-76,266	63,314	-38,133	217,757	-198,036	154,443	-159,903	-5,460	Increased expenditure and corresponding grant income in respect of homeless.
HOM005	Homelessness Hostel Accommodation	4,000	-35,500	2,000	-17,750	9,505	-25,057	7,505	-7,307	198	
HOM406	Temporary Emergency Accommodation	87,825	-77,519	43,412	-38,760	45,103	-45,947	1,691	-7,188	-5,497	
PSH001	Private Sector Housing Grants	28,013	0	14,007	0	14,018	0	11	0	11	
	Housing Management	246,501	-189,285	122,733	-94,643	286,382	-269,040	163,649	-174,398	-10,748	
LTC001	Council Tax Collection	207,854	-143,808	99,521	-25,308	105,701	-34,966	6,180	-9,658	-3,478	Overspend on postage and software
LTC011	NNDR Collection	52,017	-198,555	24,592	-2,000	34,312	154	9,720	2,154	11,875	
PUT001	Concessionary Travel	15,499	0	7,372	0	5,690	0	-1,682	0	-1,682	
SUP028	Security Carriers	0	0	0	0	397	0	397	0	397	
	Revenues	275,370	-342,363	131,485	-27,308	146,099	-34,811	14,615	-7,503	7,111	
	Revenues & Housing Support	14,017,205	-13,714,739	6,996,008	-6,675,666	7,461,983	-7,138,128	465,975	-462,462	3,513	

Revenues - Covid Grants

For 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income		
COV022	Business Lockdown Grants	0	0	0	0	2,189,103	-2,214,103	2,189,103	-2,214,103	-25,000	Covid grants to local businesses administered by Council funded from government grant. Net nil overall impact. Includes admin and finance resource costs of £25k these expenses will be funded from additional new burdens funding expected later in the year.
COV024	Restart Grant	0	0	0	0	10,728,747	-10,728,747	10,728,747	-10,728,747	0	Covid Restart grants to local businesses administered by Council funded from government grant. Net nil overall impact.
Revenues - Covid Grants		0	0	0	0	12,917,850	-12,942,850	12,917,850	-12,942,850	-25,000	

Environmental Services

For 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£		£		£		£			
		Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income		
CPK401	Car Parks	1,025,989	-2,989,797	507,122	-1,494,899	506,110	-1,104,291	-1,012	390,608	389,595	The pandemic has continued to reduce car park income received during the first half of the financial year. £335k less than budgeted received in parking fees, £30k less in parking permits and £31k less in excess parking fees.
CPK402	Car Parks - Maintenance	35,725	0	17,863	0	20,752	0	2,889	0	2,889	
CPK413	Car Parks - Tetbury The Chippings	39,075	-54,000	19,537	-27,000	9,410	-17,322	-10,128	9,678	-450	
CPK414	Car Parks - Chipping Campden	0	0	0	0	14,282	-12,224	14,282	-12,224	2,058	
CPK499	Car Parking Reserve	0	0	13,036	-16,293	13,036	-16,293	0	0	0	
	Car Parking	1,100,789	-3,043,797	557,558	-1,538,191	563,590	-1,150,130	6,032	388,062	394,093	
CCM001	Cemetery, Crematorium and Churchyard	167,684	-63,830	90,833	-31,915	91,875	-44,920	1,042	-13,005	-11,963	In receipt of £13k more income from Cemetery and Cremation fees than budgeted.
CCM402	Cemeteries - Maintenance	16,275	0	8,138	0	23,830	0	15,693	0	15,693	£11k Roof renewal to machine stores at Chesterton Cemetery funded from overall Building Maintenance Fund
HLD410	Waste - Cleansing	84	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
HLD411	Waste - Cemeteries	2,092	0	704	0	869	-1,991	166	-1,991	-1,825	
REG003	Animal Control	59,828	-32,505	29,569	-14,203	29,563	-12,216	-6	1,987	1,981	
REG019	Public Conveniences	270,632	-84,030	117,892	-42,015	122,194	-33,731	4,302	8,284	12,586	£5k roofing repairs, Church Rooms BoW. £8k underachieved on fee income
RYC001	Recycling	2,734,062	-882,964	1,515,787	-378,985	1,434,926	-429,332	-80,861	-50,347	-131,209	£6k underspend in marketing. £18k underspend on Ubico contract, £40k underspend in recycling contract (estimated increases in processing costs not realised) and general underspend of £16k in supplies and services. £50k overachievement of income from recycling credits and from sale of recycled material due to higher than estimated commodity value.
RYC002	Green Waste	1,008,377	-835,000	585,280	-817,500	586,827	-965,623	1,547	-148,123	-146,575	£155k overachieved on Garden Waste subscriptions
RYC003	Refuse / Recycling Organic & Food Waste	805,818	0	470,061	0	535,815	-71,988	65,755	-71,988	-6,234	Andigestion [food waste transfer] costs invoiced to Cotswold then recharged to GCC.
STC001	Street Cleaning	1,352,383	0	785,593	0	782,221	0	-3,372	0	-3,372	
WST001	Household Waste	1,589,267	-143,662	902,046	-71,831	829,718	-1,962	-72,328	69,869	-2,460	Retained Officer transferred to Publica. Therefore no salary costs and no subsequent partnership recharges income.
WST004	Bulky Household Waste	41,930	-56,000	20,965	-28,000	35,629	-54,767	14,664	-26,767	-12,103	Increase in demand has seen an increase in both contractor costs and income, however income overachieved £12k.
WST401	Refuse-Stow Fair	11,227	0	4,789	0	4,786	0	-3	0	-3	
WST402	South Cerney Depot, Packers Lease	31,768	-173,500	5,000	-86,750	0	-86,750	-5,000	0	-5,000	No expenditure against maintenance budget to date.
	Environmental Services Client	8,091,427	-2,271,491	4,536,655	-1,471,199	4,478,253	-1,703,279	-58,402	-232,081	-290,483	

Environmental Services		For 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021									
Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£		£		£		£			
		Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income		
CCC001	Climate Change	94,563	0	47,264	0	42,602	0	-4,662	0	-4,662	No spend to date in respect of Civic Pride. Expenditure expected from Q.3 onwards for newly recruited Clean and Green Officers.
	Climate Change	94,563	0	47,264	0	42,602	0	-4,662	0	-4,662	
FLD401	Land Drainage	97,274	-20,000	47,867	-10,000	46,594	-5,765	-1,273	4,235	2,962	
FLD402	Flood Defence	0	0	0	0	650	-5,330	650	-5,330	-4,680	
	Flooding	97,274	-20,000	47,867	-10,000	47,244	-11,095	-623	-1,095	-1,718	
REG023	Environmental Strategy	100,655	0	50,000	0	0	0	-50,000	0	-50,000	
	Waste & Recycling Policy	100,655	0	50,000	0	0	0	-50,000	0	-50,000	
	Environmental Services	9,484,708	-5,335,288	5,239,345	-3,019,390	5,131,689	-2,864,504	-107,656	154,886	47,230	

Leisure & Communities

For 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£		£		£		£			
		Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income		
SUP002	Consultation, Policy & Research	87,473	0	42,587	0	49,449	0	6,862	0	6,862	
	Corporate Planning	87,473	0	42,587	0	49,449	0	6,862	0	6,862	
CUL410	Corinium Museum	101,084	0	0	0	2,692	0	2,692	0	2,692	
CUL412	Collection Management	4,961	0	0	0	310	0	310	0	310	
CUL413	Northleach Resouce Centre	8,850	0	4,425	0	0	0	-4,425	0	-4,425	
CUL415	Corinium Museum - HLF Project	0	0	29,398	0	29,398	0	0	0	0	
											£178k support provided to SLM through open book and funding agreements. Additional leisure grant funding received through National Leisure Recovery Fund. National Leisure Recovery Fund Grant of £104k received offsets losses of £52k from waiving of SLM management fee in Q1 and Q2. Net overspend to be funded from underspend in relation to SLM set aside from 2020/21.
REC410	Ciren - Centre Management	687,063	-105,269	35,202	-52,635	211,170	-104,298	175,968	-51,663	124,304	
REC413	Ciren - Dryside Areas	0	0	0	0	0	-6,756	0	-6,756	-6,756	
REC419	Cirencester Leisure - Maintenance	32,850	0	16,425	0	19,657	0	3,232	0	3,232	
REC430	C Campden - Centre Management	125,878	0	61,511	0	57,273	0	-4,238	0	-4,238	
REC450	Bourton - Centre Management	150,951	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
											No Building Maintenance expenditure to date. Budget is an allocation of the wider BMF. Any underspend will fund additional maintenance requirements on other assets within the BMF allocation.
REC459	Bourton - Maintenance	28,019	0	14,010	0	131	0	-13,879	0	-13,879	
	Leisure Management	1,139,656	-105,269	160,971	-52,635	320,631	-111,054	159,660	-58,420	101,241	

Leisure & Communities (continued)

For 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income		
COM401	Health Policy	25,847	0	12,302	0	12,273	0	-29	0	-29	
COM402	Community Liaison	95,926	0	47,445	0	45,824	0	-1,621	0	-1,621	
COM403	Youth Participation	92,916	0	68,809	0	69,302	-1,942	493	-1,942	-1,449	
COM405	Health Development	41,774	0	31,962	0	31,235	0	-727	0	-727	
GBD001	Community Welfare Grants	165,830	0	118,254	0	118,185	0	-69	0	-69	
	Community Liaison	422,293	0	278,772	0	276,818	-1,942	-1,954	-1,942	-3,896	
CCR001	Community Safety (Crime Reduction)	48,335	0	23,816	0	24,168	0	352	0	352	
	Community Safety	48,335	0	23,816	0	24,168	0	352	0	352	
TOU001	Tourism Strategy and Promotion	39,401	0	7,200	0	7,182	0	-19	0	-19	
TOU402	Partnership Grants	54,000	0	45,500	0	45,500	0	0	0	0	
TOU403	Cotswold Tourism Partnership	42,222	0	36,728	0	35,840	889	-889	889	0	
TOU404	Tourism Discover England Fund - Project	0	0	0	0	71,947	-71,947	71,947	-71,947	0	
	Tourism Policy	135,623	0	89,429	0	160,468	-71,059	71,040	-71,059	-19	
	Leisure & Communities	1,833,380	-105,269	595,575	-52,635	831,536	-184,054	235,961	-131,420	104,541	

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income		
DEV001	Development Control - Applications	851,375	-999,877	419,441	-499,938	427,379	-638,038	7,938	-138,100	-130,162	<p>£159k overachieved planning app income, includes 12 fees over £10k totalling £206k. £21k underachieved on Pre-App Advice. New Pre-App advice charging schedule not yet implemented.</p> <p>No costs associated with significant appeals to end of Q2.</p>
DEV002	Development Control - Appeals	128,712	0	63,767	0	21,212	0	-42,556	0	-42,556	
DEV003	Development Control - Enforcement	185,843	0	91,344	0	91,103	0	-240	0	-240	
DEV004	Development Advice	330,666	0	162,914	0	162,485	0	-428	0	-428	
DEV401	Planning Advice For Land Charges	11,321	0	5,502	0	5,488	0	-14	0	-14	
DEV488	Planning - Section 106 Agreements	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Development Management		1,507,917	-999,877	742,967	-499,938	707,666	-638,038	-35,301	-138,100	-173,401	
PLP005	Heritage & Design	210,966	0	101,690	0	104,574	-550	2,884	-550	2,334	
Heritage & Conservation		210,966	0	101,690	0	104,574	-550	2,884	-550	2,334	
HAD001	Housing Advice	274,132	0	141,890	0	140,512	0	-1,378	0	-1,378	
HOS001	Housing Strategy	138,534	0	116,088	0	119,978	-100	3,890	-100	3,790	
HOS002	Housing Partnerships	24,436	0	11,937	0	11,906	0	-31	0	-31	
HOS005	Community Led Housing	30,475	0	15,237	0	15,237	0	-0	0	-0	
Strategic Housing		467,577	0	285,153	0	287,633	-100	2,481	-100	2,381	
CIL001	Community Infrastructure Levy	10,000	-10,000	12,250	-5,000	66,445	-38,141	54,195	-33,141	21,055	<p>Retained 5% Admin for CiL not yet at a level to cover administration costs of the service.</p>
PLP002	Local Development Framework	339,953	-100	173,167	-50	171,995	-101	-1,172	-51	-1,223	
PLP401	Fwd Plan work for Dev Con	16,508	0	8,088	0	8,066	0	-21	0	-21	
PLP499	Local Development Framework Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
PSM001	Planning - Service Management and Su	16,035	-11,510	8,018	-5,755	9,941	-309	1,923	5,446	7,369	
Planning Policy		382,496	-21,610	201,522	-10,805	256,447	-38,551	54,925	-27,746	27,179	
Planning & Strategic Housing		2,568,956	-1,021,487	1,331,332	-510,743	1,356,320	-677,240	24,988	-166,496	-141,508	

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income		
DRM005	Committee Services	88,568	0	31,032	0	29,949	0	-1,083	0	-1,083	Election costs to be covered by income due from Electoral Claims Unit. Balance to be transferred to Election Reserve
DRM008	Corporate Subscriptions	18,980	0	18,980	0	25,497	0	6,517	0	6,517	
	Committee Services	107,548	0	50,013	0	55,447	0	5,434	0	5,434	
SUP018	Press & PR/Communications	56,087	0	27,540	0	31,881	0	4,340	0	4,340	
SUP024	Postal Services	40,011	0	19,544	0	21,394	0	1,851	0	1,851	
	Communications	96,098	0	47,084	0	53,275	0	6,191	0	6,191	
ELE*	Elections	139,662	-3,880	58,260	-940	328,635	-288,341	270,375	-287,401	-17,026	
	Elections	139,662	-3,880	58,260	-940	328,635	-288,341	270,375	-287,401	-17,026	
DRM001	Democratic Representation and Management	115,690	0	57,828	0	57,714	0	-113	0	-113	
DRM002	Councillors Allowances	304,890	0	152,445	0	153,382	0	937	0	937	
DRM004	Servicing Council	4,016	0	2,008	0	2,192	0	184	0	184	
	Member Support	424,596	0	212,281	0	213,288	0	1,008	0	1,008	
SUP022	Printing Services	230,310	-22,025	102,089	-11,013	94,090	-8,683	-7,999	2,330	-5,669	
	Print & Design	230,310	-22,025	102,089	-11,013	94,090	-8,683	-7,999	2,330	-5,669	
	Democratic Services	998,214	-25,905	469,726	-11,953	744,735	-297,024	275,009	-285,071	-10,062	

Retained Services

For 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income		
FIE010	Interest Payable and Similar Charges	19,290	0	9,645	0	0	0	-9,645	0	-9,645	No borrowing to date, therefore no interest payable
FIE030	Interest and Investment Income	0	-504,668	0	-246,284	8,200	-254,750	8,200	-8,466	-266	£8k Arlingclose Treasury Management Advice. Overachievement of budgeted investment income.
FIE410	Commercial Properties - General	10,630	4,705	5,210	-55	2,967	-330	-2,243	-275	-2,518	
FIE*	Commercial Properties - Summary	95,697	-579,801	52,753	-369,465	48,590	-369,926	-4,163	-462	-4,625	
NDC401	Discretionary Pension Payments	1,881,916	0	118,293	0	68,511	0	-49,782	0	-49,782	
Corporate I&E		2,007,533	-1,079,764	185,901	-615,804	128,268	-625,007	-57,633	-9,203	-66,836	
COR005	Corporate Finance	98,677	0	97,729	0	104,278	-115	6,549	-115	6,434	Includes refund from PSAA of £5.6k
COR007	External Audit Fees	70,830	0	35,415	0	28,500	-5,683	-6,915	-5,683	-12,598	
COR008	Bank Charges	61,065	0	30,533	0	36,957	0	6,424	0	6,424	
COR406	Savings and Growth Items	911,555	0	503,531	0	47,375	0	-456,156	0	-456,156	Contingency for additional expenditure and income losses in relation to Covid income and expenditure. including Ubico costs in COV019 of £303k and £153k of car park losses not covered by sales, fees and charges compensation.
COR001	Publica Group	445,958	-445,958	222,979	-222,979	222,979	-223,318	-0	-339	-339	
SUP032	Strategic Directors	503,669	0	250,357	0	249,180	0	-1,176	0	-1,176	
Corporate Management		2,091,754	-445,958	1,140,543	-222,979	689,269	-229,116	-451,274	-6,137	-457,411	
Retained Services		4,194,984	-2,105,523	1,379,197	-1,208,247	866,127	-1,224,049	-513,070	-15,802	-528,872	

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Cost Centre	Cost Centre Description	Original Budget		Budget to Q2		Actual Position		Under / Over Budget		Net Variance	Comments
		£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income	£ Expenditure	£ Income		
COV019	Corona Virus	0	0	0	0	395,689	-96,000	395,689	-96,000	299,689	178 test and trace grants were awarded to 30 September 2021 totalling £89k, matched by £89k of grant income. £303k of additional Covid-19 Ubico charges.
COV020	High Street re-opening	0	0	0	0	57,227	-57,227	57,227	-57,227	0	Expenditure matched by funding from the Government 'Welcome Back Fund'
COV023	Contain Outbreak Management Fund	0	0	0	0	100,135	-100,135	100,135	-100,135	0	Grant funding provided by Gloucestershire County Council utilised to fund compliance and enforcement and wider contain outbreak. Further funding from both Gloucestershire County Council (£125k) and the Department of Health and Social Care (£97k) is expected to be used in future periods as plans are firmed up to utilise. The Earmarked Contain Outbreak Management Fund balance of £107k has been fully allocated for use in Q3 and Q4.
	Covid	0	0	0	0	553,051	-253,362	553,051	-253,362	299,689	

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2021/22 Capital budgets and expenditure Q2					
Project	Budget for the year £	Expenditure £	Variance £	Other Committed Expenditure [2021/22] £	Comments
Disabled Facilities Grants [Better Care Fund]	700,000	379,007	(320,993)	267,764	<p>48 grants totalling £379,007 were awarded in the period 1 April to 30 September 2021. There are currently 70 live DFG cases, 28 of which have funding approved with committed expenditure of £267,764.</p> <p>It is expected that the majority of the 42 remaining cases are likely to be completed this financial year with an estimated expenditure of £200,000. Any additional funding required to cover any overspend will be requested from the retained funds [Better Care Fund] held by Gloucestershire County Council.</p> <p>The frequency of Occupational Therapist referrals are beginning to return to normal following delays due to Covid-19 restrictions. Some delays with contractors are continuing as they manage work backlogs and difficulties in sourcing materials. More contractors have been sourced to assist in clearing the backlog. However, we continue to expect delays to installation. For example, we are seeing that a level access shower that used to take six months to install from OT referral to completion is now taking nearer to nine months.</p>
ICT Infrastructure	200,000	1,883	(198,117)	120,000	<p>Committed expenditure relates to the following planned infrastructure projects for 2021/22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase storage to allow enhanced immutable storage. (E.g., protection to ensure our data cannot be deleted in a Cyber Attack). • Additional logging capacity to help investigate Cyber incidents. • Additional Wifi coverage at Council locations, particularly with an increase in officers returning to the office and implementation of agile working policy, this will also address the need to replace older Wifi kit. • Ongoing Laptop Replacement. • Core Network Upgrade at Trinity Road (existing kit is at end of life).
Replacement of Idox/Uniform Software [ICT]	150,000	0	(150,000)	0	Project will take place in 2022/23

Project	Budget for the year £	Expenditure £	Variance £	Other Committed Expenditure [2021/22] £	Comments
Planning document digitisation [ICT]	200,000	0	(200,000)	0	Project under review. Update to be provided in Q3.
Crowdfund Cotswold [Spacehive]	98,000	62,596	(35,404)	34,152	The first round of Crowdfund Cotswold was highly successful, with 15 projects supported and meeting their funding targets. Commitments remain high due to legacy projects rolled forward from the Community Projects Fund.
Replace pay and display machines	125,000	0	(125,000)	0	Replacement payment mechanisms will be required depending on new technology and lifespan of existing machines. A new 'off line' card payment system is being developed by the pay and display machine operators which may require investment from the Council to upgrade the current machines. This new method will speed up processing time for each customer and improve customer experience.
Recycling and waste vehicles	394,000	19,594	(374,406)	374,406	Budget will be utilised in full by the end of this financial year. This will be in line with the approved Ubico fleet replacement programme.
Car Park Improvements	245,000	0	(245,000)	0	The tender for the refurbishment of Rissington Road Car Park, Bourton on the Water went live on the Councils website 19 th October. Tender submissions are due in by 12 th November.
Waste Receptacles	55,000	0	(55,000)	55,000	This is a rolling fund for the purchase of Waste Receptacles due to growth in properties or replacements. It is anticipated that the budget will be spent in full by the end of the year.
Electric vehicle charging points [EVCPs]	719,000	0	(719,000)	0	Site specific quotes are being obtained. It is planned that a report will be taken to Cabinet in December 2021. Installations should commence during Q.4.
Replacement Leisure Equipment	380,000	0	(380,000)	380,000	A revised scheme is being considered by the Council at present. Orders are expected to be placed for this work in January 2022 for delivery of equipment in March 2022.
Investment in Cirencester Leisure Centre	1,200,000	0	(1,200,000)	0	This project will be considered as part of the Leisure Contract renewal. It is unlikely that this budget will be used this financial year.
Cirencester Leisure Centre Pool Hall Works	110,000	0	(110,000)	110,000	Quotes now obtained and work being coordinated with Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funded improvements to minimise disruption to customers. Expenditure anticipated during Q.4.

Project	Budget for the year £	Expenditure £	Variance £	Other Committed Expenditure [2021/22] £	Comments
Roller Brake Testing [Ubico]	52,000	43,900	(8,100)	0	Equipment has now been installed at Packers Leaze depot, South Cerney.
Packers Leaze Depot – Flood Prevention Works	135,000	7,831	(127,169)	127,169	Works progressing on-site with completion expected in Q.3.
Rural Broadband	500,000	0	(500,000)	0	This scheme is dependent on a bigger scheme being agreed with the County Council.
Recovery Investment Strategy	15,200,000	0	(15,200,000)	3,753,000	In July 2021, Council approved a loan to a local housing association as part of the Recovery Investment Strategy. Further opportunities and options are being explored by officers, and detailed reports seeking approval will be presented to Cabinet and Council as appropriate.
BEIS Decarbonisation Project	1,237,000	15,317	(1,221,683)	0	Contractor appointed and detailed costs agreed. Orders for specialist equipment commenced in October with installation likely to start early in Q.4.
Investment in Strategic Property Acquisition [Council 27 th June 2019]	4,360,000	0	(4,360,000)	0	Discussions remain on-going with landowner.
	26,060,000	530,128	(25,529,872)	1,468,491	

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Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 6 DECEMBER 2021
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 08
Subject	REVIEW OF GRANT FUNDING & SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS FOR EXISTING GRANT MAINTAINED VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRES
Wards affected	Directly - Bourton on the Water Village, Chipping Campden & Vale, Stow on the Wold, Tetbury Town council, Tetbury Upton. (Location of facilities) Indirectly - All - a wider tourism reach
Accountable member	Councillor Tony Dale – Cabinet member for the Economy & Council transformation Email: tony.dale@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Chris Jackson - Shared Tourism Services Manager Email: Chris.Jackson@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To review the work and impact of the grant maintained Visitor Information Centres across the District. ● To understand the role they play in supporting businesses in the local Visitor Economy & how this could be improved in future. ● To understand the impact of the Covid pandemic on the Centres & visitor journey with a focus on digital engagement. ● To consider the future direction for Visitor Information Centres & how they can help support the Council’s tourism priorities.
Annexes	Annex A – Update on review of VIC work from 2018/2019 review Annex B - Finance & visitor number spreadsheet Annex C - Proposals from each VIC on supporting key Council & tourism priorities in the future
Recommendation(s)	<i>To seek approval to continue to provide financial grants at current levels to the four existing grant maintained Visitor Information Centres for an 18 month period. Total financial commitment of £81 000 (1/4/22 – 30/9/23). To use the 18 month period as an opportunity to baseline and work with the current Centres to trial a change to a criteria-based commissioned grant system with key objectives relevant to the town/village & helping</i>



	<p><i>towards the Council & Cotswolds Tourism objectives.</i></p> <p><i>Have a longer term aim to shift Visitor Information Centre provision to being proactive, digitally enabled and working to improve the visitor economy of the local town/village and surrounding area.</i></p>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Delivering our services to the highest standards● Responding to the challenges presented by the climate crisis● Supporting businesses to grow in a green, sustainable manner, and to provide high value jobs
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>Consultation has taken place with Bourton Visitor Information Centre Ltd, Chipping Campden Visitor Information Centre (CEE Ltd) Tetbury Visitor Information Centre, Stow Visitor Information Centre, Tetbury Town Council, Stow Town Council, Gloucestershire Library Service, Bourton Parish Council, Chipping Campden Town Council Local Ward Councillors</p>



I. BACKGROUND

- I.1 Historically, the District Council (“the Council”) has provided annual Visitor Information Centre grant support to Centres in Bourton on the Water, Chipping Campden, Stow on the Wold and Tetbury, in support of enabling visitors to those places to access visitor information on local and wider Cotswolds information. Grants have remained at the same levels since 1 April 2009 and moved to a three year model in 2016 having previously been annual agreements.

The Council currently supports four community-operated Visitor Information Centres (“VICs”):

- Bourton on the Water £24k
- Chipping Campden £10k
- Stow on the Wold £10k
- Tetbury £10k

- I.2 Following the recent Council review of the work of the shared Tourism Service, responsibility for the VICs has passed back to the shared Tourism Service. The current three year VIC grants are due for renewal 31st March 2022 with a decision needed to be communicated by 31st January 2022.
- I.3 For clarification the shared Tourism Service is a small joint tourism team across West Oxfordshire and Cotswold District Councils. Activity is focussed on the wider visitor economy and supporting businesses to make the best of opportunities associated with visitor spend. The joint tourism team also lead Cotswolds Tourism which is the official Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for promoting and marketing tourism across the wider Cotswolds region that liaises with the British Tourism Association via VisitBritain and VisitEngland which in turn liaises with government via the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS). A public-private sector organisation, Cotswolds Tourism is a partnership of tourism businesses, supported by local authorities. Hosted in Cotswold District Council, Cotswolds Tourism is supported with resources by West Oxfordshire District Council, Cotswold District Council and includes strategic partners of Cotswolds National Landscape, Cheltenham Borough Council & Marketing Cheltenham, Tewkesbury Borough Council, and Stroud District Council.
- I.4 The Council has corporate priority of delivering services to the highest standards and supporting businesses to grow in a green, sustainable manner, and to provide high value jobs. Furthermore, for Cotswold District, tourism is a key sector of the local economy accounting for 17% of jobs.
- I.5 The grant review undertaken in December 2018 and October 2021 both concluded that it is more cost effective for the Council to operate a VIC via a third party than operating it directly itself.



- 1.6 The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has been severe. With the first lockdown in March 2020, the Visitor Economy came to an almost complete halt and key parts of the main holiday seasons were lost in both 2020 and again in 2021. The VICs across the District were closed for much of this time. Overseas visitors, who tend to be proportionally the highest users of VIC services, are not predicted to return fully to 2019 levels until 2024/25. The pandemic has disrupted VIC plans and significantly affected their income.
 - 1.7 The previous Council review work of the shared Tourism Service highlighted the impact of Covid-19 and the rapid move to digital on-line services which support the requirements for pre-arrival booking and pre-planning. There has also been an associated dramatic reduction in the production of printed publications and guides and default to online digital versions. There are consequences for traditional VIC face-to-face services in that their business model and much of their offer has been badly impacted by Covid-19 and overtaken by events in terms of the move to digital solutions.
 - 1.8 It should be noted for the context of this report that visitor information services are also provided through the Corinium Museum via contract arrangements with SLM, which run until 31 July 2023. Local information is provided via Moreton Area Centre. Local community information points are also provided by Cirencester Town Council and at Lechlade Community Library.
 - 1.9 In the last three year grant agreement review each VIC had highlighted how it would explore innovative ways to increase its income, sell local merchandise and engage and promote local small businesses.
 - 1.10 Discussions with representatives from each VIC have highlighted that the Centres are seen as a valued support for their local economy and for that reason most receive grants from their relevant Town or Parish Council.
 - 1.11 Regionally and nationally, the pandemic has seen the permanent closure of many VICs including Burford & Witney, as well as Oxford and Bath.
 - 1.12 Local businesses have adapted during the pandemic to offer online booking, enhance their social media presence and websites reducing the need for leaflets. This trend is likely to continue and increase.
- 2. MAIN POINTS - Review of past and current service provision**
- 2.1. Update review meetings were held with each of the VICs & relevant partners to the SLA agreements in Autumn 2021 to understand how they delivered VIC services, including the challenges and opportunities during the last three years. Each VIC updated on actions taken



or postponed due to the pandemic from the last review meetings held in 2018 – see Annex A which gives a summary of these meetings. The overall view was that each location operated differently but all were only providing reactive visitor provision to lower visitor numbers.

- 2.2. The reviews found significant variations across the four grant funded VICs: the levels of support and involvement from the local Town or Parish Council; the engagement with local businesses, event organisers and the resident community; the online presence and engagement with visitors via local websites and social media channels.
- 2.3. Visitor numbers, income and expenditure were also reviewed, highlighting similarities for outgoings on physical premises, differences on income, footfall and alternative delivery partners. See Annex B which highlights the headline figures and the current reliance of each VIC on Council grant funding. If this grant funding was withdrawn it is likely that over a short time they would close or reduce the service they offer, substantially placing additional strain on the shared Tourism Service team.
- 2.4. VIC understanding of the needs of its visitor community is poorly documented. For instance there was no clear data from where visitors were coming from.
- 2.5. Anecdotal information highlighted local VIC staff, including volunteer staff, are knowledgeable, local ambassadors of the local places they represent playing a key role in promoting local businesses, events, retail and ticket sales answering a wide range of enquiries via email, phone and face to face.
- 2.6. Town Councils that are investing in their local VIC felt the service to be key to continue to invest in but saw opportunities to build more community and business involvement to see them as local hubs.
- 2.7. The pandemic has accelerated the drive to digital both from a consumer perspective but also the need for businesses to manage visitor flow. In reviewing the town's social media promotional and presence it is clear that the VICs have been playing a limited role in recent years. The VICs also recognise the need to reach visitors while planning their visit and could play a vital role in influencing visitor behaviour. Social media now plays a big part in the consumer journey including before booking, and this is a potential gap that could be better exploited to help drive visitors to book experiences and visit less well known places in the area. Knowledge on digital promotion would need to be improved.
- 2.8. In reviewing the past and current Service Level Agreements, it is felt that a more robust Service Agreement with the VICs could help the shared tourism service in delivering some key engagement with visitors digitally, promoting local events and ensuring better



- 2.9. communication with businesses in the local economy. It was also noted that, in the past, the Centres have had a shorter grant period of one year as well as more recently the three year grant period.
- 2.10. The changing landscape of enhancement to digital provision, means fewer brochures are now produced by Cotswolds Tourism DMO and the local attractions, meaning some of the VICs now have less need for leaflet racking within their premises.
- 2.11. **MAIN POINTS - Future provision & way forward**
- 2.12. Each local VIC was asked to submit ideas of how they can support the key tourism priorities and actions in the destination management plan for Cotswolds Tourism DMO which is currently being refreshed. Following adoption of the plan it is expected to include a focus on accessibility and sustainability so the VICs were also asked to highlight ideas for their local area on future opportunities they could help promote and work in supporting the shared tourism team. See Annex C which highlights the responses from each of the four Visitor Centres.
- 2.13. Essentially each VIC has, in the past, just been reactive to visitors. The shared tourism service is keen to work with each VIC and town to become more proactive in their approach to help influence visitors, businesses and local residents and maximise local opportunities. By moving to a proactive approach it is felt this could improve the visitor economy of the town/village and surrounding local area.
- 2.14. The VIC's footfall is lower and still recovering from the pandemic. It may be that it will not recover to past levels. This presents an opportunity to trial something new for a short period, while maintaining the physical VIC and considering future options. It would also allow the shared tourism team to work closely with each town better to understand who is using the VICs, look at alternative options and allow the VICs time to put into action the original plans.
- 2.15. There is a clear training requirement for the VIC staff to have confidence to engage and promote via social media platforms. During Spring 2022 this could be provided with an expectation for each VIC to help the tourism team showcase more local events, businesses and sustainable visitor ideas to visitors and locals via digital platforms.
- 2.16. Each local VIC was asked to consider ways longer term that they could operate differently to save expenditure such as using volunteers, (as many already do) co-locating for premises or to drive revenue. By having an 18 month period this will ensure each location has time



fully to review its own options and look to address key visitor economy issues specific to each location.

- 2.17. Each local VIC can work with the shared tourism service to gather better data within the year period to ensure a better understanding of the requirements of visitors, residents and businesses from a local information centre. This information can also be gathered for other local information centres who currently operate without a grant to share best practices and look to consider future models.
- 2.18. As referred to in 1.8 above, as the SLM contract for Cirencester VIC at Corinium Museum ends in July 2023, it would make sense to bring all VIC provision into a similar timeframe.
- 2.19. Visitor behaviour had to change with the pandemic and visitors have become accustomed to information being provided in alternative ways. People are increasingly self-serving via phone apps, QR codes and websites but these do take time to set up. For physical leaflets such as maps, town information or walking routes these could be purchased or picked up from a variety of outlets.
- 2.20. With the changing landscape of the visitor journey it is vital that all digital social media engagement is monitored & responded to, addressing issues as they arise and maintaining a good quality visitor experience. Local VICs are the knowledgeable local ambassadors of the local town/village so can play a vital role in answering visitor's queries and comments via platforms such as Tripadvisor, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter as well as promoting local events and things to do. The review found that currently this is very limited.
- 2.21. As part of the government's plan via DCMS to support the tourism industry recovery from the pandemic, the [National Tourism Recovery Plan](#) has been launched. Cotswolds Tourism DMO is currently revising the Destination Management Plan for the Cotswolds and both of these documents have a focus on sustainability and accessibility as two core areas of focus for tourism. The four local grant maintained VICs will be expected during this new grant period to support the shared tourism team by liaising with local businesses, researching local information and considering new ideas that support tourism locally.
- 2.22. The Council needs to ensure value for money and, with the uncertainty the pandemic has caused to the tourism industry, an 18 month approach allows for open communications with Town & Parish Councils which rely on tourism, to work with the shared tourism service on potentially establishing a future grant scheme that is criteria based to support the visitor economy across the District. A further Cabinet report on options longer term can then be put forward in Summer 2023.



3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1.** Each Centre has operating models that have become heavily reliant on Council grants and each of them has a distinct reactive way of operating. The VICs are a source of local information with knowledgeable staff and volunteers who take pride in their local area and the wider Cotswolds. If this grant funding was withdrawn it is likely that, over a short time, they would close or reduce the service they offer substantially placing additional strain on the shared Tourism Service team.
- 3.2.** With many areas already closing VICs, it was felt a better approach would be to see how the Centres can adapt to being proactive and digitally enabled over the next 18 months, bearing in mind the Cotswolds traditional visitor and larger number of overseas visitors the current locations support.
- 3.3.** The current VIC grant is not equitable to all visitor locations across the District. Time is required to set up and gather survey information to consider if and how it could be changed to best suit future needs as visitors, businesses and locals engage in a digital world. Having an 18 month grant funding period continuing at the current levels for each location would act as a pilot period to bring forward alternatives for a future criteria-based commission grant system. It will allow a firm base line to be established and enable a wider engagement with Town and Parish Councils in key tourist locations on appropriate future provision. Furthermore, it is considered having an 18 month grant via an individual Service Level Agreement approach, with clear outcomes for each location, linked to each town/village objectives, tourism priorities for the Cotswolds destination DMO and aims of the Council would ensure a better service overall.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** No direct financial implications at this stage as grant support provided to VICs is to continue at the current budgeted level of £54,000 per year for the next 18 months (£81,000 in total).

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** Under the terms of the Agreements with the various VICS, the notification of the outcome of the review must be made known to them no later than 31 January 2022.
- 5.2** Save than the above there are no other legal implications arising directly from this Report.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1** The risks of a Centre failing are mitigated by clear performance metrics aligned to the Council's priorities and the evidenced needs of the Visitor Economy.



7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 7.1 The recommendation does not involve a new policy or requirement for an EIA.

8. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Recommendations support the aim of the Council climate actions by encouraging the drive to a digital focus for the visitor economy.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 The following documents have been identified by the author of the report in accordance with section 100D.5(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and are listed in accordance with section 100 D.1(a) for inspection by members of the public:

Annex A, B, C

Previous Council reports of :

Visitor Information centres 2019-2022 & Tourism Review April 2021

These documents will be available for inspection at the Council Offices at Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX during normal office hours for a period of up to 4 years from the date of the meeting. Please contact democratic services via democratic@cotswold.gov.uk

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Visitor Information Centres grant review Annexe A

Update on plans from previous grant review meetings held December 2018 for setting of grant April 2019 - March 2022

- Bourton on the Water £24k,
- Chipping Campden £10k,
- Stow on the Wold £10k
- Tetbury £10k

The Council committed to 3 years funding for the four Visitor Information Centres ("VICS") as detailed above to give stability in the period April 2019 - 22 and allow the VICs to explore areas to ensure continuous improvement that would also help sustain the local economy and offer alternative source of information for visitors in the area, while looking for innovative methods to increase their income and promote local merchandise/crafts and small businesses.

Obviously the pandemic has had an impact on the VICs being shut for large periods in 2020 and some of 2021.

Update review meetings were held with each of the VICs and relevant partners to the SLAs in Autumn 2021 to understand how they delivered VIC services, including the challenges and opportunities during the last three years. Each VIC updated on actions taken or postponed due to the pandemic from the last review meetings held in 2018 and this Annex details the key elements from each VIC meeting.

Bourton on the Water

2018 - Bourton on the Water will be developing their website and enhancing the promotion of local hotels and businesses. Since the Chambers of Commerce dissolved, the VIC has taken on much of the work to support local businesses.

2021 - The Visit [Bourton website](#) has recently been revamped and is currently on a soft launch stage. Businesses have the option to pay to advertise and this has generated £4k income in the first year. Currently working to develop click & collect / shop too. The website now belongs to the VIC. Volunteers were being used prior to Covid with 12 assisting. Since pandemic to minimise contact volunteers have not been used with mostly staff lone working.

Chipping Campden

2018 - Chipping Campden is updating 'Campden on Line' in which it will promote the VIC. They are also exploring the use of drones to promote the area with 3D footage on line.

2021 - In the last 2 years the team has worked to develop a better online presence including a virtual VIC and online shop. Work has also progressed on a guided walk app (MP3 file) of the town which will be chargeable and can convert to different languages. A community blog into which the VIC feed content has recently launched to help keep the community involved. The plan for 3D footage has been paused for a variety of reasons including changes to CCA licence.

Stow on the Wold

2018 - Stow on the Wold is exploring the possibility of implementing a 'heritage hub' in partnership with the Civic Society. They are also looking to implement a 'Meet and Greet' service for coaches arriving with tourists to promote the area at first point of contact.

2021 – Update the 'heritage hub' is a long term ambition in the local plan. We have taken back control of the Stow website. Staff changes within library service & Covid community work, mean we need to restart regular meetings with VIC and no work was considered on meet & greet service for coaches. VIC team has been engaging with local businesses and getting them to sign up to the tourism charter. Have started 'Stow Matters' update to all GL54 postcodes and new 'What's App' group for businesses. Dursley Town Council has replicated this model in its library as a new service.

Tetbury

2018 - Tetbury has undergone a full refurbishment of the VIC to entice more footfall. They have also experienced an increase in overseas visitors and 15% of their total footfall has been attributed to this. Tetbury relies heavily on tourists as its main source of income and therefore concentrate on promoting local crafts.

2021 - Overseas visitor numbers continued to increase prior to pandemic. "Visit Tetbury" website content is being updated. Started an Instagram account in this period to promote town, local area and local events. Supported Cotswolds Tourism team with gathering "Real Cotswold" town information.

Income and Expenditure for the Financial Year 2019/20

	Bourton VIC	Camden VIC	Stow VIC	Tetbury VIC
CDC Grant	£24,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
Town council Grant	£600	£3,000	£1,000	£9,500
Retail	£38,679	£38,913	£6,328	£19,829
Other		£910	£328 (2)	
Total Income	£63,279	£52,823	£17,656	£39,829
Staff costs	£33,557	£26,225 (1)		£20,000
Building costs	£8,400	£8,053		£8,160
Other	£23,637	£21,915	£53,303 (3)	£15,116
Total Expenditure	£65,594	£56,193	£53,303	£43,276
Shortfall	<u>-£2,315</u>	<u>-£3,370</u>	<u>-£35,647</u>	<u>-£3,447</u> (6)
Visitor numbers 2017/18	69,958	33,355	72,301 (5)	13,816
Visitor numbers 2018/19	66,262	30,406	69,528 (5)	14,192
Visitor numbers 2019/20	67,172	29,608	66,843 (4)	12,855

Notes: The information gathered to produce the figures above came from different sources and as such wasn't in the same format or necessarily covered the exact same time period, however it is believed to be sufficiently comparable to provide an indication of the scale of the various operations.

(1) Includes Directors.

(2) Accommodation booking commission. No ticket sales done.

(3) Joint service of GCC library and VIC 83.5 hours per week. Split of costs not available.

(4) Of the overall 66,843 visits to this joint location, tourist visitors accounted for 26% of footfall (17,150). In 2020/21 so far (September 21) tourist numbers are 4114 which amounts to 41% of the footfall.

(5) Includes GCC Library and VIC footfall. Estimate that approximately 25% are visitors using the VIC

(6) The deficits reported are funded through either support from third parties or by utilising reserves balances held.

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Visitor information centres grant review Annex C

Each Visitor Information Centre (“VIC”) was asked to consider how it could look to support the Council and Cotswold Tourism priorities going forward as well as assist visitors both prior to and during their visit. With the local knowledge and connections each VIC has with businesses in their area, it was vital to consider how communications, promoting digitally and data could be improved and the supporting role the centres can play for businesses as well. Longer term this can form the basis of a grant being criteria led with realistic targets whilst retaining this service for visitors and local businesses.

Key priorities listed in the current Cotswolds Tourism Destination Management Plan (DMP”) are listed below:

1. Partnership working
2. Product - enhancing the visitor experience
3. Marketing
4. Knowledge/data
5. Performance through networking and collaboration

With a review of the DMP currently underway the following were also highlighted.

- sustainability/green tourism
- accessibility/inclusiveness
- Move to digital/digital skills
- Coaches & management

Specifically the VICS were asked to consider how they can help with these objectives:

1. Communication with local businesses/residents/tourism team
2. Better local information
 - Events
 - Openings/closings/redevelopments
 - Other relevant news
3. Social media coverage
4. Sustainable tourism
 - Local ideas for car free days
 - Bike hire
 - Collection by tour operators
 - Public transport information and ideas
 - Local walks & cycle rides
 - Local shops
5. Dispersal of visitors within locality and the wider Cotswolds
6. Data collection & provision
7. Support for enquiries to the wider tourism service

Each VIC gave a detailed response with all at different stages of the drive to reach businesses, locals and visitors digitally as well as encompass a focus on sustainability, accessibility and data. The following are key elements that each centre highlighted for their own location:

Bourton on the Water

“We are taking significant steps and continue to explore avenues of improving our media presence. The revamp of [our website](#) with the introduction of on-line sales is a major step forward and we will expand the ranges available. We continue to use Twitter to promote offers and events. The new Facebook site will give our VIC extensive coverage across this media channel.

We rent out space on shelves and in showcases for local businesses to display their products and have recently introduced a local artist range.

We are currently investigating a local passport scheme to enhance our income and promote local attractions at a discounted price.

We are looking into an information gathering meeting with local businesses and shops including the main attractions to improve networking between us all.

We give free advertising to local events e.g., village fetes, musical evenings, charitable events both in Bourton and surrounding areas in displaying posters and leaflets often selling tickets for these events. Many of these small community activities do not have a website presence We produce, print and sell our own walking and cycling maps which encourage visitors to go to smaller villages and shops in surrounding areas”.

Chipping Campden

“A detailed proposal was submitted with key aims and objectives for Chipping Campden VIC which is the operating arm of Cotswold Edge Enterprise Ltd., a not for profit Community Interest Company (CIC) supported by many local volunteers, businesses and organisations including the Town Council. Listed below are some of the key objectives for the future.

With our ticketing sales being a major source of income, working in partnership with many organisations to mutual advantage, we have been selling their products mainly through personal contact with potential customers in the “shop”. We are now in the process of taking this into the online market through www.campdenonline.org

There is also intention of developing and promoting Chipping Campden as a Hub/base for multiple activities and experiences including walking.

Future plans include offering suppliers – and other local businesses – franchise style space in the VIC Online Shop and/or standalone space on the Shops/Campden Online Commercial Platform.

The Digital Town Walk, which has just completed beta testing, provides a Smartphone guided visual and multi language audio tour of all the major buildings and places of interest around the town. Further Walks and Themed Tours (eg Campden History, Arts & Crafts) are planned. It is anticipated this will also be a significant revenue generator in the coming years.

Plans for Marketing for the 2022 Season are currently being developed, with input from Shuttlefish a local digital marketing agency and these will include a significant increase in the use of Social Media and in proactive/push based initiatives incorporating new themed and targeted content/regular blogs and incentivised registrations to create broad interest based communities. Improved data capture is also planned. Discussions are currently taking place

with Chipping Campden Academy about getting a student who is studying social media to help significantly extend the use of these services.

In addition, leveraging the knowledge and experience of the CEE Ltd Board, a specific North American Marketing initiative is being planned for 2022.

To support data provision, plans are in hand for a questionnaire for the 2022 season to provide a demographic snapshot of our visitor. Presently, due to Covid, visitors are predominantly UK based; however the VIC has just begun to see the return of a few North American tourists. Historically, they comprised 60% of overseas visitors using the VIC services”.

Stow on the Wold

“GCC has a very good working relationship with Stow Town Council (STC) although with Covid everything stopped & changes of staff, has meant the relationship has now been re-established and regular meetings are being scheduled. VIC staff have agreed to organise a shop window display competition asking the business owners to decorate their windows with a “Royal Theme” for Queen Elizabeth II’s Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in June 2022. This is a perfect opportunity for the staff to engage again with the local businesses and continue to build relationships.

STC is currently trying to encourage the local traders to set up a Business Association especially as attitudes have changed since the pandemic. It is hoped local traders/businesses are more likely to see the benefits of working as a team.

GCC could produce more signage and branding to make users aware of the information the VIC holds on local businesses, events, walks etc. and this will be looked into.

STC has a VIC dedicated website www.stowinfo.co.uk but since lockdown this needs updating and expanding the information. All options will be considered including bringing back under Town Council website with a view to updating content.

STC also needs to look at an overall strategic plan for coaches visiting the town with a view that the VIC will contact the local tour companies, explaining the town’s approach to the parking of coaches and offering them information about the VIC and the opportunity to arrange for their passengers to have a “Meet and Greet” experience. This was planned to be set up ahead of lockdown.

For data, GCC will start recording location of origin during every interaction and run quarterly sample surveys over a period of a week, which would have more detailed queries to analyse why visitors come to the town.

STC has carried out an Accessibility Survey for the town centre and nearby streets and is working with GCC in relation to the results to see what can be achieved to improve the accessibility issues.

Libraries are delivering a Green Initiative, which fits with the objective. GCC will be looking for local businesses that have a good green approach and flagging up organisations in the local area who make use of products attractive to tourists in a sustainable and eco-friendly manner”.

Tetbury

“We are looking at ways to improve the customer experience through our product & promotion of our product e.g., bespoke itinerary signage accessibility and maps, electric charge points, value for money car parking. Product messages will be delivered via social media, the VIC and through stake holders’ messages, will centre around authenticity experience and USP

‘Visit Tetbury’ is very active on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook and benefits wide social media coverage. Moving forward our aim is to ascertain advertising equivalent value of this.

‘Visit Tetbury’ is working with the community to develop a list of personalities to support PR enquires.

‘Visit Tetbury’ have strong links with Greening Tetbury and have undertaken joint initiatives that include walking maps, bike hire and work with sustainable business-like Wild Carrot.

Marketing to promote off-peak travel and events is extremely important; we will promote product drivers to entice people to Tetbury and disperse them around the town.

Liaison with partners within the town to create a portfolio of unique experiences for Tetbury and a database of key personalities to help bring the brand to life business”.

Agenda Item 9



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 6 DECEMBER 2021
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 09
Subject	PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL ELECTION COSTS
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Councillor Mike Evemy Email: mike.evemy@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver, Returning Officer Email: robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider the option of recharging the closets of elections to Town and Parish Councils
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	<p><i>(a) That the Council agrees to recharge Town and Parish Councils for contested 4-yearly elections with effect from the May 2023 elections.</i></p> <p><i>(b) That the Council agrees to recharge Town and Parish Councils for contested by-elections at all elections called on or after 1 April 2023</i></p>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering our services to the highest standards
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	None



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Section 36(5) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 gives District Councils the discretion to either to charge each local Council in full for election costs or bear the costs itself.
- 1.2. The Returning Officer uses a County-wide agreed scale of fees and charges for all local elections. Cotswold District Council (“the Council”) has previously endorsed this scale and agreed to its implementation for all local elections. The Returning Officer is given delegated authority to update the scale in line with the cost of living pay rise each year.
- 1.3. In 1996, the Council agreed to absorb the cost of all Town and Parish Council Elections except Parish Polls rather than recharging individual Councils for the costs.
- 1.4. Reserves are allocated each year to build up a fund for the 4-yearly District and Parish Elections. This fund also covers the cost of any By-elections which take place during the term. If the recommendation were to be agreed, the allocation could be reduced by the appropriate amount.
- 1.5. Parliamentary and Police & Crime Commissioner Elections are funded by Central Government and County Council Elections are funded by the County Council.
- 1.6. Neighbourhood Planning Referendum costs are not included in election costs and will continue to be funded by the Neighbourhood Planning Grant provided by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- 1.7. Where elections are combined, costs are split between the areas and charged back to the relevant Authority/Government.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1 District and Parish/Town elections take place every 4 years and consist of 32 District Wards (for 34 seats) and 97 separate Parish/Town elections.
- 2.2 In 2019, all the District wards were contested along with 18 Parish/Town councils. Of the remaining Parishes/Towns, 79 were quorate and co-opted the remaining seats and 2 did not have sufficient nominations to be quorate. Further elections were required for these two and resulted in uncontested elections.
- 2.3 In 2015, there were 17 contested Parish/Town Council elections along with the fully contested District wards.
- 2.4 When a casual vacancy occurs in a Parish/Town Council, a notice of vacancy is published. This gives electors an opportunity to request an election to fill the vacancy. If no request is received, the Parish/Town council can co-opt to fill the vacancy. If an election is requested it is conducted by the Electoral Services Team and the cost is absorbed by the District Council.



2.5 The following table shows the number of casual vacancies since the 2015 full elections:

	Number of notices of vacancy	Elections requested	Co-option
2015 - 2019	165	16 of which 11 were contested	149
2019 - 2021 (12.10.21)	131	15 of which 6 were contested	116

2.6 At present, the full cost of all elections is met by the District Council. The estimated cost across 4 years is £150,000 for the main elections plus approximately £50,000 for contested by-elections at either District and/or Parish/Town level. This is an estimated cost as it is dependent on the number of By-elections taking place during the term.

2.7 A request for information on election charging was made through the Association of Electoral Administrators to Local Authorities in the South West and the following replies were received. This shows that Cotswold District is outside of the norm for both similar local authorities and more urban areas.

Authority	4-yearly elections	By-elections	Comments
Cheltenham	Yes	Yes	County scale of fees
Cornwall	Yes	Yes	
Cotswold	No	No	
Forest of Dean	Yes	Yes	There is a threshold for charging based on the precept of the Parish
Gloucester	Yes	Yes	
Mid Devon	Yes	Yes	
North Devon	Yes	Yes	
North Somerset	Yes	Yes	20% added to By-election cost for administration
Sedgemoor	Yes	Yes	
Stroud	Yes	Yes	
Tewkesbury	No	Yes	
Torridge	Yes	Yes	



3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Election costs are calculated according to the scale of fees along with actual costs for poll cards, ballot papers, postal vote packs, venues etc.
- 3.2 The cost therefore varies according to the size of the Parish/Town, the number of electors and whether the election is held on its own or combined with another type of election e.g. Parish and District election on the same day.
- 3.3 As an example, the election held on 7 October 2021 for Stow-on-the-Wold Town Council cost in the region of £4,000 for 1613 electors.
- 3.4 At combined elections, costs will be split between elections - some costs will be split 50/50 e.g. polling station hire, whilst other costs such as ballot papers will be charged in full to each election type.
- 3.5 At the 2019 elections, the total cost of all District and Parish elections was £125,000. The table below shows the approximate costs for each District Ward where there was also a contested election along with an estimate of what could have been charged to the Parish/Town councils with contested elections.
- 3.6 These estimates are based on the number of electors, postal votes, polling stations and staff. They also include an amount per elector for printing and stationery.

Parish/Town Council	Number of electors	Full cost of District and Parish election £	Potential recharge cost to Parish/Town Council £
Beverston Parish	112	1,044.00	468.00
Bibury Parish	499	2,393.00	947.00
Cirencester Town, Abbey Ward	1899	8,393.00	3,184.00
Cirencester Town, Four Acres Ward	1556	7,039.00	2,694.00
Cirencester Town, Stratton Ward	2070	8,673.00	3,282.00
Cirencester Town, Watermoor Ward	2081	8,836.00	3,355.00
Driffield Parish	119	1,192.00	536.00
Hatherop Parish	137	1,175.00	518.00



Longborough Parish	383	1,996.00	801.00
Maugersbury Parish	115	1,004.00	442.00
Moreton-in-Marsh Town	3691	14,440.00	5,405.00
Rendcomb Parish	183	1,177.00	494.00
Shipton Moyne Parish	224	1,350.00	563.00
Somerford Keynes Parish	404	1,993.00	789.00
Southrop Parish	210	1,272.00	526.00
Stow-on-the-Wold Town	1644	7,194.00	2,747.00
Tetbury Town	4659	19,386.00	7,316.00
Upper Rissington Parish	1404	5,744.00	2,200.00
		94,301.00	36,267.00

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Other than the legal issues referred to there are no other legal implications arising directly from this Report.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 There is a risk that the Parish/Town Councils would be unable to meet the cost of elections. However, they are able to precept for these costs. Giving as much notice as possible to the Parish/Town Councils will help alleviate this risk.
- 5.2 There is also a need to reduce reputational risk by making sure that the proposal and consequent decision is communicated effectively and in a timely manner to the Parish/Town Councils.



6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1 There are four options to consider and the table below shows the implications for each. The estimated costs are based on a full district election with 18 contested Parishes/Towns being £150,000 plus £50,000 for By-elections across the 4-year term.

Option		Split of costs	Cost to District Councils (across 4 years)	Cost to Parish/Town Councils
1	No change to current arrangements	District Council absorbs all costs	£200,000	
2	Recharge Parish/Town Councils for contested 4-yearly elections but not by-elections	District Council splits costs for 4-yearly elections with contested parish/towns. District Council meets cost of any Parish/Town By-elections	Approximately £160,000	Approximately, £40,000 (based on estimates given above)
3	Recharge Parish/Town Councils for by-elections but not 4-yearly elections	District Council absorbs the cost of 4-yearly elections. Costs for By-elections are met by relevant Parish/Town Council	£150,000	£50,000
4	Recharge Parish/Town Councils for all elections with combined elections split across election types	4-yearly election costs split between District and Parish/Town. By-election costs met by relevant Parish/Town Council	£110,000	£90,000

(END)



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET - 6 DECEMBER 2021
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 10
Subject	LOCAL PLAN AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY – UPDATE
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Rachel Coxcoon, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning Email: rachel.coxcoon@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officers	James Brain, Forward Planning Manager Email: james.brain@cotswold.gov.uk Jasper Lamoon, Senior Infrastructure Delivery Officer Email: jasper.lamoon@cotswold.gov.uk Sophia Price, Heritage and Design Manager Email: sophia.price@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider the publication of an early stage Local Plan consultation document and updated Conservation Area Appraisals for public consultation; ● Note latest monitoring data on planning contributions on Section 106 Legal Agreements (S106) and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL); ● Consider the internal Council processes for the allocation and spend of the Council's CIL funds; and ● Consider updated terms of reference for two Programme Boards.
Annexes	<p>ANNEX A - Cotswold District Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation document</p> <p>ANNEX B - Cirencester Conservation Areas: Appraisals and Management Proposals</p> <p>ANNEX C - A Report on CIL Governance Procedure</p> <p>ANNEX D - Infrastructure Funding Statement 2020/21</p>



	<p>ANNEX E - Local Plan Programme Board: Updated Terms of References</p> <p>ANNEX F - Cirencester Town Centre Master Plan Programme Board: Updated Terms of Reference</p>
Recommendation(s)	<p><i>That Cabinet:</i></p> <p>a) Approves Annexes (A) and (B) for a public consultation in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement;</p> <p>b) Grants delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning to agree any minor amendments, including refining consultation questions, and typographical changes to Annexes (A) and (B) ahead of the public consultation;</p> <p>c) Approves CIL governance framework (Annex C);</p> <p>d) Notes the publication of the data in the CIL and S106 reports of the Infrastructure Funding Statement (Annex D);</p> <p>e) Approve the publication of the Infrastructure List (contained in part one of the Infrastructure Funding Statement - Annex D);</p> <p>f) Approves updated Terms of References for the Local Plan and Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan Programme Boards (Annexes E and F); and</p> <p>g) Approves drawdown of £108,000 from the Council Priorities Fund reserve to initiate and / or remunerate programmes of work identified in paragraph 7.4.</p>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Making the Local Plan green to its core; ● Responding to the challenges presented by the climate crisis; ● Providing good quality social rented homes; and ● Rebuilding trust and confidence in the council by promoting a culture of openness and transparency.
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>Internal consultation with the following departments and lead officers:</p> <p>Head of Climate Action; Sustainable Transport Lead; Development Management (planning applications) Manager/Team; Heritage and Design Manager; Strategic Housing Manager; Building Control; Economic</p>



	Development Lead; Finance; Local Plan Programme Board; and Local Management Team.
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I. BACKGROUND

- I.1 The Council has committed to update partially the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 - 2031) to make it green to the core. In practice this means responding to the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency declarations. The partial update also presents opportunities to respond to other corporate objectives such as health and wellbeing, the delivery of genuinely affordable housing, etc.
- I.2 The Council's decision confirms that it is taking a staged approach to greening the Local Plan to its core. This pragmatic approach focuses on taking decisive action on specific parts of the Local Plan so that the impacts can be felt more immediately in the planning application process; the Council's (and others who have taken the same) approach is advocated in a recent Royal Town Planning Institute and Town and Country Planning Association guidance on addressing the Climate Crisis¹. A full Local Plan update will be undertaken at a later date and will address the need to identify locations to accommodate needs arising in the 2030/40s.
- I.3 In November 2020 Cabinet approved an update to the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. This document explains how and when different groups, organisations and communities can get involved with the planning process. It provides a framework for consultation and community engagement.
- I.4 In May 2021 Cabinet approved the Council's Local Development Scheme for the period 2021 to 2024². This document sets out the project milestones and provides a timetable for the delivery of the Local Plan - partial update. The first milestone is to publish an issues and options consultation document by the end of 2021.

2. AN ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

- 2.1 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012³ (as amended) set out the rules that the Council must follow when updating its adopted Local Plan. There are two formal consultation stages that must be carried out before the Council can submit its Local Plan to the government for public examination:
- Regulation 18 - This stage sets the scope of any updates, it presents issues affecting policies and invites engagement on possible options; and

¹ https://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/9379/tcpa-rtpi-climate-guide_oct-2021_final.pdf

² Statement of Community Involvement and Local Development Scheme <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-update-and-supporting-information/>

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/introduction/made?wrap=true>



- Regulation 19 - The Council presents its draft Local Plan and invites comments on revised and new policies and development sites.

- 2.2 The Council has now reached the Regulation 18 stage in the plan making process.
- 2.3 The consultation document is presented at Annex A. The introduction explains the “subject of the local plan”⁴ update and introduces 18 topics that put forward the issues affecting the adopted Local Plan and proposes options for how to tackle them through the Local Plan update.
- 2.4 Each topic contains a series of questions, which are designed to elicit a response to aid the formulation of policy during 2022. The climate and ecological emergencies have directly influenced options contained in the consultation document to the extent that if carried forward to the Regulation 19 (draft Local Plan) stage they would deviate from the norm / established policy. For example, the landscape topic asks, *“Should the Local Plan actively promote renewable energy development in the District?”*
- 2.5 The document is ordered in to five parts:
- 1) The introduction explains the ‘partial update’ nature of the project and the plan making process;
 - 2) List of the 18 Topics;
 - 3) How to participate;
 - 4) Topic papers. This is the core aspect of the consultation and it summarises supporting technical / evidence papers, which will be available at the consultation.; and
 - 5) Glossary of technical terms and abbreviations.
- 2.6 The consultation document presented at Annex A is a raw text document. Subject to Cabinet approval the document will be designed to make it visually engaging. The Council’s new consultation platform, which has been procured as the result of the Council’s successful bid to the Government’s PropTech Engagement Fund, will enhance the Council’s ability to host and trial a new interactive digital consultation.
- 2.7 The consultation document will be supported by recently updated evidence studies:
- Integrated Impact Appraisal (due December 2021);
 - Habitats Regulation Assessment (due December 2021);
 - Renewable Energy Strategy - initial findings study (due December 2021);
 - Cirencester Town Centre Master Plan Feasibility Study: Forecast Change in Uses to 2051 (November 2021);
 - Housing Land Supply Report (October 2021);
 - Strategic and Economic Housing Land Availability Assessment (October, 2021);

⁴ Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012 (as amended) - Regulation 18
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/introduction/made?wrap=true>



- Cotswold District Local Plan Review (2020);
- Gloucestershire Economic Needs Assessment (2020);
and
- Gloucestershire Housing Needs Assessment (2019).

3. CIRENCESTER CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS & MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

3.1 In order to support the master planning process for Cirencester Town Centre and to ensure that the historic environment is fully considered, the 2008 Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Proposals (“the Appraisals”) have been reviewed (Annex B). An earlier version of the Appraisals was subject to consultation with key organisations such as Cirencester Town Council and Historic England. Approval is now sought to undertake a public consultation.

4. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) - GOVERNANCE

4.1 The Council has levied a charge, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), on residential and retail development since June 2019⁵.

4.2 The Council needs to set up governance arrangements to spend the money collected from CIL including an appropriate mechanism to prioritise infrastructure projects that will be funded. The report contained at Annex C sets out a proposal for governance arrangements on how the Council will spend CIL funds.

4.3 CIL is intended to deliver infrastructure projects listed in adopted Local Plan policies SA1, SA2 and SA3. These items of infrastructure have been identified as essential and critical to the delivery of the adopted Local Plan development strategy.

4.4 CIL will generate around a quarter of the funds needed to deliver the essential and critical infrastructure that is identified in the adopted Local Plan. The rest will have to come from other funding sources. It is therefore important that CIL does not fund (parts of) projects that could be funded through other sources. Moreover, CIL should be used as leverage to open up other funding where possible.

4.5 The Council will continue to use provisions contained within Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to secure specific items of infrastructure where it is in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (2021) paragraph 57⁶ and National

⁵ Further information on the Council’s CIL can be found here: <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/community-infrastructure-levy/>

⁶

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf



Planning Practice Guidance⁷. For example, this could include securing contributions to support the expansion of a primary school to mitigate the impact of new family homes being built nearby. This would be in addition to any CIL levied on new development.

- 4.6 The report includes a recommendation to set aside 10% of the strategic CIL fund, i.e. the fund set aside to deliver Local Plan related infrastructure, to invite bids that would support the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergencies Actions Plans and other Corporate objectives. The report also includes an Expression of Interest form and a scoring matrix, which will be used to invite and score bids respectively.

5. INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT

- 5.1 In the CIL legislation changes of September 2019 the government introduced a requirement for Councils to produce a yearly 'Infrastructure Funding Statement' (IFS). The first statement, covering the financial year 2019/20 was published in December 2020. Annex D provides the second report covering the 2020/21 financial year.
- 5.2 The aim of the IFS is to increase transparency by providing a statement of accounts of all financial and non-financial developer contributions relating to S106 Agreements and CIL collected and spent by a Local Authority per calendar year. The report has therefore been kept succinct and factual.
- 5.3 The IFS is split into three sections: The Infrastructure List, the CIL Report and the S106 Report. The CIL and S106 Reports contain factual data about the collection and spending of funding for infrastructure in the District as set out in the CIL regulations. This data does not require cabinet approval, although Cabinet should be aware of its publication.
- 5.4 The Infrastructure List is a statement of infrastructure projects that the Council expects to be wholly or partly funded by CIL. Although this is an evidence based list derived from infrastructure needs identified in the Council's adopted Local Plan, the report seeks approval of its publication.
- 5.5 This IFS contains information on infrastructure funding collected and spent by the Council. Information on the neighbourhood proportion (the element of funding given to Town and Parish Councils), as well as any associated expenditure, is also reported within the IFS. Cotswold District Council's IFS should be read in conjunction with Gloucestershire County Council's IFS to get a full picture of infrastructure funding that is collected and spent in the District.

The CIL Report

⁷ NPPG Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 23b-002-20190901 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-obligations>



- 5.6** CIL is a non-negotiable rate on new development which is indexed each year. The rate for 2022 is set at £83.52/sqm for residential developments and £62.64/sqm for retail developments.
- 5.7** CIL applies only to permissions approved after 1 June 2019 in the District. The CIL charge is paid by instalments spread over time to assist the viability of developments. It therefore takes time before enough CIL funds are collected for investment in infrastructure projects.
- 5.8** The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) set out which figures need to be reported on in the IFS. The full IFS with all figures is at Appendix D.
- 5.9** The CIL monies collected in 2020/21 (£231,262.26) have come from small developments (under 10 dwellings) which would not have been subject to a S106 agreement. Hence, none of these funds would have been collected without having CIL in place. One of the key reasons for the introduction of the CIL regime was to ensure that all developments under a certain size threshold contributed to the mitigation of their impact on infrastructure, rather than only those that were subject to S106.
- 5.10** Notwithstanding this, the majority of CIL funds are expected to come from larger developments. No large developments have been approved since the introduction of CIL in the District although a large application in Moreton-in-Marsh is approved subject to agreement of a S106 agreement.
- 5.11** 15% of collected CIL funds go to the Town/Parish Council in which the development takes place (25% if the application area is covered by a neighbourhood plan). This is called the neighbourhood portion. These funds are automatically transferred to the Town/Parish Council biannually (1 October and 1 April) as defined in the regulations. A total of £7,970.87 was transferred to the town/parish councils in 2020/21. As this is done biannually, the neighbourhood portion of a large amount of the funds collected in 2020/21 will have been transferred on 1 April 2021, which will be reported on in next years' IFS.
- 5.12** The Council granted a total of £2,250,567.61 in CIL reliefs (see Table 6 contained in Appendix D). These reliefs are defined in the legislation and the Council does not have any discretion in this matter.

The S106 Report

- 5.13** The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) specify which figures need to be reported. The full IFS with all figures is at Appendix D.
- 5.14** The Council secured £127,478.30, 127 affordable homes and 4 self-build plots in S106 agreements signed in 2020/21.



5.15 In 2020/21, the Council collected a total of £744,993 from S106 agreements and spent £1,055,401.97 of the S106 funds it held.

5.16 A total of £1,025,500 of S106 funds was allocated to two affordable housing projects in Avening and Moreton-in-Marsh. This leaves a total of £601,931.97 of non-allocated S106 funds being held by the Council.

6. GOVERNANCE OF PROGRAMME BOARDS - DECEMBER 2021 UPDATE

6.1 The overall purpose of the Programme Boards is to oversee the review of the Council's Local Plan and the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan projects.

6.2 A change to Cabinet membership earlier in 2021 has provided the opportunity to review the membership of the Programme Boards. Annexes E and F present updated membership.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Local Plan

7.1 The financial implications associated with preparing a partial update to the adopted Local Plan were set out at the Council meeting held on 3 June 2020. To recap, the costs can be attributed to several discrete parts, principally updating the evidence base; policy writing; undertaking consultations (formal regulations and informal); preparation of the publication / submission plan; examination; adoption and legal challenge.

7.2 Expected costs for the Local Plan update are considered as part of the Council's future budget setting process and details were provided at a Cabinet meeting on 2 November 2020.

7.3 An update on the project to update partially the adopted Local Plan is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Local Plan project expenditure at 1 November 2021

Project / Study	Committed funding	Project started	Spend to date
Integrated Impact Appraisal (Sustainability Appraisal)	£35,000	Yes	£0
Habitats Regulation Assessment	£10,000	Yes	£0
Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Mitigation Strategy (Swindon)	£1,000	Yes	£0



Carbon Audit / Climate Change Risk Assessment	£35,000	No	£0
Play Pitch Strategy	£15,000	Yes	£0
Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan	£95,000	Yes	£16,365
Gloucestershire-wide Economic Needs Assessment	£3,012	Completed	£3,012
Gloucestershire-wide Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and Site identification Assessment	£10,000	Yes	£2,825
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Levels 1 & 2)	£30,000	Yes	£0
Preparation of a Sustainable Transport Strategy	£75,000	Yes	£0
Contribution to Stratford to Honeybourne railway reinstatement strategic outline business case	£5,000	Yes	£3,759
Public Consultation / Engagement	£25,000	Yes	£0
TOTAL SPEND UP TO 1 NOV 2021			£25,961

7.4 Approval is sought to commission and initiate the following studies to support the next stage of the partial update to the adopted Local Plan (drafting policy):

- Local Plan and CIL Viability Assessment update (£20,000);
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan update (£25,000);
- Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership contribution to rail studies and engagement (£4,000);
- River Severn Special Area of Conservation Visitor Survey and Mitigation Strategy (£5,000);
- Water Cycle Study update (£12,000);
- Cotswold District Design Code (£40,000); and
- Environment Agency service level agreement (£2,000).

7.5 The Environment Agency now charges local planning authorities to engage with it outside of the formal regulation process, for example providing professional feedback on emerging evidence, policies and site allocations.

7.6 In September 2021 the Council submitted a bid to the Government's PropTech fund to access funding to enhance the Council's digital engagement tools. The Council was successfully awarded £53,193 in October 2021. The fund will be used to procure a new public engagement platform for town planning and corporate projects; this will be a one year trial. A fixed term (12 months) part time resource (Digital Engagement Lead) will be responsible for implementing the new system.



Infrastructure Funding Statement

- 7.7** There are no direct financial implications arising from the Infrastructure List and the CIL report. Proposals regarding the governance arrangements for the spending of CIL monies will be finalised in 2021.
- 7.8** Most legal agreements with financial obligations include a payback clause. If collected S106 monies have not been spent within a defined time period, they must be returned. An index is applied to such returns. Although the spending period varies between agreements, it is typically five years from the date of receipt by the Council. The IFS identifies the S106 funds that are currently held by the Council that could potentially lead to payback requests from developers.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** The Council currently has an up to date Local Plan. Pausing the Local Plan update at this stage (e.g. not proceeding to a Regulation 18 consultation) has no specific legal implications. However, in the longer term a delay would affect the Council's ability to maintain a robust supply of land for housing beyond August 2023 (the 5th anniversary of the adopted Local Plan), which may invite appeals and result in more protracted negotiations on S106 agreements.
- 8.2** Failure to publish an Infrastructure Funding Statement in December 2021 would put the Council in breach of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- 8.3** Save from the above there are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1** The adopted Local Development Scheme⁸ includes a risk assessment which contains commentary on measures that have been or can be taken to mitigate identified risks of partially updating the adopted Local Plan. The capacity and ability of external organisations (especially the Environment Agency) to respond to requests for information is a continuing risk to the timely delivery of the updated Local Plan.

⁸ Cotswold Local Development Scheme (2021-2024) <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/fmtasbps/local-development-scheme-may-2021.pdf>



- 9.2** The IFS is published yearly and it increases transparency on how the Council deals with infrastructure funding. The risks outlined here therefore do not result from the IFS itself. However, there are possible consequences if SI06 Agreements are not properly monitored. These risks are of a financial and reputational nature. The financial risks consist of SI06 monies not being collected and collected funds having to be returned as they go over the spending deadline. The reputational damage lies in the possible public perception that the Council is not fully cognisant of the legal agreements it is signing and is failing to collect the monies required to deliver infrastructure in the district.

10. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 10.1** The Integrated Impact Assessment will include an Equalities Impact Assessment.
- 10.2** A new digital consultation system has been procured, which will help the Council to reach a wide range of local communities.
- 10.3** The Regulation 18 consultation documents will comply with relevant accessibility regulations⁹. The consultation document provides a summary of the planning issues and possible options, which is supported by evidence papers for those who are interested in the technical details of the issues and options.

11. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1** The Council has declared climate and ecological emergencies. The Council has also prepared an action plan to show how it will support the District to become carbon neutral. The Council has also committed to make the Local Plan green to its core. An update to the Local Plan will directly support local communities and businesses to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- 11.2** An update to the Local Plan could affect the Infrastructure List in the future. However, there are no direct climate change implications arising from the Infrastructure Funding Statement.

12. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/publishing-accessible-documents>



12.1 As a legal requirement there is no option other than to publish an Infrastructure Funding Statement with an Infrastructure List.

12.2 Cabinet could choose not to proceed to the next stage of the Local Plan making process (a Regulation 18 consultation). However, this approach would directly affect the Council's ability to deliver an updated Local Plan and would be inconsistent with the Council's Corporate Plan, as well as its climate and ecological emergency declarations.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

13.1 None

(END)



ANNEX E: LOCAL PLAN PROGRAMME BOARD - UPDATED TERMS OF REFERENCE (DECEMBER 2021)

The overall purpose of the Local Plan Programme Board (“the Board”) is to oversee the review of the Council’s Local Plan and any associated policy documents, and address any emerging programming or resource issues. The Board will champion spatial planning’s key role in future corporate planning and assist with the wider ambition of making the Local Plan green to its core.

Terms of reference:

1. Strategic management

- A. Agree a project plan that will lead to the partial update of the Cotswold District Local Plan;
- B. Receive updates on, and monitor progress against, the project plan, key tasks and critical paths;
- C. Agree remedial actions to be taken in the event of any slippage against the project plan;
- D. Agree a communications strategy (who, what, when, where and how) and undertake defined roles in relation to that strategy;
- E. Act as a sounding board for any specific issues requiring member input prior to the submission of formal reports to Cabinet;
- F. Oversee and report to Cabinet on progress made;
- G. Make recommendations to Cabinet in relation to work programming and staff resources;
- H. Champion the use of modern technology to aid plan-making and community engagement;
- I. Oversee responses to government consultations on the planning system; and
- J. Receive updates on the progress of Neighbourhood Development Plans and highlight matters of strategic merit.

2. Financial management

Consider and oversee (and if necessary, recommend to Cabinet) the allocation of financial resources to support the development of the Local Plan; any associated policy documents; and evidence in line with the project management plan.

3. Accountability

The Board is accountable to Cabinet where it will be represented by the Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy, Climate Change and Energy.

4. Performance management

The Board will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing performance against the Council’s relevant efficiency measures and timetable. This will also include an oversight of risks.



5. Membership

The Board will consist of:

- Cllr Rachel Coxcoon, Planning Policy, Climate Change and Energy Portfolio Holder and Chair, Liberal Democrats Group
- Cllr Juliet Layton, Chair of Planning and Licensing Committee, Liberal Democrats Group
- Cllr Tony Berry, Conservative Group
- Cllr Julia Judd, Conservative Group
- Cllr Andrew Mclean, Green Party
- Cllr Niki Ind, Independent
- Strategic Director, Group Manager or Business Manager
- Climate Emergency Manager
- Forward Planning Manager and Officers
- Community Partnership Officer

6. Arrangements for meetings:

- A. Board meetings will aim to meet once a quarter (or as projects demand);
- B. The Board is not a decision making body;
- C. Administrative support (Minutes) will be provided by Committee Services; and
- D. Project support will be provided by Forward Planning's Project Manager.



ANNEX F: CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE MASTER PLAN PROGRAMME BOARD - UPDATED TERMS OF REFERENCE (DECEMBER 2021)

The overall purpose of the Cirencester Town Centre Programme Board (“the Board”) is to oversee the delivery of a new Masterplan for Cirencester Town Centre, a requirement of the Council’s adopted Local Plan and the Corporate Plan.

Terms of reference:

1. Strategic management

- A. To give effect to the agreed Memorandum of Understanding between Cotswold District Council and Cirencester Town Council to work collaboratively in the preparation of the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan;
- B. Agree a project plan that will lead to the delivery of new Masterplan for Cirencester Town Centre and indirectly the delivery of the Cirencester Neighbourhood Development Plan;
- C. Receive updates on, and monitor progress against, the project plan, key tasks and critical paths;
- D. Agree remedial actions to be taken in the event of any slippage against the project plan;
- E. Agree a communications strategy (who, what, when, where and how) and undertake defined roles in relation to that strategy;
- F. Act as a sounding board for any specific issues requiring member input prior to the submission of formal reports to Cotswold District Council’s Cabinet;
- G. Provide oversight and make recommendations to Cotswold District Council’s Cabinet in relation to work programming and staffing resources;
- H. Champion the use of modern technology to aid plan-making and community engagement;
- I. Oversee responses to government consultations on the planning system; and
- J. Receive updates on the progress of Cirencester Town Council’s Neighbourhood Development Plan.

2. Financial management

Consider and oversee (and if necessary, recommend to Cotswold District Council’s Cabinet) the allocation of financial resources to support the development of the Masterplan; any associated policy documents (for example, Cirencester Town Council’s Neighbourhood Development Plan); and evidence in line with the project management plan.



3. Accountability

The Board is accountable to Cotswold District Council's Cabinet where it will be represented by the Leader of Cotswold District Council.

4. Performance management

The Board will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing performance against the council's relevant efficiency measures and timetable. This will also include an oversight of risks.

5. Membership

The Board will consist of:

- Cllr Joe Harris, Leader of Cotswold District Council and Chair, Liberal Democrats Group
- Cllr Rachel Coxcoon, Liberal Democrats Group
- Cllr Juliet Layton, Liberal Democrats Group
- Cllr Tony Berry, Conservative Group
- Cllr Julia Judd, Conservative Group
- Cllr Rebecca Halifax, Cirencester Town Council
- Cirencester Town Council CEO
- Cirencester Town Council Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Chairperson
- Publica Strategic Director, Group Manager or Business Manager (*Project Sponsor*)
- Cotswold Economic Development Lead
- Cotswold Forward Planning Manager and officers (*Delivery and Project Managers*)
- Cotswold Community Partnership Officer

6. Arrangements for meetings:

- A) Board meetings will aim to meet once a quarter (or as the project demands);
- B) The Board is not a decision making body;
- C) Administrative support (Minutes) will be provided by Cotswold District Council's Committee Services; and
- D) Project support will be provided by Forward Planning's Project Manager.

Cotswold District Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (Partial Update)

Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012

A Regulation 18 “Issues and Options” consultation document

Part 1: Introduction

- 1.1 Although the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011 – 2031 was adopted as recently as 2018, Local Plans need to be periodically reviewed to keep them up to date. Housing requirements, for example, must now be reviewed at least once every five years. This does not necessarily entail a full-scale review – effectively a replacement Local Plan – but can be a targeted update focussing on specific issues. It is the latter that the Council has resolved to undertake.
- 1.2 Whether a full review or an update is undertaken, the process is the same. In simple terms there is an initial stage where “issues and options” are discussed with stakeholders (including the public) followed by a further public consultation on a draft updated Local Plan, which is also publicly consulted upon. Following those two stages, the next step is an Examination in Public where a government Inspector looks into the soundness¹ and legal compliance of what’s proposed and considers representations made in response to the formal consultations. At each stage there is an opportunity for stakeholders to participate in the process and have their views heard.
- 1.3 This consultation paper relates to the initial Regulation 18 “issues and options” stage – so we’re right at the start of the process. Details on participation and consultation arrangements and how to get involved are given on page 2.
- 1.4 There may be issues that you feel we should be tackling but which we’re not proposing to include in this Local Plan update. The main reason for that is usually because some issues may be more appropriately addressed in a full-scale Local Plan Review. We’ve identified in the topic papers several issues that fall into this category. Let us know if you think we should be widening the scope of the Local Plan update.
- 1.5 Updating a Local Plan tends to fall broadly into one of two categories. Updates can be needed because legislation has changed or because important new data or evidence has emerged that means an existing policy is weakened or even unsound – these can broadly be termed “technical updates”. Updates can also address issues that have emerged or intensified since the Local Plan was adopted that really must be tackled without delay and which are either not covered by existing policy or existing policy is no longer adequate.
- 1.6 An example of a key issue in the second category derives from the Council’s declarations of Climate Change and Ecological Emergencies. In reflecting these declarations in its [Corporate Plan](#)², the Council has committed to making its Local Plan “Green To The Core” with an aim

¹ A technical term that is based on the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 34). A plan must be Positively Prepared; Justified; Effective; and Consistent with National Policy.

² The Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024 (<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/rldwcm/corporate-strategy-2020.pdf>)

to “Develop an updated local plan that delivers our corporate priorities and promotes both carbon neutral development and infrastructure”. Stated actions include “Draft new policies and updating existing policies to give effect to new council strategies, such as the economic recovery strategy, the climate and ecological emergency action plans and the renewable energy strategy.”

- 1.7 The Local Plan update proposals relating to the Corporate Plan commitments are set out in Topic Paper 1 *Responding To The Climate Crisis* and in some other Topic Papers. This consultation document comprises eighteen such Topic Papers that put forward the issues as the Council currently sees them and proposes options for how to tackle them through the Local Plan update. You should regard these as starting points for discussion. No firm decisions have been made about the precise range of issues or the proposed solutions, although clearly tackling the climate change emergency is an example of an issue the council is deeply committed to addressing.
- 1.8 Each Topic Paper is derived from an evidence paper that is available to read online by clicking on the hyperlink embedded at the beginning of the Topic Paper **[available shortly]**.
- 1.9 The council encourages as many people as possible to participate in the discussion and help to inform the next stage of the process as outlined earlier. In taking part in the discussion it is important to bear the last step of the process – the Examination – in mind. The Inspector will be focusing on whether any proposed change is sound, and one key consideration for her/him will be whether there is evidence to back it up. So if you do suggest new issues or solutions please remember that we need to be confident we can robustly and justifiably support them at Examination.

Part 2: Topic Papers

1. [Responding to the Climate Crisis](#)
2. [Accessibility of New Housing Development](#)
3. [Biodiversity](#)
4. [Design](#)
5. [Economy and Employment](#)
6. [Green Infrastructure](#)
7. [Health, Social and Cultural Wellbeing](#)
8. [Historic Environment](#)
9. [Housing Affordability](#)
10. [Housing Need, Requirement, Land Supply and Delivery](#)
11. [Infrastructure](#)
12. [Landscape](#)
13. [Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services](#)
14. [Neighbourhood Development Plans](#)
15. [Retail and Town Centres](#)
16. [Sustainable Tourism](#)
17. [Sustainable Transport and Air Quality](#)
18. [Water Quality, Water Resources and Flooding](#)

Part 3: How to participate

- 3.1 Each Topic Paper has a series of questions. You aren't restricted to answering the questions and can raise other relevant issues if you want to. Please take a little time to read through the paper(s) you're interested in before you respond – some of the questions you have may be answered in the text.
- 3.2 Public consultation on this stage, more formally known as the Regulation 18 stage, normally lasts a period of six weeks. Comments received during the consultation are considered and used to inform the next stage of plan preparation.
- 3.3 For further information about Local Plan consultation and next steps the [Statement of Community Involvement](#) (SCI) outlines how you can get involved.
- 3.4 **This round of consultation and participation will end at close of business on XX XX 2021.** Please ensure your representations are with us by then. Unless there are exceptional circumstances we will not accept late representations because this will affect the overall timetable for the Local Plan update and is unfair on those who've adhered to the deadline.

Part 4: Glossary of technical terms/abbreviations

[To follow]

Part 5: Contacts

- 5.1 Hard copies of the documents are available to view at all district libraries as well as the council offices at Trinity Road, Cirencester and the Moreton in Marsh office. Hard copies can be obtained on request by contacting the Council's customer services team on 01285 623000 or email customer.services@cotswold.gov.uk. Please note charges may apply.

Forward Planning Team
Cotswold District Council
Local.plan@cotswold.gov.uk

- 5.2 Any individual or organisation may request to be added to the Local Plan consultee database by contacting Local.Plan@cotswold.gov.uk or telephoning 01285 623000.

Topic Paper: Responding to the Climate Crisis

1.0 Introduction

1.1 National policy makes clear that *“The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions [...] and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure”*.

1.2 Reflecting these concerns and in taking action following its declaration of Climate Change and Ecological Emergencies, [Cotswold District Council’s Corporate Plan](#) includes objectives to:

- review its local plan to make it ‘green to the core’ - *develop an updated local plan that delivers our corporate priorities and promotes both carbon neutral development and infrastructure,[...] including new climate crisis policies and standards that contribute to a carbon neutral society*
- achieve a reduction in carbon emissions for the district
- increase renewable energy generation within the district
- take a leadership role on the ecological emergency and nature recovery in the Cotswolds

1.3 Objective 6 of the adopted [Cotswold District Local Plan](#) aims to reduce the environmental impact of development and vulnerability to the impacts of climate change by:

a. Maximising water and energy efficiency, promoting the use of renewable energy sources and sustainable construction methods, and reducing pollution and waste.

b. Supporting the principle of waste minimisation.

c. Locating development away from areas identified as being at high risk from any form of flooding or from areas where development would increase flood risk to others.

1.4 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: [\[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE\]](#)

2.0 The Issues

2.1 Objective 6 of the adopted Local Plan goes some of the way to meeting the Climate Change emergency from a planning perspective. But it is essentially reactive rather than proactive. Its context is one of reducing the environmental impact of development and its vulnerability to the effects of climate change rather than taking positive steps to tackle the emergency through, for instance, promoting the development of stand-alone renewable energy generation. The objective therefore needs to be revised. Options are suggested at Part 3 below.

- 2.2 Coupled with the revised objective, while the current Local Plan has a range of policies that clearly relate to climate change (INF7 Green Infrastructure and the water-related policies EN14, EN15 and INF8, for instance) it lacks a strategic policy that pulls the various threads together to present an integrated approach. Options for a strategic policy also are suggested in Section 3.
- 2.3 Paragraph 155 of the NPPG says that *to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources*. The plan should also consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources. Policy INF10 does not set out a “positive strategy” and the Local Plan does not identify suitable areas for renewable energy development. Options in this respect are likewise set out in Section 3.
- 2.4 Setting the shortcomings of the adopted Local Plan to one side, the issues fall broadly into two interrelated categories.
- 2.5 The principal focus is on **climate change mitigation** – that is, measures that contribute to slowing, peaking and then reversing the emission of ‘greenhouse gases’ to the atmosphere, to minimise further climate destabilisation. Mitigation measures can be divided into:
- reducing and ultimately ceasing the emission of greenhouse gases – that is, principally, carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O) - from activities in the district, including activity such as consuming mains electricity where the source of CO₂ emissions lies outside the district; and
 - increasing the rate of removal of CO₂ from the atmosphere – that is, sequestering atmospheric carbon into carbon ‘sinks’ usually in the form of biomass and soil carbon.
- 2.6 The secondary focus is on **climate change impacts and adaptation** – that is, understanding the present and likely future impacts on the district caused by unavoidable climate destabilisation – for example heat, drought, flooding, and building heave/subsidence – and planning the measures that need to be taken to adapt to, and mitigate the risks of, those impacts.

Mitigation

Electricity generation (see section 5.1 of the Topic Paper)

- 2.7 At present, most electricity consumed in the district is generated elsewhere in the country, or in the EU and imported through interconnectors. Currently electricity consumption in the district is responsible for around 16% of total carbon emissions (most of the rest coming from burning fossil fuels in the form of vehicle fuel and gas and oil for heating buildings). The electricity challenge is made much greater by the need to dramatically increase electricity consumption by shifting road transport and heating for homes and larger buildings away from fossil fuels to electricity.

- 2.8 The National Grid Future Energy Scenarios report³ states the need for the UK to add at least 3GW of wind and 1.4GW solar each year between 2020 and 2050 (executive summary, key message 3).
- 2.9 For Cotswold District, using the National Grid Future Energy Scenario “Consumer Transformation” suggests a growth in electricity demand (domestic and non-domestic combined) from about 430GWh to over 815GWh.
- 2.10 A large amount of the necessary change to the UK’s electricity generation will have no impact on Cotswold District – for example the huge increase in offshore wind that the sixth carbon budget’s ‘balanced pathway’ calls for. Nonetheless certain aspects of the electricity transformation will need to be accommodated within the district. The most (technically) viable forms of renewable energy generation in the district are wind, solar and biomass.

Displacing fossil fuel consumption for heating (see Section 5.2 of the Topic Paper)

- 2.11 Cotswold District’s total gas consumption (2019)⁴ was 402GWh (domestic) and 149GWh (non-domestic). Over 54% of Cotswold District properties are not served by mains gas⁵. The District’s domestic consumption of heating oil (2018)⁶ was about 120GWh (about 30% of the energy consumed in the form of gas – reflecting the large number of off-gas properties), and commercial consumption was about 227GWh (higher than the consumption of gas).
- 2.12 To reach net zero carbon emissions, the District must reduce fossil fuel consumption to zero. The options for achieving this in buildings (for both space heating and water heating) are, broadly, to:
- replace gas and oil with direct electric heating (e.g. immersion heaters and electric boilers) – using electricity in this way is more or less 100% efficient, but presently extremely expensive;
 - replace gas and oil with electric-driven heat pumps (typically air source and ground source) – using electricity in this way is, in a well designed and operated system, around 300% efficient, meaning each kWh of electricity consumed will deliver around 3kWh of heat;
 - substitute natural (fossil) gas with methane derived from biological sources, such as anaerobic digestion of farm, industrial and domestic wastes;
 - substitute natural gas with an alternative gas such as hydrogen, generated from renewable electricity; and
 - substitute heating oil, in principle and to only a very limited extent, with so-called synthetic bio-oils – that is, liquid fuels derived from biological sources such as waste wood. It is very unlikely that this will be a cost effective way to heat premises in the future.

³ <https://www.nationalgrideso.com/document/173821/download>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/gas-sales-and-numbers-of-customers-by-region-and-local-authority>

⁵ <https://www.nongasmap.org.uk/>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-national-residual-fuel-consumption-2005-to-2018>

- 2.13 With an assumed coefficient of performance (CoP) of 3, replacing the District's current gas and oil demand for heating (that is, around 900GWh) would require additional electricity supply of around 300GWh/year. This would be subsumed within the overall growth of electricity demand described earlier.

Adaptation

- 2.14 UK Climate Projections (UKCP) is a continuous programme of work led by the Met Office Hadley Centre, which aims to give some foresight of the likely effects of climate destabilisation on the UK's weather, at local scale. Having regard to the most recent published update (July 2021) the matters of concern nationally and for the district are increases in flooding, heatwaves, drought and wildfires.

Flooding

- 2.15 Pluvial and fluvial flood events are likely to become more common. There can be no certainty over the severity of events, but it is likely that rainfall intensity may increase.
- 2.16 It may be appropriate to require developers to design surface water runoff, permeable surfaces, water attenuation etc, using assumptions of much higher intensity and more sustained rainfall events than are currently accounted for. Soakaway design for rainwater runoff from individual dwellings may need to assume a much higher rainfall volume than is currently the case.
- 2.17 In respect of the assessment of flood risk and suitability for development, in order to guard against future destruction of property and economic value, it may be necessary for the existing Environment Agency flood risk assessments to be updated to show flood risks re-calibrated to the kind of extreme rainfall events that will be more likely in the future.
- 2.18 The existing Local Plan policies regarding flooding are considered to be fit for purpose and sound. The principal evidence base in relation to flood risk - the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Parts 1 and 2 - is in the process of being updated by specialist consultants and the Environment Agency is engaged in the process. If any amendments to policy are required as a result of the updated SFRA they will of course be made.

Heat Stress

- 2.19 Heatwaves are set to become more commonplace, with health risks to many. From the perspective of minimising excess energy consumption, passive measures (e.g. insulation, reducing solar gain, nighttime purging etc) should be pursued before air conditioning. Installation of air conditioning units may require planning permission. In respect of new-build, some design adaptations may affect the external appearance of new buildings, and design policies will need to accommodate this. Public areas of new developments - green infrastructure - may require features to reduce temperature at ground level such as tree planting.

Wildfire

- 2.20 Large forest, woodland and heathland fires are still relatively rare in the UK, but sustained drought, high temperatures, low humidity and high wind are likely to increase the risk in

future. It will be important to bear this risk in mind when planning how close new build dwellings should be to existing or newly planted woodland.

Drought

- 2.21 Climate change will increase the likelihood of less rainfall in summer months, which may lead to drought conditions. For new build developments it may be appropriate for planning conditions to impose stricter water efficiency requirements than are currently embodied by requirement G2 (water efficiency) of building regulations part G.
- 2.22 Sustained low rainfall or drought conditions may lead to heave and shrinkage of clay rich soils in a limited part of the District, which has the potential to lead to damage to the foundations and structure of buildings.

3.0 The Options

Option 1 - Do nothing

- 3.1 This is always an option in any situation. It is unacceptable here not least because if the plan fails to bring forward a positive strategy for Renewable Energy as required by the NPPF it risks being found unsound at Examination.

Option 2 - take forward a suite of amendments to meet the issues and challenges set out at Section 2

The current Local Plan

- 3.2 Revised objectives for the updated Local Plan could include:
- compliance with the requirements of the NPPF (paragraphs 148 – 169) in respect of addressing the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change.
 - conformity with the guidance set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance on climate change⁷ to ensure the update to the local plan is sound.
 - reflect the objectives and intent of the Council's existing declarations, policies, strategies and plans regarding the climate and ecological emergencies.
 - conformity with the requirements of the Climate Change Act 2008⁸ and more recent government policies and strategies.
 - in setting policy, to draw on and be consistent with official research, guidance and recommendations given to Government by the Climate Change Committee⁹.
 - creation of a policy foundation for district-wide mitigation and adaptation actions to be implemented at a scale and pace that is:

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/climate-change>

⁸ Primarily, by interpreting in a logical and defensible way how the requirements of the Act relates to the District, showing how the District may contribute proportionally to the national achievement of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest

⁹ The independent advisory body established under the Climate Change Act 2008

a) commensurate with the gravity of the climate and ecological crises, and consistent with the goal of limiting global heating to not more than 2.0°C, and striving for not more than 1.5°C, above pre-industrial levels, as embodied in the Paris Agreement; and

b) consistent with the 6th carbon budget, adopted by government in April 2021¹⁰.

3.3 A new strategic Local Plan policy could be based on the concept of the “tilted balance”. That is, the application of any and all of the Local Plan policies in decision taking should have an inherent bias towards ensuring that issues relating to the climate change and ecological emergencies are appropriately addressed, having regard to the scale and nature of the proposal. Climate change mitigation and adaptation are therefore inescapable considerations running through the entire Local Plan, making it “green to the core”.

3.4 The updated Local Plan should enact the land-use recommendation of the forthcoming Renewable Energy Strategy, identifying land suitable to deliver the generation capacity indicated. The Renewable Energy Strategy will be publicly consulted upon concurrently with consultation on the Local Plan update.

Mitigation: electricity

3.5 In respect of Local Plan policy, several approaches are possible in defining a target for, or acceptable level of, renewable electricity generation:

- Defining a target by scaling the required national growth in onshore renewable generation to the level of the District on the basis of land area, population, GVA or other agreed appropriate metric;
- Defining an acceptable level of generation through an objective assessment of the realistic technical potential for renewable electricity generation in the District, based on technical resource availability suitably scaled back by landscape and other relevant constraints; and
- Defining a target based on the projected future electricity demand in the district – which could be scaled up by an ambition for the district to be a ‘net exporter’ of energy, or scaled back by a concern that the protected landscape characteristic of much of the district limits the district’s capacity for new renewable generation, compared to equivalent rural districts without such sensitive landscape classification.

3.6 Regarding storage, distribution and use of electricity, policy objectives could be:

- To encourage and facilitate the installation of such electricity infrastructure (relating to, for example, distribution, storage, demand side management) that is necessary to enable the transformation to a zero carbon electricity sector, accepting a level of local disruption that is commensurate with the urgency and importance of the objective.

3.7 Regarding planning requirements for new developments, policy objectives could be:

¹⁰ Principally, for Cotswold District to contribute fully to following the recommended pathway of a 78% reduction in UK territorial emissions between 1990 and 2035

- To require new individual dwellings or larger developments to incorporate on-site renewable energy generation (principally solar), with annual energy generation equivalent to the building's total annual energy use¹¹.
- (If on-site renewable energy generation is technically or otherwise not possible), to require new individual dwellings or larger developments to invest in equivalent renewable generation equivalent to the building's total annual energy use at an off-site location (a so-called 'allowable solutions' policy).

3.8 Regarding planning requirements for stand-alone renewable energy generation, policy objectives could be:

- (Recognising the potential for renewable energy investment to create tangible value to 'host' communities), to particularly support renewable energy generation proposals that are led by, or meet the needs of, local communities. This could mean developments that are conceived and/or promoted within the community within which the development will be undertaken, and provide long term and inclusive socio-economic and/or environmental benefits which are accessible to all members of the community.^{12 and 13}
- In order to maximise the local economic and carbon value of renewable energy generation), to particularly support proposals that are co-located with energy users, and those that demonstrate innovation.
- Recognising the need for renewable energy generation to enhance and improve ecological quality, to particularly support proposals that can demonstrate not merely minimum harm, but produce biodiversity net gain, carbon sequestration, or other local ecological benefits.

Mitigation: displacing fossil fuel consumption for heating

3.9 Recognising that the UK's housing has poor energy performance, and that 80% of the dwellings that will exist in 2050 have already been built today, where the alteration or extension of an existing building is subject to planning permission, planning policy in this context could include the following requirements in proportion with the scale of the proposal:

- For existing premises currently heated by fossil fuels: to require / encourage heat pump technology, and facilitate the most rapid possible transition from fossil fuel heating to high efficiency electric heating.
- For existing premises of all types: to encourage and facilitate the installation of measures to reduce heat demand to the maximum practical extent ('deep retrofit'), in order to minimise the capital cost and electricity consumption of replacement heating methods.

¹¹ eg <https://www.leti.london/cedg>

¹² See for example Cornwall Council's Renewable Energy Informal Planning Advice, 2016: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/3ngmulk1/cornwall-renewable-energy-planning-advice-march-2016.pdf>

¹³ See for example Cornwall Council's Adopted Local Plan, Policy 14 (renewable and low carbon energy): <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/ozhj5k0z/adopted-local-plan-strategic-policies-2016.pdf>

- For existing premises of all types: to encourage and facilitate the installation of on-site renewable energy generation (predominantly solar PV and solar water heating), which will contribute to the maximum practical extent to the heat energy demand of the building.
- 3.10 Recognising the cost effectiveness of building in net zero carbon performance from the start, rather than retrofitting later, and furthermore recognising the necessity for new build to achieve net zero carbon performance at the earliest possible date, planning policy for new buildings could include:
- To require zero combustion of fossil fuels (for either heating or cooking) from the earliest possible date, with heating to be provided predominantly by high efficiency electric means (heat pumps).
 - To require the installation of on-site renewable energy generation whose annual output will be equivalent to at least the building's expected annual total of regulated and unregulated energy demand.
 - To require that all new buildings are net zero carbon in both construction and operation, using suitable definitions such as those provided by the UK Green Building Council¹⁴ or the LETI Net Zero Design Guide¹⁵ (or equivalent).
 - For new experimental technologies capable of displacing fossil fuels for heating: to encourage and accommodate the exploration, research and commercialisation of new technologies and techniques, even when locally disruptive, to reflect the importance of encouraging the rapid evaluation of all potential candidate technologies for decarbonising heat.

Adaptation

- 3.11 The Local Plan already contains robust policies relating to flooding. It is not proposed to amend those in this update. In terms of heat stress, drought and wildfire the suggestions made at Part 2 above regarding, for example, water efficiency, proximity to woodland and design adaptations can all be the subject of amendments to update existing Local Plan policies.

4.0 Questions

Q1: Do you agree with the preferred option(s)?

Q2: We're all going to have to accept significant changes in how we live our lives to adapt to the Climate Change Emergency and to mitigate its effects. Rank these seven key issues in order of difficulty for you (1 being the most challenging) and give brief reasons for your ranking:

- 1) using your car less and walking or cycling more
- 2) heating your home from non-fossil-fuel sources (like an air source heat pump)

¹⁴ <https://ukgbc.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/05150856/Net-Zero-Carbon-Buildings-A-framework-definition.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://www.leti.london/cedg>

- 3) improving the energy performance of your home
- 4) accepting renewable energy close to where you live?
- 5) focus housing away from poorly accessed settlements and the countryside;
- 6) not so many car parking spaces outside your house?
- 7) owning one house?

Are there any other issues that are missing from this list of options? **[RANK QUESTION]**

Q3: Cotswold District aims to be carbon neutral by 2045. To achieve this we need both to use less non-renewable energy and generate much more renewable energy than we do at present. One way of meeting our targets is to put wind turbines in those parts of the district where they'll be most efficient and effective. Although there are key planning criteria that would need to be met, the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is an obvious area of search for suitable sites. On a scale of 1 -10 (1 being the most supportive) what's your response to that idea? Please explain why?

Q4: National Policy requires renewable energy and low carbon proposals (in particular wind turbines) to secure community support. What would make you more supportive of a local renewable energy scheme? For example, if schemes directly benefit the local community.

[SCORE QUESTION]

Q5: Would you support a proposition in the Local Plan that required an energy performance improvement of the entire building when it is proposed to extend or refurbish the building (Climate Change Statement)? Please explain why.

[INSERT YES / NO TICK BOX. INSERT COMMENT BOX FOR 'PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY' QUESTION]

Q6: Do you support ground mounted solar panels ('solar farms') being much more common in the district?

Q7: Should the Local Plan go above and beyond Building Regulations, which only seek to make development low carbon ready as opposed to Net Zero Carbon?

[INSERT YES / NO TICK BOX. INSERT COMMENT BOX FOR 'PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY' QUESTION]

Would you support zero carbon housing if it also meant homes had a less traditional design?

Q8: On a scale of 1 (= I don't want to see any change at all to the district) through to 10 (= I'm happy to accommodate any change necessary, no matter how large) how ready do you feel to accept changes to the 'look and feel' of the district in response to the imperative of climate change? Please explain why.

[SCORE QUESTION + INSERT COMMENT BOX FOR 'PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY' QUESTION]

Q9: Should a strategic policy be added to the Local Plan requiring all development to respond positively to the climate change emergency and to the ecological emergency? The policy would set out compliance criteria and be a 'green thread' running through the entire Local Plan. It would give proportionate additional weight to these considerations when determining planning applications.

[INSERT SLIDER GAME ABOUT HOW FAR PEOPLE ARE WILLING TO COMPROMISE TO ACHIEVE NET ZERO - TO BE PROVIDED BY CHRIS CROOKALL-FALLON]

Q10: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

Topic Paper: Accessibility of New Housing Development

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This topic paper seeks to provide greater definition and clarity to the adopted Local Plan objective to “Locat(e) most developments in sustainable locations where there is better access to jobs, services and facilities and public transport.” The aim is to develop a set of accessibility metrics, with reference to objective measures, that can be used to guide the location of new development – and potentially highlight the need for new services or better access to existing ones – to minimise dependency on private vehicles.
- 1.2 We are doing this to achieve local and national government targets to reduce carbon emissions and to deliver on our corporate promises to make our local plan “green to the core”, help residents and businesses maintain good health and wellbeing and support businesses to grow in a green, sustainable manner.
- 1.3 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: **[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE]**

2.0 The issues

- 2.1 The UK Government has signed up to a commitment to cut total carbon emissions by 78% by 2035 and 100% by 2050 to try to prevent catastrophic climate change. Cotswold District Council has set its own target to cut carbon emissions to net zero by 2045.
- 2.2 Most economic/industry sectors in the UK have made good progress in cutting carbon emissions over the last 30 years. Unfortunately, this is not the case with transport, where domestic emissions have barely reduced and remain well above the levels required to meet our commitments. Evidence from past research tells us that people are more likely to walk, cycle or use public transport when the places they need to go regularly can be reached quickly and conveniently from their homes without using a car. Thus, we recognise that where we locate new housing developments has a strong bearing on the transport choices residents make.
- 2.3 Other options to support people to reduce car dependency are covered in more detail in the Transport and Air Quality topic paper. The Responding to the Climate Crisis topic paper provides more detail on the climate change science and targets that are driving the need for these changes.

3.0 The options

- 3.1 The adopted Local Plan already contains objectives to reduce car use by:
 - a. Locating most developments in sustainable locations where there is better access to jobs, services and facilities and public transport.
 - b. Supporting improvements in public transport, walking/cycling networks.
- 3.2 It also contains some policies, e.g. D1, D2 and INF3 to deliver these objectives. So the process set out below is intended to provide definition to the existing policies, and to extend them as necessary where evidence, policy or strategy regarding

decarbonising transport has moved on since the adoption of the Plan. The approach will also inform the decision of which sites should be allocated in the Local Plan.

A New Approach

We propose to assess and score each potential new development site based on how long it would take someone living there to walk or catch the bus to everyday facilities, services, education and employment. If it takes too long, we know that more people are likely to drive instead. The times people are usually willing to travel to different places varies depending on what that place is. For example, people are usually happy to walk further to a secondary school than a primary school. We've based our proposed journey time scores on data from the Department for Transport about how long people in the UK normally travel to such places and compared that with other sources of information about journey time and mode of transport.

Core Services

“Core services” are services and facilities that most people will need to access frequently in their day to day lives. We propose that new housing developments should make sure that people can get to each of these services within a reasonable time by walking and/or using public transport as follows:

Table 1: Core services and journey times

Service	Local Journey time bands (mins by walk/bus)		
	<15 mins	15-30 mins	>30mins
Employment	Green	Amber	Red
Primary school ¹⁶	Green	Red	Amber
Secondary school	Green	Amber	Red
GP	Green	Red	Red
Hospital	Green	Green	Amber
Food store	Green	Red	Red

For the Core Services, potential development sites that score red for any service are deemed to require improvement (in terms of access, service provision or other mitigating measures) before a site would be considered suitable for allocation in the Local Plan.

Primary and Secondary Services

In addition to the Core Services, we have also used national policies, strategies, metrics and locally available information to identify a set of services and facilities we

¹⁶ Primary school thresholds turn amber again after 30 mins travel time, as children under 8 are provided with free home to school transport if the distance they have to travel is greater than 2 miles (3 miles for children over 8).

have defined as Primary and Secondary Services. Primary Services are not as fundamental to sustaining modern life as the Core Services, but are nonetheless services that most people need to access regularly to maintain good health, wellbeing, community and personal life. Secondary Services are those which many people will wish to access to maintain a good quality of life. They are services people will tend to visit less frequently. They may stay for longer when they do.

Primary Services	Secondary Services
Sports fields Play areas Post offices Banks Pharmacies Nurseries Libraries Community halls Places of Worship	Dentists Allotments Leisure Centres Pubs FE Colleges

Scores for access to Primary and Secondary Services give a broader view of the expected transport sustainability of development sites. Sites that are well connected to a range of local services by foot and public transport are less likely to generate high levels of vehicle traffic as people will be more able to access their regular services without needing a car.

We propose to score Primary Services as follows:

- Score 2 for each service within 15 mins walk/bus time; and
- Score 1 for each service within 15-30 mins walk/bus time.

Secondary services score 1 for each service within 30 mins walk/bus time.

The scores for Primary and Secondary Services indicate where access or service improvements should be sought through development. A site that scores low on access to the majority of the indicator services should seek to provide improvement or mitigation. A site that scores well against a broad range of Primary and Secondary Service indicators may be able to offset less favourable performance in other areas.

4.0 Questions

Q1: Do you think it is appropriate that the Local Plan should prioritise development in areas that have good access to essential services without needing to drive?

Q2: Do you agree that an accessibility test should form part of Policy DS3? Note: Policy DS3 applies to small-scale residential development in Non-Principal Settlements¹⁷.

Q3: Do you think the “Core Services” have been appropriately identified? Is there anything you would remove/add to the list?

Q4: Do you think the Primary and Secondary Services have been appropriately identified? Is there anything you would remove/add to the list? Which services are most important to you in your everyday life?

Q5: Do you think the time bands for Core, Primary and Secondary Services are realistic? Do they reflect how long you would be willing to walk or use the bus to access these services?

Note: the time bands for Core, Primary and Secondary Services are shown in sections 3.1 and 3.2 of this topic paper.

Please use the boxes below to indicate how long you would be willing to walk and/or use public transport to get to the following places:

	Acceptable Journey time by walk + bus							
	N/A. I don't need to access this service	Up to 10 mins	Up to 20 mins	Up to 30 mins	Up to 40 mins	Up to 50 mins	Up to 60 mins	More than 60 mins
Workplace								
Primary School								
Secondary School								
GP								
Hospital								
Food shop								
Town centre								
Sports field								
Play area								

¹⁷ Policy DS3 can be viewed in the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 at this link: <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/k2kjqv3b/cotswold-district-local-plan-2011-2031-adopted-3-august-2018-web-version.pdf>

Post office								
Banks								
Pharmacies								
Nursery								
Library								
Community hall								
Place of Worship								
Dentist								
Allotment								
Leisure Centre								
Pub								
FE College								

Q6: If we apply these standards to new housing developments, it may mean that we are able to deliver less housing in Cotswold, or that housing development may be more concentrated in fewer locations with good access to facilities and services. Do you think this is appropriate or would another approach be preferable?

What balance of priority would you give to providing sufficient new housing to meet the District's identified housing need vs. making sure new housing is delivered in accessible locations?

[INSERT PRIORITY SLIDER BELOW QUESTION WHEN IT APPEARS IN THE CONSULTATION SYSTEM]

Q7: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

Topic Paper: Biodiversity

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Biodiversity is the variety of life on Earth – the variety of ecosystems or habitats, of species and of the genetic diversity they contain. We value wildlife in its own right but biodiversity also underpins much of the economic and social benefit we gain from nature¹⁸.
- 1.2 The adopted Local Plan contains several policies relating to biodiversity. It seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment, of which biodiversity is an integral part.
- 1.3 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: **[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE]**

2.0 The Issues

- 2.1 Since the adoption of the Local Plan, several important issues have arisen. National planning policy has been updated and, most notably in respect of biodiversity, there is now a clearer requirement for biodiversity net gain¹⁹. The Government also published the 25 year Environment Plan, which makes recommendations on how biodiversity can be enhanced, including through a Nature Recovery Network. [The Environment Act 2021](#)²⁰ - which is the legislative framework for the 25 year Environment Plan makes biodiversity net gain and nature recovery strategies mandatory. The Act also increases the biodiversity duty of local authorities, by making sure Biodiversity Net Gain is set at a minimum of 10%.
- 2.2 Cotswold District Council declared a [Climate Change Emergency in July 2019 and an Ecological Emergency in July 2020](#)²¹. The Council's Ecological Emergency Action Plan makes various commitments towards improving biodiversity. The Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024 also commits to making the local plan 'Green to the Core'.
- 2.3 Nature Recovery Network mapping has been undertaken and a Local Nature Recovery Strategy is being produced. There have also been various changes to designations in the District, including the re-notification of the Cotswold Water Park Site of Special Scientific Interest to significantly increase its size and further assessment of the Special Areas of Conservation at North Meadow and Clattinger Farm and Cotswolds Beechwoods. The Covid-19 pandemic has also put pressure on biodiversity, which requires further consideration in the Local Plan.
- 2.4 A Local Plan review found that the policies relating to biodiversity should be partially updated to take consideration of these issues.

¹⁸ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

¹⁹ NPPF (2021) paragraph 174b

²⁰ <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2593>

²¹ <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/cotswold-climate-and-ecological-emergencies/>

2.5 The subject of Biodiversity interlinks with several other Local Plan topic papers such as Climate Change, Design, Green Infrastructure and Water.

3.0 The Options

3.1 There are various options available to update the Local Plan in respect of the above issues:

- The Local Plan could require a higher percentage of biodiversity net gain than the 10% minimum that has been mandated by the Environment Act.
- The Local Plan could seek to plug gaps in the Nature Recovery Network through the development of sites and through off-site biodiversity net gains.
- The Local Plan could seek to further protect important wildlife sites from increased pollution from cars, increased recreational pressure, etc., for example, by providing more high quality and accessible open spaces where provision is lacking and delivering modal shift away from private automobiles.
- The Local Plan could incorporate a levy, which requires all new developments to contribute towards biodiversity enhancements where viable.

4.0 Questions

Q1: The Environment Act requires a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain from development proposals. Local Plans can require higher than 10% but this has to be weighed in the balance of delivering other policy objectives. Should developments in Cotswold District achieve more than 10%? Do you think there should be a fixed percentage or should it vary in relation to the size, location or type of development?

Q2: Should the Local Plan limit the percentage of biodiversity net gain that can be delivered off-site (Yes / No)? Should the Local Plan limit how far away from a development site that the biodiversity net gains can be delivered (choices: On-site only; directly adjacent to development; up to 1km; within District; beyond District?)

Q3: Should applications for developments of a certain scale or that are located within a strategically important part of the Nature Recovery Network be required to be accompanied by a Nature Recovery Network plan?

Q4: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

Topic Paper: Design

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The design of development is an important component of the planning process. At a national level the government is promoting the importance of ‘beauty’ and the need to deliver ‘well designed places’²².
- 1.2 The following ten design characteristics contribute towards a well-designed place.



- 1.3 The adopted Local Plan makes various references to design and its importance to the natural built and historic environments (Local Plan objectives 1 and 6). Reference is also made to promoting sustainable construction methods to help mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- 1.4 The Local Plan contains a specific design policy - Policy EN2: *Design of the Built and Natural Environment*. This directs the reader to the Cotswold Design Code located at Appendix D of the Local Plan. The design code helps to ensure that the local context is fully considered when determining planning applications.
- 1.5 National policy is set out in part 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework ([NPPF](#)). National guidance is contained within Planning Practice Guidance ([PPG](#)) and is supplemented by additional guidance contained within the National Design Guide (2019) and the National Model Design Code (2021). The latter provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on the ten characteristics of good design in the National Design Guide.

²² Planning for the Future (2020) - A government consultation on proposals for reform of the planning system in England <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>

- 1.6 Cotswold District Council Corporate Strategy contains a specific action to “Develop design codes that focus on climate change and protect people from overheating risk”.
- 1.7 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: **[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE]**

2.0 The issues

- 2.1 The Cotswold Design Code is the principal local plan policy and source of advice on how to achieve good design in the Cotswolds especially in terms of architectural styles and Green Infrastructure. Since its adoption in Aug 2018 the Code has been used to good effect and it continues to provide a firm basis upon which to determine planning applications. Nevertheless the Sustainability Appraisal scoping document and Local Plan review identified the need to update the Council’s Design policy and code.
- 2.2 A review of Local Plan policies concluded that the following amendments were needed:
- design and building standards will play an increasing vital role in the adaptation and mitigation of the climate emergency;
 - the NPPF directs the Council to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, and plans should use visual tools such as design guides and codes;
 - the Local Plan partial update will need to consider more detailed design policies as the NPPF places greater emphasis on place shaping;
 - the Local Plan should consider how the council can provide an effective framework to guide town and parish councils preparing Neighbourhood Plans to draft design codes and guides that provide guidance at a local scale and avoid duplicating district and national level principles.
- 2.3 The Design Code’s aim remains consistent with national policy and with the Council’s corporate aims. However and in general terms, the Local Plan Review raised concerns that design policies are not proactively responding to known issues in a timely manner or sufficiently emphasising the role of the design code in place shaping. The issues are set out in the Topic Paper but examples are:
- reducing the energy consumption and carbon emissions for new buildings and supporting residents to retrofit their traditionally built Cotswold homes to achieve similar standards whilst respecting local character and heritage;
 - creating space for people to walk and cycle more, potentially by reducing space currently devoted to vehicles;
 - responding to the Council’s commitment to promoting healthier homes and neighborhoods;
 - protecting our air, water, landscape and descendent from the impacts of pollution and climate change we will need to explore clean methods of energy generation, such as wind turbines and solar panels; and

- responding to changes in national planning policy and guidance which is emphasising the importance of delivering beauty through the local planning system.

2.4 Other Topic Papers relevant to Design are: Historic Environment; Climate Change; Transport / Accessibility; Green Infrastructure; Natural Capital; and Biodiversity

3.0 The options

3.1 The issues highlight the interconnectedness of sustainable development and good design - one can not be achieved without the other. The options reflect this synergy and are considered to respond well to identified issues and corporate actions.

3.2 Specific policy response could include:

- 1) **Present a new strategic policy** that incorporates the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals²³. The purpose of the policy would be to emphasise the interconnectedness and interdependence of these issues; and require that all proposals be fully compliant with their requirements;
- 2) **Present a new Sustainable Development Checklist and Statement** that sets out the standards that applicants are expected to demonstrate their compliance with and require applicants to evidence how proposals meet the standards, respectively;
- 3) **Richer detail for new site allocations ('S' Policies)**. New site allocations would benefit from greater detail on the design influences, access arrangements and necessary infrastructure within the policy to provide more clarity and expectation to the development management process.
- 4) **Introduce a new building standards policy** that requires new buildings to be zero carbon, in terms of the construction and life time use.
- 5) **Partially update the Cotswold Design Code** to improve the visual quality of the guidance, without freighting the guidance with pages of information and avoiding repetition of national guidance; and improve consistency with the National Design Guide's ten characteristics of good places.

Options

Option 1 - do nothing. This is always an option in any situation. In this case it is unacceptable. The Local Plan review has identified that policy amendments together with new policies are required to make the local plan green to the core.

Option 2 - Commit to the five policy responses listed above that collectively deliver zero carbon development within the plan period. The parameters of this option are self-explanatory and respond to the issues considered above.

Option 3 - Commit to the five policy responses listed above but align policies to government policy which promote a slower and longer transition towards zero carbon development.

Preferred option

²³ The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

Option 2 is the preferred option.

4.0 Questions – tell us what you think

BINARY QUESTION. Q1: Do you agree with the preferred option and the five suggested policy responses? If not, why? Are there other policy responses? **[INSERT YES / NO TICK BOX. INSERT COMMENT BOX FOR 'PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY' QUESTION]**

BINARY QUESTION. Q2: Would you support a proposition in the Local Plan that required an energy performance improvement of the entire building when it is proposed to extend or refurbish the building (Climate Change Statement)? **[INSERT YES / NO TICK BOX. INSERT COMMENT BOX FOR 'PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY' QUESTION]**

BINARY QUESTION. Q3: Would you support the Council in approving development that takes a modern interpretation of the traditional Cotswold design to achieve zero or low carbon development? **[INSERT YES / NO TICK BOX. INSERT COMMENT BOX FOR 'PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY' QUESTION]**

Q4: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

Topic Paper: Economy and Employment

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: [\[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE\]](#)

1.2 The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) makes clear the government's requirement that "planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt" and that "significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development."²⁴

1.3 The Council's economic ambitions for Cotswold District reflect this requirement. They are encapsulated in the proposed revisions to Objective 3 of the Local Plan:

a. Support the local economy and enable the creation of more high quality jobs in the District, which help young people to have rewarding careers locally.

b. Encourage the vitality and viability of town and village centres as places for shopping, work, leisure, cultural and community activities, including maintaining Cirencester's key employment and service role.

c. Support sustainable tourism in ways that enable the District to act as a tourist destination which spreads the benefits of tourism throughout the District rather than being concentrated in 'honeypot' areas.

1.4 Some key statistics:

- the local economy is a net importer of labour into the District - 2,000 people (pre-pandemic);
- job density is the highest in the South West;
- productivity is 17% higher than the national average and the highest in the South West;
- 90% of businesses are microbusinesses employing 9 people or fewer - over 5,500 in total; and
- double the national average of people working at home - 13.3% - 7th highest in England (pre-pandemic).

2.0 The issues

2.1 The economy is in the midst of dynamic change. It is important when considering updates to the Local Plan to bear this context in mind. It introduces uncertainty and consequent difficulty in formulation and revision of planning policy. The relevant changes include:

- increased online shopping;

²⁴ NPPF (2021) paragraph 81

- Brexit;
- changes in social and working habits as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic;
- legislative change related to Class E of the Use Classes Order; and
- the impact of climate change adaptation and mitigation.

2.2 Setting aside retail and town centres and Tourism (see separate Topic Papers) the adopted Local Plan has six policies relating to [Economy and Employment](#):

- Employment Development (POLICY EC1)
- Safeguarding Employment Sites (POLICY EC2)
- Proposals for all types of Employment-Generating Uses (POLICY EC3)
- Special Policy Areas (POLICY EC4)
- Rural Diversification (POLICY EC5)
- Conversion of Rural Buildings (POLICY EC6)

2.3 The review of the adopted Local Plan has concluded these policies remain broadly sound although additions and amendments need to be considered to address some of the following issues, questions and opportunities:

- The Local Plan contains a B1 land and floorspace requirement and various references to B1 uses within the policies. It also contains an A1 floorspace requirement. Given the A1 and B1 use classes have been revoked and that changes of use can now take place between uses in the new Class E without needing planning permission, an update to the Local Plan is needed to respond to these issues.
- Despite the planning system still purporting to be “plan-led”, the ability for uses within Class E to change to Class C3 (dwelling houses) as permitted development²⁵ is a significant threat to the safeguarding of existing employment sites (Policy EC2) and to the ability of the council to effectively control commercial development within Class E.
- Relatedly, national policy on retaining employment sites and the market attractiveness of delivering housing in Cotswold mean there is pressure on some employment sites to become housing.
- The housing element of mixed use developments is often built first but the employment is rarely delivered. Viability / lack of demand is often the reason cited for not delivering employment developments. The Local Plan could be updated to condition that employment development must be delivered simultaneously with housing on mixed use schemes.
- *Gloucestershire Economic Needs Assessment identifies substantial need for new employment development in the Cotswold District. There appear to be some challenges delivering this need - rents do not support speculative development and demand has been weaker in smaller and more remote areas. There is also the risk of*

²⁵ There are exemptions including Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings, and the ability to change use is subject to a prior approval process.

allocating employment development in Class E which could subsequently become housing “by the back door”.

- *There is strong demand for industrial/warehousing especially in and around Cirencester. This may well increase when the A417 Missing Link project is completed, reducing journey times between Gloucester and Cirencester and, probably more crucially, between the M5 and M4. The employment land elements of the Steadings development should help to meet this demand.*
- *For many years Cotswold District has seen a high and increasing rate of in-commuting and out-commuting. House prices in the district are such that many people cannot afford to live close to where they work so have to travel - something which is not desirable from a climate change perspective or in attracting new businesses. Flexible working and home working mean that more people can commute less often to work. Home working also means that demand for office space is reduced. It has also created a demand for flexible/serviced offices, not just in larger towns like Cirencester but even in some of our villages.*
- *Climate change represents both a challenge, in how we mitigate its effects and reduce the carbon footprint of businesses, but also an opportunity in terms of how we can make the Cotswold District a centre for green technology businesses.*
- *The pace of technological change - for example, Artificial Intelligence (AI) - is great and we need to ensure that the District is in a position to take advantage of it by ensuring we have the appropriate skills and infrastructure in place, as well as the right premises to attract technology companies. The Applied Digital Skills Centre at Cirencester College, which is currently under construction, is an example of the type of initiative we need to keep pace with technological change.*
- *Key local sectors include agritech/food and drink production/innovation, cyber/digital and environmental technologies. The landscape of the Cotswolds makes it an attractive place for environmentally conscious businesses and the Council is keen to ensure the recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic is a green one.*
- *The Cotswolds brand, with its images of rolling hills and chocolate box villages, is a great asset from a tourism perspective but does not represent the full picture of the District and its business community. The perception that the area is not diverse and does not contain a wide range of leisure facilities (e.g. cinemas and nightclubs) can make it difficult for businesses to attract staff, particularly young people in, for example, the digital and finance sectors. The loss of young people from the area was a key weakness identified by the Gloucestershire Vision 2050 initiative, which noted in 2018 that Gloucestershire suffered a net loss of 400 young people from the County each year.*

2.4 It is important to note that not all these issues can be addressed in an update of the Local Plan. The more long-term and strategic issues (italicised) will be considered when a full review of the Local Plan is undertaken in due course.

3.0 The options

Option 1 - Do nothing. This is always an option in any circumstance, but in this case is unacceptable. For the Local Plan Update to be found sound when it is examined it will at the very least be necessary to amend Policy EC2 so that it accords with the revised Use Classes Order.

Option 2 - revise the extant policies and supporting text solely to ensure they are technically compliant with legislative changes and the revised NPPF.

Option 3 - revise extant policies from a technical viewpoint (Option 2) and amend existing or introduce new policy to:

- (a) ensure that the employment element of mixed-use schemes is developed coterminously with the housing element;
- (b) introduce a presumption in favour of viable employment development that demonstrably is part of the “green” economy;
- (c) identify areas considered to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses;
- (d) explore the feasibility of using Article 4 Directions to control the ability of Class E development to change to Class C3 (dwelling houses) in specific parts of the district, including safeguarded employment sites that may feature a significant proportion of Class E uses; and
- (e) for larger development sites, require that the proposal is accompanied by an Employment and Skills Plan that shows how the development will materially contribute to helping the local economy be more self-sufficient and sustainable.

Preferred option(s)

- 3.1 Option 3 is the preferred option. Legislative change is a significant challenge to the Local Plan’s employment strategy and “greening” the Local Plan requires clear direction in that regard.

4.0 Questions – tell us what you think

Q1: What do you think of the options set out above?

Q2: Working patterns are changing. Is there a need to provide workspaces closer to home? Should we require new housing developments to provide or contribute towards providing flexible workspace in or close to those developments? Do you agree new houses should provide spaces and infrastructure for home working? Could existing community buildings like village halls have a role to play in this?

Q3: Do you support the use of legal requirements to ensure the delivery of employment development on mixed-use schemes at the same time as the housing element? If not, why?

[TICK BOX: (YES / NO). ADD COMMENT BOX BELOW]

Q4: How else can we use local planning policy to support green business activity and the local economy? Do you have any specific ideas on how we deliver the LEP's draft Local Industrial Strategy?

Q5: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

Topic Paper: Green Infrastructure

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Green Infrastructure (GI) is defined as “A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity”
- 1.2 National policy requires local plans to have a GI strategy and make provision for GI²⁶. It recognises the importance of GI in achieving healthy, inclusive and safe places²⁷. It also recognises the important function GI has in tackling climate change²⁸, as well as conserving and enhancing the natural environment where a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and GI is required²⁹. National policy also recognises the role GI can play in improving air quality³⁰.
- 1.3 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: **[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE]**

2.0 The Issues

- 2.1 The adopted Local Plan contains contains various policies that directly or indirectly relate to GI³¹. A review of Local Plan found that some policies relating to GI would benefit from being updated to reflect the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), commitments on GI in the government’s 25 year Environment Plan and the [Environment Act 2021](#)³². An update to Natural England’s open space standards is also expected soon, so there is an opportunity to align the Local Plan’s GI policies with them.
- 2.2 Cotswold District Council’s Corporate Strategy (2020-2024) seeks to make the Local Plan ‘Green to the Core’, respond to the climate crisis, improve health and wellbeing and enable a vibrant economy. Additionally, the Council has declared a Climate Change Emergency and an Ecologic Emergency. The Ecological Emergency includes a commitment to produce a GI strategy, which has now been completed. The local

²⁶ NPPF (2021) paragraph 20

²⁷ NPPF (2021) paragraph 92c

²⁸ NPPF (2021) paragraph 154a

²⁹ NPPF (2021) paragraph 175

³⁰ NPPF (2021) paragraph 186

³¹ For example, Policy INF4: Social and Community Infrastructure; Policy INF7: Green Infrastructure; and Policy INF8: Water Management Infrastructure

³² <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2593>

plan should help deliver the actions and aspirations within the GI strategy. The Council has also committed to using the Building with Nature Standard to a greater extent than it does at present.

- 2.3 The Covid-19 pandemic has also put pressure on Green Infrastructure. The increase in people accessing the countryside has created new challenges, including management of sites, litter, more wear on footpaths, etc.
- 2.4 GI interlinks with several other Local Plan topic papers such as Climate Change; Design; Health, Social and Cultural Wellbeing; Transport; and Water.

3.0 The Options

- 3.1 **Option 1** - Do nothing. Always an option in any situation, but unacceptable here. The Local Plan needs to accord with national policy. GI is an important component in making the updated Local Plan “green to the core”. The actions set out in Option 2 are all necessary.
- 3.2 **Option 2** - Update the Local Plan to reflect:
- Cotswold District Council’s Climate Change Emergency and Ecological Emergency declarations and the Council’s Corporate Plan;
 - Cotswold District Council’s Green Infrastructure Strategy;
 - the updated national planning policy and guidance;
 - the Building with Nature Benchmark/Standard;
 - the 25 year Environment Plan and the Environment Act 2021; and
 - Natural England’s revised National Open Space Standards.

4.0 Questions

Q1: The GI Strategy identifies that the District does not have enough access to open spaces at both the local and District-wide level. Do you think sites should be allocated within the local plan for the provision of country parks and further local community parks? Can you suggest any locations for a country park or a local community park?

Q2: In new developments, would you prefer a bigger garden or better access to shared open spaces such as parks, allotments, playgrounds, etc.?

Q3: What GI features are most important to you in new developments and what would deliver the most benefits for people and the environment:

Pick your top three choices from this list:

- Creating new pedestrian and cycle routes or enhancing existing routes. These would be off-road or traffic-free routes and we would try to link settlements

(within and outside the district), e.g. by re-using disused railway lines and canals.

- Features within development sites to reduce flooding, prevent droughts and deliver biodiversity and amenity enhancements.
- Better management of streams and rivers to increase water quality, reduce flood risk and generate renewable energy.
- Creating fully accessible circular walks around towns and villages.
- Securing better long term management and community involvement of new or enhanced GI within all new developments.
- More play opportunities with a particular emphasis on natural play.
- Sufficient provision of allotments in all towns and villages;
- Stopping developments being clogged up with cars parked everywhere.

Q4: Should developments deliver GI that meets the [Building with Nature Standard GI standard](#)³³, or equivalent as a way of ensuring that high quality GI is provided within new developments? Should this apply to all developments or only to developments over a certain scale? And what scale should that be?

Q5: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

³³ The Building with Nature Standard and benchmark supports the delivery of high quality GI at all stages in the development process including policy, design, planning, implementation, construction and long-term management. The Benchmark breaks down GI using the key themes of Wellbeing, Water and Wildlife

Topic Paper: Health, Social and Cultural Wellbeing

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Health, social and cultural and wellbeing are complex and wide-ranging issues - they span practically every Local Plan policy and extend well beyond the influence of town planning. Cotswold District generally has good health, social and cultural wellbeing compared to much of the UK. However, the District has particular issues that need to be addressed and planned for.
- 1.2 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: [\[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE\]](#)

2.0 The Issues

- 2.1 Cotswold has an aging population. Social isolation and loneliness are growing concerns and 16.1% of the District's residents have a long-term health problem or disability³⁴.
- 2.2 Food bank usage in the Cirencester food bank area³⁵ grew by 131% between 2018 and 2021. There is also an upward trend in obesity and mental health problems across the District.
- 2.3 The quality of housing is also linked to health. The District has some overcrowded housing and there is also a large number of poorly heated and / or insulated properties. Solving this problem would help the 9% of the District's households who live in 'fuel poverty'³⁶, whilst also taking action against climate change.
- 2.4 Health can also be improved through active travel. However, the district currently has a high reliance on private automobiles. The rural nature of the district means that many of the District's communities have limited access to essential services and / or active travel options. However, a balance has to be struck, as housing is sometimes needed in less accessible locations to sustain existing services and to enable people, particularly younger people, to live in the area they have strong connections to.
- 2.5 Since the adoption of the Local Plan, Covid-19 has shone a spotlight on health, social and cultural wellbeing inequalities and the Council has declared a climate change emergency. It is therefore right to revisit the Local Plan on these issues to understand whether the balance has shifted between providing housing in rural areas or providing housing in locations with better access to services and active travel options.

3.0 The Options

³⁴ 2011 Census

³⁵ Cirencester with Tetbury and Fairford

³⁶ Department for Energy and Climate Change (2016)

- 3.1 National policy and guidance recognise the importance of health, social and cultural and wellbeing and the role that planning policies can play to make improvements. Cotswold District Council's Corporate Plan³⁷ also seeks to encourage resilient, well-connected and active communities that take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing goals.
- 3.2 The Local Plan already supports health, social and cultural wellbeing in various ways, but there are opportunities to do more. For example:
- The Local Plan could require all new housing to be zero carbon to overcome fuel poverty issues and enabling more people to live in warm and healthier homes (as explained further in the Climate Change topic paper).
 - The Local Plan objectives can be expanded to ensure that new developments and sites support positive health outcomes and the delivery of local strategies³⁸ that seek to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing and inequalities, as well as only permitting developments with limited access to services in exceptional circumstances and delivering more active and sustainable forms of travel.
 - The Local Plan³⁹ could (i) incorporate the updated needs for different types of housing for older people resulting from the Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment and the Gloucestershire Older People Care Home Strategy; and (ii) include a requirement for types of accessible and adaptable housing, as identified in the Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment.
 - The Cotswold Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Policies SA1-SA3 and INF1 could be updated to reflect the need for additional health care facilities and asset-based/place-based community development, such as the development of designated community spaces (indoor and outdoor) and funding to facilitate 'Community Building' in new developments.
 - The local plan could require new developments to contribute towards improving peoples' access to good food (e.g. the incorporation of allotments and community kitchens into developments).
 - The Cotswold Design Code could be updated to take further consideration of 'Inclusive Design' principles contained within the PPG on Housing for Older and Disabled People and RTPI Guide on Dementia. It could also be updated to better create environments that encourage the use of healthy, active travel choices.
 - The Local Plan could align with the new Leisure Strategy to secure improved, more accessible, flexible and inclusive services.
 - Policies DS3 and H3 could be updated to provide further clarity on what is meant by sustainable access to jobs, services and facilities (as explained further in the Transport topic paper).

³⁷ <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/r/rldwcmb/corporate-strategy-2020.pdf>

³⁸ e.g. [Gloucestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy \(2020 to 2030\)](#)

³⁹ This refers to Local Plan Policy H4

- The Green Infrastructure policy could be updated to better enable people to live more active lifestyles with improved mental health with improved access to better food (as explained further in the Green Infrastructure topic paper).
- The Sustainable Transport policy could be updated to help deliver more active transport options, which will benefit peoples' physical and mental health (as explained further in the Transport topic paper).

4.0 Questions

Q1: Are the proposed policy changes justified within the Local Plan partial update? Please explain why.

Q2: Are there any additional policy changes that could help to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing and inequalities in Cotswold District?

Q3: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

Topic Paper: Historic Environment

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The historic environment of Cotswold District is of national significance and is one of its key assets. The adopted Local Plan's objectives in this respect are to:
- a. Conserve and enhance the high quality, local distinctiveness and diversity of the natural and historic environment; and
 - b. Ensure that new development is of high quality and sustainable design, which reflects local character and distinctiveness, is appropriately sited, and provides attractive and inclusive environments
- 1.2 [Local Plan chapter 10](#) "Built, Natural and Historic Environment" contains seven policies relating specifically to the historic environment.
- 1.3 National policy is set out in part 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework ([NPPF](#)). National guidance is contained within Planning Practice Guidance ([PPG](#)).
- 1.4 [Cotswold District Council Corporate Strategy](#) has no aims or actions relating specifically to the historic environment.
- 1.5 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: [\[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE\]](#)

2.0 The issues

- 2.1 A review of Local Plan policies concluded that the following relatively minor amendments were needed in respect of two of the policies:
- Policy EN12 Historic Environment: Non-designated Heritage Assets*
- 2.2 The policy states that "*Proposals for demolition or total loss of a non-designated heritage asset will be subject to a balanced assessment ...*". NPPF (para 203) states that: "*... a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*".
- Policy EN13 Historic Environment: The Conversion of Non-Domestic Historic Buildings*
- 2.3 The phrase '*proportionate to the significance of the asset*' does not accord with NPPF para 202 in respect of less than substantial harm to designated heritage assets and the need to weigh impact against public benefits.
- 2.4 The review also noted that having regard to the Climate Change and Ecological Emergencies declared by the council, the following issues need to be incorporated into a new policy:
- when changes are made to heritage assets, the potential impacts of climate change, e.g. increased storm events with higher rainfall, should be fully considered

- when retrofitting heritage assets to increase energy efficiency, including insulation and energy generation, the full implications of those changes should be considered, using a "whole-building" approach. The choice of energy efficiency measures should be guided to ensure that measures that both maximise energy efficiency and minimise any potential impacts on the significance of the heritage asset are prioritised.

2.5 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report says that the key sustainability issues for this topic area include:

- ensuring that heritage assets are managed and maintained appropriately;
- managing change which protects and enhances the historic environment for future generations while meeting the needs of current occupiers and users, for example the move from retail uses;
- using the historic environment as an "inspiration" for the design of new developments;
- the need to consider the impacts of climate change on the historic environment;
- the impact of the proposed change affecting Use Class E - allowing change to Class C3 (dwelling houses) as permitted development - although it should be noted that listed buildings and buildings within Scheduled Monuments are not affected by this change.

2.6 Paragraph 185 of the NPPF requires the council to set out in its plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats.

2.7 Historic England has issued guidance relating to the historic environment in local plans The guidance includes advice relating to the preparation of the strategy referred to in the NPPF.

2.8 The requirements of NPPF paragraph 185 and the Historic England (HE) guidance are fairly clear. Although it refers in several places to the Council's "Historic Environment Strategy", the Local Plan does not set out a "positive strategy" in the form recommended by the HE guidance.

2.9 Other Topic Papers relevant to the historic environment are:

- Design/Built Environment
- Climate Change

3.0 The Options

3.1 As noted above, the policy amendments recommended by the review of the Local Plan together with the recommendation that a new policy is prepared in response to the Climate Change Emergency are relatively modest and do not raise any significant issues.

3.2 In respect of the NPPF requirement that the Plan sets out a positive strategy for the historic environment, several points are worth noting:

- 3.3 Firstly, the existing CDC HE Strategy pre-dates the Historic England guidance. At the time the CDC HE Strategy was being prepared there was no clear guidance on what “a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment” actually entailed. Although it would be unfair to label the CDC HE Strategy as “wrong” within the context of its preparation, subsequently issued guidance has placed a different emphasis and interpretation on the NPPF requirement.
- 3.4 Secondly, it is important to bear in mind that when the current Local Plan was examined in 2017/2018 its approach to the Historic Environment was not found to be unsound. There has been no change in relevant national planning policy in the intervening period.
- 3.5 Thirdly, the task at hand is to update the Local Plan to bring it into line with key changes in national policy and to take account of other significant planning considerations affecting the Plan since its adoption in 2018. While it is acknowledged that the adopted Local Plan does not set out a “positive strategy” precisely as envisaged in the HE guidance, it is also the case that to integrate such an approach into the Local Plan would entail its deconstruction and rebuilding to ensure that a strategy of that nature was properly embedded. It is not something that can simply be “bolted on”.
- 3.6 Having regard to these considerations and to the need to acquire the necessary supporting evidence - for which there is no allocated budget - it is considered that this is a matter for a subsequent full review of the Local Plan rather than this partial update.

4.0 Options

Option 1 - do nothing.

This is always an option in any situation. In this case it is unacceptable. The Local Plan review has identified that policy amendments together with a new policy are needed.

Option 2 -

- i. Commit to preparing a “positive strategy” for inclusion in the next full review of the Local Plan;
- ii. Update the existing Plan policies having regard to the Local Plan Review; and
- iii. Prepare new policy to address the safeguarding of heritage assets while mitigating and adapting to the Climate Change Emergency.

The parameters of this option are self-explanatory and respond to the issues considered above.

Option 3 - together with parameters ii and iii of Option 2, following HE guidance, prepare a “positive strategy” as required by the NPPF.

This option is identical to Option 2 but it commits the council to preparing a “positive strategy” as part of the Local Plan Update. For the reasons set out above, this is not considered to be a viable or appropriate option.

Preferred option(s)

- 4.1 **Option 2** - is the preferred option.

5.0 Questions – tell us what you think

Q1: Do you agree that the preparation of a “Positive Strategy for the Historic Environment” is, for the reasons set out above, better addressed in a full review of the Local Plan rather than in this partial update?

Q2: Like everything else, our historic buildings will be affected as we respond to the Climate Change Emergency. Do you agree with the measures we’re proposing to ensure that our designated buildings are safeguarded as we mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change? Are there any other measures you think we should consider?

Q3: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

Topic Paper: Housing Affordability

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: [\[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE\]](#)
- 1.2 Cotswold District has an acute housing affordability issue. Many people, particularly younger people, are unable to afford a home close to where they work, grew up or have a close connection to. This means people have to travel further, particularly to get to work. The housing affordability issue is also having a harmful impact on the local economy and the viability of some services.
- 1.3 The district has an aging population and if young people are unable to live here, this issue is exacerbated. The district's average household size is also getting smaller⁴⁰ - larger houses are generally more expensive and they're increasingly not what people need or can afford.

2.0 The Issues

- 2.1 National policy requires Local Plans to provide a strategy to deliver affordable housing, as well as for the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community. Affordable housing should be built alongside market housing to create mixed and balanced communities.
- 2.2 National policy also requires Local Plans to protect and enhance the district's nationally designated landscape and its high quality built and natural environment. The district is heavily constrained in all these regards. A balance has to be struck between achieving sustainable development with regard to delivering affordable housing and all the benefits this can bring and the need to protect the district's sensitive environment.
- 2.3 The adopted Local Plan has an affordable housing delivery strategy and the district is over-delivering on its Local Plan affordable housing requirement. However, the long-running trend of worsening housing affordability has continued. As of 2021, Cotswold District is the least affordable place to live in Gloucestershire and is more unaffordable than any of the surrounding local authority areas.
- 2.4 Solving the housing affordability issue is not just a local issue. There is a national housing crisis, which the government acknowledges. However, there are various national policies and issues outside the Council's control that have fuelled house price increases or have made housing affordability worse. For example:
- Wages have not kept pace with house prices;
 - The cost of food, energy and other household bills have increased, leaving less money to afford a suitable home;

⁴⁰Average household size in Cotswold District is 2.28 people per house in 2021 but this is set to decrease to 2.18 by 2041.

- The Right to Buy scheme has extended well-beyond its original purpose and has left a shortage of social-rented housing nationally, but especially so in Cotswold District;
- Not enough social-rented housing has been built in recent years across the country;
- Both low interest rates and the increased ability of people being able to get a mortgage have fuelled an increase in house prices;
- Stamp Duty holidays have effectively given people more money to spend on buying a home and have driven up demand, which in turn has driven up house prices;
- Land banking (i.e. land being used as a financial asset to increase share prices rather than to deliver housing) and developers purposefully 'drip-feeding' new homes into the market to ensure house prices remain high to maximise profits;
- Second home ownership, buy to let and holiday lets have removed housing from the market that could otherwise be made available to those who want to own a home, and the resulting increased demand within a reduced pool of housing stock inflates house prices; and
- The Covid-19 pandemic has put additional pressure on housing markets, particularly in Cotswold District. Increased home working has enabled people to live further afield and commute to work on a less regular basis. The lockdowns highlighted the importance of having a garden or access to high quality open space, as well as a large enough house to live and work in. This has created a so-called 'race for space' with many people vacating urban areas in seeking housing in places like Cotswold District. Covid-19 has led more people to undertake a holiday or weekend break in the UK. Private landlords can typically make as much money from a single week of renting a property for holiday accommodation as they can in a month for conventional housing. This is removing private rented accommodation from the market, which leaves a reduced pool of houses to choose from and increased demand and rental prices.

2.5 Building more and more houses to reduce house prices (or "Build, Build, Build", as Boris Johnson puts it) does not work, particularly in Cotswold District. There is much evidence to support this. Cotswold District has delivered significantly more housing than has been required in recent years, yet housing affordability has continued to worsen. Cotswold District Council will continue to lobby the government on these issues, as we did in our [response to the Planning for the Future White Paper](#).

2.6 There are, however, things that the Council can do to improve housing affordability. Cotswold District Council's Corporate Plan (2020-2024) aims to provide more 'genuinely affordable homes', with an emphasis on social rented housing and a focus on provision for young people, military veterans and families. Additionally, the Council wants to tackle fuel poverty and climate change by ensuring that all new housing is energy efficient and carbon neutral, which will have long-lasting improvements on being able to afford a home. Enabling people to live close to where they work, grew up or have a close connection to also reduces the need to travel and the costs involved, which again helps people to afford a home.

2.7 Cotswold District Council is actively pursuing a partnership with an affordable housing provider to deliver more affordable housing, particularly social rented housing, and refurbish

or rebuild existing stock. This includes maximising opportunities presented by the Council's own assets, as well as working with partners and developers to maximise opportunities.

3.0 Options

3.1 There are also various Local Plan policy changes that may help to improve housing affordability. The following list is unavoidably technical and does not attempt to provide every solution. However, these are some things the Council could consider doing.

- The Local Plan could allocate more sites over and above the housing requirement to deliver more affordable housing.
- An accessibility to services test could be introduced to open market housing developments in more rural settlements⁴¹. Where the test is failed, development would only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, such as a 100% affordable housing development.
- One of the determining factors in the choice of sites could be the number or type of market or affordable homes that would be delivered⁴².
- Smaller homes are generally more affordable, so a policy requirement could be introduced for a higher proportion of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom market houses, and fewer 4 and 5 bedroom houses.
- The percentage requirement for affordable housing on housing development sites could be increased, although this may affect the delivery of other types of infrastructure. A balanced strategy would be needed.
- Recent national policy changes enable Local Plans to require affordable housing and / or money to deliver affordable homes elsewhere on smaller development sites than is currently required in the adopted Local Plan. The Local Plan could be updated to reflect this.
- There are different types of affordable housing, with social rented housing being the most affordable but also the most expensive to build. The Local Plan specifies how much of each affordable housing type should be provided within a development. This requirement could be adjusted to deliver more or less of a particular type of affordable home.
- A loophole currently exists that enables developers to submit several smaller developments on a larger site, which in isolation do not exceed the affordable housing requirement threshold, but cumulatively would otherwise require affordable housing. This loophole could be closed off.

⁴¹ Those applicable to Local Plan Policy DS3

⁴² Note - the Council is also required to prioritise the reuse of brownfield sites, which would likely provide fewer affordable homes due to viability issues

- The Local Plan policies could be adjusted to enable more affordable housing to be delivered on Rural Exception Sites⁴³ to make more of these opportunities when they arise.
- The Local Plan could allow 100% affordable housing sites, small or large, adjacent to the development boundaries of Principal Settlements, which are currently not allowed, particularly within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- The Local Plan could include a policy that restricts second home ownership within new developments.

4.0 Questions – tell us what you think

Q1: Are the suggested policy changes beneficial and deliverable? Please explain why or any alternative solutions that could be used.

Q2: Can you suggest any further policy changes that could maximise the delivery of affordable housing, whilst also achieving sustainable development with regard to issues such as the need to protect the high quality built and natural environment and reduce the need to drive?

Q3: Should the local plan restrict second home ownership in new developments? Should this be all new housing that is built or a proportion of new housing? And how do you think this would benefit or make worse housing affordability in Cotswold District?

Q4: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

⁴³ Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. They seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

Topic Paper: Housing Need, Requirement, Land Supply and Delivery

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: [\[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE\]](#)
- 1.2 National policy requires local planning authorities to understand and plan for housing needs in their area. It also requires local planning authorities to maintain a deliverable five year housing land supply to provide a continual pipeline of development sites. Furthermore, a 'Housing Delivery Test' must be passed to ensure that the required number of homes is actually delivered.

2.0 The Issues

- 2.1 Cotswold District Council adopted a Local Plan in August 2018, which set the District's housing requirement to be 8,400 dwellings for the Plan period 2011 to 2031 (an average of 420 dwellings a year). The Local Plan also identifies a need for up to 14 pitches for gypsies and travellers, as well as a need for 665 sheltered and extracare housing units (dwellings) and 580 nursing and residential bedspaces. The Plan allocates sites across the district and has further policies to ensure that the housing requirements are fully delivered and a five year housing land supply is continually maintained.
- 2.2 National policy specifies that housing requirements are a minimum, not a maximum. Furthermore, national policy does not allow restrictions on the timing of when sites can be developed. Cotswold District has extremely high demand for housing. These factors led to an extreme peak in housing delivery early in the Local Plan period. 66% of the 8,400 dwelling requirement has already been built in the first 10 years of the plan period. In three consecutive years between 2016 to 2019, annual housing completions reached 755, 910 and 806 dwellings respectively.
- 2.3 To counteract extreme over-delivery, the Local Plan contains a mechanism to ensure that the requirement against which the five year housing land supply and the Housing Delivery Test are measured factors in any over-delivery from earlier in the Local Plan period. As of April 2021, the remaining annual housing requirement for the plan period stood at 282 dwellings. Based on the current housing requirement and Local Plan policies, the remaining supply of housing sites is expected to be more than sufficient to maintain a five year housing land supply and enable the District to continue to pass the Housing Delivery Test. Similarly, the policies for gypsies and travellers and specialist accommodation are also currently on track for delivering the needs identified in the Local Plan.
- 2.4 Despite this, a significant change in circumstance has taken place recently that now requires an update to the Local Plan. Since the adoption of the Local Plan in August 2018, new rules have been introduced to national policy that require housing needs (for new new dwellings) to be reassessed at least once every five years. Furthermore, the calculation of housing need is now provided to all local authority areas by national guidance - so every authority's

requirement is calculated using the same methodology. Cotswold District Council's minimum housing need is 490 dwellings per annum.

- 2.5 There is also new evidence on the specialist accommodation needs of older people, which also assesses the needs of different groups of people. Updated evidence on gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople accommodation needs has also been commissioned.
- 2.6 At this point, it is worth highlighting the difference between a 'housing need' and a 'housing requirement'.
- The government's standard method calculation of housing need (for new dwellings) is based on household projections, which are adjusted to take account of the affordability of housing in an area. A cap on the housing need is also provided.
 - The housing need is normally used as the basis for calculating the housing requirement (for new dwellings). The housing requirement also takes into consideration whether the number given by the housing need should be increased or decreased to account for other variables, such as providing more affordable housing, environmental constraints, the availability of sites, the impact of large infrastructure projects, whether any unmet needs of neighbouring authorities should be provided for, and so on. Consideration can also be given to whether there is an exceptional circumstance for using an alternative approach to the standard method to calculate the minimum local housing need.
- 2.7 National policy requires that unless the housing requirement is reassessed and adopted within the five year anniversary of the adoption of the Local Plan (i.e. 3 August 2023), the standard method calculation of 490 dwellings per annum should be used as the requirement against which the five year housing land supply and Housing Delivery Test are measured.
- 2.8 There is currently an insufficient housing land supply to deliver 490 dwellings a year between 2023 and 2031. It is currently estimated that this increase would require the allocation of sites capable of delivering around 700 to 900 additional dwellings by 2031. The adopted Local Plan must be updated to ensure that the District continues to maintain a deliverable five year housing land supply and passes the Housing Delivery Test.

3.0 The Options

- 3.1 It is considered that there are two available options to respond to this specific issue and both have their pros and cons:
- i. Revert to standard method housing need calculation as the basis for determining the requirements against which the five year housing land supply and Housing Delivery Test are measured. Allocate additional sites in the Local Plan to maintain a five year housing land supply and pass the Housing Delivery Test.
 - ii. Review and update the Local Plan housing requirement for the remainder of the Local Plan period. Allocate additional sites to maintain a five year housing land supply and pass the Housing Delivery Test. The Council proposed this approach during the Examination of the adopted Local Plan and it was accepted as sound by the Planning Inspector.

- 3.2 Option 1 would be simpler in one respect, as the housing requirement would not need to be re-examined. However, it would not guard the District from the extreme spikes in housing delivery that have occurred in previous years. Unlike the current situation or Option 2, the 490 dwelling per annum minimum housing need would continually be used as the basis for calculating the requirement against which the five year supply and Housing Delivery test are measured. So if the District delivered over 900 dwellings again, this would not reduce the 490 dwelling per annum figure in subsequent years and further land would have to be identified so that the District continues to maintain a five year housing land supply and pass the Housing Delivery Test.
- 3.3 Another concern with Option 1 is that the housing need is directly linked to the standard method calculation, which is provided by national guidance. This is currently based on 2014-household projections, which are widely recognised to be outdated. National guidance can be updated at any time and updates can take immediate effect. So the District could on one day have a comfortable five year supply, but if an updated housing need calculation were to increase the District's housing need the District could overnight suddenly find itself in a position where it does not have a five year housing land supply. Furthermore, given the timescales involved with plan-led development, it would take some time and expense to put the situation right.
- 3.4 A recent government consultation suggested that the District's minimum housing need should increase to 1,209 dwellings. This was subsequently aborted by the government, but it demonstrates the gravity of what could happen.
- 3.5 Option 2 would explore whether various factors should increase or decrease the 490 dwelling annual figure to provide a housing requirement up to 2031. This is more complicated than Option 1 and would require examination in public. However, Option 2 would be less susceptible to change than Option 1. It would fix the housing requirement for five years. It would secure the housing requirement from needing to be updated should the standard method of calculation change.
- 3.6 Option 2 would also enable the district to continue to average out any peaks or troughs in housing delivery over the remainder of the Local Plan period. This would mean there would be more certainty that the Local Plan housing supply would be sufficient to deliver the housing requirement. It would also reduce the risk of needing to update the Local Plan again or permit off-plan development to continue to maintain a five year housing land supply, which would otherwise occur if Option 1 was chosen.
- 3.7 National policy requires strategic policies to look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption, to anticipate and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities, such as those arising from major improvements in infrastructure⁴⁴. If the housing requirement was reassessed, it is reasonable to ask why the housing requirement should not also look ahead to a 15 year period from adoption. In answer, the Local Plan is being partially updated within a limited scope. It does not seek to extend the plan period beyond 2031, which would require a full Local Plan update. Housing requirements identified in Local Plans now have to be reassessed once every five years. Option 2 would seek to update the housing

⁴⁴ NPPF (2021) paragraph 22

requirement for the next five-year period. Once adopted, a full Local Plan review would likely commence to provide a housing requirement beyond 2031.

- 3.8 For these reasons, Option 2 is considered to be the most appropriate option on the basis that it reduces the risk of oversupply. In a district such as Cotswold where developable land is at a premium, where property prices and the potential profits from development are very high, and because of the environmental sensitivities of the District, there is a compelling need to keep unplanned growth in check and resist the pressure to allow more development than is planned for. The reasons include issues relating to environmental impact, infrastructure capability and the capacity of services to cope.
- 3.9 Both Option 1 and Option 2 require the allocation of additional sites in the Local Plan. The Cotswold District Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Review (2021) (SHELAA) assessed potential development sites and created a shortlist of sites that can be taken forward for further more detailed assessment.
- 3.10 The shortlist of sites is able to deliver the anticipated 700-900 dwelling requirement several times over, so not every site would be allocated for development in the Local Plan Partial Update. Further sites may also be submitted and considered for allocation that have not yet been assessed in the SHELAA.
- 3.11 The Local Plan may need to be updated to accommodate any additional needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople as a result of recently commissioned evidence. Similarly, the Local Plan policy on specialist accommodation for older people may also need to be updated to reflect more recent evidence, as well as being broadened to factor in the specialist accommodation needs of other groups of people.

4.0 Questions

Q1: Is there an exceptional circumstance for Cotswold District to use an alternative approach to the standard method to calculate the minimum local housing need?⁴⁵

Q2: Do you agree or disagree that Option 2 is the most appropriate option for the District to continue to deliver its housing requirement, maintain a five year housing land supply and pass the Housing Delivery Test? Please explain why.

Q3: The Cotswold District Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Review (2021) identifies a shortlist of potential residential development sites⁴⁶. Do you support the findings? Please explain your answer with reference to any factual inaccuracies or missing information from site assessments that might lead to an alternative conclusion. Please include the reference number of the site(s) your response relates to. **GEOSPATIAL QUESTION - INCLUDE MAP SHOWING SHELAA 2021 SITES. ENABLE PEOPLE TO DROP PINS**

⁴⁵ Note, as set out in national guidance, any alternative methodology would need to be demonstrated through robust evidence, be based on realistic assumptions of demographic growth and must not rely on using household projections more recently published than the 2014-based household projections.

⁴⁶ The Cotswold District Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Review (2021) can be accessed at the following links:

<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/strategic-housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment/>

<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/evidence-base-and-monitoring/>

WITH COMMENTS ON THE SITES. INCLUDE MANDATORY FIELD WITHIN THE COMMENT BOX THAT REQUIRES RESPONDENTS TO PROVIDE THE SHELAA SITE REFERENCE NUMBER]

Q4: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

Topic Paper: Infrastructure

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Infrastructure is the basic systems and services that a country or organisation uses in order to work effectively⁴⁷. This includes systems such as energy, digital and water supply networks, wastewater treatment, transport, flood defences, education and health and social care. It also includes services such as play areas, open spaces, parks and green spaces, cultural and sports facilities and district heating schemes. National policy also defines wind and solar energy generation and carbon capture and storage installations as infrastructure.
- 1.2 Given the breadth of infrastructure as a topic area, various infrastructure issues are covered in other Local Plan topic papers⁴⁸.
- 1.3 Infrastructure is a fundamental aspect of sustainable development. The adopted Local Plan has policies that list ‘critical and essential infrastructure’ required to deliver the Local Plan growth strategy. It also contains more general infrastructure policies that handle infrastructure provision resulting from developments. The Local Plan infrastructure policies are informed by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)⁴⁹ and are supported by an adopted Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)⁵⁰.
- 1.4 Cotswold District Council declared a Climate Change Emergency in July 2019 and an Ecological Emergency in July 2020⁵¹. The Council’s Corporate Plan (2020-2024) also seeks to make the Local Plan ‘green to the core’. The provision of infrastructure in the right place and the right time can deliver multiple corporate aims. The Corporate Plan also seeks to deliver more genuinely affordable housing, particularly social-rented housing.
- 1.5 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: **[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE]**

2.0 The Issues

- 2.1 Additional critical and essential infrastructure may be required to accommodate additional planned growth resulting from the Local Plan partial update, as well as to respond to the climate change and ecological crises.
- 2.2 There are several major infrastructure projects planned in the district, including the upscaling RAF Fairford to accommodate an increase in United States Air Force activities, the

⁴⁷ Cambridge Dictionary - <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/infrastructure>

⁴⁸ These include the topic papers on Accessibility of New Housing Developments; Economy; Green Infrastructure; Health, Social and Cultural Wellbeing; Natural Capital & Ecosystem Services; Responding to the Climate Crisis; Sustainable Transport and Air Quality; and Water

⁴⁹ [Cotswold District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan \(Arup, April 2016\)](#)

⁵⁰ CIL is a charge placed on development, such as new homes and extensions to homes according to their floor area. The money generated through the levy contributes to the funding of infrastructure to support development growth in Cotswold District. Further information can be viewed here: <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/community-infrastructure-levy>

⁵¹ <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/cotswold-climate-and-ecological-emergencies/>

A417 Missing Link⁵² and a water supply line from the River Severn water catchment to the River Thames water catchment. These may also result in additional Local Plan infrastructure requirements.

- 2.3 There is a changing approach towards highway upgrades, which are increasingly being considered as a last resort where improvements to sustainable transport infrastructure and services cannot resolve the issue.
- 2.4 The timing of infrastructure is also critical - something which could more clearly be defined in the Local Plan. For example, the early delivery of walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure can increase use of these modes of transport and decrease car use. This is to do with how travel habits are formed. The installation of some infrastructure can also be much easier and more cost-effective if it is done as part of a development, rather than after development has taken place.
- 2.5 The IDP is now five years old. Some infrastructure items have been, or are due to be, delivered. Some infrastructure requirements have changed. The IDP would benefit from being updated, which may require an update to the list of critical and essential infrastructure identified in the Local Plan.
- 2.6 There has been difficulty delivering several pieces of critical and essential infrastructure identified in the adopted Local Plan (e.g. locating a suitable site for the replacement doctor's surgery in Tetbury). There may be opportunities to deliver such items through the allocation of further sites for residential development if required infrastructure is delivered within the site allocation.
- 2.7 The District has an infrastructure funding gap, which is the gap between the cost of identified critical and essential infrastructure and how much money is expected to be generated from CIL. It is normal for local authorities to have an infrastructure funding gap and CIL can only be adopted if one exists. The funding gap is made up by S106 agreements, grants and other funding sources. Around a quarter of the funds needed to deliver the required critical and essential infrastructure are expected from CIL alone, although CIL funds can be used as leverage to secure other funding.
- 2.8 Additional evidence is now available that may justify a higher or lower CIL rate. The CIL rate is subject to a viability test, which assesses whether developments will be viable when all other Local Plan policies are applied.
- 2.9 Due to viability reasons, there is likely to be a trade-off between increasing the CIL rate and increasing the affordable housing requirement from developments.
- 2.10 Cotswold District Council is not the delivery body for nearly all critical and essential infrastructure projects. Gloucestershire County Council, as the lead education, highways and transport authority, delivers most items, although some infrastructure such as the water and wastewater is delivered by other providers. Infrastructure delivery is a Duty to Cooperate issue. A Memorandum of Understanding may be required with infrastructure providers to

⁵² Further information on the A417 Missing Link project can be accessed here: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/south-west/a417-missing-link/>

set out how and when infrastructure will be delivered, especially if infrastructure delivery affects the timing of delivery of development sites.

3.0 The Options

3.1 There are several options to where infrastructure policies can be updated to help make the Local Plan green to the core:

- Option 1 - increase or decrease the CIL rate taking account of new evidence, such as Infrastructure Funding Statements and an updated Whole Plan Viability Assessment.
- Option 2 - Deliver more genuinely affordable housing, particularly social rented housing, or seek higher contributions towards bridging the infrastructure funding gap.
- Option 3 - Allocate additional sites within the Local Plan in order to secure on-site delivery of required critical or essential infrastructure items. The provision of such items could be a determining factor in which sites are allocated.
- Option 4 - expand the infrastructure policy to provide clarity on the timing and location of infrastructure delivery. This could also be set out in site design briefs included in site allocation policies.

4.0 Questions

Q1: Tell us what infrastructure is required in your area?

Note: not all infrastructure requests can be delivered through the Local Plan. However, where this is not possible, information gathered from this question can be relayed to other Council-led strategies, external organisations, as well as providing evidence for Neighbourhood Plans.

[INSERT OPTIONS LIST: carbon sequestration, education facility, emergency service facility, flood management, Green Infrastructure, highway upgrade, health facility, other transport infrastructure, renewable energy, sports or play facility, walking or cycling infrastructure, water supply or wastewater treatment, other.]

[INCLUDE MAP OF THE DISTRICT ALLOWING PEOPLE TO DROP A PIN AND COMMENT ON INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIRED IN DIFFERENT LOCATIONS]

Q2: What infrastructure could most help make the Local Plan 'Green to the Core'?

Q3: Should the Council prioritise choosing sites for development in the Local Plan that can deliver critical and essential infrastructure needs, even if the site is otherwise less suitable?

Q4: Do you consider the delivery of critical and essential infrastructure needed to support the Local Plan growth strategy and / or meet the challenges posed by the Climate Change Emergency to be an exceptional circumstance to allow such development in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty? Please explain why.

Q5: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

Topic Paper: Landscape

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Cotswold District has a highly valued landscape, recognised by a range of national and local designations. A high quality landscape does not only have aesthetic value but also plays a key role in health and wellbeing, the local economy, tackling the climate and ecological emergencies, as well as providing a clear sense of place to local communities and visitors. Much of Cotswold District is designated as an area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB).
- 1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires planning policies and decisions to protect and enhance valued landscapes, and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The importance of the AONB is also recognised. Major development should be refused in the AONB except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated it is in the public interest. The NPPF also supports a proactive approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation and encourages the use of renewable and low carbon energy.
- 1.3 Landscape planning policies can generally be seen in two ways;
- as protecting and enhancing the existing landscape and/or
 - as helping to create new high quality landscape (such as in Green Infrastructure, and design policies which are the subject of other topic papers in this series).
- 1.4 A key challenge for the landscape is presented by the imperative to meaningfully engage with the climate change and biodiversity emergencies declared by the council. The provision of renewable energy facilities to help achieve the net zero carbon target will almost inevitably look to sites within the landscape, and this will require careful balancing of what are likely to be conflicting planning considerations.
- 1.5 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: **[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE]**

2.0 The issues

- 2.1 The [Review of the Local Plan](#) concluded that the landscape policies (EN4, EN5, EN6), did not require further update. However the declaration of a Climate and Ecological Emergency by the Council and the [Council's Corporate Plan](#) objective - making the Cotswold District Local Plan 'Green to the Core' - mean that Local Plan policies must all cumulatively assist in delivering this objective.
- 2.2 There are competing and often conflicting requirements between future development pressure (such as housing, economic growth) and the need to protect and enhance the natural environment. There is also the challenge of how to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change and ecological emergencies in a designated landscape. These are examples of the need to consider proposals in the 'planning balance' that is characteristic of the planning system (see the Climate Change topic paper for more on this).

- 2.3 The impact of climate change on the landscape is likely to be far reaching. There will be changes in temperature causing drought and areas of flooding, increase in pests and diseases, changes to habitats, and farming practices, as well as renewable energy schemes and other new technologies. Both the NPPF and the adopted Local Plan are supportive in principle of renewable energy projects and energy efficient design. These are the subject of other topic papers.
- 2.4 Over the next twenty years therefore, a range of new developments may come forward, where achieving positive outcomes for the landscape will be even more challenging. There may be more instances where the public benefits of a proposal, such as in addressing the climate emergency, are finely balanced against the requirements to conserving and enhancing the landscape. A more strategic perspective may need to be taken which goes beyond local concerns - climate change is a global problem and solutions need to be considered in that context.
- 2.5 In such circumstances every effort will be made to mitigate impacts on the landscape at both local and wider scales. The creation and enhancement of on and off site green infrastructure will play a key role (see Green Infrastructure topic paper) together with other benefits such as recreation, water management and nature recovery.
- 2.6 Other related topic papers include:
- Green Infrastructure
 - Biodiversity
 - Natural Capital
 - Renewable Energy/ Climate Change
 - Design

3.0 The Options

- 3.1 The challenge for the planning system is to deliver sustainable development; conserve and enhance the landscape, and also make a significant contribution to both mitigating and adapting to climate change and the ecological emergency.
- Option 1** – retain policies as they are, ‘do nothing’
- 3.2 The landscape ‘protection’ policies should be retained in their existing format. The policies accord with the existing strategic objective of the Local Plan (1a) and are considered robust and fit for purpose (Local Plan Review, see above). GI, design and other policies, which overlap with landscape, however may need further change.
- 3.3 Existing policy allows consideration of, for example, some renewable energy developments – the degree of acceptable harm is proportional to the importance (e.g. designation) of that landscape. This is particularly vital within the nationally designated AONB, where there is a presumption against major development other than in ‘exceptional circumstances’ and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest.
- 3.4 The landscape and other policies in the current local plan *already* enable the decision-maker to balance the level of harm/adverse impact against the public benefits of the development and, in line with NPPF, to determine whether or not the proposal constitutes major development. However, the adopted Local Plan does not have a positive strategy for the

provision of renewable energy facilities as required by paragraph 155 of the NPPF. This strategy is currently in preparation and it may have an influence on the balance of considerations regarding development affecting the aesthetic qualities of the landscape.

Option 2: As Option 1, but amend and add to the supporting text

- 3.5 In addition to Option 1. Amend the supporting text to include more reference to the linkages between this topic and others such as biodiversity, green infrastructure and climate change (Natural England, SA Scoping Comment, 2021) perhaps link to the forthcoming Renewable Energy Strategy (to provide additional guidance) or other relevant evidence, and to help ensure the landscape is taken into account in a clearly holistic way.
- 3.6 Add to the supporting text to make it clear that the existing policy already considers 'exceptional circumstances' including climate change/ ecological emergency when considering proposals in the planning balance.
- 3.7 By retaining the landscape policies broadly as they are, they remain a counter-weight to increased pressure for development and can be considered on a case by case basis in the planning balance.

Option 3 – a more climate-led landscape policy?

- 3.8 Investigate further policy options to be as 'green to the core' as possible, in light of the Corporate Strategy and declared emergencies.
- 3.9 There are significant challenges, conflicts and opportunities in how to approach climate change mitigation, while also being consistent with national policy and designations to conserve and protect the landscape.
- 3.10 The key issue is finding the balance between protecting very important landscapes and their potential degradation by climate change with the need to adapt to, and mitigate the causes, of climate change in a beneficial 'value added' approach. We could include or amend policy to:
 - Require development to; provide trees and protect soils, provide flood storage areas, and walking/cycle routes as appropriate to the scale of the development.
 - Be more encouraging of appropriately scaled renewable energy development in the countryside, including wind turbines. Identify suitable locations for such development - allocate specific sites and/or broader "areas of search" where they might be appropriate. Consider larger scale RE within and outside of the AONB, and safeguarding areas outside of the AONB for the delivery of wind energy and large scale solar energy provision.
 - Consider the siting of renewable energy technologies in the landscape in a sequential way (least suitable to most suitable) based on agreed assessment criteria, for example biomass energy (from crops or woodland) is likely to have less impact on landscape.

- 3.11 Additional evidence and time may be required to bridge the gap between further possible policy proposals/ recommendations and update to Local Plan. This option may only be possible in a full review of the Local Plan.

Preferred option(s)

- 3.12 The preferred option is Option 3, if consistent with national policy, this is likely to be the most ‘value added’ approach but may take longer and need more evidence. In the short term Option 2 may prove to be more realistic for this Update.

4.0 Questions – tell us what you think

Q1: Do you agree with the preferred option? Please explain why?

Q2: Does Local Plan Objective 1a (landscape) need to be updated? For example, to reference a more holistic approach, ‘*to achieve/ support the maximum multiple benefits of the landscape, such as recreation, water management, and biodiversity*’? Should the objective reference the need to balance the aesthetic aspects of the landscape with the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change?

Note: this issue is also discussed in the Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services topic paper

Q3: Should the Local Plan actively promote Renewable Energy developments in the District?
If yes:

- i. Should the Local Plan identify broad locations where Renewable Energy developments would be suitable, such as wind turbines and large scale solar farms?
- ii. Should locations in the Cotswolds AONB be considered for Renewable Energy developments, particularly wind turbines?
- iii. If broad locations are not identified for Renewable Energy developments, should the Local Plan instead include a criteria based policy with a threshold on the size, type or location of proposals?
- iv. If broad locations are not identified for Renewable Energy developments, should the Local Plan instead include a sequential approach policy to identify the location of Renewable Energy developments?

Note: this issue is also discussed in the Responding to the Climate Emergency Topic Paper

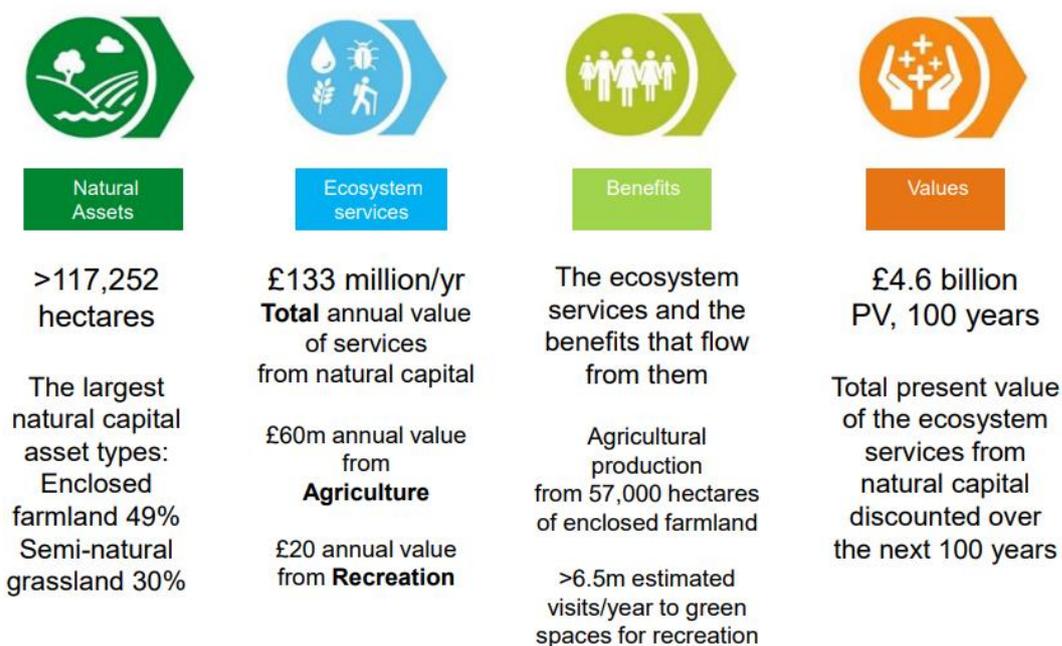
Q4: Have any relevant issues or options to the landscape been missed? We would be particularly keen to hear of any further ideas that could help respond to the climate change and ecological emergencies whilst also balancing the need to protect and enhance the District’s sensitive landscape.

Topic Paper: Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Natural capital is “the world’s stocks of natural assets, which include geology, soil, air, water and all living things”.⁵³ It is from this natural capital that humans derive a wide range of services, often called ecosystem services, which make human life possible.
- 1.2 The subject of natural capital spans into several other Local Plan topic papers. In particular, recommendations around enhancing natural capital policies are also included in the topic papers on Biodiversity; Climate Change; Green Infrastructure; Health, Social and Cultural Wellbeing; Transport; and Water.
- 1.3 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: **[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE]**

Headline results for Cotswold District natural capital register and account



- 1.4 The diagram above provides an estimated financial value of several types of natural capital and ecosystem services in Cotswold District in 2021. The figures are thought to be a substantial underestimate, as not all types of natural capital and ecosystem services have been assessed and factored into the sums. However, the figures show how even a partial view of natural capital and ecosystem services has a substantial monetary worth. Furthermore, where natural capital and ecosystem services have too often been overlooked

⁵³ <https://naturalcapitalforum.com/>

in the past due to a lack of quantifiable data, this data can now have a particularly important function in the planning and development process.

- 1.5 National policy also recognises the value of natural capital and ecosystem services. It requires local plans to enhance natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.⁵⁴ The National Planning Practice Guidance also requires the delivery of environmental net gain to reduce pressure on and achieve overall improvements in natural capital, ecosystem services and the benefits they deliver.⁵⁵
- 1.6 The adopted Local Plan has limited references to natural capital and ecosystem services, although its policies inadvertently support both to some degree through policies on flood risk prevention, water management, Green Infrastructure provision, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and so on. There is, however, potential for the Local Plan to be more explicit about natural capital and ecosystem services and better incorporate this thinking into land use planning within the District.

2.0 The Issues

2.1 Since the adoption of the Local Plan:

- Cotswold District Council declared a [Climate Change Emergency in July 2019 and an Ecological Emergency in July 2020](#)⁵⁶. The Council's Ecological Emergency Action Plan makes various commitments towards natural capital improvements. The Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024 also commits to making the local plan 'Green to the Core'.
- The Government has published its 25 year Environment Plan. [The Environment Act 2021](#)⁵⁷, which is the legislative framework for the 25 year Environment Plan, boosts the importance of natural capital and ecosystem services and further increases the need to update the Local Plan.
- A review of the Local Plan confirmed that the Local Plan would benefit from being updated in respect of its policies on natural capital and ecosystems services.
- In response to these commitments, there is a need to update the Local Plan and potentially recognise natural capital and ecosystem services as a standalone policy.
- There are tools available for assessing natural capital and ecosystem services but there remains some ambiguity about how they should be assessed at a local level. This can be clarified if further detail is provided in the Local Plan.
- The principle of Biodiversity Net Gain has now been established. This has many similarities with natural capital and ecosystem services. There is an opportunity to

⁵⁴ NPPF (2021) paragraph 175

⁵⁵ Planning Practice Guidance: Natural Environment: Paragraph: 028 Reference ID: 8-028-20190721

⁵⁶ <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/environment/climate-action/cotswold-climate-and-ecological-emergencies/>

⁵⁷ <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2593/publications>

provide a similar mechanism to Biodiversity Net Gain in the Local Plan but for natural capital and ecosystem services.

- There are various play-offs between different types of natural capital and ecosystem services. One such significant play-off, which the Council needs to consider further, is whether more trees should be planted for CO² sequestration and biodiversity enhancements, which would bring with it the cost of the trees abstracting water and impacting water supply networks, or whether the water supply networks should be protected and enhanced.

3.0 Questions – tell us what you think

Q1: How should natural capital and ecosystem services be assessed on development sites in Cotswold District before and after development has taken place?

Q2: Should the local plan require the natural capital value of a site after development to be not less than it was before development? This would be a similar principle to biodiversity net gain.

Q3: Should the Local Plan allow on-site natural capital and ecosystem decreases to be compensated for by off-site improvements?

Q4: Should natural capital and ecosystem services policy apply to all developments or only developments over a certain size?

Q5: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

Topic Paper: Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Town and Parish councils are empowered by law to prepare development plans for their local communities. Generally speaking these plans are conterminous with town or parish boundaries and they respond to non-strategic planning issues affecting local communities. These plans must be in general conformity^{58 59} with the District Council's adopted Local Plan. They should not look to duplicate policies contained within the adopted Local Plan or within the government's National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.2 Sixteen neighbourhood areas have been designated (have defined their area boundaries) in Cotswold District, covering 18 parishes. Of these Lechlade-on-Thames, Tetbury with Tetbury Upton and Northleach with Eastington Neighbourhood Development Plans have all been made (the legal equivalent of being adopted). Several more are well advanced.
- 1.3 Neighbourhood planning has become an established route for progressing local and national development priorities – particularly housing and responding to climate change and arresting the loss of ecology / biodiversity. It is within this context that issues and possible options are considered below.
- 1.4 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: **[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE]**

2.0 The issues

Are Neighbourhood Plans responding to the climate and ecological crisis?

- 2.1 In blunt terms collective performance might be described as 'could do better'. In fairness the same could be said of the adopted Local Plan, from which neighbourhood plans derive policy direction. Proposals to address Local Plan shortcomings are set out in other Topic Papers, notably "Responding To The Climate Crisis".
- 2.2 There is an expanding range of policies and interventions that town and parish councils are using in their neighbourhood plans to respond to the climate crisis:
- walking and cycling audits are becoming increasingly common as local communities seek to reduce the dependence of the private motor vehicle and improve local quality;
 - preparing Design Codes to promote sustainable patterns of development at the very local level, these are particularly powerful when combined with site allocation policies. The challenge with design codes is not to duplicate national guidance and the Council's design guide. Another challenge is aligning it with an out of date

⁵⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#General-conformity-with-strategic-policies>

⁵⁹ <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/general-conformity-strategic-local-planning-policy/>

Manual for Streets guide, which is discussed in further detail in the design topic paper;

- allocating local green spaces, nature improvement areas, allotments, etc.; and
- identifying local infrastructure and prioritising the spending of the neighbourhood proportion of the Cotswold District Community Infrastructure Levy. Further information on this can be found in the Infrastructure topic paper.

How can neighbourhood plans be in general conformity with the Local Plan?

- 2.3 Neighbourhood plans have to be in conformity with the strategic policies of the local plan. The adopted Local Plan does not distinguish which of its policies are strategic. This plainly creates doubt and difficulty for neighbourhood plans and is a matter for the Local Plan update to address.
- 2.4 The LPA has resolved to make its local plan ‘green to the core’. This is likely to entail creating a new strategic policy together with several amendments and additions to existing policies. Because neighbourhood plans complement and add further policies to the District’s ‘Development Plan’⁶⁰, they will need to be in general conformity with any new strategic policy regarding the climate change and ecological emergencies. Conformity is likely to entail a proactive rather than passive or neutral approach on the part of NDPs.

What is the Local Planning Authority’s role in providing advice or assistance to those preparing neighbourhood plans?

- 2.5 Government has not sought to prescribe how local planning authorities should meet their ‘duty to support’ the preparation of NDPs. The Council’s neighbourhood function⁶¹ largely focuses on ensuring both parties are following due process and that it acts as a critical friend on emerging NDP policy. It has not published guidance on how it will discharge its ‘duty to support’ requirement, which may affect the ability of town and parish councils to prepare timely neighbourhood plans. A solution to this problem is set out below.

3.0 The options

3.1 Potential responses are split between policy (local plan) and non-policy interventions. Policy interventions could consider:

1. making clear which Local Plan policies are strategic. This will aid the ‘general conformity’ process and enable town and parish councils to identify parts of the local plan that may have scope to be altered and added to at a local level;

⁶⁰ The ‘Cotswold District Development Plan’ is made up of Cotswold District Local Plan (2011-31), Mineral Local Plan for Gloucestershire (2018-32), Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy (2012-27) and geographically relevant neighbourhood development plans.

⁶¹ The neighbourhood planning ‘function’ is coordinated from Community Planning, but requires significant input in time and expertise from other teams: notably Forward Planning and Heritage and Design (also representing the wider Development Management function), Electoral Services, and the Geographical Information Services team.

2. creating a new Neighbourhood Plan policy and /or updating existing policies to further clarify how neighbourhood plans can be in general conformity with the local plan; and
3. place a duty within the local plan, possibly as part of the above proposal or as the corollary of a new strategic policy (as recommended in the Biodiversity and Climate Change papers) that neighbourhood plan must respond to climate change and biodiversity issues. The test would have to be passed to be found in general conformity with the Local Plan.

3.2 Non-policy interventions could consider:

1. providing supplementary planning guidance (a) to clarify the level of non-financial support the council will provide to town and parish councils and (b) regarding conformity with a new strategic policy on meeting the challenges of the climate change and biodiversity emergencies; and
2. support Town and Parish Councils to better connect with one another to share knowledge and experience. This is already happening across the district and the Council could further support these networks and knowledge exchange building on the Council's recent Town and Parish Council forums model.

3.3 Alternative options would be to avoid preparing a new policy or new guidance but continue to provide *ad hoc* local guidance on procedural matters; and not to explicitly require or encourage Town and Parish Councils to prepare neighbourhood plans that respond to climate change and biodiversity matters.

3.4 National policy requires the Council to identify strategic policies of Local Plan and therefore this is no alternative.

Preferred option

- i Make clear which local plan policies are strategic and non-strategic.
- ii Create a new Neighbourhood Plan policy that sets out conditions that neighbourhood plans will need to pass to be in general conformity with the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan. The policy would also act as a "hook" for further guidance on procedural matters e.g. establishing the degree of support town and parish councils can expect from the Council.
- iii Encourage those preparing neighbourhood plans to respond to climate and ecological emergencies.

4.0 Questions – tell us what you think

Q1: Do you agree with these options? **[BINARY QUESTION. INSERT YES / NO TICK BOX. INSERT COMMENT BOX FOR 'PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY' QUESTION]**

Q2: What kind of proposals do you think could be included in your local neighbourhood plan to help meet the challenges of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergencies? **[OPEN QUESTION]**

Q3: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

Topic Paper: Retail and Town Centres

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 [Chapter 9 of the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan](#) contains several policies relating to town centres and retail. The [Council's Corporate Plan](#) also is clear about its aspirations in this area. At national level, the National Planning Policy Framework ([NPPF](#)) and National Planning Policy Guidance ([NPPG](#)) set out relevant government policy and advice.
- 1.2 As is explained at section 2, there are several major issues now affecting town centres and retail. The upshot is that our current strategy for town centres and the policies accompanying it need to be revised to ensure the Local Plan remains sound and effective. Proposals in this respect are set out at section 3.
- 1.3 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: **[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE]**

2.0 The Issues

- 2.1 The problems facing town centres and retail are multiple and interrelated.
- 2.2 The effect of internet-based retailing on the traditional high street is well documented in the media and elsewhere. It is a developing situation that is resulting in the closure of significant numbers of shops including long-established national chains. Due to its evolving nature it is difficult at present to be certain how deep the effect will ultimately be or whether, for example, some town centres that have a "niche market" appeal will prove less susceptible.
- 2.3 The response to the Covid-19 pandemic encouraged more people to opt for internet shopping and this has accelerated the trend. Change in shopping habits is expected to endure.
- 2.4 Covid social distancing also required many people to work from home. The success of this has led many businesses to adopt more flexible working practices permanently, and it is anticipated that many firms will operate a "blended working" approach.
- 2.5 A decrease in office working could have a two-fold impact on town centres. It could affect footfall as office workers are a significant clientele for a wide range of "traditional high street" uses. And it may also reduce the need for office space in and around the town centres, which could be made available for other uses. This is likely to be another accelerant in the rate of high street change.
- 2.6 Another "known unknown" is the effect that Brexit is going to have on the economy over time. Whether or not this will materially affect our town centres remains to be seen.
- 2.7 In respect of national planning policy, the traditional role of retail as the town centre "anchor" use is no longer tenable. Although it is helpful that the NPPF supports broadening the range of "main town centre" uses, its continued reference to the sequential approach (centre, edge of centre, out of centre) perhaps harks back to earlier policy objectives - the

imperative to retain retailing as the key town centre use and prevent out of centre retail “parks” from threatening town centre prosperity. However, the sequential approach remains a very useful planning “tool” and it can be adapted to apply to a broader range of uses.

- 2.8 National planning policy is now also accelerating the rapid rate of change in town centres. Changes to the planning use class system Introduced a new Class E and Class F. In summary:
- Class A1 (retail), A2 (financial and professional services) and A3 (restaurants and cafes) were effectively combined into a new Class E(a,b,c).
 - A4 (drinking establishments) and A5 (hot food takeaways) uses became defined as ‘Sui Generis’.
 - B1 (office, research and development processes and light industrial uses) was revoked and has effectively been replaced with the new Class E(g).
 - D1 (non-residential institutions) has been split out and replaced by the new Classes E(e) (Provision of medical or health services) and Class E(f) (Creche, day nursery or day centre) and F1.
 - D2 (assembly and leisure) has been split out and replaced by the new Classes E(d) (indoor sport, recreation and fitness) and F2(c-d), as well as several newly defined ‘Sui Generis’ uses.
- 2.9 The introduction of the new Class E and F is designed to bring flexibility to town centres to help them evolve. In particular, planning permission is no longer required to switch between retail and some other main town centre uses. However, planning permission is also no longer required to switch between retail or main town centre uses to some non-main town centre uses. Cumulatively, it is expected that this change will degrade the purpose and effectiveness of the current Local Plan primary shopping area policy. It could also affect the historic character of local town centres which are an important component of their vibrancy and vitality.
- 2.10 A new permitted development right allowing the change of use from Class E to Class C3 (dwelling houses) came into force in August 2021⁶², meaning this type of development will also no longer require planning permission. There are some exemptions - such as listed buildings - but this change will if anything accelerate the phenomenon that is already taking place. An informal study of Cirencester town centre shows that about 50% of the ground and first floor premises that currently are within Class E have the potential to change to residential use without the need to make a planning application.
- 2.11 The ability to make this change of use is not limited to town centre premises in Class E. Any Class E premises, unless they are exempt, are susceptible.-This potentially undermines Local Plan policy EC x that seeks to safeguard existing employment sites.
- 2.12 It’s not all gloom and doom. Unlike many across the county many of the district’s town centres are so far not badly affected by the changing nature of the high street. Most already

⁶² <https://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1711537/class-e-town-centre-to-residential-pd-right-effect-august-government-confirms>

have a wide diversity of uses, a strong tourism offer, niche markets and a high proportion of independent retailers. These provide a visitor experience that is not offered by internet shopping. But changes are already happening and will continue to happen. We have to plan for this so that we can capitalise on opportunities, continue to safeguard and build resilience and flexibility through town centre strategies. In this way we can seek to ensure that the District's town centres continue their critical role as community and commercial hubs.

2.13 Other relevant Topic Papers in respect of these issues include:

- Employment
- Tourism
- Design

3.0 The Options

3.1 Rather than attempting to put the genie back in the bottle by hanging on to an outmoded retail-centred strategy, the policy approach needs to be one that is fundamentally about diversification of town centre uses rather than relying on a single anchor use - retail - to hold everything together. Town centres are at the heart of a community, providing an identity and a vibrant hub around which the town revolves. The job of planners is to ensure that that remains so. Retail will always be a significant element of the town centre offer - more prominent in some towns than in others perhaps - but it can no longer be the primary policy focus.

Option 1 - do nothing.

3.2 This is always an option in any situation. In this case it is unacceptable. If positive steps are not taken to safeguard the vitality of our town centres in the face of the issues raised the Local Plan is not doing its job. We do, however, have to be realistic. Some of the legislative changes the government recently has introduced - particularly regarding Use Class E - leave the council with very little room for manoeuvre.

Option 2 - await greater economic stability and certainty before amending the policy approach in a full revision of the Local Plan.

3.3 Has its temptations and a case could be made for this approach, but it tends to beg the "how long is a piece of string" question and ultimately is as unacceptable as Option 1.

Option 3 - amend the existing policies to reduce the prominence of retail as the keystone of town centre policy while maintaining the sequential test for the development of "main town centre uses". Consider including certain classes of residential use as a locally-defined "main town centre use". Retain and amended "primary shopping area" delineation to ensure no conflict with NPPF requirements.

3.4 This is a step in the right direction. Reduction in the primacy of retail is what the evidence is pointing to (even if government still insists on the identification in the Local Plan of a "primary shopping area"). Retaining the sequential test to ensure that main town centre uses are directed, in the first instance, to town centres is crucial in safeguarding vitality and encouraging diversification and growth.

Option 4 - all of Option 3 together with new strategic policy that sets out a requirement for Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) to consider preparation of town centre plans where their administrative area includes a key settlement as defined in the Local Plan. Alternatively include the “requirement to consider” in any NDP policy that is developed.

- 3.5 At present the Local Plan only has a town centre strategy for Cirencester. This is because Cirencester is by the far the largest town in the district. Taking account of the issues set out earlier, a case can be made for all the key settlements in the district at least to consider whether their town centre would benefit from having its own strategy. The purpose of this would be to guide development and to ensure that a balance of uses exists that is appropriate to the centre and that will help to ensure its continued health. It would be appropriate for the Local Plan to set out this out in a “strategic” policy although it is not strictly necessary - an NDP could opt to take this approach unilaterally.
- 3.6 Any new or revised Local Plan policy would make clear that preparation of a town centre strategy is not a mandatory requirement in terms of an NDP being in general conformity with the adopted Local Plan. Demonstration of consideration during NPD preparation of whether or not to prepare a strategy will be a requirement.

Preferred option

- 3.7 The preferred option is Option 4.

4.0 Questions

Q1: Have we missed any issues or options? Tell us what you think. If you suggest an alternative approach explain why and show how it is sound in planning terms.

Q2: Where a Neighbourhood Development Plan is being prepared or revised, should your town be required to consider incorporating within it a town centre strategy that helps safeguard its health and vitality and better enables it to respond flexibly to economic change?

Q3: Do you think there should be a more diverse mix of uses in your town centre? What would you like to see more of:

- Housing, including above shops or making better use of under-developed sites **[tick]**
- Leisure uses, such as bars, cafes, a cinema, restaurants, etc. **[tick]**
- Convenience goods retail, such as bakers, butchers, greengrocers, etc. **[tick]**
- Comparison goods retail, e.g. non-food goods such as clothes, books, etc. **[tick]**
- Retail services, such as hairdressers, launderettes, travel agents, opticians, etc. **[tick]**
- Financial and business services, such as banks, estate agents, offices, etc. **[tick]**
- Cultural facilities, such a museums, art installations, etc. **[tick]**

Q4: Are you concerned that changes of uses in town centres no longer require planning permission in your town and village centres (outside of AONB areas)? Do you think this will affect the vibrancy and vitality of Town Centres?

Topic Paper: Sustainable Transport and Air Quality

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Topic Paper on Transport and Air Quality looks at what we can do in our Local Plan to make it easier for people to go about their daily lives and access the goods and services they need without having to depend on using private vehicles.
- 1.2 We are doing this to achieve local and national government targets to reduce carbon emissions and to deliver on our corporate promises to make our local plan “green to the core”, help residents and businesses maintain good health and wellbeing and support businesses to grow in a green, sustainable manner.
- 1.3 The Government also has specific targets around increasing cycling levels, increasing the proportion of primary school children walking to school and reducing deaths and injuries on the road. The changes we are considering in this paper will also contribute to those aims.
- 1.4 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: [\[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE\]](#)

2.0 The issues

- 2.1 The UK Government has signed up to a commitment to cut total carbon emissions by 78% by 2035 and 100% by 2050 to try to prevent catastrophic climate change. Cotswold District Council has set its own target to cut carbon emissions to net zero by 2045.
- 2.2 Most economic/industry sectors in the UK have made good progress in cutting carbon emissions over the last 30 years. Unfortunately, this is not the case with transport, where domestic emissions have barely reduced and remain well above the levels required to meet our commitments. To achieve the reductions we need, we need to consider all options to reduce our use of petrol and diesel powered vehicles. This is particularly challenging in Cotswold, where our dispersed, rural population and limited public transport options make driving the easiest choice for many journeys.
- 2.3 We need to consider this issue as part of our update to the Local Plan - and not just, for example, through transport planning - because we recognise that where we locate new developments has a strong bearing on what options people have to get to, from and through those developments. We also want to make sure that, when new developments are built, they contribute effectively to improving local walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure and services, and that the facilities provided on-site enable people to use those modes of travel easily.
- 2.4 The first of these issues - locating development in places that reduce dependence on cars and enable people to walk, cycle or catch the bus/train to where they need to go - is covered in more detail in the Topic Paper called “Accessibility of New Housing Development”. The Topic Paper called “Responding to the Climate Crisis” provides more detail on the climate change science and targets that are driving the need for these changes.

3.0 The options

3.1 The adopted Local Plan already contains objectives to reduce car use by:

- i. Locating most developments in sustainable locations where there is better access to jobs, services and facilities and public transport.
- ii. Supporting improvements in public transport, walking/cycling networks.

3.2 It also contains some policies, e.g. D1, D2 and INF3 to deliver these objectives. So the options set out below are primarily intended to provide definition to the existing policies, and to extend them where necessary where evidence, policy or strategy regarding decarbonising transport has moved on since the adoption of the Plan - for example, the conversion to electric vehicles.

3.3 In practise, it is unlikely that these options will be discrete selections from which we can pick and choose. To achieve the decarbonisation of transport, we are likely to need to implement all of them to some degree - the speed, extent and prioritisation of each to be determined by the local situation. The speed and type of change that happens will also depend strongly on the changes people are willing and able to make for themselves.

Option 1: Introduce minimum accessibility requirements for new development sites

3.4 This option provides greater definition to objective i. above and seeks to establish criteria to determine whether or not a location is sustainable in transport terms. This option would see the introduction of an accessibility scoring system for potential development sites based on ease of access to key services and facilities by foot, bicycle or public transport, and identify improvements that could be made by development to facilitate these modes of travel.

Topic paper: Accessibility of New Housing Development explains the proposal in more detail.

Option 2: Introduce mode share targets for new development sites

3.5 Building on the principles of Option 1 and the existing Highway Development Management requirement for a Travel Plan for significant development sites (see Gloucestershire County Council's *Travel Plan Guide for Developers (July 2011)*), this option seeks to establish robust, binding targets to limit the generation of new vehicle trips from development sites. The Travel Plan would identify site-specific measures that can be implemented to limit the demand for vehicle travel and support the use of other modes. These measures would be implemented incrementally (using safeguarding sums held from the developer) in the event of excessive vehicle trip generation.

Option 3: Develop a Sustainable Transport Strategy for Cotswold

3.6 The current Local Plan looks to the Local Transport Plan (LTP) to provide direction regarding transport provision. As a county-wide strategy this can be limited on specific detail for Cotswold. A Cotswold District Sustainable Transport Strategy (STS) will build on the policies in the LTP to identify walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure improvements within and between key settlements: new developments can then contribute effectively to their delivery. In addition to infrastructure, the STS will identify "soft measures" - such as

information, incentives, promotion, training and support - that can encourage and enable people to use sustainable modes of transport.

3.7 Option 4: Embed key sustainable transport design principles in the Local Plan and ensure they are used to guide the design of new developments and their links to the wider travel network.

Building on principles contained in Gloucestershire County Council’s *Manual for Gloucestershire’s Streets*⁶³ highway design guidance and informed by recent and emerging government guidance and policy, we propose to bring significant sustainable transport design principles directly into the Local Plan to give additional weight and prominence to the concept of enabling travel on foot, by bicycle and by public transport to deliver government’s active travel and carbon reduction targets. These principles include:

- a “hierarchy of road users” (illustrated below);
- the concept of permeability (also called “filtered permeability” or “modal permeability”);
- recent guidance on cycle infrastructure design (LTN1/20);
- updated requirements regarding parking for all vehicles and charging infrastructure for electric vehicles (including micro-mobility vehicles such as eScooters and eBikes)

Table 3.2: User hierarchy

<p>Consider first</p>  <p>Consider last</p>	Pedestrians
	Cyclists
	Public transport users
	Specialist service vehicles (e.g. emergency services, waste, etc.)
	Other motor traffic

“Hierarchy of Road Users”, from Manual for Streets (2007)

The Evidence Paper: Sustainable Transport and Air Quality provides a more detailed explanation of these approaches.

Preferred option(s)

3.8 In this paper, there isn’t a single “preferred option” as such. It is likely we will need to pursue all options to some degree in order to achieve the necessary reductions in transport-related carbon emissions. Your feedback will help us decide how we prioritise each type of action and the degree to which we should implement them.

4.0 Questions – tell us what you think

Q1: Given transport’s high contribution to the UK’s total carbon emissions and other pollutants, how can we in Cotswold seek to reduce our use of petrol and diesel powered

⁶³ <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2099344/2020-july-mfsgs.pdf>

vehicles? To what extent do you think it is possible at the moment? What would help you to drive less often?

Q2: When car use was restricted during the COVID lockdowns, did you struggle to be able to get the things you needed? What things were difficult?

First half of your postcode: <i>If that's not possible then ask if they live in a town village or rural area.</i>				
	N/A. I don't need to access this service	Easy	Challenging, but possible	Difficult
Workplace				
Primary School				
Secondary School				
GP				
Hospital				
Food shop				
Town centre				
Sports field				
Play area				
Post office				
Banks				
Pharmacies				
Nursery				
Library				
Community hall				
Place of Worship				
Dentist				
Allotment				
Leisure Centre				

Pub				
FE College				

Q3: Do you feel that the walking, cycling and public transport networks in your area are sufficient for you to get to most places you need to go without a car? If not, are there any particular barriers, or improvements that need to be made? **[Explore adding a mapping option here, where people could pinpoint issues in the walking, cycling and PT environment. Note: this would be very similar to the consultation system for the Cirencester LCWIP and, if possible, I'd want to ensure the info collected here could be shared with GCC to inform that project too.]**

Q4: Would you be interested in contributing to a plan to improve sustainable transport options in Cotswold, or help us assess walking, cycling and public transport provision in your area? Add option to enter email address.

Q5: Do you think it is a good idea to try to build new places in such a way as to make it as easy as possible for people to get around without a car? To what extent would you be willing to accept longer journey times in a car to facilitate shorter journeys on foot or by bike? **[Options: Not at all/Up to 5 mins longer/Up to 10 mins longer/Up to 15 mins longer/Up to 20 mins longer/Up to 25 mins longer/Up to 30 mins longer/30 mins+ longer]**

Q6: Do you think it is reasonable to require developers to commit to managing vehicle traffic generated by their sites once built and to make improvements if it exceeds the volume agreed?

Q7: Do you agree that we should prioritise safe and convenient space for more vulnerable road users (e.g. pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders) when we design new places and roads? To what extent would you be willing to accept a reduction in space for driving or parking to make sure there was enough space for people to walk, cycle and scoot comfortably? **[Create checklist with Yes/No/Maybe/N/A options for the following: Reducing width of road lanes to create wider pavements or cycle paths; Removing additional vehicle lanes (e.g. 2 lanes down to 1) to create more space for walking and cycling, or add bus lanes; Reducing on-street parking spaces in residential areas; Reducing parking spaces in town centres; Reducing the size of the driveway and/or garage at your home]**

Q8: If you own a vehicle, would you consider switching it to an electric one? **[Options: I already have/Actively looking/Within the next 2 years/In the next 2-5 years/In 5 years+/No intention to do so/Cannot do so because of the following factor(s): *Add open text box with this option]**

Q9: Would you consider becoming part of a car club rather than owning your own individual car? **[Options: I already have/Actively seeking to join/As soon as one is available in my area/Within the next 2 years/In the next 2-5 years/In 5 years+/No intention to do so]**

Q10: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

Topic Paper: Sustainable Tourism

1.0 Introduction

1.1 As a popular and well-known visitor destination, tourism is a significant part of Cotswold District's economy and a key local employment sector.

1.2 In [2019 17%](#) of all jobs in the District were in tourism related sectors (figure 1). Most tourism employment relates to food and drink, and accommodation for visitors. ([Gloucestershire LIS, draft 2019](#)). The Local Plan ensures that the location of new tourism development is effectively and appropriately managed to protect the high quality natural and built environment of the District (Local Plan, para. 9.10.1, 9.10.4).

[The Economic Impact of Gloucestershire's Visitor Economy \(Cotswold District\) 2019](#)

£366 million	Total Visitor Related Spend
7,348	Estimated actual employment
17%	Proportion of all employment

£82 million	Retail
£52 million	Accommodation
£123 million	Food and drink
£50 million	Attractions and entertainment
£38 million	Transport and other
Making a direct expenditure of over £345 million in 2019	

1.3 Sustainable tourism is a key emerging issue for the sector. It goes beyond green tourism to encompass the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development. Sustainable tourism practice includes ensuring that the well-being and cultural heritage of communities is protected. Activities may include supporting conservation projects, hiring local staff, sourcing locally-produced products, conserving energy and recycling. Sustainable tourism requires participation of stakeholders and is a long term process that needs to be monitored and adapted as required.

1.4 On a national and international scale, sustainable tourism is becoming increasingly significant as a result of the global climate crisis. The British Tourism Association (BTA) has begun work on a Sustainable Tourism Policy Paper due to be published in late 2021/early 2022.

1.5 This paper summarises the evidence and looks at the planning policy context for tourism in Cotswold District. It considers what changes, if any, should be incorporated into the Local Plan Partial Update, making recommendations for how existing planning policy might best

be amended. It also takes a longer, strategic view on the relationship between tourism and the climate change emergency, making recommendations as to how potential conflicts with certain key policy areas may best be approached in a subsequent full review of the Local Plan.

- 1.6 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: [\[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE\]](#)

2.0 The Issues

Strategic level - the context

- 2.1 Climate change and ecological emergencies have been declared by the Council, embedding climate emergency considerations in all work areas. The Council's Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 establishes a series of actions to respond to these emergencies including an objective to deliver actions contained in the Cotswolds Tourism Destination Management Plan (DMP), promoting Cotswold District as a high quality year-round destination and '*Increase tourism's contribution to the economic, social and environmental sustainability of our communities*'.
- 2.2 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA Scoping report) 2021 sets identifies key relevant issues as:
- limited range of public transport options, which affects the ability to both reach the destination and travel around sustainably.
 - uneven distribution of visitors throughout the year and across the district,. balancing the needs of visitors and locals to avoid conflict and retain a sense of place.
 - potential environmental damage e.g. erosion caused by increased visitor numbers.
- 2.3 The Cotswold District Council Green Economic Growth Strategy (2020) seeks to improve the quality of tourism and increase visitor spend, building on the 'experience' of our towns and linking it with other local businesses. It emphasises the Council's aspiration to move towards a sustainable visitor economy that encourages a wider geographical spread and promotes the area as an "all-year-round" destination rather than having a heavy concentration of visitors in the summer.
- 2.4 The October 2021 update of Cotswolds Tourism's Destination Management Plan for Tourism (DMP) places sustainability at the core of the DMO's priorities. Key sustainable tourism objectives include:
- increase usage of sustainable transport by visitors when travelling to and around the Cotswolds;
 - encourage businesses to adopt sustainable practices and to develop sustainable tourism messaging to all stakeholders and visitors;
 - encourage the use of local produce and suppliers to support the development of better local supply chains;
 - encourage a better geographical and seasonal spread of visitors to lessen the impact on the landscape and its residents; and
 - promote the co-benefits of active travel (walking and cycling) on health and wellbeing - as well as reducing carbon emissions.

- 2.5 Other relevant studies are discussed in the supporting evidence for this Topic paper including Gloucestershire Economic Needs Assessment 2020, the Gloucestershire Economic Recovery analysis paper and the Visit Gloucestershire 2021- 2024 strategy.

Strategic level - the issues

- 2.6 A central consideration is ensuring a balance between the economic and social benefits from visitor spend and the impacts that visitor numbers can have on the natural environment and resident communities, as well as the need to conserve and enhance the natural assets that play a critical role in attracting visitors in the first place. The inexorable impact of climate change and the need for action to mitigate and adapt to its effects is greatly increasing the pressure to find ways of sustainably managing or resolving these challenges.
- 2.7 The importance of the tourism sector for the district's economy is indisputable. However, recent studies (Gloucestershire Economic Recovery and Visit Gloucestershire for example - see supporting evidence) recognise the need to address the less desirable climate change impacts of tourism. These include air pollution and congestion from traffic. The critical need to address these issues (clearly not restricted to tourism) is altering the components of the balance that needs to be struck in reaching planning decisions. The planning challenge is to maintain and grow the tourism economy, implementing the council's objectives while developing and implementing measurable initiatives to increase its sustainability performance.
- 2.8 Options for addressing these strategic challenges are set out at Section 3 below.

Non-strategic level - the context

- 2.9 Adopted Local Plan policies support sustainable tourism by enabling new and extended tourism development, appropriate regeneration schemes, visitor attractions, cultural and leisure facilities that are appropriate to their location and enhance and protect the existing attractions within the District.
- 2.10 **Policy EC10** sets out the criteria for new or extended tourist facilities and visitor attractions. The policy supports the provision of enhanced and new facilities in appropriate locations.
- 2.11 **Policy EC11** requires tourist accommodation to be appropriately located and both policies recognise the environmental sensitivity of the District.

Non-strategic level - the issues

- 2.12 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report 2021 considers the policies to generally be working well. It 'scoped out' tourism as a topic requiring further investigation. A tension was noted however in EC10 between clause b requiring tourist facilities to be well related to the main tourist routes and that of the concentration of tourism in 'honeypot' destinations. Similarly EC11 is essentially restrictive rather than enabling. Whilst having regard to the recognised environmental sensitivity of much of the district, it tends to conflict with statements, again in the supporting text, that emphasise the importance of tourism as "a key employment sector in the district" and its role in supporting key community assets. Local
- 2.13 Plan policy revisions could seek to improve the policies to better consider these tensions/ conflicts.

- 2.14 Whilst both policies are noted as fit for purpose, the Local Plan review 2019 recommends minor revisions are required in the short term for clarity:
- 2.15 “Policy EC10 - to clarify that new/extended tourist attractions should be viable without the provision of tourist accommodation. And that new tourist attractions should not include accommodation (in a more explicit way than at present), to prevent the argument that the new accommodation will form part of the tourist attraction (EC11 (4)) and is therefore acceptable.
- 2.16 Following on and in context of possible changes to EC10, Policy EC11 should be more explicit when policy applies to improve clarity on when accommodation, in connection with an attraction, will be supported e.g. when extensions to existing hotels/serviced accommodation facilities apply.”
- 2.17 This topic paper has links with several other topic papers including Transport, Meeting the Climate Challenge, Landscape, Town Centres & Retail, and Economy and Employment.

3.0 The Options

- 3.1 Given time constraints of a partial update and because they have different requirements, it is not possible to deliver both the strategic and non-strategic dimensions simultaneously. Therefore the policy response is that there are two objectives: one to deal with in the short term (in the Local Plan partial update), and a longer term option (Local Plan review) once a sustainable strategic tourism strategy is in place. This could also be linked into Local Plan Economic Objective 3d.
- 3.2 **Short-term (non-strategic) approach** – clarity is needed for development management as identified in the Local Plan Review 2019 and in the Sustainability Appraisal (see above). The solution is to amend and update the policies accordingly. This may also include a version where the supporting text is also amended to include reference to the Corporate Plan’s objective of a ‘green to the core’ Local Plan.
- 3.3 **Longer-term (strategic) approach** – the overarching issue is that of unintentional conflict i.e. those topic areas which at a strategic level are potentially in conflict with the current role of tourism in the District. This is partly due to the emerging paradigm shift triggered by the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change. As noted above, the recommended way towards a solution is that a sustainable tourism strategy is needed to discuss and strive to reconcile the conflicts and challenges. This will take time and will not be available for the Local Plan Update. A full Local Plan review would in due course be able to deliver the planning elements of the strategy.
- 3.4 Forward Planning and Tourism officers have discussed this approach and agreed to work closely together to deliver it.

Preferred option(s)

(a) Amend adopted policies for clarity in line with Local Plan Review and Sustainability Appraisal recommendations, and continue to ensure tourism development protects, and is appropriate in, the natural and built environment.

(b) Propose in the partial update that a sustainable tourism strategy is prepared, with planning actions/outputs taken forward in the future full Local Plan review. Amend supporting text to reflect the “green to the core” aspiration.

4.0 Questions – tell us what you think

Q1: Do you agree with the preferred option, and if not, why not?

Q2: What does “sustainable tourism” mean to you?

Q3: How do we balance the need to access visitor destinations in rural locations with other policy objectives such as the need to reduce private car use/ carbon emissions?

Q4: Should there be more places or direction in the Local Plan, for example, identifying areas and/or routes to facilitate sustainable tourism growth?

Q5: Visitor spend already has a key role in supporting local high streets but are there new facilities you would like to see that would also appeal to visitors and which visitor spend would make more viable?

Q6: Should there be more indoor or all-weather attractions and/or serviced-accommodation to enhance the year-round tourism offer? If so, where?

Q7: Should we try to ensure that tourism and its benefits are spread more equally across the District rather than concentrated in “honeypot” locations? What are your ideas about how we can do this?

Q8: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

Topic Paper: Water Quality, Water Resources and Flooding

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In future, Cotswold District will experience a higher temperature climate, more extreme weather and adverse weather-related events. These are likely to include flooding especially in the wider river valleys. An increase in surface water flooding is also likely. Flooding from groundwater sources may also occur.
- 1.2 Hotter, drier summers may exacerbate low river flows and concentrate pollutant loads from wastewater effluents including agricultural run-off, affecting water quality. Increase in water demand also adds pressure to existing water resources in an already 'seriously water stressed' area.
- 1.3 The existing Local Plan policies are sound in making adequate provision to enable management of the effects of development and climate change on the water environment. They are compliant with national policy and rest upon a comprehensive evidence base that includes a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Level 1 and 2), a [Water Cycle Study](#) and application of a sequential, risk based approach (the Sequential Test) to the location of development. But it is considered in light of the need to mitigate and adapt to the increasing effects of climate change that the policies could be more robust and proactive. Greater detail is set out in the accompanying Topic Paper.
- 1.4 Further technical detail on this topic paper is provided in a supporting evidence paper, which can be accessed at the following link: [\[INSERT HYPERLINK TO EVIDENCE PAPER BEFORE PAPER GOES LIVE\]](#)
- 1.5 Related Topic Papers include: Green Infrastructure; Design; Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services.

2.0 The issues

- 2.1 There is likely to be increasing conflict between climate change impacts and future development demands. Increased development will put pressure on water resources. Areas of the District that are at risk of flooding and increased flood risk, alongside the increased risk of storm events and dry periods, will also put pressure on water quality due to increased levels of run-off or lack of dilution.
- 2.2 In the longer term land may be required for future flood storage and more natural methods of flood management. These include the creation or re-establishment of natural features such as tree planting or hedge lines or changes to land management that will reduce flood risk in the catchment, attenuate flood waters or capture pollutants.
- 2.3 Flood water storage areas are designed to hold back excess water during a flood. They will become even more essential as the effects of climate change increase. They reduce the volume of water travelling downstream and consequently reduce the risk of a watercourse overflowing in downstream locations. Potential flood storage areas in the future should be safeguarded from development. Two have already been identified near Cirencester in discussion with the Environment Agency (EA). It is possible that given updated climate

change allowances the EA could recommend implementing these areas sooner rather than later.

2.4 Climate change is expected to significantly change rainfall patterns in the United Kingdom. Flooding is expected to be more frequent, to a greater extent, deeper and faster.

2.5 To increase resilience to flooding, allowances for climate change should be considered in flood risk assessments. (Previously river flows were predicted to increase by 20%).

River basin district	Allowance category	Total potential change anticipated for the '2080s' (2070 to 2115)
Thames	Upper end	70%
	Higher central	35%
	Central	25%
Severn	Upper end	70%
	Higher central	35%
	Central	25%

Source: Figure 2 Climate Change Allowances (% increase in river flow) SFRA 2016

2.6 The **Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report** 2021 recommends that action is required to address:

- Fluvial flooding: On larger main rivers in wider valleys such as the River Churn and the River Thames mapping indicates a noticeable increase in the mapped flood extent. Smaller watercourses in Cotswold tend to be in areas of steeper topography with quite confined floodplains, and in these cases increases in flow do not result in a significant increase in flood extent.
- Surface water flooding: climate change is predicted to increase rainfall intensity in the future by up to 30%. This will increase the likelihood and frequency of surface water flooding, particularly in impermeable urban areas, and areas that are already susceptible such as Moreton in Marsh and Fairford.
- Groundwater flooding: The effect of climate change on groundwater flooding, and those watercourses where groundwater has a large influence on winter flood flows (such as the River Churn), is more uncertain. Milder wetter winters may increase the frequency of groundwater flooding incidents in areas that are already susceptible. However, warmer drier summers may counteract this effect by drawing down groundwater levels more during the summer months

2.7 At national level, flood risk is high on the government’s planning agenda. It is comprehensively addressed in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) at Chapter 14 *Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change*, and also in [Planning Practice Guidance on Flood Risk and Coastal Change](#) and [Meeting our Future Water Needs](#). The [Environment Act](#) 2019-2021 has four priority areas: biodiversity, air quality, water and waste, while the [Planning For the Future](#) White Paper (July 2020) noticeably mentions flood risk ahead of other environmental challenges such as drought and coastal erosion.

At regional level, available evidence includes:

- [Thames River Basin Management Plans](#) (Environment Agency 2015);

- [Thames Water Resources Management Plan 2019](#); and
 - As Lead Local Flood Authority, Gloucestershire County Council CC has produced a Surface Water Management Plan, Technical guidance on sustainable urban drainage or SuDS design, a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment ([PFRA 2013](#)), and has a statutory duty to develop and maintain a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy ([LFRMS](#)).
- 2.8 Locally, from a land-use planning perspective the need to effectively manage flood risk has long been a significant and well-recognised issue. [Local Plan Strategic Objective 6 Climate Change and Flood Risk](#) is to:
- 2.9 *Reduce the environmental impact of development and vulnerability to the impacts of climate change by...Maximising water and energy efficiency, promoting the use of renewable energy sources and sustainable construction methods, and reducing pollution and waste [and] Locating development away from areas identified as being at high risk from any form of flooding or from areas where development would increase flood risk to others.*
- 2.10 This objective and the policies (INF8 and EN14) aimed at delivering it remain sound in a “technical” planning sense. But the policies need to be strengthened so that we are better able to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of Climate Change.

3.0 The options

- 3.1 Management of the water environment is an integral part of the wider need for climate change adaptation and mitigation. As such it is closely related with other policy areas that are increasing in importance such as Green Infrastructure (GI) and Natural Capital. An obvious first step towards making the Local Plan more robust is to clearly link the related policies so that taken together they provide an integrated and robust response to all aspects of the climate change emergency - for example mapped areas to reduce flood risk in future (climate change allowances) and improve natural flood/pollution/storage measures (See GI and Natural Capital Topic Papers).
- 3.2 In specific terms, and as Option 1, the existing water management policies could be supplemented and amended thus:
- i. Introduce a requirement to use ‘Flood zone map 3a+CC ‘ in flood risk assessments. Propose that the flood risk zone mapping is updated to take into account the most recent climate change predictions and introduce a policy requirement to submit flood risk assessment using/within the climate change buffer areas.
 - ii. Retrofitting of SUDs when appropriate. Areas to be identified where it may be possible to suggest this (e.g. high risk areas), and where there are opportunities in already consented development to minimize flood risk and water pollution.
 - iii. Surface water flooding - use EA data/mapping of surface water flooding and flows to revise and adopt a Surface Water Drainage constraint map to be required in policy to be used in FRAs. Surface water flood risk to be clearly considered as having equal importance with fluvial risk.
 - iv. Promote more natural methods of flood management (link with GI strategy) for drainage and flood storage, improved water quality and recreation and wildlife, for example tree

planting within the river/drainage catchment of the development. Or require a financial contribution from developers.

- v. Policies to be flexible for drought or flood risk and see water resources as a benefit for humans and wildlife, tourism/ recreation, and flood prevention
- vi. Provide more land to be safeguarded for future potential flood storage areas
- vii. Improve how design/ layout of buildings can contribute to improved water quality and reduce flood risk. eg properties to be more resilient to flooding (air brick covers), rainwater capture for more efficient use of water. Major /large scale residential development could be accompanied by an Energy Statement which demonstrates a low level of water consumption

3.3 As an alternative approach, **Option 2** is that the existing Local Plan policies remain unchanged but the supporting text is amended to be more explicit about climate change adaptation and emphasise a more holistic linkage with Green Infrastructure. Possible text could be:

'Development will need to be located and designed to cope with the potential adverse impacts of climate change such as flood risk and water scarcity incorporating sustainable drainage systems where possible, green infrastructure and increasing permeable surfaces, water harvesting and layouts that accommodate waste water recycling for example.

Adapting to the likely impacts of climate change includes locating development away from areas at high risk of flooding, and also protecting our water resources and water quality'

3.4 Preferred option(s)

The preferred option is Option 1. Option 2 will only make changes to the supporting text. Although it serves to contextualise and explain, supporting text is not policy. If climate change is to be tackled, we must be bold. In reality it will in all likelihood be possible to combine the best elements of both options.

4.0 Questions – tell us what you think

Q1: Do you agree with the preferred option? Please explain why.

Q2: Is there any information / key issues we have missed?

Q3: What other ways can we improve flood prevention/ water efficiency / reduce water demand?

Q4: To mitigate and adapt to the Climate Change Emergency we may have to increase the planning restrictions on development in areas subject to flooding - what do you think about that?

Q5: Are there areas close to where you live that flood more often?

Q6: Are there any other Local Plan-related issues or options on this topic paper that you would like to raise?

CIRENCESTER CONSERVATION AREAS: APPRAISALS AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

CIRENCESTER PARK CONSERVATION AREA
GLOUCESTER STREET AND RIVER WALK CONSERVATION AREA
CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA
CIRENCESTER SOUTH CONSERVATION AREA

Consultation Draft 2021



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 A conservation area was originally designated for Cirencester in 1968, which was reviewed in 1980; 1984; 1991 and 2008 and finally in 2021. There have been various names and boundaries for the conservation areas since 1968. The previous boundary and name changes occurred in 2008 and designated four Conservation Areas within the town:

- Cirencester Park
- Gloucester Street And River Walk
- Cirencester Town Centre
- Cirencester South

A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, as defined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

A Conservation Area is a designated heritage asset, and is an important consideration in assessing planning applications.

Map 1. Cirencester Conservation Areas (see Appendix 1)

1.2 Comprehensive appraisals of the four Conservation Areas were undertaken in 2008, providing a wealth of useful historic and descriptive information, as well as photographs; for that reason very few photographs are included in these appraisals (the 2008 appraisals remain available on the Council's website¹).

1.3 This 2021 appraisal provides a shorter and more accessible document that combines the analysis of all four Conservation Areas, in part to aid in the preparation of a "masterplan" for Cirencester. Many issues are relevant across all four Conservation Areas and have been presented jointly, for example, the townscape and green infrastructure/open space analyses; however, there are also separate detailed assessments of each Conservation Area and the individual character areas within each one. This combined appraisal is also accompanied by management proposals, which relate to all four Conservation Areas.

1.4 The aim of the appraisals is to set out the special interest and character of the four Cirencester Conservation Areas.

¹ <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/historic-buildings-and-conservation-areas/conservation-area-maps/>

2. ALL CIRENCESTER CONSERVATION AREAS: DESCRIPTION AND SETTING

2.1 Cirencester lies in the floodplain of the River Churn, a tributary of the River Thames. Sitting in a shallow bowl it is surrounded to the north and west by the Cotswolds (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and to the south by the relatively flat expanse of the Upper Thames Valley. The Conservation Areas fall entirely within the (landscape) National Character Area 107² (The Cotswolds).

2.2 Cirencester is a fairly compact market town, whose attractive and distinctive character is strongly influenced by its historic development, including the original Roman road pattern and medieval street pattern. It is characterised by buildings of a modest scale and, for the most part, by intimate and enclosed spaces. The historic town, within the late 20th century ring road, has two distinct phases. Taking a line marked by Lewis Lane and Querns Lane, the northern section is characterised by a curvilinear medieval street pattern, with tightly packed buildings, often built up from the back edge of the pavement. South of Lewis Lane and Querns Lane, and including the small section bordered by Sheep Street and Ashcroft Road, the built form is derived predominantly from nineteenth century development in the form of tight terraces to straight streets and avenues giving a sense of space and regularity.

2.3 Many of the approaches into Cirencester are within green wedges of undeveloped land, which are important to the town's appearance and character and link it with the surrounding countryside; this is especially true of Cirencester Park and the Abbey Grounds.

2.4 The unifying feature is the prominent use of Cotswold stone for buildings, walls and roofs. Interest is provided by a variety of building styles and architectural features, and in the modulation of historic street frontages. More recent buildings exhibit a wider range of building materials, including brick and natural blue slate.

Map 2. Landscape Designations (see Appendix 1)

² <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5900626>

3. ALL CIRENCESTER CONSERVATION AREAS: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1 **Roman Corinium** - The town was of considerable importance in Roman times as Corinium Dobunorum and was at the junction of several key Roman roads – some of which are still main roads today. The town developed into a local government centre and agricultural market. There was also a large military fort. Today, there is relatively little to see of the Roman period other than the amphitheatre and some remains of the Roman wall around the settlement. However, there are considerable below ground archaeological deposits. In recognition of this important archaeological resource much of the town is scheduled³; but it is likely that important archaeological remains are also present outside the scheduled areas.

Map 3. Archaeology (see Appendix 1)

3.2 **The Medieval and Early Post-Medieval Period** - The Abbey was founded during this period and the present parish church constructed. The town increased in prosperity from the 14th century onwards, because of the wool trade and Cirencester's role as a market town. Buildings and street patterns from the medieval period can still be found towards the centre of Cirencester. The Abbey's properties were sold as part of the dissolution of the monasteries, the Oakley Estate on the west side of the town to Sir Benjamin Bathurst, and the Abbey Grounds on the east side to Dr Richard Master. The two families were to have a profound influence on the development of the town.

3.3 **Seventeenth Century** - The town continued to benefit from the wool trade, with fine stone buildings replacing many of the timber-framed domestic buildings of the medieval period. The new type of local vernacular style developed around the needs of the inhabitants and the capability of the stone. The typically gabled two-storey houses, incorporating stone mullioned windows with drip moulds over, and stone slate roofs with stone chimneys, were built off the pavement edge in densely-packed terraces.

3.4 **Eighteenth Century** - There was a distinct change in architectural fashions, with elegant and classically-inspired houses, which served to demonstrate the growing wealth and social standing of their inhabitants. The development of Cirencester Park by Allen, 1st Earl Bathurst, was a very important physical change in eighteenth-century Cirencester. The Earl rebuilt the Mansion in subdued classical style and laid out the Park. The canal arrived in the late 18th century, bringing new trade connections.

3.5 **Nineteenth Century** - At the start of the century most of the town lay north of Lewis Lane and Querns Lane. To address poor housing conditions new houses and shops were built, mainly in a very "Cotswold" style and roads were widened. These "improvements" included the demolition of a tightly packed group of medieval properties to the south of the Church, which opened up the Market Place. The Watermoor suburb south of Lewis Lane developed slowly throughout the century and by 1850 it had its own church. The Great Western Railway arrived in 1841 linking Cirencester with Kemble. In 1883 a further branch line station was opened at Watermoor by the rival railway company. New institutions and facilities were also constructed, including a public outdoor swimming pool.

3.6 **Twentieth and Twenty-First centuries** - Further public and commercial buildings were constructed in the early 20th century, often in the new Arts and Crafts style, including The Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Standard building. As the population expanded housing estates were built

3

[https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/has/scheduledmonuments/#::~:~:text=A%20scheduled%20monument%20is%20a%20n,Areas%20Act%201979%20\(1\).&text=Buildings%20in%20use%20for%20non%20residential%20purposes%20may%20be%20scheduled.](https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/has/scheduledmonuments/#::~:~:text=A%20scheduled%20monument%20is%20a%20n,Areas%20Act%201979%20(1).&text=Buildings%20in%20use%20for%20non%20residential%20purposes%20may%20be%20scheduled.)

around the town, mainly outside the Conservation Areas, and this has continued into the 21st century.

3.7 Various schemes have addressed the major increase in traffic, including most notably the inner ring road, which severed the amphitheatre from the town centre, and large areas of car parking. Within the town centre, a number of medieval and later buildings were demolished and new developments undertaken, some more successful than others.

Cirencester Park (Grade I registered park and garden – Historic England)

The Park covers more than 1,000 acres extending westwards from the Mansion for some 8km towards Sapperton. A 1.5 to 3 metre high, mostly drystone wall extends around much of the park perimeter. There are two main approaches from the east, one private (an eighteenth semi-circular courtyard with curved wall and yew hedge) with associated gates and a main public access (with wrought iron gates and railings and two 19th century lodges).

The Park consists of extensive woodland together with parkland and private pleasure grounds. It was designed by The 1st Earl Bathurst and the poet, Alexander Pope. Cirencester Park combines both the formal geometric layout of previous designed parks characterised by radiating avenues extending in straight lines between principal viewpoints, and the naturalistic elements of later designs incorporating irregularly shaped woods and glades and occasional serpentine paths. There are many structures of interest in the Park including the lake in the private grounds of the Mansion and several “follies” or garden structures, such as Pope’s Seat and the Hexagon.

There are various key vistas, including the former Elm Avenue (Windsor Walk) on a line extending west from the church tower through the centre of The Mansion and terminating at Queen Anne’s Monument, and also the Broad Ride extending on a gentle rise from Cecily Hill and continuing for several miles.

The Park is a major informal recreation facility (open to the public at the discretion of the Bathurst Estate) on the edge of the historic town centre. The Park is also home to more formal sporting activities and events.

Map 4. Registered Parks and Gardens (Cirencester Park) (see Appendix 1)

4. CHARACTER ASSESSMENTS - INTRODUCTION

4.1 The four Conservation Areas have somewhat different characters, relating to their visual appearance, their historic development and the current and past uses of the area. The special interest and key characteristics of each Conservation Area is summarised below. Each Conservation Area has been sub-divided into character areas. There is often not a clean edge to each area but rather a gentle transition of character. For each character area a list of key characteristics and features is provided. These are not exhaustive but give a flavour of that character area.

4.2 Some of the character areas described in the 2008 appraisals have been combined as they are very similar. The reference numbers used in the 2008 appraisals are included for clarity.

4.3 For each character area there is a list of opportunities for enhancement and issues to be addressed to improve the quality of that character area, for example, too many parked cars or buildings in a poor state of repair. Actions to address these are included in section 10 – All Cirencester Conservation Areas: Management Proposals.

5. CHARACTER ASSESSMENTS OF THE FOUR CIRENCESTER CONSERVATION AREAS

5.1 The Park Conservation Area (CA1)

Summary

5.1.1 The majority of the Park Conservation Area comprises the easternmost part of the historic designed Cirencester Park. The relationship between the Park and the town is of crucial importance. There is a marked contrast between the wide open spaces of the Park and the more contained urban space of Cecily Hill, the two meeting at the ornate iron screen and gates at the top of Cecily Hill. Further south the Park (and the Mansion) are divided from the town by a high wall and the famous yew hedge. There are striking long views within the Park, including of the Mansion and church tower.

5.1.2 The Park Conservation Area is sub-divided into three character areas:

Map 5. The Park Conservation Area (CA1) Character Areas (see Appendix 1)

Character Area CA1 A (2008 CA1:1): Cecily Hill – Key Characteristics and Features

- A broad linear urban space defined by predominantly two storey almost continuous historic building frontages built off the back edge of the pavement on the north side and, for the most part, set back behind mature gardens on the south side.
- Cecily Hill represents a transition between urban and rural; marked by the wrought iron railings and screen. It has an intimate scale in contrast with the vastness of the Park itself.
- A mix of imposing classically inspired polite architecture of the early eighteenth century onwards sitting amongst more rustic and simplistic residential properties typical of the Cotswold style (gabled elevations, stone surrounds and hood moulds to windows and doors, small hipped and gabled dormers, with Cotswold stone roofs and chimneys).
- Fairly consistent building heights of two and three storeys punctuated by the occasional prominent pedimented frontage rising higher than its neighbours, and prominent chimney

stacks, mostly of ashlar stone to various designs, many diagonally set and appearing in pairs or threes and providing vertical emphasis.

- Dominant use of limestone for frontages, flank walls and garden walls with occasional use of brick for chimney stacks and one prominent shaped gable end to 7 Cecily Hill.
- Predominantly limestone slate roofs with some Welsh slate and clay tile.
- The southern side of Cecily Hill is characterised by small gardens with boundary hedges offering a degree of separation and containment. To the north side, gaps in the street scene lead to glimpses of mature planting in the rear gardens sloping down towards the River Walk.
- The rear gardens on the south side are flanked by mature trees separating these properties from the private grounds of the Mansion and forming an important visual backdrop especially at the west end of Cecily Hill.
- The castellated former barracks (armoury or Castle) at the top of the hill dominates short views from within the Park.
- The elegant Park entrance ironwork screen containing a pair of large eighteenth century gates.
- An unusually wide pavement on the north side suitable for promenading.
- Tall hedges are the most visible boundary treatment on the south side with limestone rubble walls forming a significant boundary treatment on the north side.
- A quiet residential street outside office hours but busy at the start and end of week days.

Character Area CA1 A: Cecily Hill - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Telegraph poles and overhead wires
- Signage and street clutter
- Prominent bin storage at The Barracks
- Street parking

Character Area CA1 B (previously CA1:2): The Barton – Key Characteristics and Features

- A quiet and rural part of the Conservation Area, located less than 500 metres from the town centre.
- A listed farmstead group (farmhouse, barns, cottages and dovecote), built mainly in a Cotswold vernacular style of mid- to late-17th century origins, with 18th and 19th century additions and alterations, viewed across an historic orchard with boundaries formed by mature parkland trees and hedge banks creating a strong sense of enclosure.

Character Area CA1 B: The Barton - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Poor condition and underuse of some estate buildings
- Corrugated sheet roofs to barn extensions within the yard

- Declining numbers of orchard trees

Character Area CA1 C (2008 - CA1:3, 4 & 5): The Broad Ride, The Mansion & The Kennels – Key Characteristics and Features

- Almost all of this character area is within the registered park (see additional information on Cirencester Park). It is, however, hidden from the main road by mature trees, the substantial yew hedge and the high limestone rubble wall that begins at the main gates to the Mansion and continues all along the southern boundary; the wall lowers to mid-height west of the lodges.
- The entrances to the Park within this character area include the classically-inspired and massive gated entrance together with adjacent small 20th century lodge facing Silver Street and two 20th century gates and limestone piers enabling access from the old Tetbury Road.
- Two limestone ashlar piers mark the west end of the Conservation Area, beyond which, the grassland is managed less intensively. This marks a distinct change in character and as such, is an appropriate boundary for the Conservation Area.
- Key landscape features of the Park include:
 - the Broad Ride which is the main axis of the Park, leading towards Sapperton.
 - the avenue of mature limes along Windsor Walk.
 - the Ha-Ha and Fulham Bridge on Windsor Walk which separate pasture land from the more formal areas of the Park.
- The land has a gently undulating form, which creates subtle variations in views. Important views include:
 - the alignment of the Broad Ride and the parish church.
 - the alignment of the Queen Anne monument (to the south-west of the character area), the Mansion and the parish church.
 - views to and from the various follies and eyecatchers within the Park, such as the Hexagon.
 - views of the west elevation of the Mansion from Fulham Bridge on Windsor Walk.
- Other features of interest in the character area include the raised path along the old Tetbury Road, which is important visually and provides appropriate safety for pedestrians.

Character Area CA1 C: The Broad Ride, The Mansion and the Kennels - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Modern post and rail fencing
- Condition of some historic railings
- Condition of Ha-Ha and other stone walls
- Unsympathetic street furniture (galvanised railings on south raised walk)
- Poor condition and underuse of historic buildings (some estate buildings)
- Unsympathetic modern buildings

- Traffic noise
- Need for pre-emptive tree planting to replace older trees as they mature and die

5.2 The Gloucester Street & River Walk Conservation Area (CA2)

Summary

5.2.1 Gloucester Street forms the principal spine of the Conservation Area; its gently curving form combines with a near continuous building line created by properties built off the back edge of the narrow pavement, to form a long and particularly intimate urban space. There is a marked contrast between this and the wider areas of green open space, which surround it to the east and especially to the west and north. The open fields provide a tranquil context and semi-rural setting with banks of trees, providing a strong sense of enclosure and appropriate boundaries to the Conservation Area.

5.2.2 Barton Lane and Gooseacre Lane are more suburban in character and as such form a transition between the two character areas.

5.2.3 The Gloucester Street and River Walk Conservation Area is divided into two character areas.

Map 6. The Gloucester Street and River Walk Conservation Area (CA2) Character Areas (see Appendix 1)

Character Area CA2 A (2008 - CA2:1): Gloucester Street – Key Characteristics and Features

- A long narrow gently winding intimately-scaled urban space, which is defined by predominantly two- and three-storey almost continuous historic building frontages built off the back edge of the pavement on both sides with the occasional narrow front or side garden.
- Retention of a number of historic corridor mews or “places”, indicative of the network of former tradesmens’ and artisans’ premises located at the rear of dwellings facing onto Gloucester Street.
- A few other small spaces, mainly private gardens, punctuate the otherwise highly dense built form; examples include the garden in front of The Old House.
- This area has evolved since the medieval period and retains many good examples of the Cotswold vernacular style mostly from the 17th and 18th centuries.
- The southern end of the street contains a handful of buildings of more polite architectural style, most notably Powell’s School, and a few buildings with Georgian facades and classical proportions albeit with few overt architectural pretensions.
- Good examples of Arts and Crafts style, displaying many of the characteristic features of their more historic neighbours.
- Dominant use of limestone for frontages, flank walls and garden walls and for chimneys stacks but with brick often used for tall rear chimney stacks and occasionally for rear and side elevations.

- Predominantly limestone slate roofs with some Welsh slate and clay tile and significant numbers of chimneys.
- Generally rustic and simple properties typical of the Cotswold style of gabled elevations with moulded window and door surrounds, and small hipped or gabled roof dormers.
- Distinctive, small-scale features including several date stones, traditional door furniture, enamel street signs, hanging signs and elements of iron, including railings and gates, which combine to create added visual appeal and local distinctiveness.
- A number of modern buildings, which fit comfortably into their historic surroundings, mostly because of appropriate design, scale and massing, materials and detailing.
- The Parish Church provides a principal focal point and is a major landmark viewed from Gloucester Street and to a lesser extent, Barton Lane.
- A quiet residential street outside office hours due in part to a lack of through-traffic but becoming more vibrant during school term time. In addition to Powell's School, other uses include a hotel and, historically, public houses and shops.

Character Area CA2 A: Gloucester Street - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Telegraph poles and overhead wires
- Loss of rear boundary features to create parking
- Signage clutter

Character Area CA2 B (2008 - CA2.2): The River Walk – Key Characteristics and Features

- This area is mainly open fields and spaces, with some development around Barton Lane and on the main road.
- Barton Mill House whilst physically altered, together with the mill pond and associated bridges, is of historic interest.
- The outdoor public pool provides an unusual urban feature whilst its “Castle” backdrop is impressive.
- The character of the River Walk itself varies along its route. Thomas Street to Barton Lane - a tightly-enclosed urban space bordered by high walls with the Gunstall Brook flowing alongside before the views open up about half way along its length across pasture land; Barton Lane to Gloucester Street Bridge - open land bordered by tree banks with only occasional glimpses of buildings to the south and east; Gloucester Street Bridge to Spitalgate Lane - the Jack Gardner Memorial Garden, an urban park which provides a green barrier between the busy Abbey Way and residential areas. A number of weeping willow trees reinforce the waterside character.
- The fields used as pasture for horses, sheep and occasionally cattle, together with allotments and public gardens which surround Gloucester Street provide a peaceful and semi-rural retreat.

- All the green open spaces of the River Walk character area are important to the setting of both Gloucester Street and the town itself.
- Substantial belts of mature trees within the River Walk character area contrast with the small number of individual specimen trees in Gloucester Street.

Character Area CA2 B: The River Walk - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Unsympathetic modern buildings (fuel station canopy and signage)

5.3 Town Centre Conservation Area (CA3)

Summary

5.3.1 Located in the centre of Cirencester, this Conservation Area contains the majority of the oldest parts of the town and has a complex evolution and character. The Market Place and the adjacent Parish Church form the principle spaces both historically and now as the focus for social, religious and community activities.

5.3.2 For the most part, medieval streets of narrow width radiate in winding form from the Market Place. The contained linear spaces found here and the vibrancy of the commercial and retail activity is in marked contrast to the quieter open expanse of the Abbey Grounds, where Abbey House was located (demolished 1964).

5.3.3 There is a mix of uses, including residential properties and most of the town's small- to medium-sized retail and office premises, together with local institutions and community and religious facilities.

5.3.4 The Town Centre Conservation Area is divided into four character areas.

Map 7. The Town Centre Conservation Area (CA3) Character Areas (see Appendix 1)

Character Area CA3 A (2008 - CA3:1, 5 & 6): Town Core, The Forum & Sheep Street – Key Characteristics and Features

- A historically and architecturally rich area consisting of a varied mixture of smaller scaled spaces, of mostly enclosed character, and centred on the Market Place, with its spectacular parish church whose tall tower provides a landmark for the whole of Cirencester.
- The Character Area lies at the commercial core of the town and contains a vibrant mix of retail, commercial, residential, community and religious uses.
- Streets are mainly tightly defined by mostly two- and three-storey buildings built off the back edge of the pavement in long, narrow, medieval plots, set at right angles to the road, mingling with buildings of later periods whose wider dimensions indicate plot amalgamation.

- Cotswold stone is used for most elevations, both coursed rubble and in places smooth ashlar for facades; roofing materials are varied and include limestone slates, clay tile and Welsh slate, the whole creating a cohesive character.
- Use of brick for later buildings, and occasionally, the rear and side elevations of stone buildings, and most often for high side boundary walls.
- Wide range of spaces, including Market Place, The Forum, Brewery Court, the old station, shopping streets, narrow medieval routes, the churchyard, corridor mews and courtyards, all serving a variety of purposes ensuring active use of the area.
- Very good pedestrian permeability because of a network of corridors and pathways between buildings and streets, under buildings towards courtyards and mews, and through public / commercial buildings.
- Many properties retain side entrances and corridor “mews” known as “places” offering access to premises developed in long narrow plots; these spaces create visual interest whilst some provide access to small shopping and café facilities, for example, Swan Yard.
- The roughly triangular West Market Place was opened up following the demolition of several properties backing onto the north of the church and facing Black Jack and Gosditch Streets in the early 19th century. The result is an enclosed pedestrian space partly filled by an impressive mature Cedar tree.
- As the streets move away from their medieval alignment, closest to the Market Place, many widen out because of later redevelopment with more varying plot widths, although often with the buildings still set at the back of the pavement, e.g. Castle Street.
- There is a significant survival of timber-framed buildings especially in Market Place dating from the later 17th century and evidenced by shallow window reveals but often concealed by rendered facades.
- Use of revivalist and Arts and Crafts derived detailing in the later 19th and early 20th centuries including hood moulds, mullioned windows and oriel windows.
- A roofscape enlivened by the use of large numbers of gabled frontages interspersed with pitched roofs behind parapets and occasional pediments, together with tall chimney stacks and high level ornamentation including cornices encouraging views upwards and reinforcing the vertical emphasis of individual buildings and the townscape of the character area.
- Enrichments including doorcases, cornices and window architraves.
- A number of surviving, mostly nineteenth-century shop fronts, especially in Market Place, Castle Street and Black Jack Street, many retaining features such as ornate console brackets, fluted pilasters, turned glazing bars, iron ventilation grilles and subtle signage painted onto slim fascias, along with imaginative and ornate hanging signs.
- Both Cricklade and Dyer Streets contain several good historic shopfronts and some well-designed modern replacements, together with numerous hanging signs providing detail and variety to ground and first floors, although the southern section of Cricklade Street is gradually becoming residential due to change of use of ground floors.

- Views are dominated by the church tower, with that from the Forum north along South Way being especially important. Shorter views toward local focal points, most often found on corner plots with frontages on two or more elevations, and glimpsed views into corridor and courtyard mews.
- The Parish churchyard forms a tranquil, enclosed, green, rectilinear space contained by the tall rear elevations of premises fronting Market Place and a high limestone rubble wall marking the boundary with the Abbey Grounds.
- Some good traditional paving most notably to corridor mews, together with modern paving schemes such as that encircling the parish church and Market Place, and a handful of eye-catching elements of street furniture.
- Trees are not numerous but where they are found within the character area, they form an important element.
- Limestone rubble boundary walls, and some brick, form a distinctive element and are most important in enclosing gardens and various areas of domestic, commercial and public car parking especially where such areas have been created as a result of lost gardens, for example to the north of Dyer Street.
- Sheep Street is part of the main route for vehicular traffic into the town towards the Brewery Car Park. However, it retains some sense of enclosure at its northern end by a terrace of two-storey buildings on its east side, built off the back edge of the narrow pavement, and the raised tree-lined embankment on its west side, forming the boundary with the Sheep Street public car park. It then opens out with large detached buildings set back from the road frontage and within their own larger plots.
- The area either side of Hammond way is now dominated by large contemporary styled buildings providing both office and residential uses.
- Trees within the neighbouring Cirencester Park and the boundary wall along Tetbury Road are important features and add to the sense of enclosure.

Character Area CA3 A: Town Core - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Unsympathetic modern buildings and public realm (for example around the Brewery Car Park and South Way)
- Unsympathetic shop fronts
- Signage clutter and inappropriate street furniture in some places
- Unsympathetic paving materials in some areas
- Loss of original architectural features
- Poor interpretation (for example of the Roman heritage)
- Poor condition and underuse of some historic buildings

Character Area CA3 B (2008 - CA3:2): The Mead – Key Characteristics and Features

- A quiet, residential and leafy 1930s cul-de-sac of less than a dozen, mostly detached properties, set back from the roadside by small gardens extending to sides and rear.
- Two-storey houses with gables, predominantly of roughcast render with clay tile and some timber-framing, tall brick chimney stacks and timber doors and timber windows with leaded lights, which have only undergone minor changes since construction.
- Views towards the church tower to the south-east and glimpses between houses of the “Castle” are especially important.
- Predominantly low Cotswold limestone roadside walls with higher ones at the entrance to The Mead, are important in retaining front gardens and minimising the impact of parked vehicles.

Character Area CA3 B: The Mead - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Loss of original architectural features
- Unsympathetic modern buildings (prominent garage block)

Character Area CA3 C (2008 - CA3:3): Western Fringes – Key Characteristics and Features

- Streets are tightly defined by mostly two- to four-storey buildings, built off the back edge of the pavement, in long, narrow, medieval plots, set at right angles to the road, and mingling with buildings of later periods whose wider dimensions indicate plot amalgamation, normally in combination with road widening and occasional narrow front gardens bordered by low walls and/or iron railings.
- Thomas Street and Dollar Street are a little wider and incorporate some larger buildings sitting in generous plots and occasional narrow front gardens bordered by railings, the whole creating a contained but grander and less tunnel-like character than, for example, Black Jack Street and Coxwell Street.
- The 1970s development known as St Clements Walk wedged between Thomas Street, Coxwell Street and Dollar Street has a distinct identity and is notable for its lower building heights, limited density, open areas of garden and linking pathways.
- Park Street and Park Lane are distinguished by the high wall and high Mansion yew hedge and by the high wall and decorated roofscape of the Mansion stables.
- Good permeability allowing a range of pedestrian movement because of a network of corridors, such as St Clements Walk.
- A very varied and rich architectural mix, dating from the seventeenth to twentieth centuries, but predominantly seventeenth and eighteenth century buildings, as well as some of the most historically and architecturally important buildings in the town, e.g. the Weaver’s Hall and The Woolgatherers.
- Survival of timber-framed buildings especially in Dollar Street, dating from the later seventeenth century, and evidenced by shallow window reveals but often concealed by rendered facades;

- Use of revivalist and Arts and Crafts derived detailing in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including hood moulds, mullioned windows, tall chimney stacks set at angles and oriel windows.
- Roofscape enlivened by tall chimney stacks, large numbers of gabled frontages interspersed with pitched roofs behind parapets and occasional pediments, creating a decidedly vertical emphasis to the street scene.
- A rich array of decorative architectural detail providing visual stimulus and a varied urban scene including some good timber shopfronts.
- Materials unite the various architectural styles, with consistent use of rubble limestone for early building elevations, flank walls, chimney stacks, and boundary walls, and the use of limestone slates for roofs creating a very cohesive character, with most later buildings marked by smooth ashlar limestone, or smooth render more suited to the architectural style of buildings of eighteenth century and later date, in combination with Welsh slate or clay tile, the whole providing a great variety in texture.
- Use of other natural materials including timber for windows, doors and shopfronts, in combination with cast and wrought iron, and significant numbers of limewashed elevations, but with brick limited largely to chimney stacks.
- Principal views towards the church tower, most notably from Dollar Street, with shorter linear views, most especially on the outer western route of the area marked by Park Lane, Park Street, Thomas Street, with corner buildings and those at T-junctions forming important focal points.
- Two important contained nodal spaces on the east of the character area - at the junction of Tetbury Road, Castle Street and Park Lane marking the western entrance into the town; and at the eastern entrance to Cirencester Park off Park Lane / Park Street.
- Hidden private gardens glimpsed through gaps in the street scene and occasionally between gables and above rooflines.
- Trees mostly restricted to private gardens and/or overhanging limestone boundary walls but occasionally of strategic importance in the street scene.
- Almost continuous building frontages are broken only by occasional gaps in the street occupied by small private gardens, bordered by high limestone walls, often in combination with limestone pillars.
- Some small areas of good floorscape, most notably in Park Lane, Silver Street, and Coxwell Street.
- For the most part a quiet, residential area, with some commercial and retail premises and several religious / community institutions.

Character Area CA3 C: Western Fringes - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Loss of original architectural features
- Unsympathetic paving materials

- Unsympathetic modern buildings

Character Area CA3 D (2008 - CA3:4): Abbey Grounds – Key Characteristics and Features

- Hidden behind the church, the Abbey Grounds, a large open wedge-shaped expanse of urban parkland, forms a tranquil and informal, recreational facility incorporating the former Abbey fish pond, a children’s play area, a bandstand and large areas of mown grass used for a variety of informal games and leisure activities.
- There is good pedestrian access to the Abbey Grounds from a number of points. However, it is quite well hidden and to those unfamiliar with the area it appears as a surprising oasis within a short distance of the commercial core.
- The medieval gatehouse (the Norman Arch) provides a visual stimulus and a reminder of the history of the site.
- The visual impact of the public car park at the northwest corner of the character area is minimised by the surrounding trees.
- Additional visual interest is provided by features such as the fish pond / lake, the section of Roman wall and nearby stone bridge; the elegant route of winding pathways, and the extensive views across the grounds and especially from east to west towards the church tower.
- The trees in the grounds are attractive. They are effective and important in minimising the impacts of the adjacent dual carriageway.
- Benches of an attractive yet simple design are provided and the lighting within the Grounds is mostly of the mid-twentieth-century design with concrete columns and simple iron lamps of the Jubilee type.
- High limestone boundary walls surrounding the Abbey Grounds to the south provide texture, and a sense of containment and security.

Character Area CA3 D: Abbey Grounds - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Unsympathetic paving materials
- Unsympathetic modern buildings
- Poor interpretation (of Abbey Grounds and its history)
- Need for pre-emptive tree planting to replace older trees as they mature and die

5.4 Cirencester South Conservation Area (CA4)

Summary

5.4.1 The Conservation Area lies on fairly flat land, although it also includes two raised and curved banks - the City Bank, the remains of the Roman wall along the south eastern side, and the embankment of the former railway line across open land from the A419 to Prospect Place.

5.4.2 The Conservation Area contains development of mostly 19th and 20th century origin, which is predominantly quiet and residential in character with a few other uses including offices, shops, public houses and some recreational spaces. The open spaces within the Conservation Area are a key part of its character.

5.4.3 Cirencester South Conservation area is divided into 4 character areas.

Map 8. The Cirencester South Conservation Area (CA4) Character Areas (see Appendix 1)

Character Area CA4 A (2008 - CA4:1): Ashcroft – Key Characteristics and Features

- This area was developed in the latter part of the 19th century and is located south-west of the main historic centre of the town.
- Streets set within a regular grid pattern, comprising mostly two-bay, two- and three-storey terraced and semi-detached properties, set within regular rectangular plots, positioned back-to-back, with building lines set back from the pavement edge by small front gardens of narrow depth, and contained by low roadside walls, and undeveloped rear gardens.
- The character of the residential terraces is defined by the repetition of identical features such as timber doors and sash windows, and chimney stacks and pots, the whole giving a harmonious and cohesive character.
- Bay windows, mostly canted, and either with slate hipped roofs or parapet style, some with ornate pierced detail.
- Paired doorways with timber-framed panelled doors with square-headed or arched-headed fanlights over.
- Simple architectural detail, including dentilated eaves and cornices in contrasting brick, with occasional terracotta panels and carved capitals, polychrome detailing with contrasting materials to windows and door surrounds, and crested ridge tiles.
- Timber-boarding to gables and porches, and decorated timber bargeboards to some properties in St Peter's Road and a number of good traditional timber shopfronts.
- A mix of building materials is present, including red brick (some with contrasting cream brick dressings) and rock-faced or squared rubble limestone elevations with smooth ashlar limestone dressings; brick or stone chimney stacks; Welsh slate, Cotswold stone or red clay roof tiles.
- Gaps between each terrace or between semi-detached pairs allowing glimpses into rear gardens and/or to development beyond.
- A variety of boundary treatments, from low brick walls and iron railings, to low stone bases with iron railings, stone or brick walls with matching gate posts / pillars, and dense neatly-cut box hedging and/or topiary.
- Staffordshire Blue pavements, and/or engineering bricks to domestic pathways, bordered by blue clay/terracotta tiles in rope or chevron pattern.

- A predominantly residential character area but also incorporating two churches, a handful of shops, a surgery and a pharmacy.

Character Area CA4 A: Ashcroft - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Loss of original architectural features
- Signage clutter and unsympathetic street furniture
- Loss of boundary features

Character Area CA4 B (2008 - CA4:2): St Michael's – Key Characteristics and Features

- Contrasting with most other parts of the Conservation Area, the St Michael's character area has mostly larger, elegant detached buildings set within generous grounds and open recreation areas. The roads are mainly straight and lined with pavements. It has an attractive, green character.
- Good permeability with several pedestrian pathways through the area including the main pedestrian route on a north - south axis of St Michael's Park and the link from Trinity Road to Watermoor Road through the grounds of Holy Trinity Church.
- The almost wholesale use of Cotswold limestone, whether rubble, ashlar or rock-faced, to building elevations and boundary walls helps to bring together the varied building styles to create a harmonious character.
- Architectural detail including classical elements such as pediments and the use of iron for decorative pedestrian and vehicular gates and rainwater goods.
- Holy Trinity Church serves as an important local landmark.
- St Michaels Park is actively managed and provides formal recreational opportunities and is characterised by its rectilinear shape, high limestone boundary wall and planned planting.
- Several other areas of formal and informal recreational activity, e.g. the school.
- Large numbers of mature trees, which are important in screening and enhancing the built form. Some individual trees also form focal points.
- A wide range of uses including residential, most notably in Querns Lane; residential care homes education and commercial.

Character Area CA4 B: St. Michael's - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Loss of original architectural features
- Signage clutter and unsympathetic street furniture
- Loss of front boundary features
- Unsympathetic extensions
- Unsympathetic modern buildings

Character Area CA4 C (2008 - CA4:3, 4, 5 & 7): The Avenue – Key Characteristics and Features

- A densely-developed and compact character area, dissected by a grid of straight roads, lined with predominantly 19th century two- and three-storey terraced properties, interspersed with occasional individual and semi-detached buildings. Most properties are set back from the road edge by narrow front gardens and have relatively long and narrow plots.
- The area was constructed predominantly from the second half of the 19th century onwards, partly in response to a growing population and the arrival of the railways.
- Predominantly residential in nature, the character area also includes several shops, (including some corner shops now converted to residential), public houses and the Bingham Hall.
- Some properties built off the back edge of the pavement on long narrow plots most notably in Querns Lane and parts of Chester Street creating more intimate and tunnel-like road spaces.
- Containing mostly national architectural forms, often marked by simple classical proportion and restraint, but in most cases made distinctive through the use of local materials.
- Small-scale architectural detail and decoration to individual buildings throughout the character area.
- Some revivalist, and Arts and Crafts derived buildings including 4-14 Bowly's Cottages of 1924, on the west side of Watermoor Road, with mullioned casement windows and hood moulds.
- Residential terraces whose individual character is defined by the repetition of identical features such as timber doors and sash windows, chimney stacks and string courses giving a harmonious, rhythmical and cohesive character.
- Mostly simple pitched roofs but with occasional decorated timber gables to more ornate and/or historic revival style buildings.
- Extensive use of squared ashlar limestone, and/or rock-faced limestone for the most visible building elevations, with rubble for flank walls, chimney stacks, and boundary walls but interspersed with significant use of brick for some elevations, chimney stacks and boundary walls, together with Welsh slate and red clay tile for roofs.
- Significant views northwards towards Cirencester Parish Church from Watermoor Road and Tower Street.
- Views of the spire of Holy Trinity Church are a key focal point for the whole Conservation Area, including along Watermoor Road and across St Michael's Park.
- Watermoor House provides a key focal point, along with the remaining two chimneys of the former Malt House in Cricklade Street.
- Some trees within the built form, mostly to rear gardens and glimpsed between buildings. A few individual trees provide focal points in the street scene.
- Small green spaces within the dense built form include the small graveyard to the west of Watermoor Road and hidden areas of garden.
- A broad range of roadside boundary features often designed specifically as part of a terrace or a pair of properties, including iron railings on stone bases, rubble limestone walling with ashlar

dressings and limestone gate posts or dense cropped hedging, providing privacy and a sense of enclosure to the street scene.

- Older properties exhibit one- and two-storey single bay kitchen and bathroom extensions to rear elevations, often visible from side and rear boundaries.
- Domestically-scaled trees punctuate the pathways of the principle thoroughfare and provide additional interest, colour and shade whilst individual front gardens often incorporate colourful shrubs and/or dense hedging to form boundaries.
- A broad range of roadside boundary features, often designed specifically as part of a terrace or pair of properties, including iron railings on stone bases, rubble limestone walling with ashlar dressings and limestone gate posts, providing privacy and a sense of enclosure to the street scene.

Character Area CA4 C: The Avenue - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Unsympathetic extensions
- Loss of original architectural features
- Unsympathetic modern buildings
- Unsympathetic building materials (artificial stone)
- Poor interpretation (for example of Roman heritage at the entrance to St Michael's Park)
- Loss of front boundary features
- Signage clutter

Character Area CA4 D (2008 - CA4:6): Beeches & City Bank – Key Characteristics and Features

- A substantially green character area, with relatively few buildings, wedged between nineteenth- and twentieth-century urban development to the west, and the dual carriageway ring-road to the east, but successfully screened from the latter by a dense bank of mature trees.
- Local limestone predominates for building elevations, chimney stacks and boundary walls whilst the one brick terrace coupled with several brick chimneys and boundary walls, and parts of the former railway line, add colour and variety to the various architectural forms with roofs of either Cotswold limestone or Welsh slate.
- Views are an especially important feature and include views across open land, along pedestrian routes, and limited views towards Cirencester Parish Church to the northwest, just glimpsed from the raised City Bank, and also towards the spire of Holy Trinity Church to the west.
- Dissected lengthways by two divergent branches of the River Churn the area contains two large public recreation grounds.
- There are allotment gardens, including to the south of the curving railway.
- Trees play a vital role in the character area, not just in screening it from the busy ring-road, but in providing colour, texture, shade and visual interest throughout the area.

- Boundary walls, built predominantly of limestone rubble, make an important contribution in defining and containing spaces, ensuring a sense of enclosure and demarcating private and public spaces.
- The Character Area is predominantly residential, but also supports other uses, such as the Barn Theatre.

Character Area CA4 D: Beeches and City Bank - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Unsympathetic domestic extensions
- Loss of original architectural features

6. ALL CIRENCESTER CONSERVATION AREAS – POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES/SITES (INCLUDING HERITAGE ASSETS)

6.1 There are many Listed Buildings within the Conservation Areas as well as a number of unlisted buildings, structures and sites with historic significance (non-designated heritage assets) that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas. Examples of these non-designated heritage assets include the Marlborough Arms and adjacent terrace; the Bingham Hall and adjacent housing; and brick-built terraces such as Ashcroft Gardens.

A **non-designated heritage asset** is a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which does not meet the criteria for a designated heritage asset. This significance (heritage interest) may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.

Planning Practice Guidance: Paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20190723

6.2 Work is currently underway as part of the Local Heritage project, in partnership with the Cirencester Civic Society and the Cirencester Neighbourhood Planning Group to undertake a comprehensive review of the non-designated heritage assets in Cirencester, including within the Conservation Areas. It is anticipated that the non-designated heritage assets will be identified within the Neighbourhood Plan.

Map 9. Listed buildings and structures (see Appendix 1)

6.3 There are also other buildings in the Conservation Areas that, although not historic in nature, still contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Areas, for example Mill Place, Barton Lane.

6.4 Unfortunately there are also buildings, structures and sites that have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas, in terms of their design quality. Nearly all of these buildings and open spaces date from the mid to later 20th century and are usually associated with poorly designed areas of the public realm from the same period. Those in the town centre are illustrated on map 10. These negative buildings and open spaces are focused on three major car park areas – the Waterloo, the Forum and the Brewery and form an almost continuous east-west swathe across the centre of the town.

Map 10. Key areas of negative buildings and public realm (see Appendix 1)

Positive and Negative Buildings/Structures/Sites - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Well-planned and strategic regeneration would enhance the appearance and character of the areas of low quality buildings and public realm in the town centre and help to respond to the current and future needs of town.
- Individual negative buildings should be addressed through improved management and careful re-development.

- New developments should draw on the character of existing positive buildings/structures (both historic and contemporary) to achieve sympathetic design in line with the Cotswold Design Code and other relevant guidance.

7. ALL CIRENCESTER CONSERVATION AREAS: KEY VIEWS, LANDMARKS AND FOCAL POINTS

7.1 Views into and out of the Conservation areas are an especially important characteristic feature of Cirencester’s historic core and the registered park. Given the close association of the four Conservation Areas, key views, landmarks and focal points have been analysed jointly for all the Conservation Areas.

Main Characteristics

- There are a number of key designed views within and from the registered park, for example, the views along the Broad Ride or from Queen Anne’s monument to the Mansion and the church.
- Many of the important views in the town, both designed and accidental are towards the tower of the parish church, for example, from the Old Tetbury Road or Gloucester Street. Of particular significance is the long view from St Michael’s Park aligned with Tower Street and South Way to the church tower (the old Roman road route) – the mid-20th century police station, with its horizontal emphasis, does not enhance this important view.
- Other taller buildings and features also act as important focal points, for example, the tall brick chimneys of Victorian terraced houses to the west of Gloucester Street as viewed from the River Walk; the two remaining chimneys of the former Malthouse in Cricklade Street; and the Holy Trinity Church spire.
- Important buildings, often on corners or seen as terminations of streets, act as focal points within the built up area of the town, for example, the former Museum of Antiquities forms a focal point at the north end of Castle Street; Powell’s School at the near end of Gloucester Street; and Lloyds Bank at the corner of Castle Street and Silver Street.
- Small glimpsed views through narrow gaps add character and depth to the conservation areas, for example, the narrow corridor views into and out of semi-public mews or “places” along Gloucester Street or Black Jack Street; or to rear gardens along Barton Lane, Spitalgate Lane and Gooseacre Lane.
- Views out of the Conservation Areas also provide character and interest, for example, from the Gloucester Street Bridge towards the Bowling Green estate.
- Areas of open space permeate into the town and the Conservation Areas and views across these open spaces give a rural and open context to the town centre, for example, views out across pasture land from the most northerly sections of the River Walk and across pasture land from the entrance to the Outdoor Swimming Pool; or from high ground on the City Bank walk and along the former railway line.

Map 11. Key views, landmarks and focal points (see Appendix 1)

Key Views, Landmarks and Focal Points - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Views of the tower of the parish church along Tower Street and South Way are abruptly curtailed by the now redundant 20th century police station. If the police station site is to be

redeveloped then forthcoming proposals should improve the visual experience of this important landmark from this position.

- Opportunities should be taken within new developments to create new focal points and landmarks, but in a way that does not detract from the historic focal points and landmarks of Cirencester.

8. ALL CIRENCESTER CONSERVATION AREAS: PUBLIC REALM; GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPEN SPACES

8.1 The character of the Conservation Areas in Cirencester is not just related to the buildings but also to the spaces (both public and private) between and around them. The type and variety of spaces, the ways in which they interrelate and the connections between them form a very important part of the character of each Conservation Area and are included in the list of key characteristics for each character area within the individual Conservation Area appraisal sections. However, as many of these “spaces” lie on or across the boundaries of the four Cirencester Conservation Areas this section covers all four Conservation Areas. Many of the open spaces also link up with other open spaces outside the Conservation Areas and to the countryside, all of which add to their value in contributing to the character of the Conservation Areas, as well as other benefits such as wildlife linkages, footpaths, etc. For example, the Abbey Grounds links visually across the main road to the open countryside beyond.

8.2 Additional work on green infrastructure, open spaces and public realm in Cirencester has already been undertaken and further work is in progress. It is not the intention of this document to repeat that work. Good examples of this include the Cirencester Town Centre Public Realm Design Code 2017⁴, prepared by Cirencester Town Council, which promotes and guides the improvement of the public realm across the town, the Cotswold District Green Infrastructure Strategy⁵ (in draft) and the Cirencester Green Spaces Strategy⁶ (2011). Further work is also underway as part of the Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan⁷ process.

8.3 The open spaces in the town range in scale from the very extensive Cirencester Park and Abbey Grounds to small rear gardens, courtyards and alleyways. They may be very green in character, such as the traditional St. Michael’s Park or areas devoid of vegetation such as the Market Place. These areas of both green and “grey” space can be clearly seen on the aerial view of Cirencester.

Map 12. Aerial photograph of Cirencester (see Appendix 1)

8.4 Many of the open spaces that are accessible to the public are hidden away (for example, it can be difficult to find a way into the Abbey Grounds or Cirencester Park for those unfamiliar with the town). This secluded character is part of the charm and character of these spaces. However, there are opportunities to improve signage and interpretation to ensure that public open spaces are available to all.

8.5 Cirencester has many small open spaces, such as gardens and courtyards, many of which are private that contribute to the character of the Conservation Areas. These small oases of green, with vegetation visible over walls and fences can be very important in areas of the town where there are few trees and little planting in the public realm, as they provide a soft green foil to the built environment.

⁴

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/563789b6e4b03c7ded1a9ff2/t/591981723e00be506919c13a/1494843896685/Cirencester+Town+Centre+Design+Code+2017.pdf>

⁵ Add web reference when available

⁶

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/563789b6e4b03c7ded1a9ff2/t/5937cc1ebe659441f72dac2c/1496828969402/Green+Spaces+Strategy+%28%29.pdf>

⁷ <https://cirencesternp.org/>

8.6 The open spaces and areas of green infrastructure perform a multitude of functions from recreation (e.g. St Michaels Park), sport (e.g. bowling green at Brewery Court), biodiversity (e.g. City Banks Local Nature Reserve) and water management (e.g. River Churn) – and indeed many of the spaces deliver a wide range of benefits. In addition they also have an aesthetic value in their contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas.

Public Realm; Green Infrastructure And Open Spaces - Opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed

- Public realm improvements undertaken in the 2000s (CTEP) and more recently (in the Market Place) should be extended to enhance the character and appearance of other parts of the Conservation Areas.
- There is a lack of vegetation and trees in some parts of the town and further planting, including within private gardens, would provide many benefits, although tree planting can be challenging given the rich below ground archaeology.
- Need to ensure pre-emptive tree planting to replace older trees as they mature and die.
- Some areas of open space are blighted by poor design and management, for example, litter, bin storage and general neglect.
- Some public open spaces are difficult to find and signage could be improved.
- Linkages between open spaces and with other parts of the town and the wider countryside could be improved.
- There is a central core of areas of public realm, particularly related to car parks and service yards which are found in conjunction with modern buildings of poor design quality. These areas of negative public realm and buildings should be addressed in a comprehensive fashion through the Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan and Town Centre master-planning.
- Opportunities should be taken to enhance areas of open space to maximise the multiple benefits that they deliver – for example, by considering the role that public open spaces might have in water management or creating new wildlife habitats.

9. ALL CIRENCESTER CONSERVATION AREAS: CHANGES IN CHARACTER (SINCE 2008)

9.1 The Conservation Areas in Cirencester are generally in good condition with many high quality buildings and well-managed open spaces. No requirement to change the existing boundaries of the four Conservation Areas was identified within the review.

9.2 Since the last appraisal in 2008 there have been some changes. There has been an isolated dynamic shift in scale, mass and architectural style either side of Hammonds Way creating an enclave of large contemporary styled buildings. There have been many smaller infill developments, mostly in a sympathetic style and often replacing unsightly or neutral buildings, for example, in Querns Lane and Lewis Lane. Retail use along Cricklade Street is retreating north due to conversion of ground floors to residential use.

9.3 Several previously derelict historic buildings have now been restored and scrap cars have been removed from one of the areas around The Mill, south of The Beeches.

9.4 There have been some initiatives to improve interpretation and facilities within public green spaces, which have made a positive difference, for example along the River Churn.

9.5 Beyond the Conservation Areas the town is expanding substantially with further expansion yet to come, particularly to the south with the Chesterton Farm development (The Steadings). These developments and the increased population of the town may impact on the character of the Conservation Areas in the future, for example through changes in traffic management and increased footfall in the town centre.

10. ALL CIRENCESTER CONSERVATION AREAS: MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

9.1 In order to ensure the continuing high quality of the four Conservation Areas in Cirencester, a series of management proposals for the Conservation Areas have been developed. The proposals relate to issues:

- identified in the appraisals, for example within the “opportunities for enhancement or issues to be addressed” provided for each character area.
- highlighted through other initiatives, for example the preparation of the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan and the production of the Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan, the Cirencester Town Centre Health Check (2018) and the Park Community Group Place Check (2018).
- anticipated as part of the way that the use of town centres and market towns is changing, such as the move away from “bricks and mortar” retail and the increasing leisure offer.
- that have arisen as part of the fall-out from the COVID-19 pandemic.

9.2 The management proposals address a range of factors; some are minor but cumulative such as street clutter or buildings in need of repair and can be addressed through individual initiatives. However, there are some more fundamental issues regarding negative buildings and public realm, which would benefit from a holistic approach as part of a strategic regeneration scheme.

9.3 The ways in which the issues and sites identified in the Management Proposals are and will be resolved are under-pinned by a range of local and national policy and guidance documents, day to day processes and initiatives, for example the Local Plan (including the Cotswold Design Code) and the Local Transport Plan or at a national level the National Planning Policy Framework and the government’s town centre initiatives.

The Cotswold Design Code

The Code forms part (appendix D) of the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 and is relevant to a number of local plan policies, in particular policies EN2 (Design of the built and natural environment) and INF7 (Green Infrastructure). The Code covers all aspects of design including architectural, landscape, ecological and sustainable design. It is relevant to a wide range of development, from householder extensions and alterations to conversions, major residential schemes and large-scale commercial proposals. The Code provides detailed guidance on how to achieve high quality development, be it in the Cotswold vernacular or a contemporary style that establishes a strong sense of place and responds to local character and distinctiveness. It is likely that the Code will be revised as part of the ongoing partial update of the Local Plan.

<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2011-2031/>

9.4 Delivering the actions in these management proposals will require a wide range of stakeholders and partners, from individual householders and major landowners (for example Bathurst Estate and Cotswold District Council) to local government (at all levels – Town, District and County), businesses, the voluntary sector and the wider community, often working in partnership.

9.5 Some of the actions are high level and strategic and will require considerable input from all tiers of government as well as businesses and property owners, for example in addressing negative buildings in the town centre but there are also many actions that can be delivered through

community or individual action, such as clearing up unsightly rubbish and ensuring that property repairs are undertaken sensitively.

KEY ISSUES AND ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	EXPLANATION	SITE SPECIFIC EXAMPLE, WHERE APPROPRIATE (THESE ARE EXAMPLES AND NOT A FULL LIST)	HOW WILL THIS BE ADDRESSED	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
Redevelopment of the town centre	As part of the Cirencester masterplan project and other initiatives, several key sites in the town centre are likely to come forward for re-development over the next 2-10 years. This is the opportunity to deliver high quality development in Cirencester, which is more in character with the Conservation Areas, be it traditional or contemporary in style.	E.g. Waterloo Car Park, The Forum area, The Brewery Car Park area – these form an east/west axis across the town centre.	Comprehensive planning for the future of the town centre.	Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP); Town Centre Masterplan; Development Management; Grant bids; and Council land ownership.
Unsympathetic modern buildings	Unsympathetic modern building designs, which are incongruous or discordant within the context of the existing historic environment. Such buildings may be monolithic, in terms of scale and mass, unattractive or lack active frontages or impede pedestrian interconnectivity.	Most prominent in the town centre of town, e.g. larger commercial buildings such as Tesco, the precinct on Dyer Street and Argos.	Strategic regeneration of the town and ad hoc developments should include the removal of or improvements to key unsympathetic modern buildings (see above) Encourage innovative contemporary architecture that respects the character or the town.	NDP; Town Centre Masterplan; Development Management; (design code); and Grant bids
Unsympathetic building materials (e.g. artificial stone)	Many mid-later 20 th Century buildings used poor quality artificial stone products as a cheaper and more adaptable alternative to natural stone. However, this type of material has not proven to be suitable or appropriate in sensitive historic settings.	Present in most areas, most prominent on some of the larger late commercial buildings within the centre such as Tesco and Argos.	Strategic regeneration of the town and ad hoc developments should include improvements to existing buildings to reflect the character of the town.	NDP; Town Centre Masterplan; Development Management; and Grant bids.
Poor public realm in the town centre	Areas of public space which are unwelcoming, unattractive or impractical due to factors such as	The passage from the Waterloo to Dyer Street adjacent to Argos.	Strategic regeneration of the town and ad hoc developments should include improvements to the public realm,	NDP; Town Centre Masterplan; Development Management;

KEY ISSUES AND ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	EXPLANATION	SITE SPECIFIC EXAMPLE, WHERE APPROPRIATE (THESE ARE EXAMPLES AND NOT A FULL LIST)	HOW WILL THIS BE ADDRESSED	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
	poorly designed hard landscaping, traffic dominance, lack of seating, lighting, surveillance or active frontages.	The area around the Brewery Car Park. The passage between The Forum and Dyer Street.	following the guidance provided by the Town Council.	Grant bids; and More projects like the Market Place.
Public realm features in Cirencester Park are in need of improvement, e.g. seating, historic structures	Cirencester Park is very popular with local residents and visitors and there is great scope to improve its appearance and the facilities, e.g. seating that it provides.	Cirencester Park	On an ad hoc basis and through a co-ordinated approach to the long-term use of the Park. Implementation of the Cirencester Park Management Plan.	Planning proposals; Grant bids; As part of the future masterplanning of the Park; and Bathurst Estate initiatives.
Unsympathetic and poorly maintained or altered paving materials	Poor quality floorscape and surfacing. E.g. use of inappropriate modern materials such as concrete dogtooth paving. Other areas have been subject to successive excavations and reinstatements resulting in an unsightly patchwork of surfacing.	Paving in front of St John's Hospital. Brewery Car park and surrounding area.	New or repaired paving materials should be appropriately specified to fit with the historic character of the town, as well as to meet other requirements such as disabled access. Ensure that statutory undertakers, installing new or improved services are clear that new paving and repairs to paving should be of the highest quality.	Development management; Highways improvements; Extensions to the Market Place project and CTEP; Strategic regeneration Contact with all relevant statutory undertakers and their contractors; and Town Council public realm guidance.
Unsympathetic or inadequate street furniture	Inappropriate, poor quality or inadequate public seating, railings and bollards etc. within historic settings.	Lack of adequate or inspiring seating within St Michael's Park. Inappropriate galvanised railings on Park Road.	New street furniture should be designed to fit the character of the town and meet the guidance in the CTC public realm guide.	Development management; Highways improvements; Extensions to the Market Place project; Strategic regeneration; Cirencester open / green spaces strategy initiatives; and Grant bids.
Management of trees within the public realm	Many trees are approaching the end of their useful life and re-planting can be a challenge given the archaeological constraints.	Throughout the Conservation Areas	Effective re-planting strategies and practices.	Determination of tree applications and notifications;

KEY ISSUES AND ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	EXPLANATION	SITE SPECIFIC EXAMPLE, WHERE APPROPRIATE (THESE ARE EXAMPLES AND NOT A FULL LIST)	HOW WILL THIS BE ADDRESSED	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
			Encouragement of appropriate tree planting and management in private gardens.	Cirencester green/open spaces initiatives; Work by the Bathurst Estate to enhance the Park; Communications with property owners in the town; and Liaison with Historic England.
Lack of interpretation	There are opportunities to provide further good signage and interpretation of local historic and ecological features, and to improve the existing provision.	Lack of signage in the Abbey Grounds. General lack of interpretation of Roman features.	Provide more interpretation about the town and its historic and natural environment, though the use of trails (e.g. Hare trail); web information; social media etc.	Work by the Bathurst Estate to enhance the Park; Ongoing initiatives such as the Hare Trail; and Local interpretation by the Corinium Museum.
Lack of visibility or public understanding of the underlying archaeology and historic development of the town, particularly from the Roman period.	Currently there is little interpretation or indication of the importance of the archaeology and history of the town visible at street level, improving this would enhance the “sense of place” of Cirencester.	The Forum Car Park.	Design new developments and initiatives so that they better reveal the underlying archaeology and street pattern for example by creating new (pedestrian) routes that follow the Roman street pattern.	Development management; Highways improvements; Strategic regeneration; Cirencester open / green spaces strategy initiatives; Grant bids; and Local interpretation by the Corinium Museum.
Signage clutter	An accumulation of street signage which can be poorly designed, unnecessarily repetitive, unauthorised or no longer relevant.	The area around the Beeches Car Park. Brewery Car Park area.	Removal of excessive signage, including that mounted on poles and buildings and temporary signage (sometimes ground-based, such as A boards).	Work with businesses to develop an understanding of how they can most effectively use signage to promote themselves; and Planning Enforcement
Loss of or poorly designed boundary features	Poorly designed or repaired boundary features, especially walls and/or loss of traditional boundary features	Cirencester Park Walls along River Walk Removal of front boundaries in Victoria Road or rear boundaries in	Work with property owners to promote the repair, retention and installation of appropriately designed boundary features.	Work by the Bathurst Estate to enhance the Park; Development management; and

KEY ISSUES AND ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	EXPLANATION	SITE SPECIFIC EXAMPLE, WHERE APPROPRIATE (THESE ARE EXAMPLES AND NOT A FULL LIST)	HOW WILL THIS BE ADDRESSED	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
		Gloucester Street to provide off-street parking	Consideration of the use of Article 4 directions.	Communications with property owners in the town.
Traffic Dominance	Over dominance of traffic (including excessive traffic noise and potential damage to sensitive buildings and structures from large and heavy vehicles)	The Kennels Cecily Hill	Re-direct traffic away from sensitive areas of the town. Provision of alternatives to travelling by car. The move to electric cars may affect the perception of traffic impacts in the future.	Development management; Highways improvements; Strategic regeneration; and Public transport and cycleway/footpath initiatives.
Parking	Parked cars can detrimentally impact on the historic character of the street scene.	Cecily Hill	Ensure that on-street parking is limited in the most sensitive parts of the town. Ensure that the parking provided with commercial and residential properties does not impact on historic buildings or street scenes.	Development management; Highways improvements; Strategic regeneration; Planning enforcement; Parking enforcement; and Public transport and cycleway/footpath initiatives.
Requirement for electric car charging points.	Over the next ten years the ownership of electric cars will increase and there will be a greater need for car charging points.		Ensuring that these points are located in the most suitable locations	Development management; Public realm projects; Strategic re-development; and Car park design.
Dominance of refuse bins	Rubbish and bins stored inappropriately	At the rear of many commercial premises which are within or clearly visible from the public realm.	Encourage the provision of better designed refuse bins and areas. Remove refuse bins from sensitive locations – both on public and private properties.	Development management; Public realm projects; Strategic re-development; and Communications with property owners in the town.
Unsympathetic power and communications	Overhead wires can appear prominent and incongruous in areas, which possess a strong	Cecily Hill and Gooseacre Lane.	Encourage the removal of existing overhead wires and poles in sensitive	Work with statutory undertakers; and Development Management.

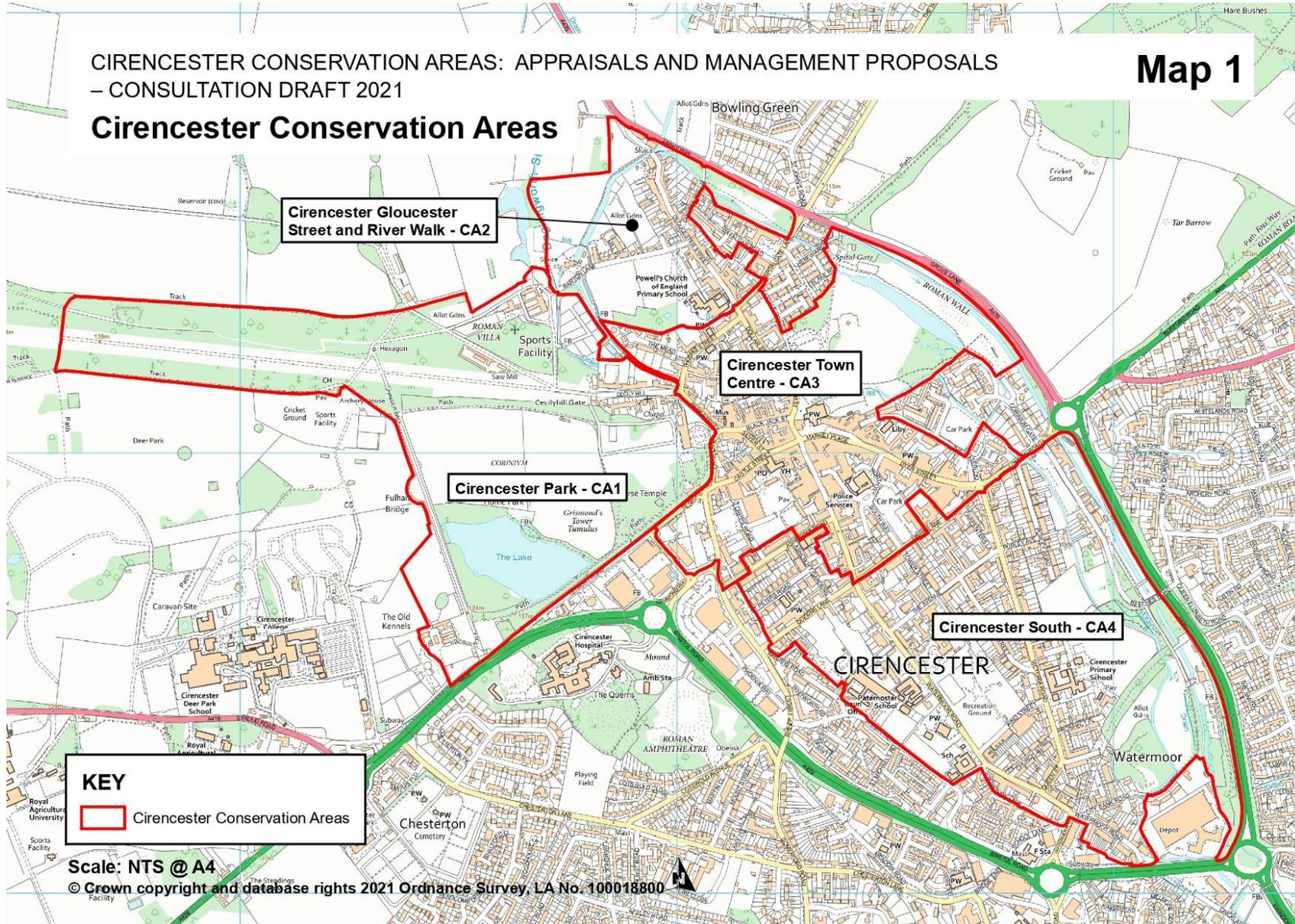
KEY ISSUES AND ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	EXPLANATION	SITE SPECIFIC EXAMPLE, WHERE APPROPRIATE (THESE ARE EXAMPLES AND NOT A FULL LIST)	HOW WILL THIS BE ADDRESSED	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
poles and overhead wires	influence from the 18 th Century and earlier, or form part of a vista.		locations and ensure that new ones are not installed	
Poor condition and underuse of some historic buildings	Buildings or upper floors where there is persistent underutilisation, vacancy or lack of maintenance.	Dollar House Old railway station Various retail premises	Work with property owners to ensure better use and maintenance. Consider the preparation of guidance on the use of retail buildings for non-retail use.	Work by the Bathurst Estate to enhance the Park; Communications with property owners in the town; and Development management Strategic re-development.
Poorly altered or extended historic buildings, e.g. loss of original architectural features; loss of render.	Some historic buildings (both designated or non-designated) have been subject to change in the past that has not respected the historic character of the building, this in turn impacts negatively on the character of the Conservation Areas.	Loss of render on some classical buildings (for example Cecily Hill.) Poor replacement windows and doors, for example in 19 th and early 20 th terraces such as in Ashcroft Road and Purley Road.	Consideration of the use of Article 4 Directions to prevent inappropriate change to non-designated heritage assets. Encourage property owners to undertake sympathetic alterations to their historic buildings and to reverse the unsympathetic alterations of the past, for example through pre-application advice. Use of the Cotswold Design Code	Development management; Strategic re-development; and Communications with property owners in the town.
Lack of information on non-designated heritage assets	There is currently no comprehensive list of non-designated heritage assets in Cirencester.		Complete the preparation of a list of non-designated heritage assets, as part of the Local Heritage Project.	Partnership between the Local Heritage project (CDC-based); the Cirencester Civic Society and the NDP.
Unsympathetic extensions to non-historic buildings	Extensions to domestic or commercial buildings, which are unsympathetic to the character of the host building and the locality due to form, scale, detail or materials.	Present in all areas.	Encourage property owners to undertake sympathetic alterations and to reverse the unsympathetic alterations of the past, for example through pre-application advice. Use of the Cotswold Design Code.	Development management; Strategic re-development; and Communications with property owners in the town.
Unsympathetic shop fronts	Additions and alterations to or replacement of historic shop fronts in a manner that is	Various examples mostly in Dyer Street, Cricklade Street and some in Castle Street.	Development management (Design Code)	Development management; Strategic re-development;

KEY ISSUES AND ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	EXPLANATION	SITE SPECIFIC EXAMPLE, WHERE APPROPRIATE (THESE ARE EXAMPLES AND NOT A FULL LIST)	HOW WILL THIS BE ADDRESSED	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
	discordant to the historic character of the locality.		Consideration of the use of Article 4 Directions to prevent unacceptable change to non-designated heritage assets.	Communications with property owners in the town; and Prepare specific guidance on shop conversions.
Change of use of shops to other uses	As town centre uses change from retail shops are likely to be converted to other uses, which can impact on the character of the area.		Ensure that changes are made sympathetically, respecting the character of the original building and its history.	Prepare specific guidance on shop conversions; Development management; and Strategic re-development.
Loss of or degradation of key views	There are key views in the town, e.g. of the church, that have or may become degraded by new development.	Views from Tower Street towards the church are negatively affected by mid-20th century buildings.	Ensure that these are considered within future regeneration and planning applications.	NDP; Town Centre Masterplan; Development Management; and Grant bids.
Climate change – adaptation	Climate change is likely to lead to more extremes in weather with increased temperatures, rainfall and potentially flooding. These could lead to demands for more air conditioning; flood alleviation schemes etc.		Need to consider climate change adaptation in new developments – orientation, natural cooling etc. Consideration should be given to how older buildings may require larger or better maintained rainwater goods to deal with increased runoff etc.	NDP; Town Centre Masterplan; Development Management; and Grant bids.
Climate change – mitigation	Changes will need to be made to decrease greenhouse gas emissions to try and slow down climate change.		New developments (and alterations to older buildings) should, where appropriate maximise the opportunities for lowering energy usage (e.g. insulation) and generating energy (e.g. heat pumps) Ensure new developments and other initiatives minimise the need for car borne journeys.	NDP; Town Centre Masterplan; Development Management; and Grant bids.
Ecological Emergency and nature recovery	Opportunities exist within both the built environment and in open	Cirencester Park; Abbey Grounds;	Cirencester Park Management Plan	NDP; Town Centre Masterplan;

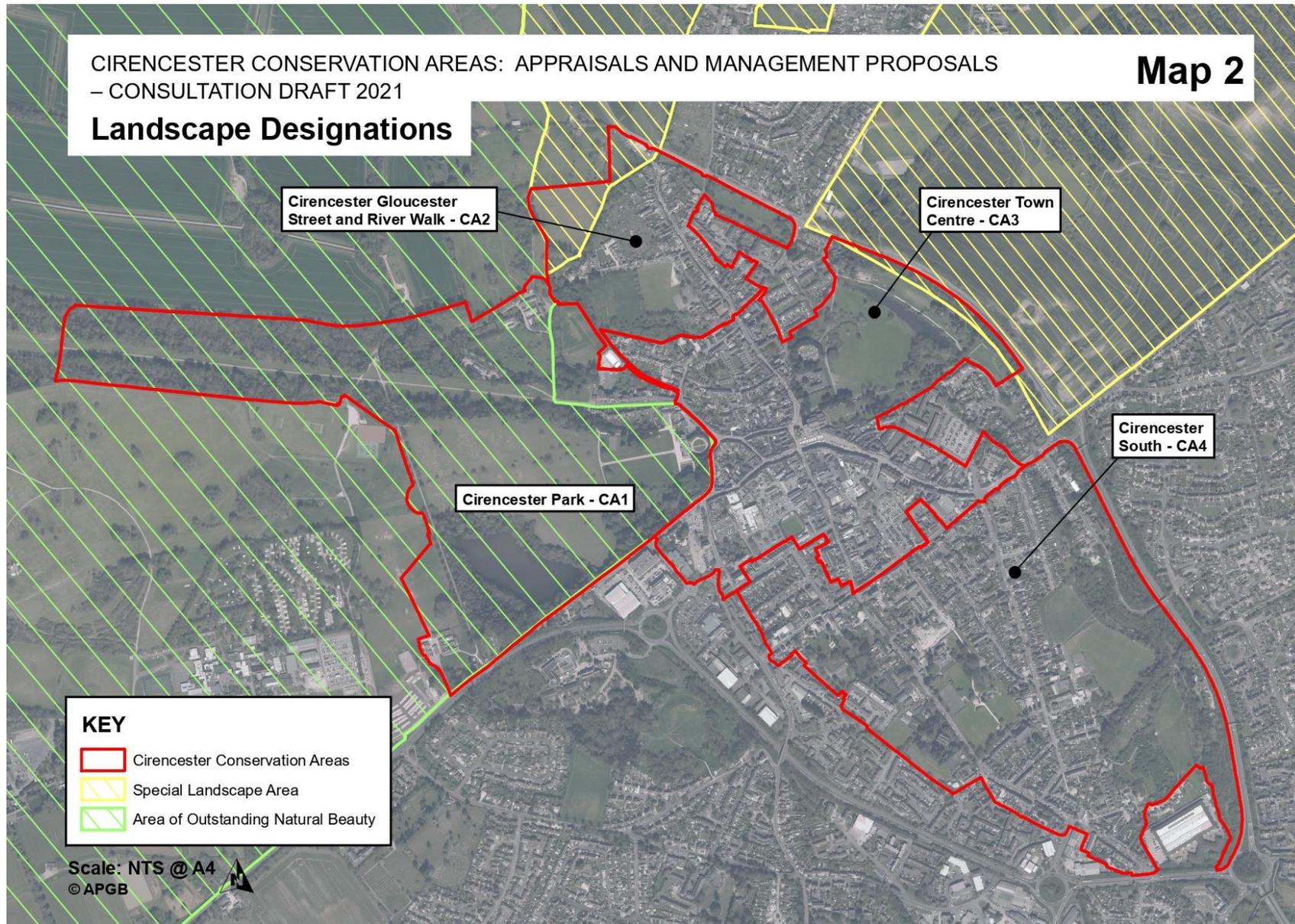
KEY ISSUES AND ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	EXPLANATION	SITE SPECIFIC EXAMPLE, WHERE APPROPRIATE (THESE ARE EXAMPLES AND NOT A FULL LIST)	HOW WILL THIS BE ADDRESSED	DELIVERY MECHANISMS
	spaces to improve their value for wildlife, while maintaining and enhancing the character of the CAs.	St Michael's Park; and City Bank.	Wild Towns project (co-ordinated by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust).	Development Management; Grant bids; Voluntary action; and Landowner input, including the District and Town Councils.
COVID-19 pandemic	The pandemic has led to both short-term and potentially long-term changes to work (more working at home) and retail patterns. It is not yet clear what the long-term impacts will be on the CAs – loss of shops or change in the types of shop, more residential uses, etc.?		The implications of the changes brought about by the pandemic will continue to form part of strategic planning for the town, including its historic environment.	NDP; Town Centre Masterplan; Development Management; Grant bids; and Local Plan partial update.

Appendix 1 – Maps

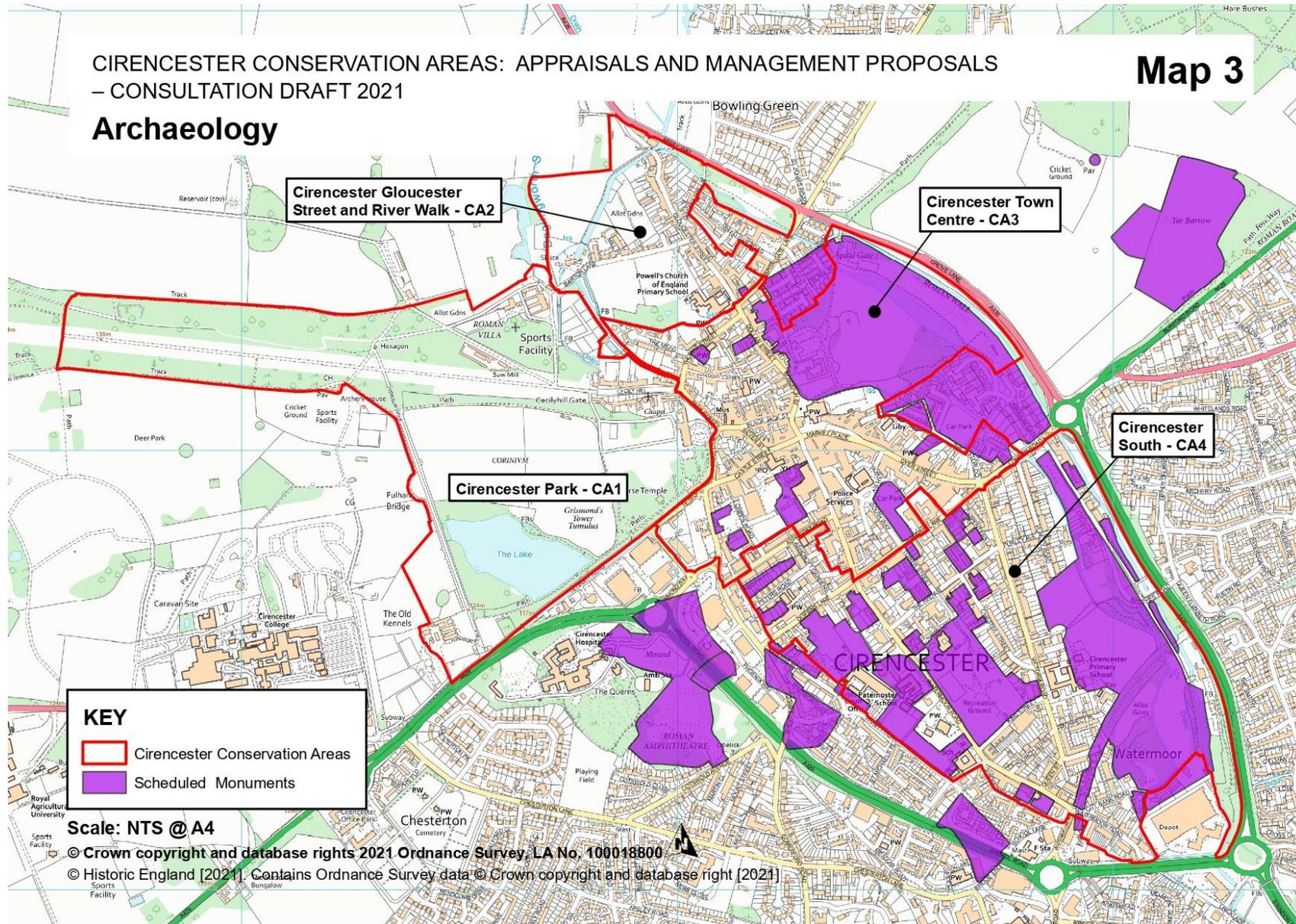
Map 1. Cirencester Conservation Areas



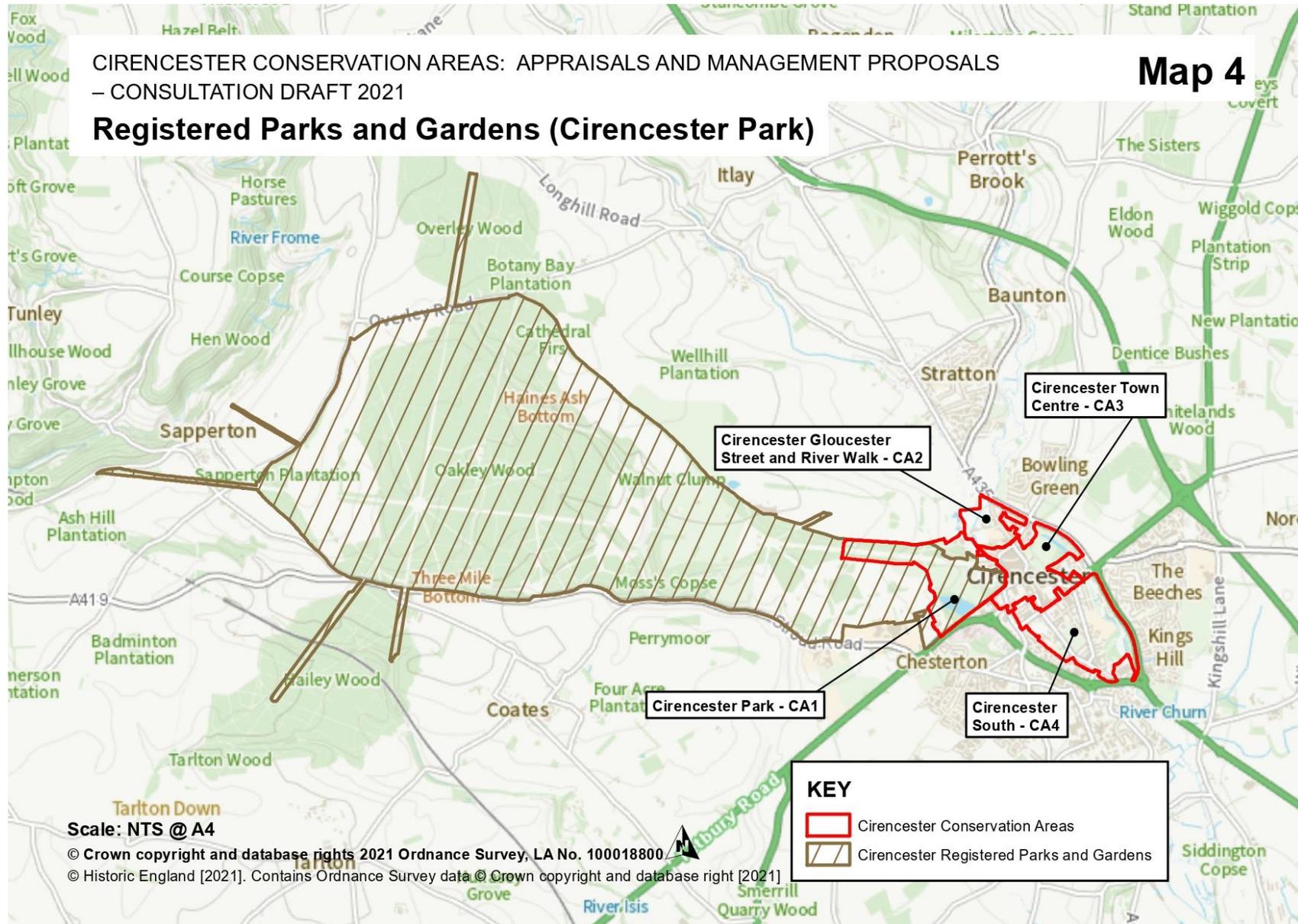
Map 2. Landscape Designations



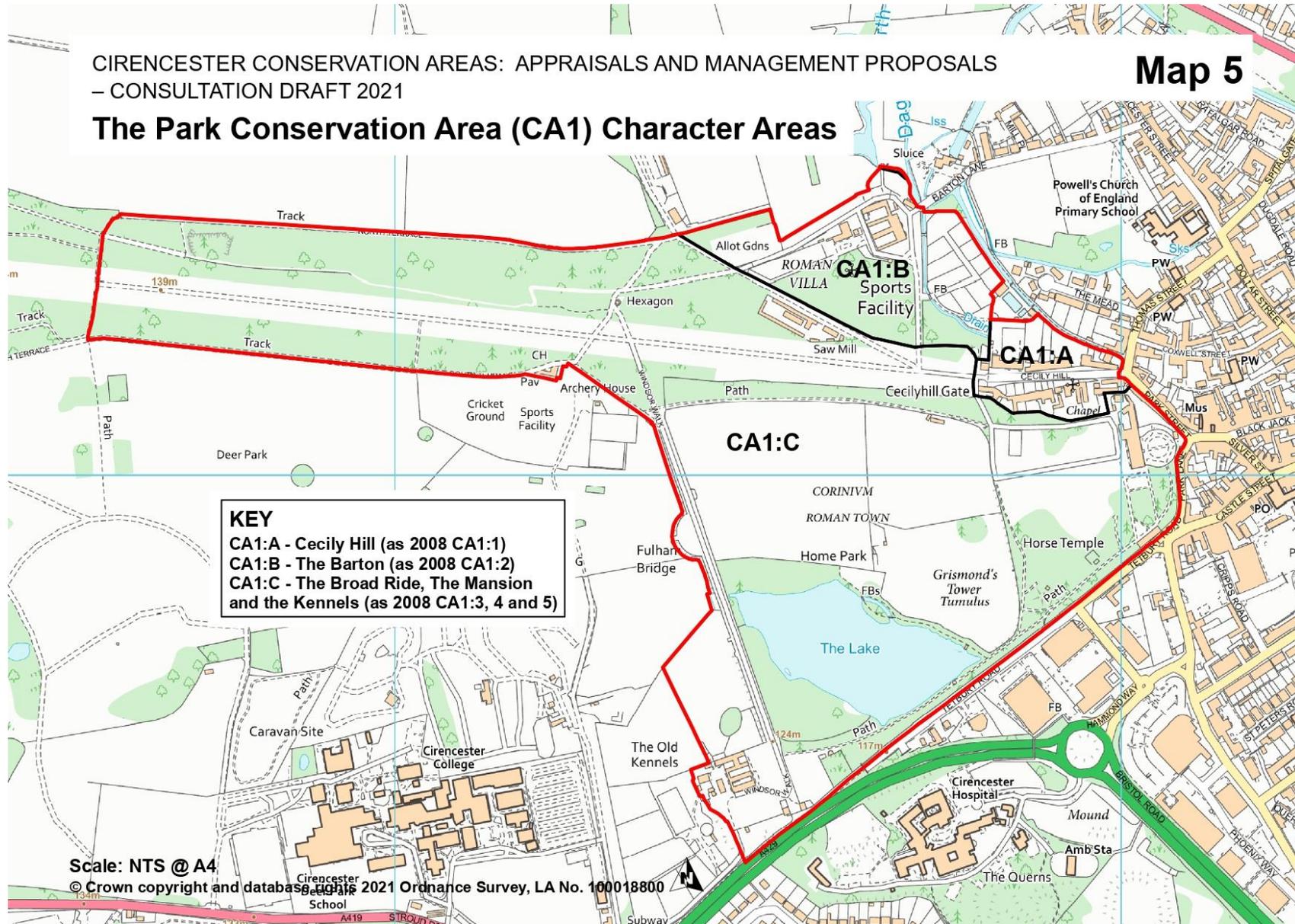
Map 3. Archaeology



Map 4. Registered Parks and Gardens (Cirencester Park)



Map 5. The Park Conservation Area (CA1) Character Areas

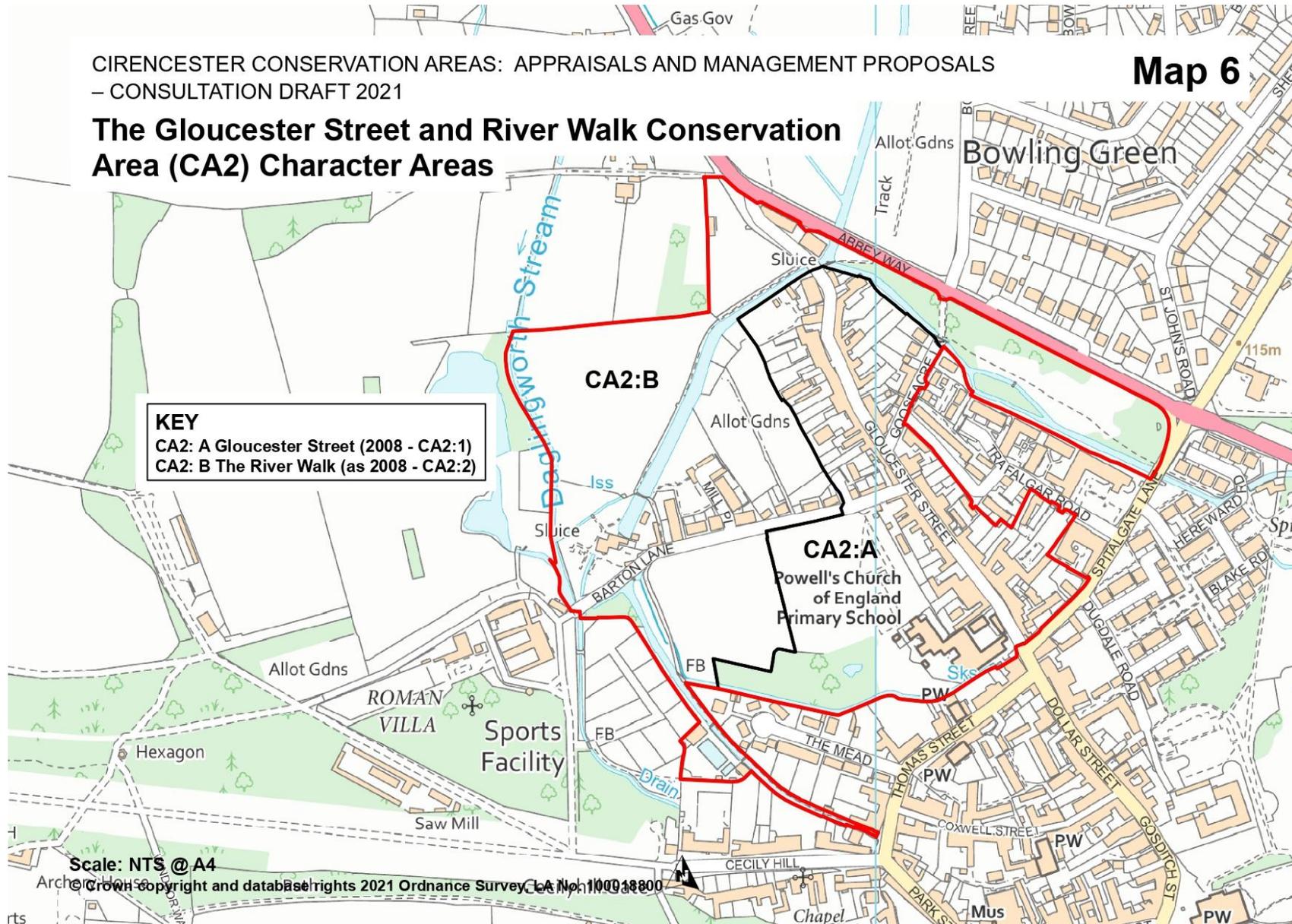


Map 6. The Gloucester Street and River Walk Conservation Area (CA2) Character Areas

CIRENCESTER CONSERVATION AREAS: APPRAISALS AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS
– CONSULTATION DRAFT 2021

Map 6

The Gloucester Street and River Walk Conservation Area (CA2) Character Areas

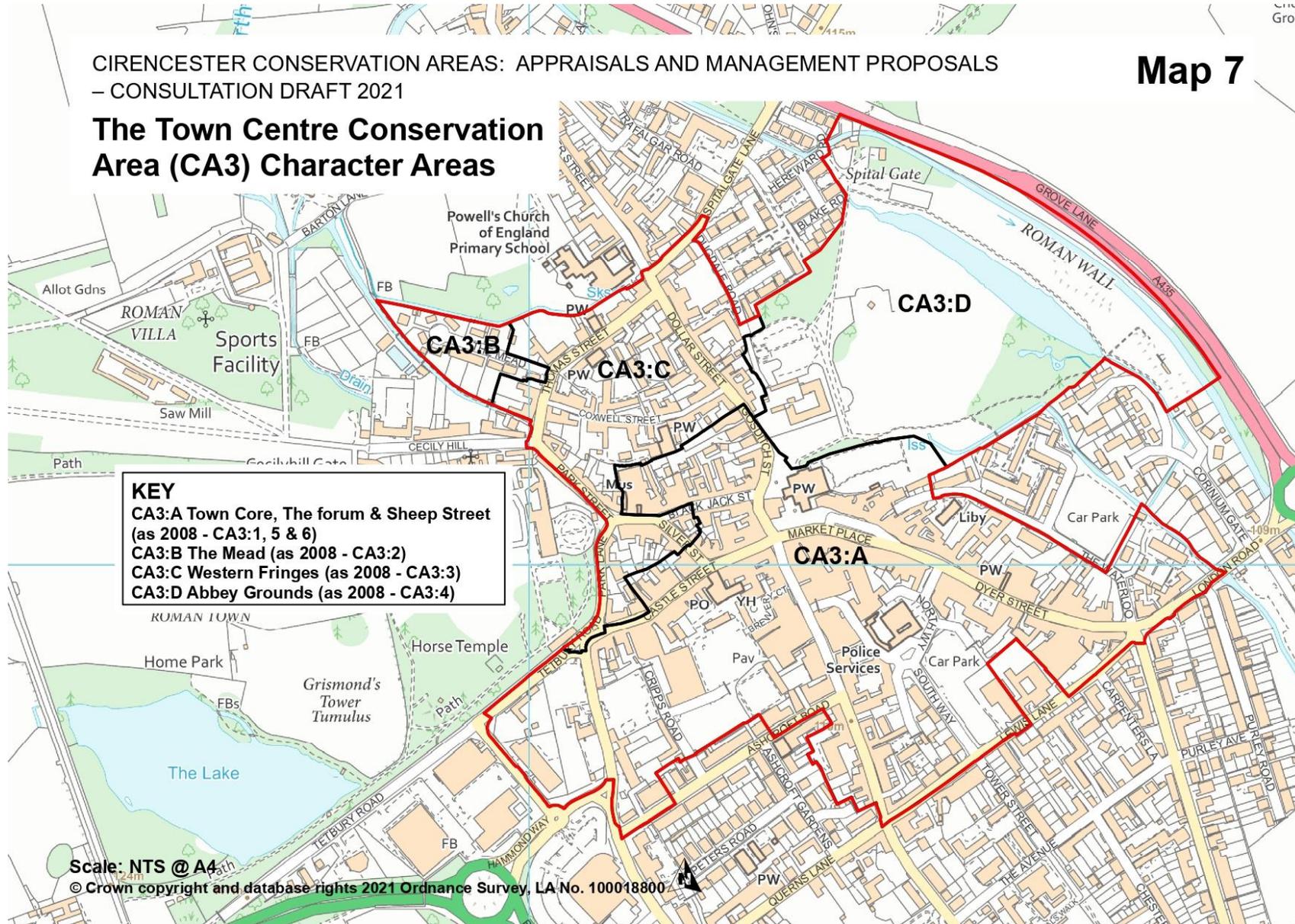


Map 7. The Town Centre Conservation Area (CA3) Character Areas

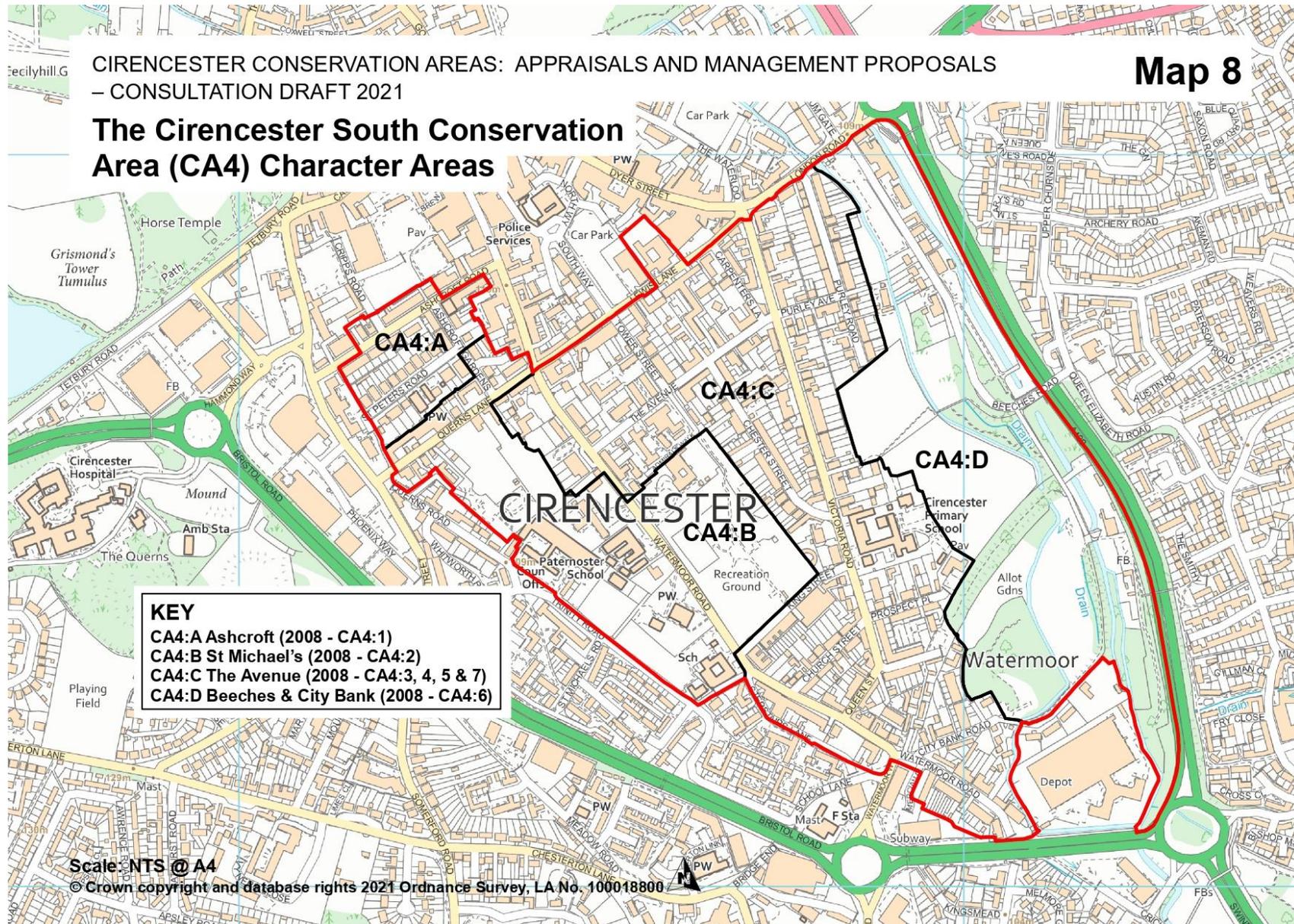
CIRENCESTER CONSERVATION AREAS: APPRAISALS AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS
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Map 7

The Town Centre Conservation Area (CA3) Character Areas



Map 8. The Cirencester South Conservation Area (CA4) Character Areas



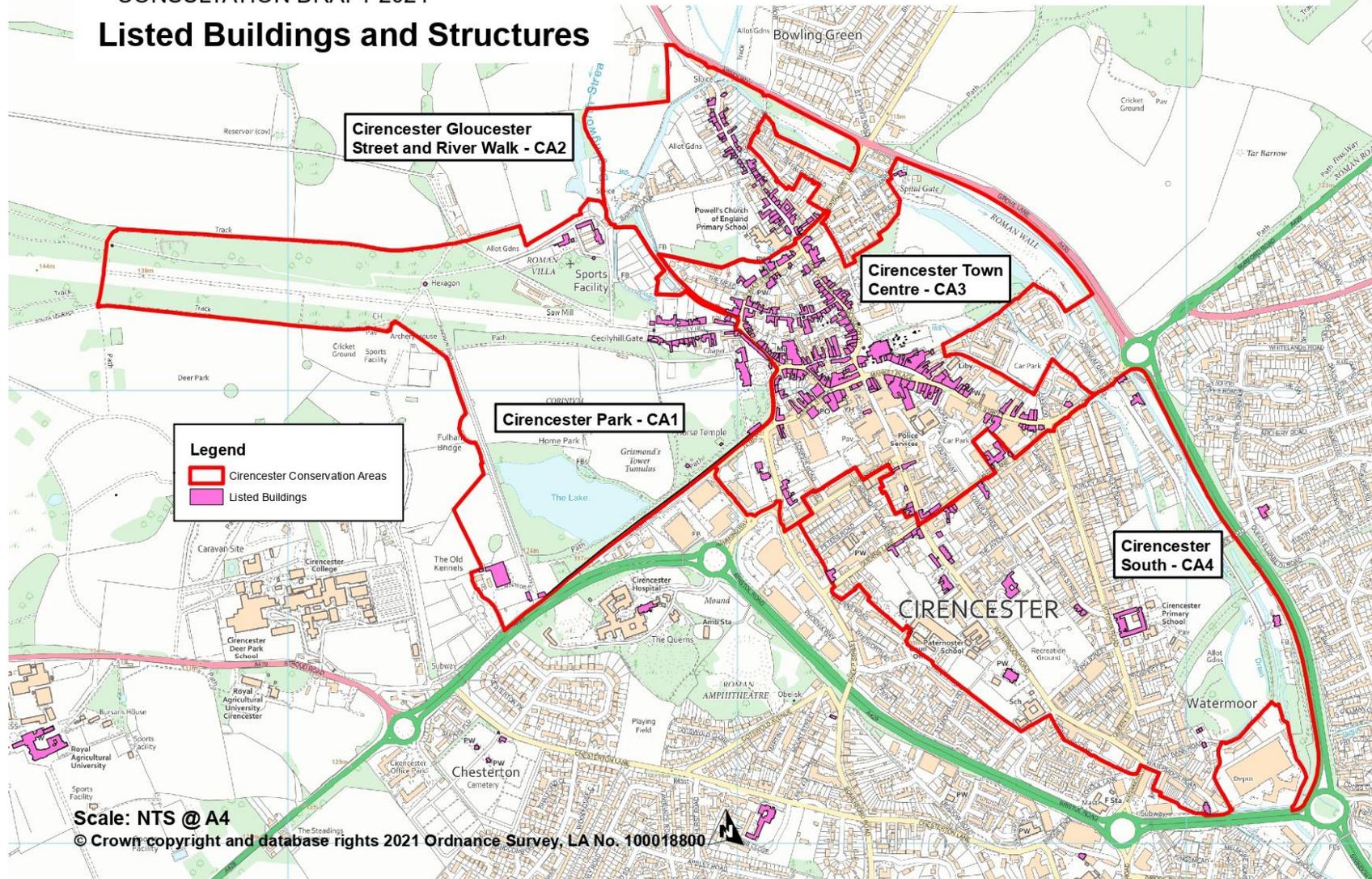
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Map 9. Listed buildings and structures

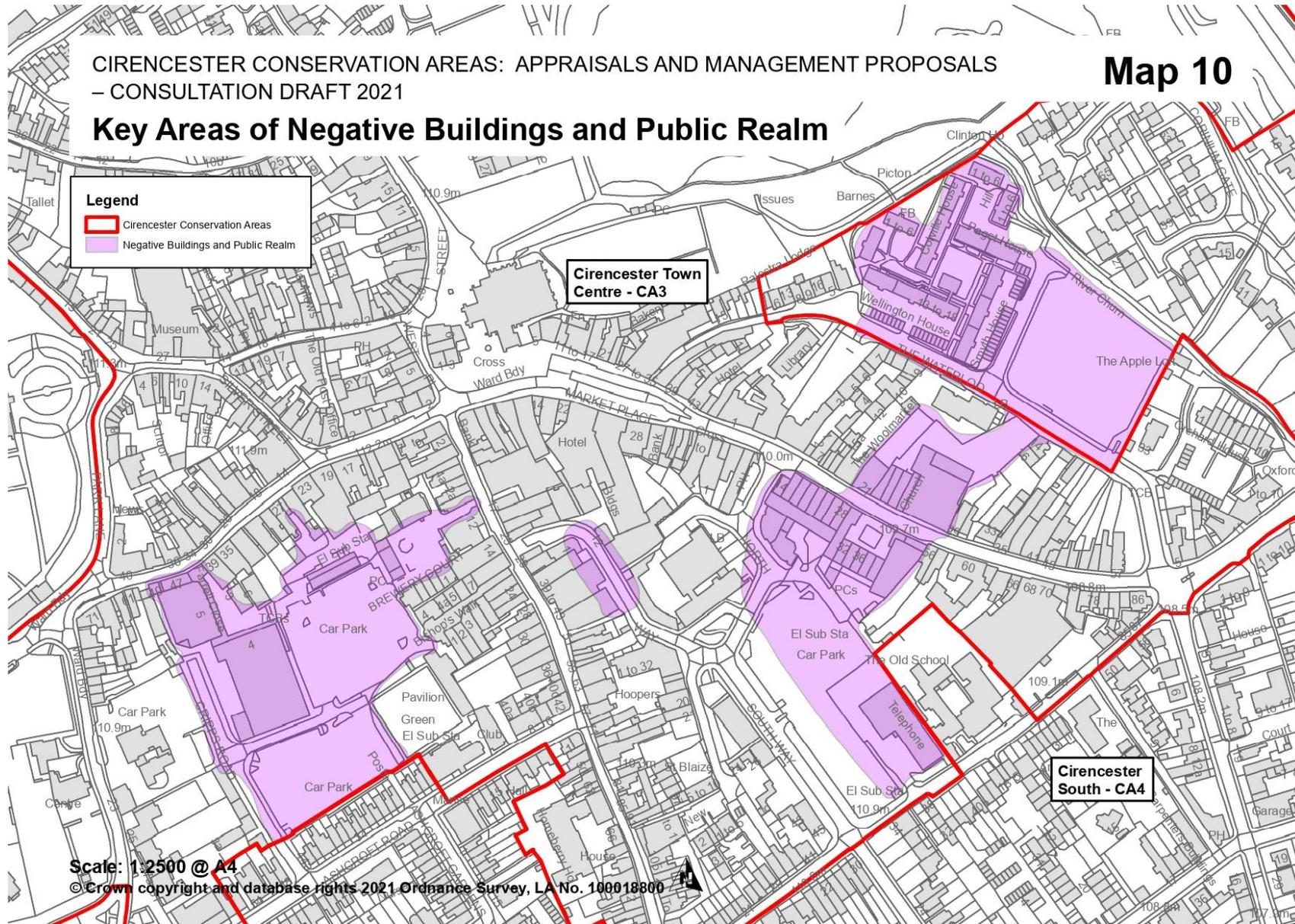
CIRENCESTER CONSERVATION AREAS: APPRAISALS AND MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS
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Map 9

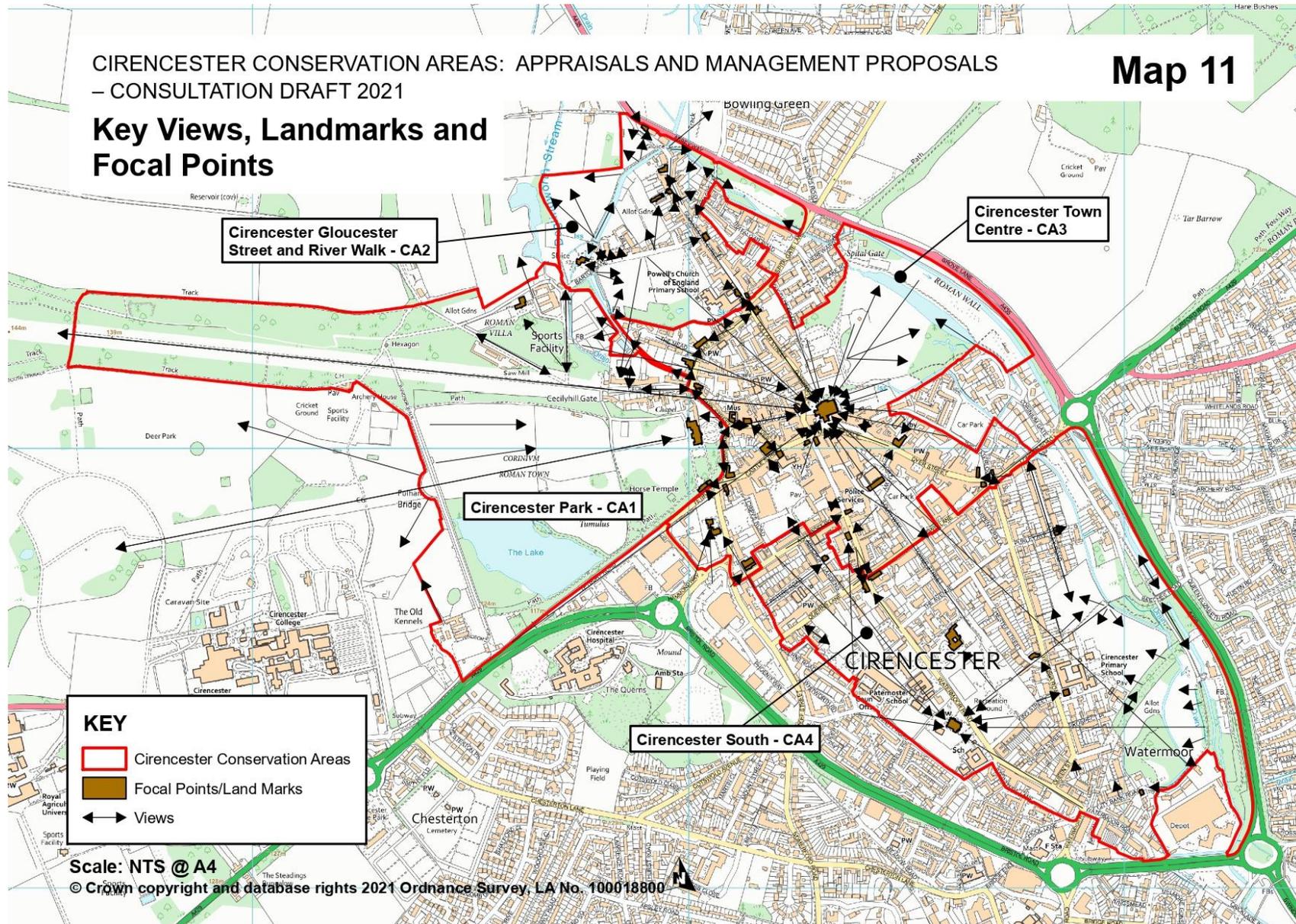
Listed Buildings and Structures



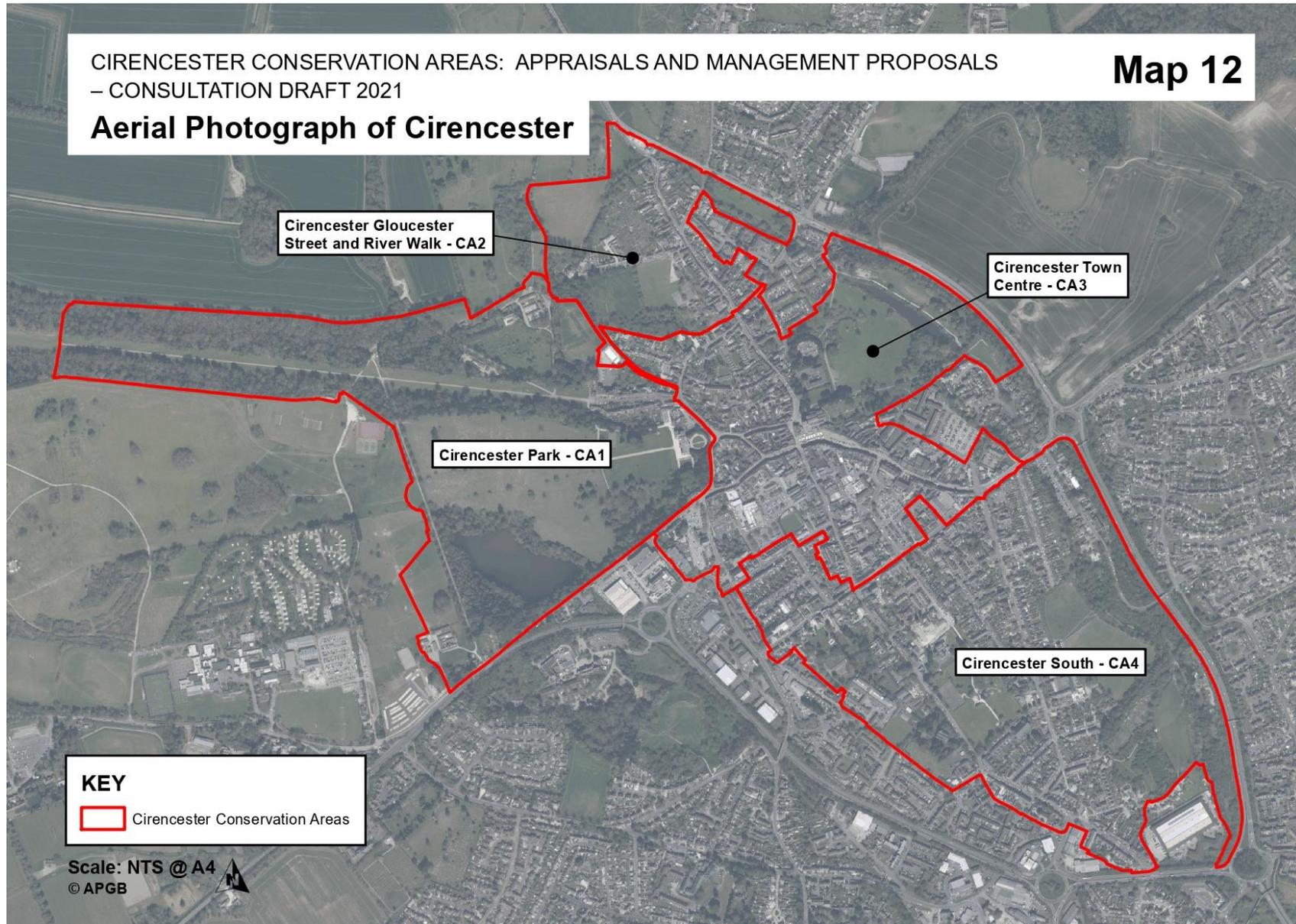
Map 10. Key areas of negative buildings and public realm



Map 11. Key views, landmarks and focal points



Map 12. Aerial photograph of Cirencester



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ANNEX C – A report on CIL Governance Procedure

(Jasper Lamoon – Senior Infrastructure Delivery Officer)

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1. Context

- 1.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced by the government in 2010 as a mechanism to fund the infrastructure required to deliver Local Plan growth strategies. Cotswold District Council (CDC) adopted CIL in August 2018 and implemented the charge on 1 June 2019. The Council needs to set up governance arrangements to spend the money collected from CIL including an appropriate mechanism to prioritise infrastructure projects that will be funded.
- 1.2 This report sets out a proposal for governance arrangements on how CDC spends CIL funds. The proposal is based on the analysis of governance at other charging authorities who have implemented CIL before Cotswold District, as well as the advice from external CIL consultant Gilian Macinnes who notes that no authority has found the perfect solution as of yet.

2. Allocation in the CIL regulations

- 2.1 The CIL funds that can be spent by the Council on infrastructure projects will comprise the strategic element of CIL, which remains after the administrative costs (5%) and local funds passed to parish councils (15-25%) have been deducted. As CIL funding takes time to accrue and CIL will not be able to meet all demands placed on it at once, decisions will need to be made about how CIL funds should be spent on strategic projects.
- 2.2 The neighbourhood portion of CIL is transferred to town and parish councils twice a year. CDC is not involved in the spending decisions regarding the neighbourhood portion although town and parish councils must comply with the CIL regulations on spending. They must also report their CIL spending back to Cotswold District Council annually.
- 2.3 The strategic element of CIL can only be used to fund items that meet the following definition in the CIL regulations: *“A charging authority must apply CIL to funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure to support the development of its area”* (par 56 (1) of the CIL regulations 2010 as amended).

3. Infrastructure Funding priorities

- 3.1 Governance procedures of other local authorities all start from a local plan evidence document that lists the infrastructure priorities or sometimes a more specific list of the infrastructure projects on which CIL funds will be spent. Mostly this is an evidence-based document, but some local authorities have a bidding process to add projects to the priority list.
- 3.2 From 2020, all local authorities are required to publish an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS). In this document, they also need to set out on what they expect to spend collected CIL monies. This can be a list of either specific projects or types of infrastructure. CDC has opted for a list of specific projects based on the critical and essential infrastructure projects identified in the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 - 2031).
- 3.3 This report proposes using the IFS as CDC's list of infrastructure priorities for which CIL funds can be used. This provides a first level of governance as the IFS is reported to Cabinet annually.
- 3.4 As it is an evidence-based list, the projects on it will be updated along with updates to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (a Local Plan evidence document). External plans and strategies such as Gloucestershire County Council's Local Transport Plan and CDC's climate and ecological emergencies may also influence the projects on the list and /or the spend and allocation of CIL funding.
- 3.5 CDC currently has an Infrastructure Funding Gap. CIL will only generate around a quarter of the funds needed to deliver the required infrastructure in the district as identified in the adopted Local Plan. The rest will have to come from other funding sources. It is therefore important that CIL does not fund (parts of) projects that could be funded through other sources. Moreover, CIL should be used as leverage to open up other funding where possible.
- 3.7 The Council could set aside an element of the strategic CIL fund (10%) to invite bids for infrastructure projects that would support the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Actions Plans.

4. Allocating and spending CIL Funds

- 4.1 Local authorities that have CIL governance in place, commonly use their Capital Programme process to spend the main CIL fund and use the annual Capital Budget setting process to sign off CIL spending. The benefit of doing this is that existing governance procedures can be used and no new committee specifically for making decisions on CIL spending is required. As this seems to be the most efficient and cost effective way, this report proposes CDC adopt this approach.
- 4.2 As, in most cases, CDC will not deliver the infrastructure itself, a bidding process for infrastructure providers will be required. This report proposes the following procedure:
 - Yearly call for bids to be held in Q2 of each calendar year to synchronise with the following year's budget setting process. This will be subject to sufficient CIL funds being

available. CDC will also reserve the right to invite bids for specific projects if that is deemed necessary and it is not obligated to award funding annually.

- Bids will need to be submitted using an expression of interest form. [Appendix 1: EOI form](#).
- All received bids will be scored by an officer group using a scoring matrix. [Appendix 2: Scoring Matrix](#).
- The officer group would consist of representatives of the Forward Planning team, Development Management, Heritage and Design, Strategic Housing, Climate Action, Legal, Finance and the Senior Infrastructure Delivery Officer
- Funding requests will need to attain a score of 75% to be taken forward. The officer group then produces a report for Cabinet to consider. This report will recommend which of the projects should be funded (or to retain CIL funds for future larger projects). This then feeds into the capital programme, which goes to full Council in February for approval.
- Winning bids will have to sign an agreement that clearly shows how the funds will be spent and specify the time frame. Such agreements will include a clawback clause and reporting requirements.

4.2 As CIL is intended to deliver strategic infrastructure projects, CDC expects most funding requests to come from major infrastructure providers such as Gloucestershire County Council (as the Education, Highways and Local Flood authority), the Environment Agency and NHS Clinical Commissioning Group. Internal departments in CDC are able to apply for CIL funds using the same form.

5. Summary

5.1 This report proposes the following governance for CIL spending at CDC:

- Use the Infrastructure List in the annual Infrastructure Funding Statement as CDC's list of infrastructure priorities for which CIL funds will be used. This is an evidence based list.
- Infrastructure providers will need to complete an expression of interest form to bid for CIL monies. The Council will use a scoring matrix to determine the suitability of the expressions of interest.
- Suitable bids will go to Cabinet for approval, successful bids will then be fed into the capital programme, which is signed off by full Council each year.
- CDC will top slice (10%) of collected CIL funds to invite bids for infrastructure projects that would support the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Actions Plans (projects that are not on the Infrastructure List in the IFS).

Appendix 1 – CIL Expression of interest form

An overview of questions that will be asked in the expression of interest form is provided below. A fully formatted form will be created in advance of the first call for bids as well as a guidance document for applicants.

General

- Project name;
- Name of organisation submitting this expression of interest;
- Contact person/role within organisation; and
- Contact details.

Project details

- Description of the project, including what infrastructure will be delivered and its aim/purpose. If available the bid should include a proposed block plan illustrating the proposed scheme;
- Please indicate the approximate start and finish dates of the project;
- How does the project contribute to the delivery of the objectives and policies of the Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 to 2031)?
- Is the project identified as a CIL priority in the latest IFS?
- If not, please provide a justification why this project should receive funds over the projects on the priority list;
- Will you require planning permission for this project?

Project location/ownership

- Please provide the address and a site location plan (1:2500);
- Do you own/lease the land in question? Please provide evidence; and
- If not, please provide evidence you have permission from the landowner to implement the project.

Funding/Costs

- Total cost of project (please provide a breakdown of the costs);
- Amount of funding committed to the project by applying organisation;
- Details of other match funding secured (amount and organisation providing funds); and
- Amount of CIL funding requested (min £20k).

Other

Please give details of any other information you would like to provide in support of your application

Appendix 2 – Scoring Matrix – CIL Funding Requests

Project Name/Applicant:
<p>Question 1: Is the project identified in the IFS as a CIL spending priority? If not, is there sufficient justification to fund a project that is not on the priority list?</p>
Score /20
<p>Note: If the project is on the list it will automatically receive a maximum score on this question as CIL is intended to fund these projects first. However, the Council welcomes funding requests for projects that would help deliver actions contained within the Council’s Climate and Ecological Emergencies Actions Plans.</p>
<p>Question 2: Does the applicant have the legal right to carry out the proposed scheme? Is the applicant a known infrastructure provider?</p>
Score /20
<p>Note: The strategic CIL fund is intended to fund strategic infrastructure projects. Bids are therefore expected from infrastructure providers such as Gloucestershire County Council.</p>
<p>Question 3: Is there sufficient evidence that the bidder has explored other funding options? If so, have they been able to secure other sources of funding? Are the requested CIL funds required to access these other funding streams?</p>
Score /20

Note: Strong justification would be required if no other sources of funding have been found. Preference should be given to projects where CIL funding is used to leverage other funding sources.

Question 4: Will the project deliver physical infrastructure?

Score /20

Note: There is a strong preference for CIL to support capital infrastructure projects. Most of the expenditure should therefore be for the delivery of physical works, such as roads, schools, etc. A small portion of requested funding for a capital project can be for associated revenue costs (e.g., necessary professional fees) although these will be considered in relation to how essential they are to enabling the proposed project.

Question 5: How deliverable is the project? Does it have a clear delivery programme? Is it financially feasible? Is it supported by an options appraisal?

Score /20

Note: Projects must have a definable start and end to its delivery and provide specific measurable outcomes. Robust financial / viability / deliverability evidence is required.

TOTAL SCORE:

Any other points you think need to be discussed or clarifications needed from the applicant?



COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Infrastructure Funding Statement

1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) is an annual report, which provides a summary of all financial and non-financial developer contributions relating to Section 106 Legal Agreements (S106) and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) collected and spent by Cotswold District Council.
- 1.2. The aim of the IFS is to increase transparency by providing a statement of accounts per calendar year.
- 1.3. This report covers the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, which is referred to as '2020/21' in this report.
- 1.4. As required by the CIL regulations (paragraph 121A 1a), it also includes a statement of infrastructure projects that Cotswold District Council expects to be wholly or partly funded by CIL called 'The Infrastructure List'.
- 1.5. This statement only contains information on infrastructure funding collected and spent by Cotswold District Council and should be read in conjunction with Gloucestershire County Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement to get a full picture of infrastructure funding that is collected and spent in Cotswold District.
- 1.6. For more information on CIL collection and spending, please see our website www.cotswold.gov.uk/CIL.

2. Infrastructure List

- 2.1. Prior to the introduction of Infrastructure Funding Statements, Cotswold District Council's CIL spending priorities were set out in its regulation 123 list. This was a list of infrastructure projects for which the Council would not request financial S106 contributions as required by regulation 123 of CIL regulations 2010 (as amended). However, this list became defunct after the September 2019 CIL legislation changes.
- 2.2. All projects on the list were identified in the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031 as critical or essential to the delivery of the local plan. The Infrastructure List is therefore a continuation of the defunct regulation 123 list. Projects that have been funded or have become obsolete since the creation of the regulation 123 list have been removed.
- 2.3. Projects on the list are shown in alphabetical order by Parish.
- 2.4. Cotswold District Council is the custodian of the CIL funds, but is not responsible for the delivery of the projects. Partnership working with Gloucestershire County Council (the highways, education and lead local flood authority) is required to deliver the infrastructure needed to support development in Cotswold District.
- 2.5. Infrastructure providers will be able to request funding to deliver projects once a year. This procedure will be outlined in the CIL spending governance guidance, which will be published by Cotswold District Council at the end of 2021. If sufficient CIL funds are available, a first round of funding bids will be opened in 2022. Infrastructure providers will be expected to demonstrate that match funding from other sources has been sought.
- 2.6. Although the Infrastructure List does not have the same legal restrictions as the regulation 123 list, the Council does not anticipate requesting S106 financial obligations for the infrastructure projects on the list.
- 2.7. Cotswold District's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) identifies all critical and essential infrastructure projects to deliver the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031. The Infrastructure List will take into account any updates to the IDP.

Table 1 - Infrastructure List

Parish	Project
Chipping Campden	Expansion of Chipping Campden Secondary School
Kemble	Junction improvements at A429 / A433, between Cirencester and Kemble
Kemble	Re-use of the former railway line for cycling
Lechlade	Junction improvements at A417 / Whelford Road, between Fairford and Lechlade
Moreton-in-Marsh	Improvements to A429 (Fosse Way)
Moreton-in-Marsh	Junction improvements at A429 (High Street)/A44 (Oxford Street)
Moreton-in-Marsh	Junction improvements at A429 (High Street)/A44 (Bourton Road)
Stow-on-the-Wold	Improvement of Unicorn junction (A436/B4068)
Tetbury	Junction improvements at A433 (London Road / Long Street) / Hampton Street / New Church Street
South Cotswolds	SUDS and soft measure interventions to manage flood risk

3. CIL Report

- 3.1. The total value of CIL set out in all demand notices issued in 2020/21 was **£752,199.34** as shown in Table 2. Note that these figures are subject to change due to appeals or variations of the planning permission.
- 3.2. Table 2 also shows the expected neighbourhood contribution for each development. Note that there is no Neighbourhood Contribution on CIL surcharges.
- 3.3. A total of **£231,262.26** was collected from CIL receipts, as shown in Table 3.
- 3.4. The difference between the amount raised in demand notices and the amount actually collected is due to the CIL instalment policy. CIL payments are paid by instalments spread over time to assist the viability of developments. The instalment policy can be found [on the Council's website](#).

Table 2 – Demand Notices Issued

Reference	Parish	Amount (£)	Neighbourhood Contribution (£)
20/03765/FUL	Ampney Crucis	17,022.66	2,553.40
18/04770/FUL	Ampney Crucis	40,508.53	6,076.28
20/03234/FUL	Avening	1,816.21	272.43
19/03144/FUL	Avening	2,500.00	0.00
19/03838/FUL	Bibury	20,961.76	3,144.26
19/03793/FUL	Blockley	1,841.60	276.24
19/03209/FUL	Boxwell with Leighterton	7,280.00	1,062.00
20/00391/FUL	Broadwell	26,635.97	3,995.40
18/04188/FUL	Chedworth	12,570.16	1,885.52
19/03964/FUL	Chedworth	35,346.86	5,302.03
18/04954/FUL	Chipping Campden	23,743.40	3,016.92
20/02550/FUL	Chipping Campden	28,826.93	3,735.63
20/01031/FUL	Cirencester	375.47	56.32
20/04004/FUL	Cirencester	4,099.55	512.44
20/02387/FUL	Coberley	5,799.42	869.91
19/02532/FUL	Cowley	1,512.16	0.00

20/00459/FUL	Dowdeswell	1,997.45	249.68
19/02734/FUL	Duntisbourne Abbots	3,600.80	540.12
19/04663/FUL	Duntisbourne Abbots	4,646.26	580.78
20/02413/FUL	Fairford	26,691.43	4,003.71
20/02770/FUL	Hatherop	1,048.85	157.33
20/01379/FUL	Lechlade	45,844.97	11,461.24
20/02806/FUL	Lower Slaughter	1,520.02	228.00
20/00698/FUL	Mickleton	16,776.46	2,516.47
19/04300/FUL	Notgrove	4,105.03	615.75
20/02983/FUL	Notgrove	6,464.22	808.03
20/02832/FUL	Oddington	7,596.59	1,139.49
19/03382/FUL	Saintbury	14,885.06	2,232.76
20/00412/FUL	Sevenhampton	467.18	70.08
19/04267/FUL	Somerford Keynes	6,690.08	1,003.51
20/02703/FUL	South Cerney	739.42	110.91
19/01427/FUL	South Cerney	10,309.80	1,546.47
20/00749/PLP	South Cerney	38,934.74	5,840.21
20/00537/FUL	Stow-on-the-Wold	95.79	14.37
19/02414/FUL	Temple Guiting	1,861.92	279.29
20/00876/FUL	Temple Guiting	20,569.75	2,710.46
20/01090/FUL	Tetbury	8,468.72	1,764.32
20/00864/FUL	Tetbury	61,138.38	15,284.60
17/04587/FUL	Upper Rissington	235,099.20	35,264.88
20/02386/FUL	Weston Sub Edge	1,806.54	270.98
		752,199.34	

Table 3 – CIL receipts

Reference	Parish	Amount (£)	Neighbourhood Contribution (£)
18/04770/FUL	Ampney Crucis	4,050.85	607.63
18/04770/FUL	Ampney Crucis	18,228.84	2,734.33
19/02727/FUL	Andoversford	4,534.56	680.18
19/02727/FUL	Andoversford	4,534.56	680.18
19/03144/FUL	Avening	2,500.00	0.00
20/03234/FUL	Avening	1,816.21	272.43
19/03793/FUL	Blockley	1,841.60	276.24
19/04585/FUL	Bourton-on-the-Water	339.62	27.55
19/03209/FUL	Boxwell with Leighterton	3,186.00	477.90
19/03209/FUL	Boxwell with Leighterton	3,186.00	477.90
19/03209/FUL	Boxwell with Leighterton	200.00	0.00
20/00391/FUL	Broadwell	2,663.60	399.54
18/04954/FUL	Chipping Campden	23,743.40	3,016.92
20/02550/FUL	Chipping Campden	27,454.22	3,529.73
20/02550/FUL	Chipping Campden	1,372.71	205.91
19/02223/FUL	Cirencester	5,719.95	857.99
19/02223/FUL	Cirencester	5,719.95	857.99
20/01031/FUL	Cirencester	375.47	56.32
20/02387/FUL	Coberley	579.94	86.99
19/02532/FUL	Cowley	1,512.16	0.00
20/00459/FUL	Dowdeswell	1,664.54	249.68
20/00459/FUL	Dowdeswell	332.91	0.00
19/02734/FUL	Duntisbourne Abbots	360.08	54.01
19/04663/FUL	Duntisbourne Abbots	387.19	0.00
19/01242/FUL	Fairford	16,435.44	2,465.32
19/01428/FUL	Fairford	10,323.00	1,548.45
19/01428/FUL	Fairford	10,323.00	1,548.45

20/02413/FUL	Fairford	26,691.43	4,003.71
20/02770/FUL	Hatherop	1,048.85	157.33
20/01379/FUL	Lechlade	4,584.50	1,146.13
20/00698/FUL	Mickleton	1,677.65	251.65
19/04300/FUL	Notgrove	4,105.03	513.13
20/02832/FUL	Oddington	759.66	113.95
19/03382/FUL	Saintbury	1,488.51	223.28
19/03382/FUL	Saintbury	6,698.28	1,004.74
20/00412/FUL	Sevenhampton	46.72	7.01
20/00412/FUL	Sevenhampton	420.46	63.07
19/01838/FUL	Somerford Keynes	4,950.72	742.61
19/01838/FUL	Somerford Keynes	4,950.72	742.61
19/01427/FUL	South Cerney	1,030.98	154.65
20/02703/FUL	South Cerney	739.42	110.91
20/00537/FUL	Stow-on-the-Wold	9.58	1.44
20/00537/FUL	Stow-on-the-Wold	86.21	12.93
20/00876/FUL	Temple Guiting	1,806.98	0.00
20/00876/FUL	Temple Guiting	8,131.39	1,115.76
20/01090/FUL	Tetbury	8,468.72	1,764.32
20/02386/FUL	Weston Subedge	180.65	27.10
		231,262.26	

Table 4 – Breakdown of CIL receipts

Components of CIL receipts	Amount (£)
Administration (5%)	11,563.11
Neighbourhood contribution (15% or 25%)	33,267.94
Strategic Infrastructure Fund	186,431.20
	231,262.26

3.5. The total amount of CIL funds for 2020/21 spent on administrative expenses pursuant to regulation 61 was **£11,563.11 (5%)**. There was no other expenditure and no CIL receipts were allocated but not spent.

3.6. The total amount of CIL receipts passed to town/parish councils under regulation 59A was **£7,970.87** as shown in Table 5.

Table 5 – CIL Receipts transferred to town/parish councils

Neighbourhood Zone	Amount (£)
Ampney Crucis	607.63
Andoversford	151.15
Bourton-on-the-Water	116.96
Boxwell with Leighterton	584.10
Cirencester	1,104.98
Fairford	3,988.85
Saintbury	223.28
Sevenhampton	7.01
Somerford Keynes	907.63
Temple Guiting	279.29
	7,970.87

3.7. The Council retained **£200,361.16** of CIL receipts at the end of 2020/21. This consisted of **£186,431.20** collected during 2020/21 and **£13,929.96** collected in previous years.

3.8. The Council granted a total of **£2,250,567.61** of relief from paying CIL as per part 6 of the CIL regulations 2010 as amended. This consisted of **£986,186.33** of self-build housing relief, **£309,601.17** of residential extension relief, **£166,029.55** of residential annex relief and **£788,750.56** of social housing relief. No claims for charitable relief were made.

3.9. The requirements for receiving the reliefs above are set in national legislation. The Council does not have any discretionary powers to amend these.

Table 6 – Reliefs granted

Type of Relief	Amount (£)
Self-Build Housing Relief	986,186.33
Residential Extension Relief	309,601.17
Residential Annex Relief	166,029.55
Social Housing Relief	788,750.56
Charitable Relief	0.00
	2,250,567.61

3.10. Please see Appendix 1 for all information relating to regulation 121A paragraph 1 (matters to be included in the CIL report) of the CIL regulations 2010 as amended.

4. Section 106 Report

4.1. The total amount of money to be provided under planning obligations that were entered into in 2020/21 was **£127,478.30**.

Table 7 – Financial contributions required from planning obligations signed in 2020/21

Reference	Location	Type	Amount (£)
19/04223/FUL	Land to the South off Quercus Road, Tetbury	Education	95,073.30
19/04223/FUL	Land to the South off Quercus Road, Tetbury	Library	6,076.00
20/04412/FUL	Dormer House School, High Street, Moreton-in-Marsh	Affordable Housing	26,329.00
			127,478.30

4.2. The Council also entered into S106 agreements during the reporting year that will deliver the following non-monetary contributions.

Table 8 – Affordable Housing required from planning obligations signed in 2020/21

Reference	Location	No. of Dwellings
18/04768/OUT	Land off Aston Road/The Bratches, Chipping Campden	30
19/01715/FUL	Cross Tree Crescent & Oakley Flats, High Street, Kempsford	9
19/04221/FUL	Land Parcel at the Sunground, Avening	14
19/04223/FUL	Land to the South off Quercus Road, Tetbury	30
20/00991/FUL	Leaholme Court, The Avenue, Cirencester	44
		127

Table 9 – Other non-monetary contributions required from planning obligations signed in 2020/21

Reference	Location	Type
18/04768/OUT	Land off Aston Road/The Bratches, Chipping Campden	4 Custom/Self-build plots

4.3. The Council collected **£744,993.00** from planning obligations entered into this or previous years.

Table 10 – Financial contributions received in 2020/21

Reference	Location	Type	Amount (£)
SC6009	Lower Mill Estate, Somerford Keynes	Section 106 paragraph 20 Nature Conservation Works	30,502.45
14/02161/FUL	Carted Barn, High Street, South Cerney	Affordable Housing	22,594.98
14/02365/OUT	Land Parcel off Broad Marston Road, Mickleton	Community Facilities	281,562.74
14/02365/OUT	Land Parcel off Broad Marston Road, Mickleton	Healthcare	14,875.08
14/04516/OUT	Land At Preston Mill Barn, Swindon Road, Preston	Affordable Housing	150,000.00
14/05122/FUL	Former Filling Station On The A40, Windrush	Affordable Housing	13,642.55
15/01376/OUT	Land East Of Bell Lane, Poulton	Education	25,386.00
15/01376/OUT	Land East Of Bell Lane, Poulton	Education	31,706.00
16/01572/FUL	Land Parcel West Of Field House, Broadway Road, Willersey	Village Hall	40,000.00
16/01572/FUL	Land Parcel West Of Field House, Broadway Road, Willersey	Education	61,937.97
16/01572/FUL	Land Parcel West Of Field House, Broadway Road, Willersey	Library	6,577.29
17/02435/OUT	Former Filling Station On The A40, Windrush	Affordable Housing	66,207.94
			744,993.00

4.4. The Council spent **£1,055,401.97** collected from planning obligations on infrastructure.

Table 11 – Total amount of planning obligations spent in 2020/21

Reference	Spent on	Recipient	Amount (£)
SC6009	Cotswold Water Park	Wiltshire Wildlife Trust	275.00
SC6009	Water Vole Recovery Project	Cotswold Water Park Trust	2,500.00
SC6009	Assistant Biodiversity Officer	Cotswold District Council	9,996.00
12/00219/OUT	Highways (extending speed limit)	Gloucestershire County Council	5,743.67
12/00219/OUT	Transport (bus services)	Gloucestershire County Council	8,680.98
12/00219/OUT	Transport (bus shelters)	Gloucestershire County Council	6,892.41
12/01792/OUT	Dolphins Hall	Tetbury Town Council	180,051.28
13/02391/OUT	Dolphins Hall	Tetbury Town Council	137,353.21
13/02936/FUL	Multi-Use Games Area	Moreton-in-Marsh Town Council	21,934.00
13/02936/FUL	Multi-Use Games Area	Moreton-in-Marsh Town Council	2,516.08
13/03539/OUT	Stow-on-the-Wold Doctor Surgery	NHS Gloucestershire CCG	28,076.34
14/02224/FUL	Affordable Housing	Bromford Housing Association	202,213.00
14/02365/OUT	Community Facilities	Mickleton Parish Council	56,562.74
14/02365/OUT	Cycle Stands	Mickleton Parish Council	2,000.00
14/02365/OUT	Community Facilities	Mickleton Parish Council	225,000.00
15/01376/OUT	Fairford Farmor's Secondary School	Gloucestershire County Council	25,386.00
15/01376/OUT	Meysey Hampton Primary School	Gloucestershire County Council	31,706.00
16/01572/FUL	Willersey Village Hall	Willersey Parish Council	40,000.00
16/01572/FUL	Secondary Education	Gloucestershire County Council	61,937.97
16/01572/FUL	Library	Gloucestershire County Council	6,577.29
			1,055,401.97

4.5. The Council has allocated **£1,025,500** to two affordable housing infrastructure projects: **£400,000** in Avening (Land at The Sunground) and **£625,500** in Moreton-in-Marsh (Land West of Davies Road).

Table 12 – Allocated S106 funds

Reference	Allocated to	Amount (£)
04/01877/FUL	Affordable Housing	38,135.41
12/02133/FUL	Affordable Housing	177,151.06
13/02642/OUT	Affordable Housing	19,796.38
14/01377/OUT	Affordable Housing	85,738.44
14/02161/FUL	Affordable Housing	22,609.10
14/03208/FUL	Affordable Housing	202,007.51
14/04516/OUT	Affordable Housing	150,062.50
14/05222/FUL	Affordable Housing	201,550.50
13/05181/OUT	Affordable Housing	105,909.27
17/02435/OUT	Affordable Housing	22,539.83
		1,025,500.00

4.6. The Council currently holds **£601,931.97** collected before 2020/21 that has not been allocated.

Table 13 – Non-allocated S106 funds

Reference	Location	Contribution for	Amount (£)
02/02286/OUT	S106 Fairford Water Ski Club	Footpath/Cycleway	608.67
14/02365/OUT	Land Parcel Off Broad Marston Road Mickleton	Sustainable Transport	3,000.00
13/02391/OUT	Highfield Farm Tetbury	Sports and Leisure Centre	50,498.39
13/02942/OUT	Kingshill Development Cirencester	Community Facilities	65,305.00
14/01483/OUT	The Fire Service College Moreton-In-Marsh	Community Facilities	250,000.00
14/02365/OUT	Land Parcel off Broad Marston Road, Mickleton	Healthcare	14,875.08
13/05306/FUL	Land North Of Cirencester Road Tetbury	Public Sector Care	12,855.00
SC6010	Lake 75 Cotswold Water Park	CWP Cycleways	3,074.75
SC6006	Lower Mill Estate Cotswold Water Park	CWP Cycleways	42,864.32
SC6009	Lower Mill Estate Cotswold Water Park	CWP Biodiversity Strategy	115,182.65
17/02435/OUT	Former Filling Station On The A40, Windrush	Affordable Housing	43,668.11
			601,931.97

4.7. Please see Appendix 2 for all information related to regulation 121A paragraph 3 (matters to be included in the S106 report) of the CIL regulations 2010 as amended.

Appendix A – Matters to be included in the CIL Report under regulation 121A paragraph 1

- (a) The total value of CIL set out in all demand notices issued in the reported year: **£752,199.34**
- (b) The total amount of CIL receipts for the reported year: **£231,262.26**
- (c) The total amount of CIL receipts, collected by the authority, or by another person on its behalf, before the reported year but which have not been allocated: **£13,929.96**
- (d) The total amount of CIL receipts, collected by the authority, or by another person on its behalf, before the reported year and which have been allocated in the reported year: **£0**
- (e) The total amount of CIL expenditure for the reported year: **£11,563.11**
- (f) The total amount of CIL receipts, whenever collected, which were allocated but not spent during the reported year: **£0**
- (g) In relation to CIL expenditure for the reported year, summary details of—
 - (i) The items of infrastructure on which CIL (including land payments) has been spent, and the amount of CIL spent on each item: **Not applicable**
 - (ii) The amount of CIL spent on repaying money borrowed, including any interest, with details of the items of infrastructure which that money was used to provide(wholly or in part): **£0**
 - (iii) The amount of CIL spent on administrative expenses pursuant to regulation 61, and that amount expressed as a percentage of CIL collected in that year in accordance with that regulation: **£11,563.11 (5%)**
- (h) In relation to CIL receipts, whenever collected, which were allocated but not spent during the reported year, summary details of the items of infrastructure on which CIL (including land payments) has been allocated, and the amount of CIL allocated to each item: **Not applicable**
- (i) The amount of CIL passed to—
 - (i) Any parish council under regulation 59A or 59B: **£7,970.87**
 - (ii) Any person under regulation 59(4): **£0**
- (j) Summary details of the receipt and expenditure of CIL to which regulation 59E or 59F applied during the reported year including—
 - (i) The total CIL receipts that regulations 59E and 59F applied to: **£0**
 - (ii) The items of infrastructure to which the CIL receipts to which regulations 59E and

59F applied have been allocated or spent, and the amount of expenditure allocated or spent on each item: **Not applicable**

(k) Summary details of any notices served in accordance with regulation 59E, including—

(i) The total value of CIL receipts requested from each parish council: **£0**

(ii) Any funds not yet recovered from each parish council at the end of the reported year: **£0**

(l) The total amount of—

(i) CIL receipts for the reported year retained at the end of the reported year other than those to which regulation 59E or 59F applied: **£186,431.20**

(ii) CIL receipts from previous years retained at the end of the reported year other than those to which regulation 59E or 59F applied: **£13,929.96**

(iii) CIL receipts for the reported year to which regulation 59E or 59F applied retained at the end of the reported year: **£0**

(iv) CIL receipts from previous years to which regulation 59E or 59F applied retained at the end of the reported year: **£0**

Appendix B – Matters to be included in the S106 Report under regulation 121A paragraph 3

(a) The total amount of money to be provided under any planning obligations which were entered into during the reported year: **£127,478.30**

(b) The total amount of money under any planning obligations which was received during the reported year: **£744,993.00**

(c) The total amount of money under any planning obligations which was received before the reported year which has not been allocated by the authority: **£601,931.97**

(d) Summary details of any non-monetary contributions to be provided under planning obligations which were entered into during the reported year, including details of—

(i) In relation to affordable housing, the total number of units which will be provided: **127**

(ii) In relation to educational facilities, the number of school places for pupils which will be provided, and the category of school at which they will be provided: **Please refer to Infrastructure Funding Statement of Gloucestershire County Council for details regarding educational provisions (www.gloucestershire.gov.uk).**

(iii) Other non-monetary contributions:

- **Provision of 4 Self Build Plots in Chipping Campden**

(e) The total amount of money (received under any planning obligations) which was allocated but not spent during the reported year for funding infrastructure: **£1,025,500.00**

(f) The total amount of money (received under any planning obligations) which was spent by the authority (including transferring it to another person to spend): **£1,055,401.97**

(g) In relation to money (received under planning obligations) which was allocated by the authority but not spent during the reported year, summary details of the items of infrastructure on which the money has been allocated, and the amount of money allocated to each item:

Allocated to	Amount (£)
Affordable Housing (Avening)	400,000
Affordable Housing (Moreton-in-Marsh)	625,500

(h) In relation to money (received under planning obligations) which was spent by the authority during the reported year (including transferring it to another person to spend), summary details of—

- (i) The items of infrastructure on which that money (received under planning obligations) was spent, and the amount spent on each item:

Reference	Type	Amount (£)	Recipient
12/00219/OUT	Highways (extending speed limit)	5,743.67	Gloucestershire County Council
12/00219/OUT	Transport (bus services)	8,680.98	Gloucestershire County Council
12/00219/OUT	Transport (bus shelters)	6,892.41	Gloucestershire County Council
12/01792/OUT	Dolphins Hall	180,051.28	Tetbury Town Council
13/02391/OUT	Dolphins Hall	137,353.21	Tetbury Town Council
13/02936/FUL	Multi-Use Games Area	21,934.00	Moreton-in-Marsh Town Council
13/02936/FUL	Multi-Use Games Area	2,516.08	Moreton-in-Marsh Town Council
13/03539/OUT	Stow-on-the-Wold Doctor Surgery	28,076.34	NHS Gloucestershire CCG
14/02224/FUL	Affordable Housing	202,213.00	Bromford Housing Association
14/02365/OUT	Community Facilities	56,562.74	Mickleton Parish Council
14/02365/OUT	Cycle Stands	2,000.00	Mickleton Parish Council
14/02365/OUT	Community Facilities	225,000.00	Mickleton Parish Council
15/01376/OUT	Fairford Farmor's Secondary School	25,386.00	Gloucestershire County Council
15/01376/OUT	Meysey Hampton Primary School	31,706.00	Gloucestershire County Council
16/01572/FUL	Willersey Village Hall	40,000.00	Willersey Parish Council
16/01572/FUL	Education	61,937.97	Gloucestershire County Council
16/01572/FUL	Library	6,577.29	Gloucestershire County Council
SC6009	Cotswold Water Park	275.00	Wiltshire Wildlife Trust
SC6009	Water Vole Recovery Project	2,500.00	Cotswold Water Park Trust
SC6009	Assistant Biodiversity Officer	9,996.00	Cotswold District Council

(ii) The amount of money (received under planning obligations) spent on repaying money borrowed, including any interest, with details of the items of infrastructure which that money was used to provide (wholly or in part): **£0**

(iii) The amount of money (received under planning obligations) spent in respect of monitoring (including reporting under regulation 121A) in relation to the delivery of planning obligations: **£0**

(i) The total amount of money (received under any planning obligations) during any year which was retained at the end of the reported year, and where any of the retained money has been allocated for

the purposes of longer term maintenance (“commuted sums”), also identify separately the total amount of commuted sums held: **£0**

Appendix C – Glossary

Charitable relief – Exemption to pay CIL on buildings for charitable use (paragraph 43 of the CIL regulations)

CIL Instalment Policy – The CIL regulations allow for CIL charges to be paid by instalments, provided the charging authority has published an instalment policy. [Cotswold District Council’s instalment policy](#) can be found on its website.

CWP – Cotswold Water Park

Demand Notice – A notice issued by the Council in line with the CIL regulations upon commencement of a CIL liable development. The Demand Notice states the amount to be paid and when it needs to be paid.

Liability Notice – A notice issued by the Council in line with the CIL regulations upon granting permission of a CIL liable development. The Liability Notice states the amount of CIL liability and how this liability was calculated.

Liable Floorspace – The floorspace of a development which will incur a CIL charge.

Neighbourhood Contribution – Element of collected CIL monies which is transferred to the local Parish or Town Council in which the development took place. The standard contribution consists of 15% of collected CIL monies, which rises to 25% if the Parish or Town Council has a neighbourhood plan in place. The monies need to be returned to the District Council if they have not been spent on infrastructure within 5 years of receipt.

Residential extension/annex relief – Exemption to pay CIL on self-build residential extensions or annexes (paragraph 42A of the CIL regulations)

Self-build housing relief – Exemption to pay CIL on self-build residential dwellings (paragraph 54A of the CIL regulations)

Social housing relief – Exemption to pay CIL on affordable housing (paragraph 49 of the CIL regulations)

Surcharges – The CIL regulations require for a series of surcharges to be applied when the CIL procedures have not been followed correctly. [An overview of the surcharges](#) can be found on Cotswold District Council’s website



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 6 DECEMBER 2021
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 11
Subject	GREEN ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY - SIX MONTHLY UPDATE
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation Email: tony.dale@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Paul James, Economic Development Lead Email: paul.james@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To update Cabinet Members on the progress in delivering the Council's Green Economic Growth Strategy
Annexes	None.
Recommendation(s)	<i>That progress in delivering the Green Economic Growth Strategy is noted.</i>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Supporting businesses to grow in a green, sustainable manner, and to provide high value jobs ● Responding to the challenges presented by the climate crisis
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Cotswold Economic Advisory Group



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council's Corporate Strategy identifies the need to "enable a vibrant economy" as a key priority. To this end, Cabinet approved a draft Green Economic Growth Strategy for consultation in October 2020 and, following amendments made as a result of the consultation, it was adopted by Cabinet in December 2020. The Strategy covers a four year period from adoption and the report by the Cabinet Member undertook to provide six monthly updates to Cabinet. This report is the second such update. It is also worth reminding Cabinet that they approved the establishment of the Cotswold Economic Advisory Group to oversee implementation of the actions contained within the strategy. The Group has met on five occasions so far and provided a valuable source of guidance and challenge.

2. PROGRESS UPDATES

- 2.1 The Strategy set out a number of different themes and progress against each of them is set out below. Whereas during lockdown, efforts were largely focused on preparing town centres for reopening and assisting them to evolve in the face of evolving shopping habits, in more recent months with restrictions being lifted it has been possible to widen the scope of activities, including undertaking a number of visits to key businesses. Nonetheless, work to assist town centres remains an important part of the economic development function and this is set out in further detail later in this report.

Growing key sectors

- 2.2 The strategy identified, in common with Gloucestershire's Draft Local Industrial Strategy, agritech, cyber/digital and green technologies as key growth sectors for the District. In terms of agritech, we have been working closely with the Royal Agricultural University (RAU). We believe there is a great opportunity to use the RAU's University Gate site to grow agritech and related businesses. This would be consistent with the site's allocation in the Local Plan. We are in regular contact with the RAU and their developer partner HBD and will be organising a workshop of relevant stakeholders in the New Year to explore possibilities.
- 2.3 Farm491, the UK's leading AgriTech incubator, owned by and based at the Royal Agricultural University, has continued to grow its membership of agritech and agrifood startups both locally and nationally. With 75 members currently, their focus over the past 6 months has very much been on getting these companies investor-ready, launching an investor-ready pitch



deck programme and investor panel. They have also recently launched the Greenhouse Programme, which is funded by the ERDF to support Gloucestershire-based companies. Support for companies has taken a hybrid form, with both online and face-to-face sessions.

2.4 As far as cyber and digital are concerned, there are a number of small digital businesses within the District, particularly around Cirencester. For example, LatchAid, based in Kemble, has developed a breastfeeding support app. It has received funding from Innovate UK and is looking to raise further equity funding. Wherever possible we have connected businesses with the Applied Digital Skills Centre at Cirencester College. We are also holding discussions with the Fire Service College about whether it can evolve into a wider national resilience role.

2.5 Green technologies is an area very much in focus at the moment. The Council is working with Cotswold Airport on a project to add solar panels to a number of their buildings to generate electricity. Members will also be aware of ZeroAvia, who have moved to Cotswold Airport from Cranfield and are developing a hydrogen powertrain for aircraft. Cirencester College is planning to launch green engineering and construction T-levels from September 2022 and will be visiting ZeroAvia as part of the preparation for this.

Green Business Pledge

2.6 Cabinet will recall a report brought to you in June of this year which set out the case for a Green Business Pledge for Gloucestershire, based on a “Climate Commitment” developed by Eoin McQuone of Sustainable Business Design. Events have overtaken this, with the Government now promoting the “SME Climate Hub” for small businesses and “Business Ambition for 1.5 degrees” for larger companies as part of the “Race to Zero”. In light of this, the Climate Commitment website (www.climatecommitment.co.uk) now acts as a gateway for these national/international initiatives, but enables us to capture details of local businesses who sign up, enabling us to share best practice.

Town Centres

2.7 The Coronavirus pandemic has accelerated trends within consumer habits, including the shift to more online shopping and it is necessary for town centres and individuals businesses to evolve in order to respond to these trends. The Council has been working actively to support our town centres in making this transition.

2.8 A previous report to Cabinet set out how the Government’s ‘Reopening High Streets Safely’ Fund (RHSS) had been used for a range of initiatives including providing business packs of posters and stickers with safety messages and running promotional campaigns to encourage consumers to return to town centres in a safe manner once lockdown was lifted. The ‘Welcome Back Fund’ (WBF) is an extension of the RHSS and granted an additional



£81,114 to the Council to use to support town centres, albeit with greater freedom on how it could

be used. £50,000 of the funding has been earmarked for 'beautification' projects in town centres, in partnership with Town Councils. These projects are at various stages of being delivered. £30,000 was provisionally set aside for a Virtual High Street to help businesses to enhance their online presence. A specification for this is being finalised at the moment in order to go to procurement for a solution. The Council is being very cautious in its approach, recognising that there are many technology-based products available in this space, but we need to be sure that they are appropriate for the Cotswold District.

- 2.9** An Economic Recovery Intern was employed for 10 weeks over the summer to concentrate on town centre issues and her contract was extended until the end of October to work on Welcome Back Fund projects. Her work has included some detailed research on town centre composition within the District and a detailed look at vacant units, particularly in Cirencester. This work has contributed to the Town Centre Healthcheck as part of the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan.

Visitor Economy

- 2.10** The visitor economy accounts for a significant proportion of the local economy. Overall, the local visitor economy was extremely buoyant during the summer with record levels of demand. Visits to the tourism website (www.cotswolds.com) hit record levels with unique visitor numbers, 94% up on pre-pandemic figures in 2019. There were almost 250,000 unique visitors to the website in August alone. Tourism businesses generally reported very high levels of interest from the public and uptake, especially those businesses with a significant amount of outdoor space. However, those businesses reliant on overseas visitors, and the business and events market or group visits, did not do so well. The tourism team has been supporting businesses in trying to adapt their offers for the domestic leisure market.
- 2.11** Cotswolds Tourism has continued to work with businesses to encourage better online presence and online bookings. One hundred and twelve Cotswolds Tourism businesses and experiences are now bookable online via Tourism Exchange Great Britain; and their online digital training videos have been watched over 300 times.

Infrastructure

- 2.12** By far the biggest infrastructure project within the District is the A417 Missing Link. The Development Consent Order was submitted on 31st May 2021. The draft timetable for the examination has now been set and was discussed at a preliminary hearing on 2nd November. Officers are continuing to liaise with National Highways (formerly Highways



England) to ensure the opportunities for local contractors, labour and suppliers are maximised.

- 2.13** An update on the rollout of high quality broadband across the District appears elsewhere on the agenda and Officers continue to press Fastershire, as well as providers such as Openreach and Gigaclear to complete work within the District as quickly as possible.
- 2.14** Mobile phone signal remains an issue in some parts of the District and officers are pressing the network operators to address not-spots, including Birdlip, Meysey Hampton and Poulton. By its nature this is not a quick process but it is important that we lobby to ensure these issues are addressed as quickly as possible, either through the Single Rural Network or by operators individually.

Skills and Training

- 2.15** As mentioned earlier, the Applied Digital Skills Centre at Cirencester College is now well-advanced and will open early in 2022. In preparation for this, Officers are connecting relevant businesses with the College whenever the opportunity arises.
- 2.16** The College has also been awarded £4 million from the Government's Post-16 Growth Fund for a new T-Level building which will be ready in Autumn 2022. T-Levels are likely to be an increasingly important part of the training mix going forward, as mentioned in the Chancellor's recent Budget.
- 2.17** In addition, the County Council has brought together their employment and skills offering in a new Employment and Skills Hub at <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/grow-gloucestershire/employment-and-skills-hub/>.

Inward Investment

- 2.18** Officers have been working with GFirst LEP's Inward Investment Team to bring ZeroAvia to Cotswold Airport and to support them with their expansion. Their staff numbers have increased from 10 to over 40, with the potential to grow to 200-300 in the next couple of years. The Cabinet Member, Chief Executive and Economic Development Lead have all visited the company and the Leader is planning to visit shortly.
- 2.19** Officers have also been liaising with the new owners of the former Mitsubishi site at Watermoor, Cirencester. The sale completed at the beginning of October. The small hotel on the site, known as Riverside House, has been let to RAU students. The warehouse is currently let to Mitsubishi until the end of March but Members may be aware that the Mitsubishi aftersales business has been sold to the IM Group and the warehouse operation



will transfer to IM's existing facility in the Midlands. New occupiers are being sought. The office building is being offered as serviced offices.

Business Engagement

2.20 The lifting of Coronavirus restrictions has meant that it has been possible to pay visits to businesses within the District in a way that was not possible before. In recent weeks, visits have been paid to:

- The Fire Service College, Moreton-in-Marsh
- Auto-Sleepers, Willersey
- Cotswold Airport, Kemble
- ZeroAvia, Cotswold Airport
- Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester
- Sentinel Systems, Cirencester
- Vanessa Arbuthnott Fabrics, Cirencester
- Law & Company, Cirencester
- Campden BRI, Chipping Campden

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the businesses we visited reported challenges with recruitment across a range of posts and disruptions to supply chains, which were affecting their businesses. A number of follow-up actions were identified which have either been completed or are in the process of being implemented. Further visits will be planned in the months ahead.

Other

2.21 The Economic Development Lead has been involved in a range of other work which could be seen as contributing to the delivery of the Green Economic Growth Strategy, including:

- Supporting Cirencester College and the RAU's projects to reduce the spread of Covid. This has brought funding of over £50,000 into the District.
- Identifying investment opportunities for the Council consistent with the Recovery Investment Strategy and Government/CIPFA guidance.
- Submitting an Expression of Interest to the government for £162,500 of funding for Changing Places Toilets for the disabled. We expect to hear the outcome at some point in the Autumn.
- Working to bring a number of empty/derelict buildings back into use.
- Working with the Data Team to produce an Economic Health Dashboard for the District made up of key indicators. It is hoped this will be ready in time for the Cabinet meeting.



3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 The last six months have been a busy time within this portfolio as the economy has opened up again. Good progress has been made in many areas against the Strategy's Action Plan, with further progress expected in the months ahead. Of particular note has been the work with ZeroAvia, which has seen their headcount rise from 10 to around 50 with potential for further growth. The launch of the Green Pledge through the Race to Zero is a key area of work and St James's Place, as the District's largest employer was the first local business to sign up. Town centre evolution remains a priority and the visit to Law & Company highlighted a business which has transformed itself through a stronger digital presence - something which other businesses can learn from. By building relationships with the new leadership at the Royal Agricultural University, we can take advantage of agritech opportunities in the future.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 All activities have been undertaken within existing budgets. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 There are no direct risks associated with this report. The risks of non-delivery of the actions contained within the Strategy are mitigated by regular monitoring and reporting.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 7.1 The Green Economic Growth Strategy seeks to deliver inclusive economic growth.

8. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Green Economic Growth Strategy seeks to grow the environmental technology sector in the District and encourage businesses to reduce their carbon emissions.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 9.1 The Council could choose not to have a Green Economic Growth Strategy or could choose not to monitor progress against it. Neither option is recommended.



10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

(END)



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 6 DECEMBER 2021
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 12
Subject	OPTIONS FOR PARKING ENFORCEMENT
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Mike Evely – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Email: mike.evely@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Jon Dearing – Group Manager for Resident Services Email: jon.dearing@publicagroup.uk
Author	Mandy Fathers – Business Manager for Operations and Enabling Email: mandy.fathers@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	The purpose of this report is to provide options in relation to the expiry of the (APCOA) Parking Enforcement contract.
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	<p><i>(a) Cabinet agrees to bring the Enforcement service back in-house.</i></p> <p><i>(b) Cabinet delegates to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, the decision on whether to lease or buy the vehicles associated with this decision and approves the allocation of £45,000 from the Electric Vehicle Charging point budget within the Capital Programme to fund the purchase if necessary;</i></p> <p><i>(c) Cabinet approves an allocation of £12,000 from the Council Priorities Fund to fund the start-up costs for the in-house service.</i></p>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delivering our services to the highest standards
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Leader and Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer, Interim Head of Legal Services, Finance Business Partner, Director of Finance (Publica), Parking Manager



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Council's Car Parks are the source of significant income receipts. The Covid-19 pandemic clearly had an impact on this income but, pre-Covid receipts were around £2,400,000 per annum. It is therefore important that this service is managed carefully. Publica manages the service on behalf of the Council but the enforcement element of the service is contracted out to APCOA, in a shared agreement, with Forest of Dean.

- 1.2. The enforcement contract commenced on 1st April 2020 for an initial period of two years (i.e. to 31st March 2022); with an option to extend for a further two years, to 31st March 2024 (and then an option of one further year).

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. Effective enforcement of the Off-street parking and maintenance of the payment equipment is essential in safeguarding the income and the reputation of the Council. These functions are undertaken by the contractor (APCOA).

- 2.2. The current contract includes the provision of uniformed Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO's), vehicles and subsistence, their training, and provision of hand-held devices. The provision of cover for absences is the responsibility of APCOA. The contract also includes first line maintenance of Pay and Display machines.

- 2.3. APCOA generally perform well in their duties and also 'add value' whilst on patrol by reporting to the Council issues such as sign displacements and damaged street furniture.

- 2.4. The contract break at 31st March 2022 provides the Council with an opportunity to evaluate the various options for the future provision of the service.

3. OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT:

- 3.1. There are three main options available to the Council:
 1. Extend the APCOA contract for a further two years,
 2. Bring Enforcement back In-house,
 3. End the APCOA contract and re-tender.



Option 1 – Extend the APCOA contract.

- 3.2. The current contract allows for a two year extension; to 31st March 2024.
- 3.3. The contract allows up to 2,958 patrol hours per annum (an average of 57 hours a week) on a ‘call-off’ basis with the flexibility to vary times. This includes pay and display machine checks on arrival at car parks. Should there be an issue with a machine the patrolling officer is able to undertake some basic first line maintenance operation.
- 3.4. The cost of the contract also relates to the issuing of penalty charges notices (PCN’s); but does not include:
- The monitoring and recovery of PCN;s
 - Cash collection, reconciliation and banking
 - General car park maintenance, including technical machine faults

Option 1 - Pros and Cons	
Pros	Cons
Continuation of service provision, established contract arrangements and good working relationships with Publica.	Concentrates on Parking Enforcement only
Contract includes some ‘added value’ activity	Council has no direct control of officers or their duties
Council do not have to pay holidays/sickness, administration, training costs – the responsibility rests with the contractor	Limited eyes and ears at ground level

- 3.5. This extension would be the most straightforward course of action; simply requiring notification to APCOA.

Option 2 – Bring Enforcement In-house



- 3.6. APCOA would require notice by 31st December 2021 and this option would necessitate a TUPE transfer of the existing APCOA officers to Publica.

Option 2 – Pros and Cons	
Pros	Cons
Given the strategic importance of car parking revenue to the Council, an in-house enforcement service aligned with the car park management team enables the Council to continually improve the car park service.	One off 'set up' costs for items such as, vehicles, uniforms and handhelds.
Ability to deploy staff on other parking/non parking activities if required.	Increased workload on Parking Manager.
Public may feel there is a greater understanding of parking issues if delivered locally.	Reduced resilience - would require sufficient resource to be able to cover leave/sickness and training.
Positive impact on environment and would fit in with Council's Clean and Green initiative.	Risk of reduced PCN income generation.

- 3.7. There is the potential to add value here, in that these officers could be tasked with additional (Clean & Green responsibilities). However, there are two further considerations in respect of that proposal:

- I. The existing APCOA officers flag Clean and Green issues with Publica officers (e.g. notifying the location of Fly Tipping for action by our officers), and
- II. This proposal would mean that Publica may need to increase its resource (and therefore costs) to ensure resilience within service delivery.

Option 3 – End the current contract and re-tender

- 3.8. Ending the current contract with APCOA would require notice to be given by 31st



December 2021.

Option 3 – Pros and Cons	
Pros	Cons
Ability to create a more detailed specification within the tender process to include 'Clean and Green added value' items for service improvement.	Time and resource required for procurement purposes.
	Recently tested the market (2020) so unlikely to obtain any additional savings.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. The current contract has a pricing schedule which is on a call off basis and the costs are therefore estimated on a 'standard number of requirements' basis. APCOA contract cost is £71,541 per annum (Option 1).
- 4.2. The cost of In-house provision (Option 2), is estimated to include start-up costs of £11,750. Should the Council choose to buy rather than lease the vehicles required to deliver the service, then the set up costs would increase by around £45,000. The purchase of the two vehicles can be funded from within the Council's Capital Programme by allocating some of the budget for investment in electric vehicle charging points. The balance of start-up costs will require an allocation from the Council Priorities Fund earmarked reserve.
- 4.3. Annual revenue costs of the in-house provision, including resilience and supervision, are estimated to be £65,900. It is important to note that if staff TUPE from ACPOA salary costs may be higher. The impact on the revenue budget will be reviewed as part of the Council's budget proposals for the 2022/23 financial year.



4.4. The following table gives a comparison of the average projected (gross) costs between Options 1 and Option 2:

Start-up Costs	Option 1	Option 2
Vehicles	Nil	£Nil (if vehicles leased)
Equipment (handhelds, docking station, cover & straps, printer, laptops)	Nil	£7,000
Uniforms	Nil	£750
Training (City & Guilds CEO training) Metric Training (First line maintenance)	Nil	£2,000 – this is dependent on whether resource TUPE over £2,000 – this is dependent on whether resource TUPE over
Total Start Up Costs	Nil	£11,750
Annual Revenue Costs	Option 1	Option 2
Staffing	£55,716	£45,000 (Based on 2 FTE) Clarification needed on TUPE from APCOA to establish exact costs.
Uniforms (replacements)	Nil	£200
Ticket Printing	Nil	£150
Stationery	Nil	£100
Transport/Maintenance/Fuel	£6,975	£14,000
Training (ongoing)	Nil	£1,000
Professional Fees	Nil	£1350
Mobile Phone Charges	Nil	£550



Computer/Software/maintenance and support	Nil	£1,050
HR/Finance/IT (recharge)	Nil	£2,500
Management	£8,850(in c HR & Finance)	Nil
Total Revenue Cost	£71,541	£65,900

4.5. On the basis of the above analysis the in house delivery offers a small saving over external delivery. This saving could be increased if a decision is made to buy rather than lease the vehicles but this requires some further analysis before a final decision can be made. It is recommended this decision be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance.

4.6. The annual contract cost of an alternative provider (Option 3) is unknown and would be subject to tender. It is unlikely that an exercise could be completed by to ensure continuity of delivery and this was tendered only two years ago.

4.7. The income generated from PCN fees over the last 5 year period (which helps support service delivery) and the numbers issued is as follows:

	No	2018/19 £	No	2019/20 £	No	2020/21 £	No	2021/22 £
Apr	426	10,234	457	11,209	0	700	165	2,490
May	363	9,988	373	14,564	0	1,075	235	3,878
June	312	9,890	264	9,354	64	924	226	4,798
July	270	7,594	311	6,916	143	2,538	233	4,760
Aug	274	7,144	302	9,090	109	2,026	159	4,989
Sept	312	6,138	264	7,937	258	4,100	107	3,502
Oct	302	8,049	301	6,899	181	4,493		
Nov	348	7,992	175	8,302	168	3,862		
Dec	315	7,373	180	5,357	207	3,590		
Jan	222	8,371	194	5,529	119	2,575		
Feb	291	5,910	215	5,435	128	3,705		
March	428	6,678	158	4,668	107	2,418		
Total	3,437	95,361	2,737	95,260	1,484	32,006	960	24,417



5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. There are different legal implications against the three options.
- 5.2. Option 1 would require the Council to send a letter of intent to extend the current enforcement contract for an additional two years, by 31st December 2021.
- 5.3. Option 2 would require the Council to give notice to APCOA to terminate the current contract with effect from 1st April 2022. This notice would have to be given by 31st December 2021. This would initiate the TUPE process.
- 5.4. Option 3 would require the Council to give notice to APCOA to terminate the current contract with effect from 1st April 2022. A new tender process and TUPE process would need to be initiated.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1. There is a reputational risk associated with any change to face to face service delivery if members decide to change the current arrangement; this may include a decrease in income generation; however, by retaining the current arrangement the Council does not have the opportunity to improve the service through having more direct control.
- 6.2. There is a risk with Option 2 that if the resource currently in place does not TUPE across there may not be sufficient time to recruit officers, undertake statutory training in readiness for the service to commence from 1 April 2022. To mitigate this the Council could ask APCOA to continue on a month by month basis under a contract variation. It should be noted however, that there is no obligation on the ACPOA to do this.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 7.1. There are no unacceptable adverse effects on the protected characteristics covered by the Equalities Act that have been identified.

8. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. This would be dependent on which option was considered as follows:
 - Option 1 – vehicles used are currently petrol which create more CO₂



- Option 2 – there would be an option to source hybrid or fully electric vehicles to reduce the carbon impact of the service. An assessment will be required of the appropriate vehicles as part of the appraisal supporting the lease or buy decision.
- Option 3 – the Council could stipulate the type of vehicle within its tender specification

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 9.1. The options have been detailed within the body of the report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1. None.

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Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET 6 DECEMBER 2021
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 13
Subject	THE FUTURE USE OF COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL'S OFFICES AT TRINITY ROAD, CIRENCESTER
Wards affected	Watermoor
Accountable member	Councillor Mike Every – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Email: mike.every@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Claire Locke Group Manager Email: claire.locke@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider high level options and agree the future use of the Cotswold District Council's Offices at Trinity Road, Cirencester
Annexes	Annex A- Financial appraisal of options Annex B – Net Zero Carbon feasibility Report
Recommendation(s)	<p><i>That Cabinet agrees that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) Based on the high level option appraisal, the Council reduces its occupation of the Offices and actively markets the estimated 30 - 40% spare space generated for commercial tenants, providing both revenue savings and a revenue return for the Council.</i> <i>b) A further report setting out capital costs to make changes to building configuration, access, security etc. will be presented to the Cabinet once the final allocation of Council services to specific space within the building is agreed.</i> <i>c) Funding of up to £13,000 is allocated from the Council Priorities Fund earmarked reserve to fund a feasibility study to assess options for roof repairs or replacement, incorporating options for insulation and reduction in heat loss, and that a further report is brought back to the Cabinet.</i>



	<p>d) <i>To support implementation of option 2a, £308,000 of capital funding is included as part of the forthcoming budget setting process to fund works to install solar PV, lighting and smaller measures in the Office buildings which should achieve a reduction in Carbon emissions of approximately 59CO₂t per year (20%).</i></p> <p>e) <i>A 20% contingency sum is allocated for recommendation (d) £62,000 to allow for equipment or installation costs above estimates or unforeseen works with authority delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to draw on that funding.</i></p>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delivering our services to the highest standards ● Responding to the challenges presented by the climate crisis
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>Forward Planning Manager</p> <p>Head of Climate Action</p> <p>Group Finance Director – Publica Group Ltd</p> <p>Portfolio Holders and Local Management Team</p>



I. BACKGROUND

- I.1. The Council owns the freehold of the Council offices at Trinity Road, which comprises 5,222 square metres over 2 floors with 143 parking spaces. The Council occupies the majority of the building, with only the Southern wing currently let in part to commercial tenants (12% of total building).
- I.2. The Covid-19 Pandemic accelerated work to reduce the Council's and Publica's office footprint with around 75% of staff home working during the height of the lockdowns supported by an urgent rollout of laptops and the increased usage of video conferencing. An Agile Working Strategy has now been adopted which means there will be a permanent shift to a hybrid way of working with most staff working remotely for 2 - 3 days a week and being office based the remainder of the week. This change to working arrangements is focussed on ensuring business needs can still be met and therefore some roles will require staff to be office based for a higher proportion of the time.
- I.3. This agile working approach is welcomed by the vast majority of staff and reduces time lost to travel and the carbon impact of commuting. It is considered it can aid productivity and help staff balance their work and home lives. It is acknowledged that it will not suit everyone's personal circumstances and therefore measures are in place to enable staff to work from the office if they need to, as well as providing welfare support to those who work remotely and have less face to face contact with their managers.
- I.4. Work to map business and employee future office needs is now nearing completion. A review of existing occupation, desk requirements, storage needs, meeting space, welfare provision and Member and civic room requirements has been completed and the reduction in space needed has been mapped against the building to identify which atria and offices are required and what space can be freed up. This new 'footprint' results in a reduction from 200 to 120 desks and can be modelled against different sections of the building, so if, for example, the decision was made to convert the building for different uses, the Council occupation could be moved to different areas. This information would also form the basis of an off-site requirement if the decision was made to rent or build office space elsewhere.
- I.5. Detailed proposals showing revised allocation of office space have been shared with Cabinet Members for agreement and wider staff and member consultation is now underway.
- I.6. Based on the modelling it is likely nearly 40% of the existing space occupied by the Council can be released for alternative use. Options have therefore been considered for repurposing this space or relocating the offices to free up the whole site for redevelopment. Options considered have focussed on how the Council may use this asset to deliver against its priorities, specifically carbon reduction, commercial investment to underpin the financial sustainability of the Council and delivery of affordable housing.



2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1. In Planning terms the site is likely to be suitable for housing or office accommodation, which is aligned with its current use. The uses considered have therefore focussed on a combination of housing, office accommodation and parking.
- 2.2. Whilst the building is not Listed (with the exception of the 'Lock Up' which is a small single storey Grade 2 Listed Building located to the southwest of the site) its location within the Conservation Area and the large number of trees to the perimeter and the "green" car park to the west of the site which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, severely constrain the opportunities for redevelopment. Demolition of the office buildings has been considered as an option to assess the potential redevelopment and net carbon zero opportunities that this would provide. However, this may not be considered acceptable due to the setting and perceived historic value of the building.
- 2.3. The options set out in this report are high level. There are many further variations to these options that could be explored. For example, housing options (3, 4 and 5 below) have been modelled based on social housing provision. A mix of unit sizes has been used based on local housing need. However this could be changed to alter both the number and size of units. Different proportions of market housing could be included and various degrees of carbon reducing measures could be installed. Figures used are therefore indicative and the detailed proposals would be subject to further review and would require a detailed business case to be prepared. If option 2 is not agreed and an alternative option is selected, a revenue allocation will be required to enable detailed feasibility work on that option to produce a more detailed business case and development proposal.

Options		Office location	Use of surplus space
1	Baseline	As Existing - Trinity Road	Not applicable
1a	As Baseline but with <u>all</u> scoped carbon reduction measures	As Existing - Trinity Road	Not applicable
1b	As Baseline but with some carbon reduction measures	As Existing - Trinity Road	Not applicable
2	Reduction in office space and increased space let commercially with full carbon reduction measures	As Existing - Trinity Road	Commercial tenants
2a	Reduction in office space and increased space let commercially with some carbon reduction measures	As Existing - Trinity Road	Commercial tenants



Options		Office location	Use of surplus space
3	Reduction in office space and partial conversion to housing	As Existing - Trinity Road	Affordable housing
4	Relocation of offices, full conversion to housing	Alternative site - not yet identified	Affordable housing
5	Relocation of offices, demolition of buildings, new build social housing	Alternative site - not yet identified	Social housing
6	Relocation of offices. Sell site.	Alternative site - not yet identified	Site sold - control limited to planning process
7	Relocation of offices, demolition of buildings, new build social and market housing	Alternative site - not yet identified	Social and Market housing
8	Relocation of offices, demolition of buildings, public car park provision	Alternative site - not yet identified	Public car park

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. Officers have looked at current costs to occupy the building, the existing income it generates from tenants and the opportunities and costs presented by different options for future use. In considering continued occupation of the site the ongoing costs to maintain and repair the building, which are identified at a high level in a condition survey, have been reviewed. This is therefore set against costs of relocating and either leasing, buying or building new office accommodation.
- 3.2. Reducing the Council's office footprint will decrease annual revenue costs from utilities, business rates etc. This is a positive change irrespective of whether the Council/Publica remains at the existing offices or relocates.
- 3.3. Option 1 is the baseline position so does not include any changes. Option 1a has been provided to show a cost comparison with the other options of the Council remaining in occupation of the building as it does now but with the installation of the full suite of carbon reducing measures. Option 1b provides a comparison with the installation of some carbon reduction measures with the shortest payback periods. The insulation of the atrium roofs and the insulation of the solid walls have been excluded as they have payback periods of 80 and 150 years respectively.



- 3.4. Options 2 and 2a are the most attractive financial options as each option results in additional rental income but with little capital outlay. Both options deliver savings of around £300,000 each year over the comparator Baseline option. While the decision on whether to invest in the full suite of carbon reduction measures or those with the shortest payback period (as shown in option 2a) have the same revenue impact, the full suite of carbon reduction measures will require £720,000 of capital compared with £300,000 without insulation of the atrium and the walls. Minimising the cost of carbon reduction measures provides an additional saving of £20,000 as there are lower capital financing costs.
- 3.5. A recent building condition survey of the Trinity Road Offices has identified building repairs of £1,240,000 which need to be carried out over the next 3-5 years. There have been long standing issues with the roofs at Trinity Road and leaks frequently occur. There has been significant expenditure over time (£118,000 in last 10 years) in repairing the roofs and the Condition Survey identified the need to invest a further £235,000 within the next 3 years as a number of atrium glazed panels have failed and flat roofs are repeatedly leaking. The Energy Audit identifies an estimated cost of £168,000 (including contractor and professional fees) for works to replace the north side glazed atrium with an insulated panel roof.
- 3.6. With a payback period of 150 years for the insulated panel roof and a need to consider the most cost effective roofing system to reduce ongoing repair costs, it is recommended a feasibility study is commissioned to explore roofing options for Trinity Road offices before any further investment is made (noting emergency repairs may be required if leaks occur during the winter period). A report will then be brought back to the Council for a decision on the structural solution and opportunities for carbon reduction as part of any significant roofing changes.
- 3.7. Annex A provides a business case which sets out a high level comparison and the net position for each option.
- 3.8. Options 4 - 8 require relocation of the Council. Within Annex A costs have been based on the Council leasing alternative premises. There are alternative options with the council buying existing premises (£8-9M) or purpose building offices (£11M) but these options are also high cost, so do not provide financially viable alternatives.
- 3.9. There is uncertainty around future revenue costs if the council relocates to existing buildings. Whilst a reduction in footprint should reduce costs from the baseline position, the Council may have limited ability to control the efficiency of the building or install carbon reducing measures if it is a tenant, although new legal requirements



will ensure rented accommodation reaches certain energy efficiency standards (see 7.7 below). If the Council built new offices they could be constructed as zero carbon.

- 3.10.** The Council could lease existing offices or build new premises either on land it already owns or on land it acquires. If new build offices are considered it is anticipated this would form part of a more strategic development which could incorporate accommodation for other public sector partners or provide for other community uses. Development of purpose built offices with public sector partners could be a two stage process. The Council could complete option 2 first and then develop alternative accommodation and move into purpose built offices with partners if this becomes viable longer term.
- 3.11.** No cost has been included for purchase of land as the Council does own some sites in Cirencester which could, in principle, be utilised. However, the Council may decide to look at other sites district wide, in which case land purchase costs would need to be included.
- 3.12.** Officers have looked at the availability of alternative office accommodation district wide but at the time of review (Summer 2021) no suitable alternative accommodation was identified. Lease costs are therefore based on an average cost per square metre. Should the Council wish to pursue option 4, 5, 6 or 7 then further work would be needed to identify a suitable alternative site. With more and more businesses shifting permanently to agile working, it is likely that more office space will become available in the short-medium term.
- 3.13.** One of the key factors in the financial comparison is the significant net cost in relocating to alternative premises. The existing offices are a depreciated asset with no rent or capital financing requirement. The only cost to occupy the building currently is insurance, business rates, running, maintenance and repair costs etc. however to lease a new building would result in rent payments and a new build would include capital build costs and the cost of borrowing, thereby increasing the Councils revenue costs considerably.
- 3.14.** The Council could apply for any available funding from Homes England to support housing development. However, the current grant levels of between £10,000 and £15,000 per unit will not balance the shortfall between build costs and resulting value. Other grant opportunities may become available in the future as Homes England focus on rapid homes delivery. One Public Estate may also provide some funding opportunities subject to the proposed development involving multiple public sector



partners. However, funding would not bridge the gaps in viability for conversion to housing.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1. A significant subsidy would be needed to fill the viability gap between the market value and the costs of refurbishing/redeveloping the offices into residential accommodation. The most financially viable option (2) is therefore to reduce the Council's office footprint and let the spare space generated to commercial tenants. This would reduce the Council's running costs and also generate an additional income. It would not prevent the Council moving to alternative premises in the future if the right opportunity arose.
- 4.2. Included within option 2 is investment in carbon reduction measures which would reduce the Council's gas and electricity usage and therefore the tonnes of carbon emitted. Option 2 includes costing for all measures identified during an energy audit. However, some measures have a long payback period so Option 2a has been provided should the Council wish to focus its investment on measures which have a shorter payback period.
- 4.3. The atrium roof presents particular challenges both in terms of repair and heat loss. If the Council is to remain in the building it is recommended that a further feasibility study is commissioned to explore options for repairing or reroofing sections of the building. This study could then incorporate both the lifespan of products and repairs to maintain the roofs, the costs of repair or replacement and the opportunities to enhance the thermal properties of the structure and/or insulation. This would complement carbon reduction measures taken forward under option 2a which is the recommended option.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. Whilst the building is not Listed (except the Lock Up) its location within the Conservation Area and the large number of trees to the perimeter and the "green" car park to the west of the site which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, severely constrain the opportunities for redevelopment.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1. There would be significant reputational risk if the Council considered demolishing the existing Council offices, due to its location in a Conservation Area and the historic nature of the buildings.



- 6.2. Continuing to occupy the existing building without significant improvements being made to its carbon efficiency presents reputational risk, particularly in light of the Council commitment to achieving carbon zero in Council operations.
- 6.3. As a result of a changing economic picture, post Brexit and following the impacts of the Covid 19 Pandemic, build costs are quite volatile. The last 12 months has seen material costs rise steeply and the availability of materials also makes construction challenging. There is continuing uncertainty regarding these factors which present considerable risks to the Council with the financial risk increased by the value of works proposed.
- 6.4. Rental income is not guaranteed. However, use would remain flexible and there would be limited costs involved in adapting the building to provide space for tenants.
- 6.5. Post Pandemic there may be excess office space on the market impacting on the Council's ability to sell a large office site with limited development potential.
- 6.6. If the Council develops housing it would need to identify a suitable mechanism for renting the properties. The Housing Act 1985 provides that a Local Authority tenant has the right to buy the property at a discount after 2 years occupation. In order that the housing stock is retained as affordable accommodation the Council could lease or sell the properties to a Registered Provider. However, this reduces the net return on the property the Council receives. Options for direct management have been explored but are not viable with relatively small numbers of properties.
- 6.7. There is a risk the Council cannot identify a suitable alternative site to lease, buy or build on which is of a suitable size and in a suitability accessible location.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 7.1. Not applicable to this decision.

8. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

Carbon reduction measures

- 8.1. The Council has firm commitments to carbon reduction which are embedded in its Council Priorities, Climate Emergency declaration, Climate Strategy and the Motion adopted in September 2019 regarding carbon zero developments.



- 8.2.** Approximately 32% of the Council's emitted CO₂t results from the Trinity Road offices. 29% is from Cirencester Leisure Centre and 10% from Bourton-on-the-Water Leisure Centre with a further 10% from staff mileage. The Council is currently delivering major improvements to the carbon impact of Cirencester and Bourton-on-the-Water Leisure Centres through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding and a permanent move to agile working will reduce staff mileage long term.
- 8.3.** The Council has the opportunity to improve the energy efficiency and carbon emissions from the existing Trinity Road office building if it remains in use as offices or to install carbon reduction measures as part of any conversion to housing. Carbon zero is extremely difficult to achieve unless it is planned and designed into new build developments. It has been assessed that only option 5 can achieve carbon zero by adding sufficient PV panels and insulating the new residential units within the redevelopment to the highest standard. Conversion of the existing building does not achieve the zero carbon target. However, an assessment has been made of feasible carbon reduction measures that could be retrofitted based on an Energy Audit and Survey conducted by energy consultants Inspired Efficiency in April 2020.
- 8.4.** Assumptions have been made regarding energy efficiency based upon pre-Pandemic energy usage and consultant's estimates for projected energy usage and the cost for improvement. Currently the building has a Display Energy Certificate for the South Wing which has had previous building improvements of C-61. Current (2018/19 pre-pandemic) annual CO₂ emissions are estimated as 142 tonnes from electricity and 219 tonnes from gas. The energy use averages 289 Kilowatt hours per square metre per annum over the 5,222 square metre building. This level of usage is above the benchmark for buildings of this size and type with electricity usage 3% below the norm but gas 33% above average. This is as a result of the inefficient external walls and atrium roof coverings. The main ways in which the DEC of the existing building can be improved and CO₂ emissions reduced are shown in the Table overleaf.



Measure	Total cost including capital costs for materials, contractor costs and professional fees (excludes borrowing)	Annual savings	Payback	Carbon savings tCO2e/yr
Changing light fitting	£70,000	£6523	11 years	14.65
Installing PV panels	£224,000	£15688	14 years	36.38
Insulating atrium roofs	£168,000	£2092	80 years	13.08
Insulating solid walls	£252,000	£1674	150 years	10.46
Minor activities (see Annex B - Page 9)	£14000	£3550	4 years	8.24
Total	£728,000	£29,527	25 years (Avg)	82.81 (27%)



- 8.5.** The overall CO₂ savings from implementing these energy saving actions would be in the order of 82 tonnes, a 27% reduction from the 301 CO₂t currently emitted.
- 8.6.** Annex B sets out detail on carbon emissions for partial conversion to housing (option 1), full conversion (option 2) and demolition and new build (option 3). Please note that these represent options 3, 4 and 5 respectively within this Cabinet report. They show that, of the three options, only demolition and new build represents a scheme that has the potential to be net carbon zero in operation, based on the offset of CO₂ emissions provided by the PV array proposals outlined in the Energy Audit & Survey Report. This option actually offers the possibility of offsetting some additional carbon as the estimates show it would be carbon negative in operation (i.e., annual PV generation energy exceeds the annual operational energy requirements). However, this option also has the highest embodied carbon in construction of any of the options. Over a 60-year period the demolition and new build option still presents the lowest whole life carbon use (see table and graph on pages 4 and 5 of Annex B) as the carbon impact of demolition and new build is high over the initial build period but over the lifetime of the development the carbon impact would be positive as the constructed buildings would be carbon negative.
- 8.7.** It should be noted that in April 2016, the Private Rented Sector (PRS) Regulations established the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) which require that from 1 April 2023, all non-domestic properties with new, renewing or existing leases must have an EPC of E or above to continue leasing the property. In 2020, the Energy White Paper confirmed that the MEES will be tightened for non-domestic properties and require EPC B by 2030, where it is cost effective to do so (payback within 7 years). In 2021, a consultation on how best to implement the 2030 target of EPC B was launched and feedback will be published by the end of the year. The subsequent amendments to the Regulations will come into force on 1 April 2025. The Council should therefore bear in mind that it will need to undertake carbon reduction improvements by 2030 for areas of the building which are leased to tenants.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 9.1.** The Council could decide to select a different option as set out above. However, other options will place the Council at financial risk.
- 9.2.** The Council could transfer the site to a Registered Provider to achieve against affordable housing priorities however any RP will be faced with the same financial constraints as the Council with demolition and site clearance costs challenging the feasibility of a development even if they acquired the site at little or no value.



10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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PICK EVERARD

Net Zero Carbon Feasibility Report Trinity Road Council Office Redevelopment Cotswold District Council



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Issue Number 01
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1.0 Executive Summary

Pick Everard were appointed by Cotswold District Council to provide sustainability & energy consultancy services in relation to the council headquarters building, located at Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX. This report provides an assessment of the operational energy consumption and embodied carbon of three potential options for the proposed scheme:

- Option 1 – Partial Conversion
- Option 2 – Full Conversion
- Option 3 – Full Site New Development

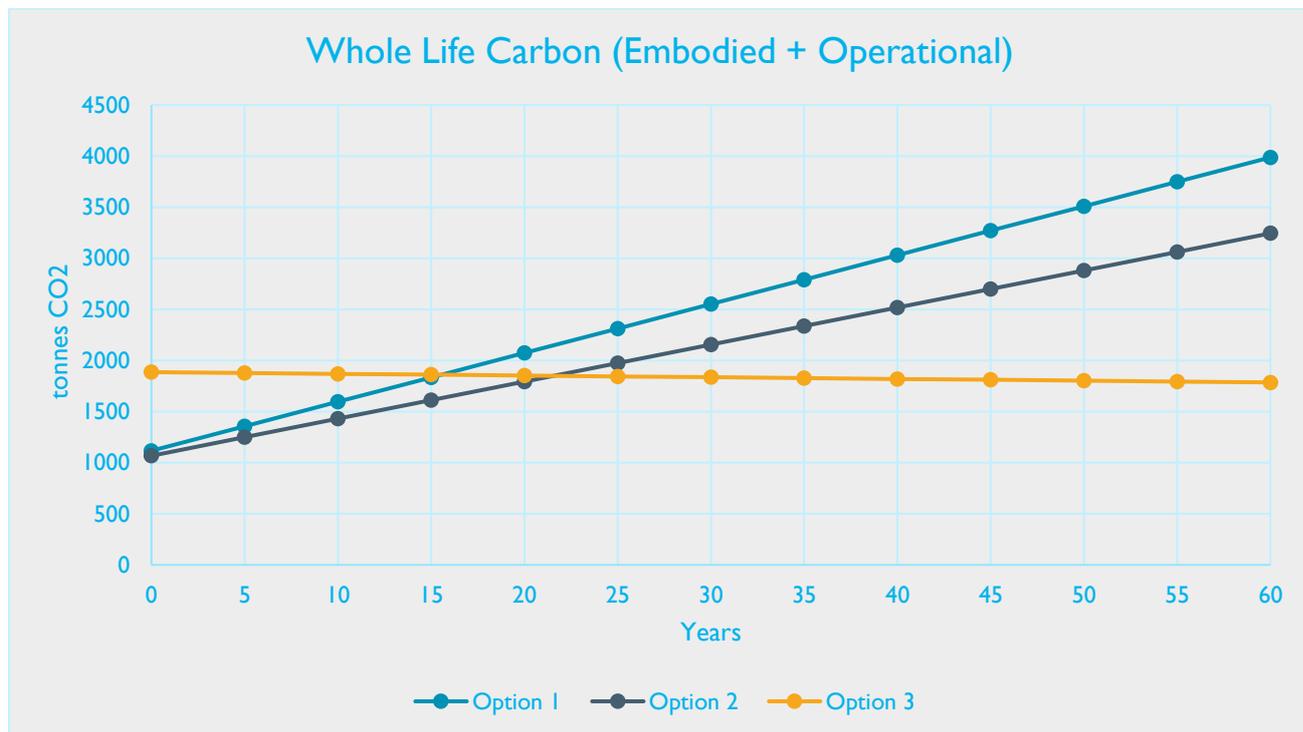
The following table provides a summary of the estimated carbon emission operational energy use and embodied carbon in construction for the three options:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Operational Energy Use before PV Generation (kWh/year)	470,268	385,272	106,149.71
Net Operational Energy Use (kWh/year)	351,844	266,848	-1669.30
Net Energy Use Intensity (kWh/m ² /year)	66.83	65.28	-3.29
Net Carbon Emissions from Operational Energy Use (tCO ₂ /year)	47.851	36.290	-1.67
Total Embodied Carbon (tCO ₂)	1117.23	1067.9	1866.21
PV Generation (kWh/year)	118,424	118,424	118,424

The above results show that, of the three options currently tabled, only Option 3 represents a scheme that has the potential to be NZC in operation, based on the offset of CO₂ emissions provided by the PV array proposals outlined in the Energy Audit & Survey Report.

Option 3 actually offers the possibility of offsetting some additional carbon as the estimates show it would be carbon negative in operation (i.e., annual PV generation energy exceeds the annual operational energy requirements). However, Option 3 also has the highest embodied carbon in construction of any of the options.

Over a 60-year period Option 3 presents the lowest whole life carbon use. The graph below is for comparative purposes as it doesn't account for further decarbonisation of the grid, replacement of equipment or further fabric works on the basis they would be the same for all three options.



The following additional PV array capacity would be required to achieve operation net zero carbon for options 1 and 2:

	Option 1	Option 2
Additional Array Capacity Required (kWp)	428	324
Additional Array Area Required (m ²)	1956	1483
Revised Total Array Capacity Required (kWp)	582	468
Revised Total Array Area Required (m ²)	2614	2142

It is recommended that, once the council has come to a resolution on which of the three options is preferred, a whole life carbon assessment of the building is undertaken including detailed thermal modelling and quantification of embodied carbon.

With respect to the offsetting of the embodied carbon contained within the construction materials required, we recommended the use at the next stage of the UK-GBC ‘Renewable Energy Procurement & Carbon Offsetting – Guidance for Net Zero Carbon Buildings’ in relation to renewable energy procurement, carbon accounting, carbon offsetting and verification of net zero buildings. The council may decide to set a price for operational carbon emissions following the example of other councils to enable whole life cost calculations that include the cost of carbon over a determined period.

2.0 Introduction

Pick Everard were appointed by Cotswold District Council to provide sustainability & energy consultancy services in relation to the council headquarters building, located at Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX. Following their declaration of a climate emergency, Cotswold District Council has introduced high aspirations for their current and future property portfolio. The purpose of this report is to outline and appraise the suitability of different energy efficiency interventions and design measures that are available to the proposed scheme in order to achieve net zero carbon (NZC) in operation. There are presently three different development options being considered for the site, and the applicability of these interventions/design considerations will vary according to which option is ultimately chosen:

➤ **Option 1 – Partial Conversion**

The majority of the existing offices will be retained for council use, with the south block and link building being converted into residential accommodation, housing 16 no. one-bedroom apartments. A first-floor extension will be constructed to the rear of the south block.

➤ **Option 2 – Full Conversion**

All of the existing buildings will be converted into residential accommodation. The atrium infill structure and link building will be demolished to improve the openness and visual appeal of the site/environment. An additional 5 no. two-bedroom terraced houses will be built in the north east of the site. A first-floor extension will be constructed to the rear of the south block. The south block will be converted into 5 no. three-bedroom houses and 4 no. one-bedroom flats.

➤ **Option 3 – Full-site New Development**

The majority of the existing council buildings will be demolished, with the south block being retained to maintain the aesthetic aspect from Trinity Road. A first-floor extension will be constructed to the rear of the south block. The south block will be converted into 5 no. three-bedroom houses and 4 no. one-bedroom flats. The rest of the site will consist of entirely new build structures, being a mix of 22 no. two-bedroom houses, 4 no. three-bedroom houses and 8 no. one bedroom duplexes.

2.1 Site Context

The council office building located at Trinity Road houses the main offices for Cotswold District Council and is located approximately 600 metres south-southeast ('As the crow flies') from the centre of Cirencester. The following image shows an aerial satellite view of the existing site, with the approximate site boundary shown as a dashed red line:

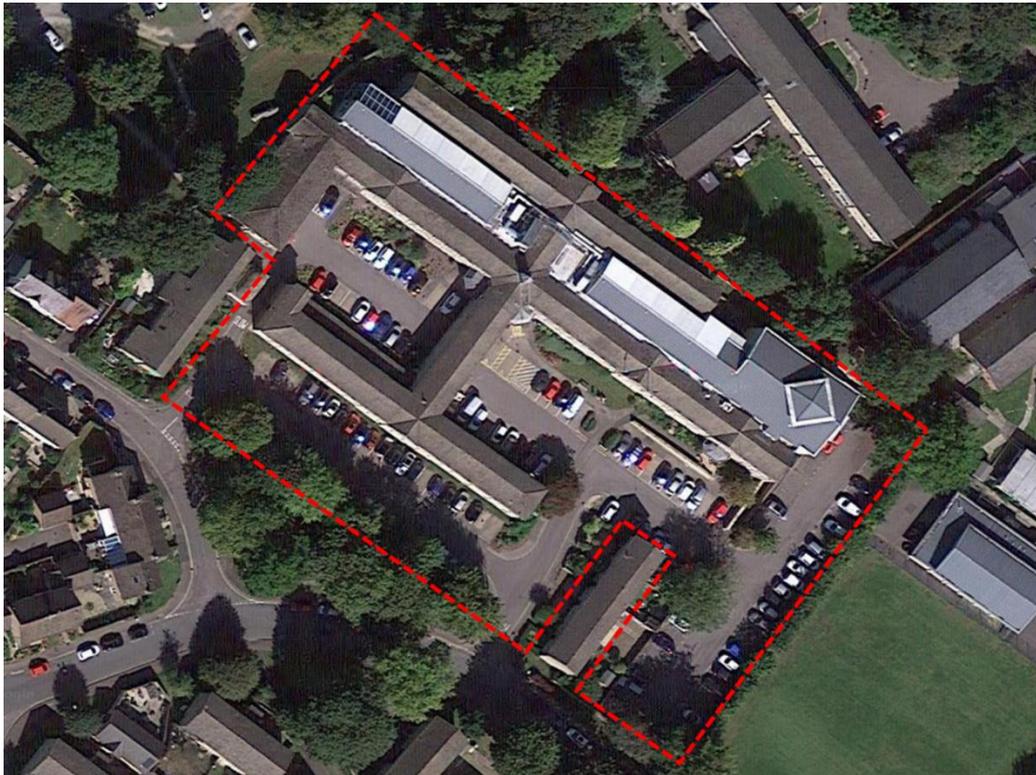


Figure 1 – Aerial satellite view of the existing site

Cirencester is a market town in Gloucestershire with an estimated population of 17,000 in 2019 (Source – Office for National Statistics). Cirencester is located in the southwest region of England and experiences a temperature 'Oceanic' climate (Köppen Cfb) similar to most of the United Kingdom.

The Trinity Road Council Office building is an historic building, originally constructed in the 1800s to be used as the Cirencester Workhouse. There is a single Grade II listed structure within the site curtilage, though this does not form a significant portion of the site accommodation. The main building is predominantly set out over two storeys and has solid Cotswold stone walls and pitched roofs. The building underwent significant refurbishment during 2000 and, at some point in the past, an atrium infill was added between the two wings of the north portion of the building. One wing of the building is let to third party tenants made up of various different organisations. Carbon emissions reports prepared by the Council from the year 2018/19 indicate that this particular building accounted for approximately 32 % of the Council's carbon emissions for that year. It has been acknowledged that the building is inherently inefficient in terms of energy performance due to its layout (form factor) and construction.

3.0 Current Building – Energy Performance

The Display Energy Certificate (DEC) for the building was accessed from the Energy Performance of Buildings Data England and Wales online records. The most recent DEC was lodged on the 28th of February 2019, as shown below:

Cotswold District Council, Council Offices, Trinity Road GL7 1PX

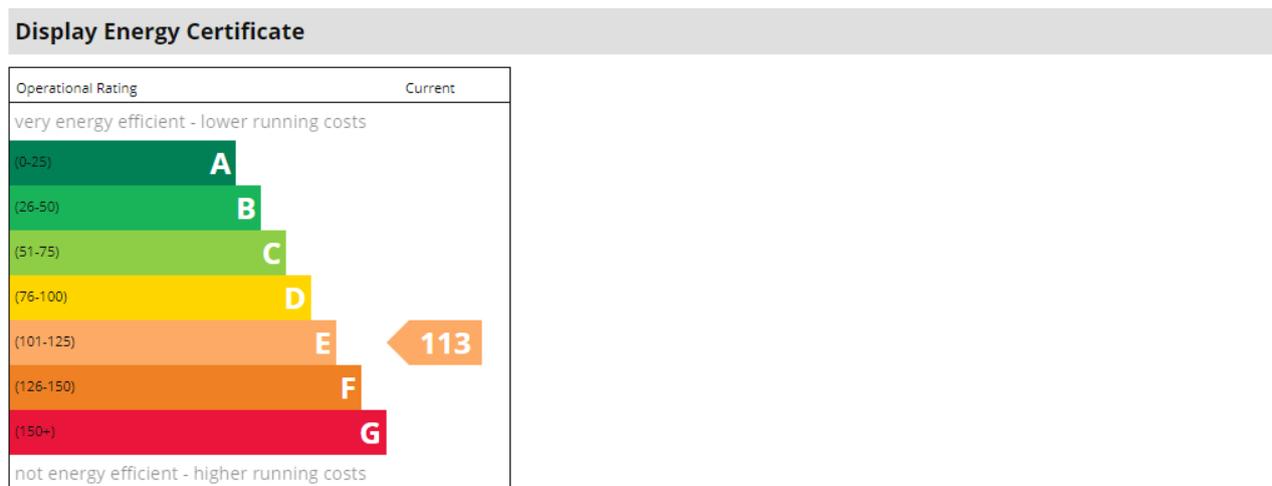


Figure 2 – Most recent DEC for current Cotswold District Council Offices

The DEC shows an operational rating of E-113. E-100 is considered to be the benchmark value, showing that this building slightly underperforms in terms of energy use & running costs when compared to other buildings of its type and size.

The other main points of note from the latest DEC are as follows:

- The main heating fuel of the building is natural gas.
- The building was assessed on the basis of a total useful floor area of 5,222 m².
- CO₂ emissions associated with electricity use were estimated to be 237 tonnes per year.
- CO₂ emissions associated with heating use were estimated to be 206 tonnes per year.
- Annual thermal fuel (heating) usage was estimated to be 203 kWh/m²/year.
- Annual electrical fuel usage was estimated to be 82 kWh/m²/year.
- No contribution from renewables was made.

The ‘Energy Audit and Survey Report’ produced by Inspired Efficiency in April 2020 summarised the energy profile of the building as follows:

Service	Description	Estimated Proportion of Usage
Lighting	Predominantly T5 fluorescent lighting with many areas having already been converted to LED. Some 2D and CFL fittings to WCs and circulation spaces.	5 %
Heating	Heating provided large gas boilers located in the basement plant room providing heating to perimeter radiators around the building. Separate gas boiler serving tenanted areas.	54 %
Hot Water	Hot water provided from electrical point of use units in most areas of the main council offices. Appears to be fed from the combi gas boilers to the tenanted areas.	10 %
IT Equipment	PC workstations on desk throughout, printers, copiers, and server room in IT department.	12 %
Other Small Power	Kitchen appliances, lift, alarms, plug in heaters, appliances and chargers and the like.	12 %
Air Conditioning	Split unit AC to some internal meeting rooms. Major AC system to oversized server room.	7 %

Table 1 – Summary Profile of Main Energy Consuming Equipment

The following table, also taken from the ‘Energy Audit and Survey Report’ produced by Inspired Efficiency, provides a schedule of energy saving recommendations for the existing building that were previously made, along with the associated cost and CO₂ emissions savings:

Energy saving recommendation	Estimated Annual Energy Saving (kWh)	Estimated Annual Cost Saving (£)	% Energy Reduction	Estimated capital cost (£)	Simple Payback (years)	CO ₂ savings (tCO ₂ e/yr.)
Remove water coolers	110	£15	0.01%	Nil	Immediate	0.03
Consider install Electric Vehicle Charging Points	-	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Power management to workstations and computers to support positive energy behaviours	8,190	£1,085	0.62%	£1,800	1.66	2.52
Install 'SavaWatt' devices on fridges and freezers	840	£111	0.06%	£300	2.70	0.26
Reduce size of IT server room to match revised racks and reduce cooling requirement	9,360	£1,240	0.71%	£4,000	3.23	2.88
Install PIR motion sensors on selected lighting circuits	6,342	£840	0.48%	£2,837	3.38	1.95
Fit timed fused spurs to hot water heaters	1,944	£258	0.15%	£1,080	4.19	0.60
Change existing lighting for low energy lamps/fittings	47,683	£6,523	3.62%	£49,782	7.88	14.65
Install 144kWp PV system on roofs of building	118,424	£15,688	8.99%	£160,000	10.20	36.38
Replace north side atrium roof with solid insulated panels	71,082	£2,092	5.40%	£120,000	57.36	13.08
Install insulated internal wall linings to solid walls	56,865	£1,674	4.32%	£180,000	107.56	10.46

4.0 Assessing Operational Energy Use and Embodied Carbon of the Proposed Options

The London Energy Transformation Institute (LETI) have produced reference documents which will be used to aid in determining the requirements for achieving NZC across all three of the different scheme options. The two documents of note are:

- LETI Climate Emergency Design Guide
- LETI Embodied Carbon Primer

The carbon emissions associated with the different schemes can be split into two broad categories:

1. Carbon Emissions from Operational Energy Use – The carbon emissions arising from the energy consumption by the building end-users to operate the building. This includes regulated loads (heating, ventilation, air-conditioning/comfort cooling, domestic hot water (DHW) use, and lighting) and unregulated loads (small power plug loads, catering equipment, lifts, security systems etc.).
2. Embodied Carbon Emissions – The carbon emissions released during the production, transport, and installation of building materials, and during their disposal at end of life.

Both of these elements will be assessed in turn to determine the potential emissions reductions and offset requirements in each case.

4.1 Operational Energy – Methodology

The annual operational energy usage of the proposed scheme across all options has been estimated based on a number of key pieces of information and assumptions:

- Figures for gas and electricity consumption for the building taken from the last DEC (Jan 19)
- Adjustments made for the proposed site layout, based on the proportion of the total useful floor area of the scheme that the retained areas, converted areas and new build areas will make up.
- LETI Energy Usage Intensity (EUI) targets in kWh/m²/year.
- Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) 10.1 carbon factors (an all-electric solution is proposed in each case). This provides a more representative carbon factor of the current electricity grid which has been substantially decarbonised over recent years compared to outdated values used in Building Regulations.
- A target of 50 % reduction in space heating consumption for retained and converted areas, based on the proposed improvements to the building fabric.
- Incorporating energy savings measures in the Energy Audit and Survey Report from ‘Inspired Efficiency’.

- Replacement of the current gas boiler plant with an electric air source heat pump (ASHP) to provide space heating and hot water.
- The use of ASHP to provide space heating and hot water for all new build areas, with a baseline seasonal coefficient of performance (SCoP) of 3.0.
- Electricity generation from PV based on the figures provided in the Energy Audit and Survey Report from 'Inspired Efficiency'.

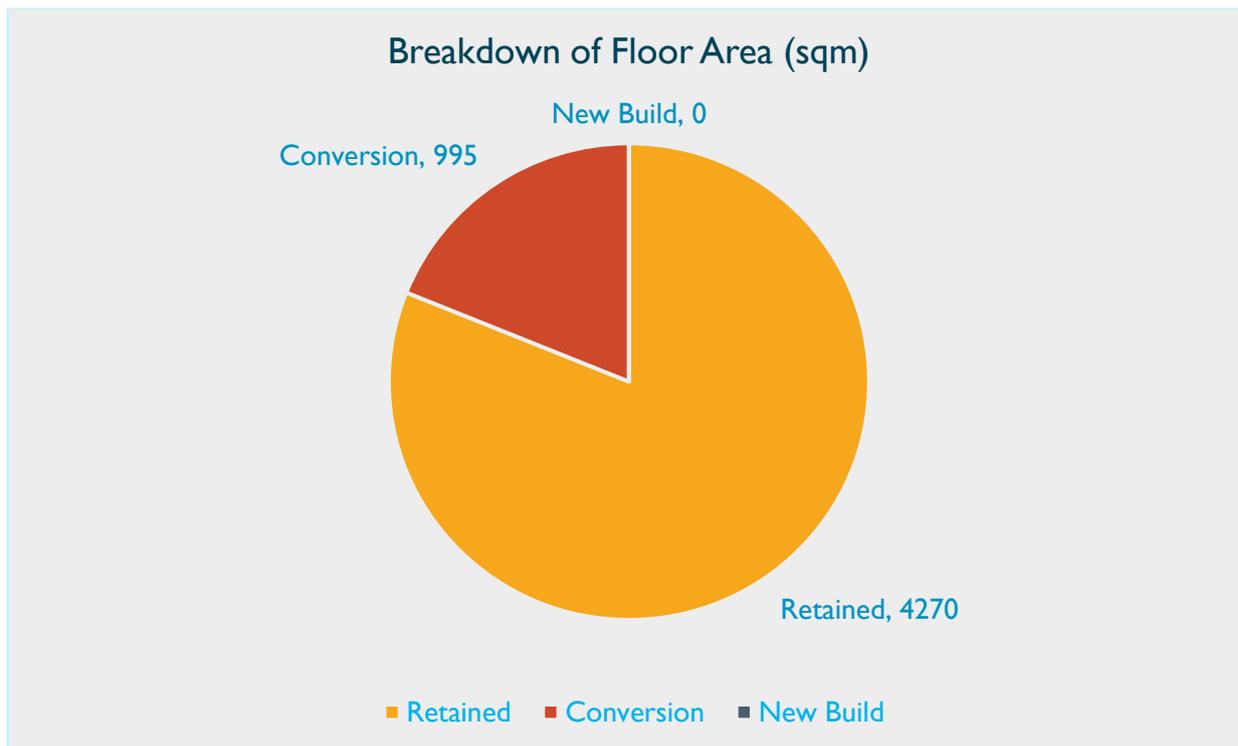
4.2 Embodied Carbon - Methodology

The embodied carbon within the building materials used for construction within the proposed scheme across all options has been estimated based on a number of key pieces of information and assumptions:

- LETI target figures for embodied carbon for new building materials were applied to the retained, converted, and new build areas as applicable.
- The typical proportions of embodied carbon within these figures (e.g., 15 % of the embodied carbon in commercial offices is found within the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) materials)
- Adjustments made for the proposed site layout, based on the proportion of the total useful floor area of the scheme that the retained areas, converted areas and new build areas will make up.
- An assumption that, for converted areas and retained areas, a full MEP replacement, full new internal finishes and a partial façade upgrade will take place.
- An assumption that, for converted areas and retained areas, all substructure, superstructure, and façade will be retained (other than where demolition takes place).
- Embodied carbon for the proposed PV array is included (derived from One Click LCA software, based on a standard product) as this has been found to be significant on other projects.
- Embodied carbon for the façade upgrade materials has been based on a typical insulated plasterboard product for internal lining of the existing Cotswold stone walls, using a take-off of linear meterage for walls requiring upgrading and assumed floor-to-ceiling heights. Final embodied carbon calculations were undertaken using One Click LCA software.

4.3 Option I – Partial Conversion

Option I involves the majority of the existing offices being retained for council use, with the south block and link building being converted into residential accommodation, housing 16 no. one-bedroom apartments. A first-floor extension will be constructed to the rear of the south block. The breakdown of floor areas for option I is as follows:



4.3.1 Operational Energy Use & Associated Carbon Emissions

Calculations were undertaken using the above information & assumptions to estimate the annual operational energy use of the entire scheme under Option I. The following results were observed:

Estimated Annual Operational Energy Demand (kWh)	Estimated Annual PV Generation based on 144 kWp Array (kWh)	Estimated Net Annual Operational Energy Use (kWh)	Estimated Net Annual Carbon Emissions from Operational Energy Use (tCO ₂)
470,267	118,424	351,844	47.851

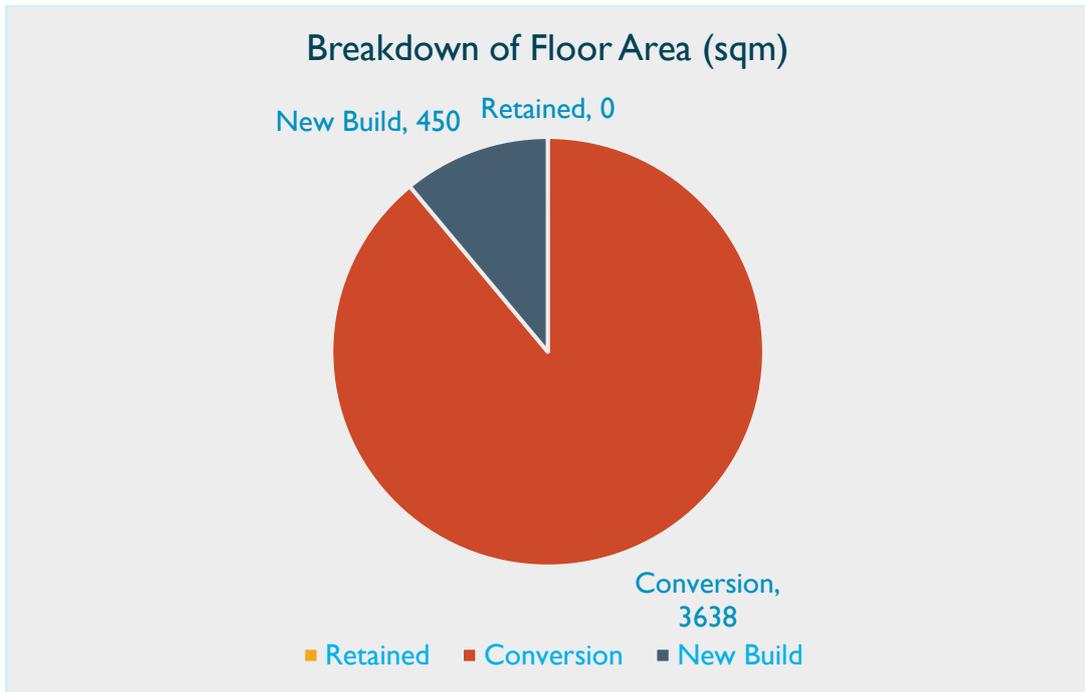
4.3.2 Embodied Carbon

Calculations were undertaken using the above information & assumptions to estimate the total embodied carbon for new construction materials required for the entire scheme under Option 1. The following results were observed:

Embodied Carbon for Construction Materials (tCO₂)	Embodied Carbon for Proposed PV Array (tCO₂)	Total Embodied Carbon for Option 1 (tCO₂)
757.230	360.000	1117.23

4.4 Option 2 – Full Conversion

Option 2 involves converting the entirety of the existing offices into residential buildings, with the exception of the atrium infill and link building (between the north block and south block), which will be demolished. A first-floor extension will be constructed to the rear of the south block, with the building itself being converted into five no. three bedroom houses and four no. one-bedroom flats. Five no. two-bedroom terraced houses will also be constructed in the north east area of the site. The breakdown of floor areas for option 2 is as follows:



4.4.1 Operational Energy Use & Associated Carbon Emissions

Calculations were undertaken using the information & assumptions listed in section 4.1.1 to estimate the annual operational energy use of the entire scheme under Option 2. The following results were observed:

Estimated Annual Operational Energy Demand (kWh)	Estimated Annual PV Generation based on 144 kWp Array (kWh)	Estimated Net Annual Operational Energy Use (kWh)	Estimated Net Annual Carbon Emissions from Operational Energy Use (tCO ₂)
385,272	118,424	266,848	36.290

4.4.2 Embodied Carbon

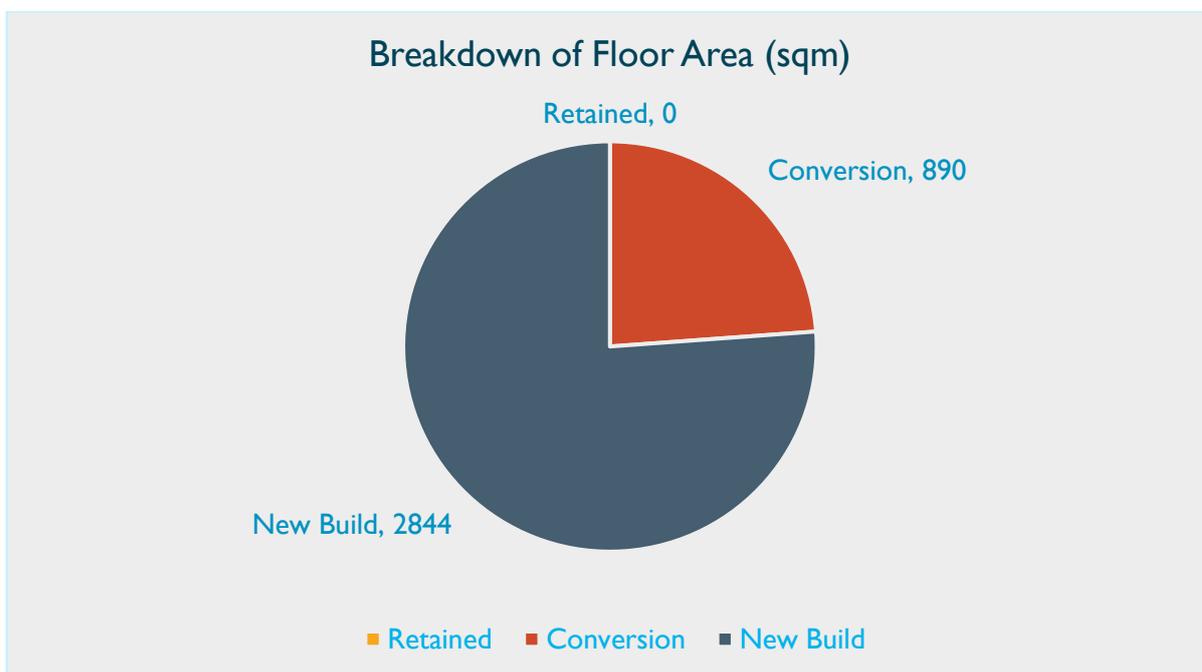
Calculations were undertaken using the information & assumptions listed in section 4.1.1 to estimate the total embodied carbon for new construction materials required for the entire scheme under Option 2. The following results were observed:

Embodied Carbon for Construction Materials (tCO ₂)	Embodied Carbon for Proposed PV Array (tCO ₂)	Total Embodied Carbon for Option 2 (tCO ₂)
707.900	360.000	1067.9

4.5 Option 3 – Full Site New Development

Option 3 involves the demolition of the majority of the existing council building. The south block is retained to provide an aesthetic continuity to the site as viewed from Trinity Road. A first-floor extension will be constructed to the rear of the south block, with the building itself being converted into five no. three bedroom houses and four no. one-bedroom flats.

- 22 no. two-bedroom houses, each with an area of 90 m².
- 4 no. three-bedroom houses, each with an area of 116 m².
- 8 no. duplexes, each with an area of 50 m².



4.5.1 Operational Energy Use & Associated Carbon Emissions

Calculations were undertaken using the information & assumptions listed in section 4.1.1 to estimate the annual operational energy use of the entire scheme under Option 3. The following results were observed:

Estimated Annual Operational Energy Demand (kWh)	Estimated Annual PV Generation based on 144 kWp Array (kWh)	Estimated Net Annual Operational Energy Use (kWh)	Estimated Net Annual Carbon Emissions from Operational Energy Use (tCO ₂)
106,150	118,424	-1669.30	-1.67

4.5.2 Embodied Carbon

Calculations were undertaken using the information & assumptions to estimate the total embodied carbon for new construction materials required for the entire scheme under Option 3.

Embodied Carbon for Construction Materials (tCO ₂)	Embodied Carbon for Proposed PV Array (tCO ₂)	Total Embodied Carbon for Option 3 (tCO ₂)
1526.210	360.000	1866.21

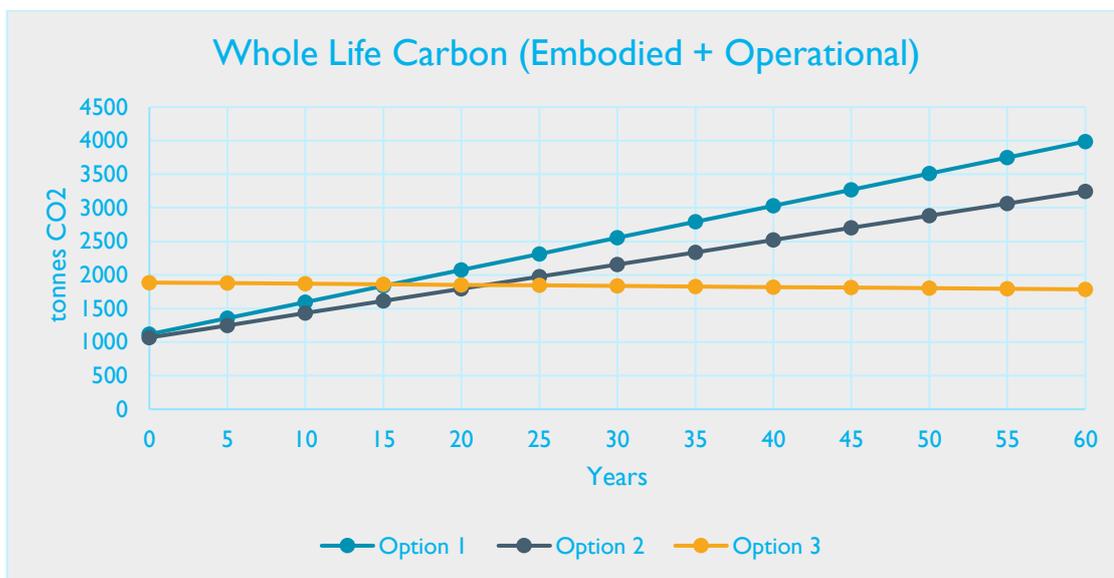
5.0 Route to achieving NZC in Operation and Offsetting Embodied Carbon

The following table provides a summary of the estimated carbon emission operational energy use and embodied carbon in construction for the three options:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Net Operational Energy Use (kWh/year)	351,844	266,848	-1669.30
Net Carbon Emissions from Operational Energy Use (tCO ₂ /year)	47.851	36.290	-1.67
Total Embodied Carbon (tCO ₂)	1117.23	1067.9	1866.21
PV Generation (kWh/year)	118,424	118,424	118,424

The above results show that, of the three options currently tabled, only Option 3 represents a scheme that has the potential to be NZC in operation, based on the offset of CO₂ emissions provided by the PV array proposals outlined in the Energy Audit & Survey Report. This result is in line with expectations, as the replacement of existing buildings built 150-200 years ago with almost entirely new build, highly energy efficient dwellings offer the best route to achieving very low operational energy requirements. This option actually offers the possibility of offsetting some additional carbon as the estimates show it would be carbon negative in operation (i.e., annual PV generation energy exceeds the annual operational energy requirements). However, Option 3 also has the highest embodied carbon in construction of any of the options. Again, this is the expected result as this option requires the highest quantity of new building materials.

Over a 60-year period Option 3 presents the lowest whole life carbon use. The graph below is for comparative purposes as it doesn't account for further grid decarbonisation or replacement of equipment on the basis they would be the same for all options or future fabric works required in options 1 and 2.



In order for a NZC in operation proposal to be achieved for Options 1 and 2, additional reductions in energy demand would need to be found. There are a number of potential measures that could be explored:

- Additional improvements to the existing building fabric.
- Demand reductions from change in usage patterns (particularly relevant to Option 1)
- Exploration of further energy efficient and renewable technology options
- Installation of additional PV array capacity

It is acknowledged that all of the above come with additional costs and indeed additional embodied carbon, both of which needs to be considered carefully. The retention of the existing building, either in whole or in part, presents additional challenges in terms of achieving energy efficiency in operation. However, it does offer options with lower embodied carbon and the retention of a building that is considered a heritage asset to the town of Cirencester is also significant.

Arguably the simplest route to achieving NZC in operation for Options 1 and 2 would be the inclusion of additional PV array capacity. Additional calculations have shown that, in order to achieve this, the following additional array capacity would be required:

	Option 1	Option 2
Additional Array Capacity Required (kWp)	428	324
Additional Array Area Required (m ²)	1956	1483
Revised Total Array Capacity Required (kWp)	582	468
Revised Total Array Area Required (m ²)	2614	2142

It should be noted that the above figures are estimates only and are based on the PV details given in the Energy Audit & Survey Report. There are higher performance products currently available on the market that may offer a more cost-effective solution when scaled up. If this is the preferred route to explore, it is recommended that the options for PV location are considered carefully:

- Roof mounting (sub metering and additional inverter requirements, particularly with private dwellings, should be considered)
- Ground mounted array (it has been noted previously that the council may have access to land adjacent to the site that would be suitable).
- Building integrated photovoltaics (BIPV)
- PV car ports/shades

As mentioned previously, it is also important to consider the additional embodied carbon that will result from a larger PV array, and how best to account for and potentially offset this.

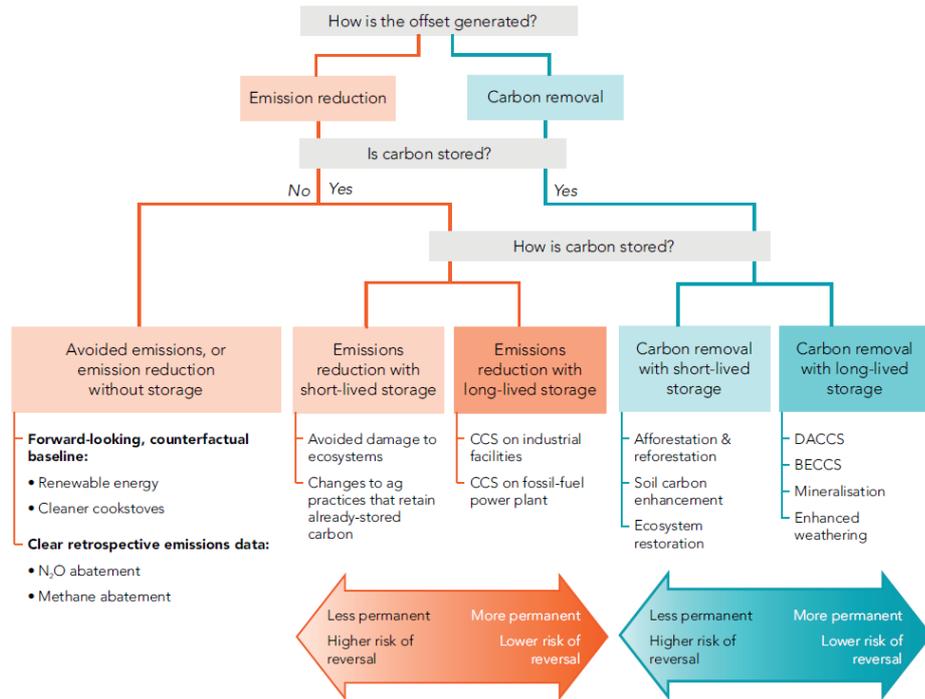
There could also be opportunities to explore the use of ground source heat pumps if a ground investigation determines its potential suitability.

It is recommended that, once the council has come to a resolution on which of the three options is preferred, a whole life carbon assessment of the building is undertaken. This will require a degree of detailed modelling that will only be possible with greater design surety and more detailed information. A detailed thermal model (which can be updated and become more detailed as the design progresses) offers much greater confidence in terms of the expected operational energy of the building/s. Similarly, a detailed assessment of embodied carbon based on robust design drawings, models and specifications offers greater confidence in terms of the quantities of embodied carbon that would need to be accounted for and offset.

With respect to the offsetting of the embodied carbon contained within the construction materials required, it is recommended that the council refers to the following two documents produced by the UK Green Building Council (UK GBC):

- 'Net Zero Carbon Buildings: Levels of Performance' (March 2021)
- Renewable Energy Procurement & Carbon Offsetting – Guidance for Net Zero Carbon Buildings

These documents give guidance on fossil fuel use, renewable energy procurement, carbon accounting, carbon offsetting, evolving performance standards and the verification of net zero buildings. The following flow chart, taken from the latter document, shows the taxonomy of carbon offset credits:



The council may decide to set a price for operational carbon emissions following the example of other councils to enable whole life cost calculations that include the cost of carbon over a determined period.

The document lists a number of voluntary carbon markets that are available to Cotswold District Council, including ‘Gold Standard’, the ‘Verified Carbon Standard’ and the UN ‘Clean Development Mechanism’. Additional certifications that work in conjunction to these carbon standards are also available, which certify the wider social and environmental benefits of these carbon offset credits. A full appraisal of embodied carbon offsetting is beyond the scope of this report.

It is also recommended that further avenues to reduce the embodied carbon of the preferred option for the scheme is explored. For example, the embodied carbon of Option 3 could be reduced significantly if it were deemed possible to retain the waste from the demolition of the existing council building and reuse it in the construction of the new buildings. For example, this could be in the form of recycled aggregates in the construction of new foundations and footings, and the re-use of the Cotswold stone for the facades of the new dwellings. This would require careful co-ordination and early engagement from an architect and structural engineer.

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET - 6 DECEMBER 2021
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 14
Subject	OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR THE COTSWOLD CLUB
Wards affected	Watermoor
Accountable member	Councillor Mike Evemy – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Email: mike.evemy@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Claire Locke Group Manager Email: claire.locke@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider options and agree the future use or disposal of the Cotswold Club, Cirencester.
Annexes	Annex A – Ownership Plan
Recommendation(s)	<p><i>That Cabinet agree that:</i></p> <p><i>a) The Cotswold Club be marketed for disposal in existing condition as set out within the report; and</i></p> <p><i>b) Capital receipts from the sale be earmarked for investment in carbon zero affordable housing developments on other sites in the District.</i></p> <p><i>c) The Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance have delegated authority to agree the final terms for the disposal of the property.</i></p>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delivering our services to the highest standards ● Responding to the challenges presented by the climate crisis ● Providing good quality social rented homes
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Business Manager – Operational Support and Enabling



	<p>Economic Development Manager</p> <p>Forward Planning Manager</p> <p>Head of Climate Action</p> <p>Group Finance Director – Publica Group Ltd</p> <p>Portfolio Holders and Local Management Team</p>
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The Council owns the freehold of The Cotswold Club, edged red on the plan at Annex A (“the property”). The property is a former pub and is Grade II listed. The Council purchased the property in 1978 to be the Social Club for Cotswold District Council employees.
- 1.2** The property was occupied by the Trustees of the Cotswold Club under a Lease arrangement until the Trustees surrendered the Lease back to the Council on 30th September 2020 following approval by Cabinet at its meeting on 7th September 2020. The property is now vacant.
- 1.3** Any future use of the property will require significant refurbishment internally and external repairs. Any works to remodel the property would require Listed Building Consent which would require notification of the application to the Historic England Commission. While the Council owns the property, if any objections are received to the Listed Building Consent application, the application would need to be determined by the Secretary of State. Change of use is likely to require planning permission as the current use is a ‘Private members Club’ being outside the planning use classes and therefore treated as an individual unique case.
- 1.4** Consideration has been given to the options for reducing the carbon footprint of the property in its future use. A consultant was engaged to assess likely costs and carbon reduction that could be achieved.
- 1.5** Due to the location of the property any planning application, including change of use, would require a flood risk assessment.

2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1** Officers have carried out a review of the property and obtained a Valuation Appraisal Report from consultants, Carter Jonas, to consider options for the future use of the property. All options, with the exception of open market sale, would need to consider flood risk mitigation works.
- 2.2** The property has a number of constraints that mean it will be difficult and expensive to convert:
 - The property is Grade II listed which may limit development or improvements that will be permitted and will increase costs (due to materials/construction methods required).
 - The property is relatively small and much of its footprint comprises of single storey extensions
 - The property is in Flood Zone 3 and has experienced internal flooding during recent years.
 - The retrofit of carbon reduction methods is proportionately more expensive than fitting technologies in new build developments.



- The above constraints mean that conversion and repair to create housing will be expensive and would require a substantial subsidy from the Council, with no realistic opportunity to achieve a return on that investment.

2.3 The Council has considered options with a focus on utilising this asset to deliver against its affordable housing and carbon reduction priorities. P3, a homeless charity, was initially interested in acquiring and converting the property. However there is limited government subsidy available to facilitate this and the Council funding required does not provide sufficient value for money to the Council. The Council also discussed the viability of conversion for affordable housing with Bromford Housing Association, as part of the Council's affordable housing Joint Venture. The view of Bromford Housing Association was that the nature and design of the property mean conversion is not cost effective and the sale of the asset and reinvestment into more viable affordable housing schemes would provide better value for money.

2.4 The Economic Development Manager has been consulted but no suitable alternatives are considered viable which would meet the Council's priorities or the Council's Recovery and Investment Strategy. Some commercial interest in purchasing the property has however been highlighted from a local business.

2.5 All options and costs are based on high level appraisals and all development options for the site will require a second stage feasibility report to assess, in more detail, the implications and costs of the option. If any option to provide social housing is to be progressed further there will need to be further dialogue with P3 or Bromford Housing Association to agree the terms under which they would acquire the property and the detail of the significant funding contribution the Council would need to make to facilitate this.

2.6 Retention and repurposing for a community use has been considered and discounted, as no viable use has been identified. The consultant's opinion of a rent for a community use is £7,383 per annum but this is subject to interest and requirements. Capital value of the property on this basis is £82,000. This places this option as less financially viable than the shortlisted options presented in this report.

2.7 The options considered are:

Option 1 – conversion for homelessness use

Option 2 - conversion for social rented accommodation

Option 3 - conversion to provide open market residential units

(a) 6 x 1 bed units for sale on the open market

(b) 1 x 1 bed and 3 x 2 bed units for sale on the open market



(c) 1 x 1 bed and 3 x 2 bed units for lease on the open market

Option 4 – Open Market Sale

3. HOUSING PRIORITIES AND SERVICE NEEDS

Option 1 - Homelessness accommodation

- 3.1 There is currently adequate provision for short term 'emergency' homeless accommodation in the South Cotswolds area with units available at Spring House (a Bromford property) and The Croft (a Council property) in Cirencester and the recently acquired leasehold property in Tetbury.
- 3.2 There is a need however for longer term accommodation for tenants with more complex needs, who can move out from temporary homeless accommodation but will need ongoing support before they are ready to take an independent tenancy. In general Housing Associations will not house these individuals in their accommodation without support or without demonstrating that they can manage a tenancy, usually achieved after a period of time in supported accommodation. The Council cannot currently allow them to remain long term in homeless accommodation as this will limit the turnover of units for the short term and emergency homeless requirements and could lead to secure tenancies and rights.
- 3.3 The Cotswold Club could provide small self-contained flats, for homeless persons requiring ongoing support. The Council contacted P3, a homelessness charity, to determine whether they would be interested in converting the Cotswold Club for this purpose. Unfortunately P3 currently only has access to very limited grant funding and the Council has estimated that there would be a capital funding gap of approximately £724,000 and an ongoing revenue deficit of £4,800 each year. If the Council wished to enable this homeless provision it would therefore need to provide the capital and revenue funding unless alternative grant funding becomes available.

Option 2 - Social rented homes

- 3.4 The Housing Needs Survey identifies that there is a need for small one bedroom units in this locality and it may be feasible to deliver between 3 - 6 units on this site.
- 3.5 The Council undertook a procurement earlier in 2021 to select a Registered Provider with whom they could enter into a formal partnership through a Joint Venture to accelerate the delivery of carbon zero affordable homes. Bromford Housing Association was subsequently appointed in July. Bromford was asked to consider whether the Cotswold Club could be converted for affordable homes. Their view was that the size, layout and Listed nature of the property mean conversion for this use would be difficult and disproportionately costly and that more affordable housing could be delivered for the equivalent level of investment at other sites.



Option 3 - Provision of market homes

- 3.6 There is a shortage of smaller units on the open market and therefore the Council could convert the property and then either sell or lease the apartments created.
- 3.7 The Council cannot let these units directly if they wish to protect these properties as a long term investment as the tenancies would be secure tenancies and the tenants would acquire the right to buy at a significantly reduced rate over time. The Council has some protection for the first 15 years as the tenant cannot purchase at a lower rate than the 'cost floor basis' which seeks to protect the cost of the refurbishment incurred in providing the units. At the end of the 15 years this would no longer apply.
- 3.8 Should the Council wish to protect these assets as tenancies, the properties would need to transfer to a housing company or be leased on a long-term lease.

Option 4 - Disposal

- 3.9 The Council could sell the property as existing or seek to obtain change of use to residential prior to its disposal. Planning Officers have provided informal advice confirming that an application would require the following accompanying reports:
- As it is in Flood Zone 2 and 3, a flood risk assessment would be required to be submitted;
 - Design and Access Statement;
 - Heritage/historic environmental statement;
 - The existing and proposed drawings – floorplans and elevations;
 - Site location plan and the existing and proposed block plans.
- 3.10 This would require appointment of external consultants to carry out this work for the planning application preparation. It is estimated that £30,000 funding would need to be allocated if this option is to be progressed to seek to obtain planning permission and Listed Building consent prior to disposal. There is a risk that having obtained this consent, a future purchaser may wish to develop the property for other uses i.e. commercial and therefore the permission does not increase the value and the Council's £30,000 investment is not returned.
- 3.11 An alternative to the Council seeking this planning permission would be for an open market sale to be pursued inviting offers for the property on both a conditional and unconditional basis. The conditional offers would be invited on the basis that the Council enter into a conditional contract whereby the other party agrees to submit a planning application for their proposed use and that on approval the purchase is completed. This would lead to the Council retaining the property for a longer period. However, it would protect the future use of the property rather than it remaining vacant and becoming derelict.



3.12 A decision on the type of sale would not have to be agreed at this stage and the final decision could be taken following review of the offers for the site and the risks attached.

3.13 Further consideration could be given to the benefit of restrictive and/or positive covenants being included in any contract for sale to protect the on-going use of the property. However, these would have a negative impact on the sale price.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Whilst there are a number of options open to the Council, the condition, design and layout of this property means conversion for affordable housing is not cost effective and greater benefit will be achieved if the property is sold and the capital receipts ringfenced to carbon zero affordable housing delivery on an alternative site.

4.2 Whilst the Council could try and impose requirements for this property to be made carbon neutral (or as close to this as possible) when it is sold this would substantially devalue the property and may prevent its sale.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The capital and revenue implications of each of the options are set out in the table below:

Option	Capital cost of refurbishment & conversion	Capital cost of Carbon reduction measures	Capital receipt from sale	Total net capital cost /(receipt)	Annual net income profit/ (deficit)
1. Homeless accommodation	£638,000	£86,000	£0	£724,000	£4,798
2. Social rented (6 x 1 Bed)	£625,000	£86,000	£0	£711,000	£14,250
3a. Market homes - sell (6 x 1 bed)	£645,000	£86,000	£750,000	(£19,000)	£0
3b. Market homes - sell	£510,000	£86,000	£819,000	(£223,000)	£0



1 x 1 bedroom and 3 x 2 bedroom apartment					
3c. Market homes retain & lease	£700,000	£86,000	£0	£786,000	£8,306
4. Open market disposal	£0	£0	(£134,000 - £470,000)	(£134,000 - £470,000)	£0

Note that where grant funding is available this has been deducted from the capital sums shown here.

5.2 Social rented homes include the costs associated with management, maintenance, void periods etc., with the properties leased to a Housing Association.

5.3 Based on the high level cost appraisal above, the financial risks associated with the conversion of a Listed property and the opportunity to release capital for reinvestment in carbon zero affordable homes on other sites in the District, the recommendation is made for open market disposal.

Open Market Disposal

- Capital receipt - approx. income £134,000 - £470,000
- less legal/sale costs at approx 2.5 % on capital receipt and advertising costs in the region of £1,000.
- If the Council wishes to, it could deduct the cost of appropriate carbon reducing technology (circa £86,000) from the sale price and require that the purchaser install suitable measures. However as noted above this would be very difficult to enforce.

5.4 The Council could ring-fence the capital receipt for zero carbon affordable housing provision on other sites in the District. This would provide a greater return on investment and generate more affordable housing for the equivalent investment.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Where legislation gives a public authority discretion to make decisions, e.g., to dispose of land, the public authority must allow itself to consider each decision on its own merits; the public authority must not 'fetter' its discretion by applying a rigid or one-size-fits-all policy to all decisions without considering the specific facts of each case. A decision that is made by a public authority that has fettered its discretion in this way may be challenged on the grounds



that the decision is unlawful. It may also be challenged on the grounds that the procedure by which it was made was unfair, or on the grounds that it is unreasonable.

6.2 Save from the above there are no legal implications arising from this report.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 There is a risk that the property may not sell quickly. Therefore the Council would retain the cost of ownership in the short term at an estimated £5,000 - £10,000 per annum.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.1 Not applicable to this decision.

9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

Carbon reduction measures

9.1 As part of any scheme to retain, improve and convert the property the Council could require carbon reduction measures. A consultant was commissioned to examine the feasibility and cost of measures that could be retrofitted at this property. The report sets out that insulation to walls, floors and roofs, double and secondary glazing, replacement external doors and an Air Source Heat Pump could provide an annual reduction of 8.88 carbon tonnes (87%) at a cost of £86,043. The payback period for this investment would be an estimated 61.44 years.

9.2 This assessment is at a high level and would alter according to the future use of the building i.e. use as a single dwelling or conversion to six self-contained dwellings etc.

Carbon reduction requirements as terms of Sale

9.3 At its meeting in September 2019 a Motion was presented to Council with the following commitment made:

“Starting immediately, ensuring that all new CDC public buildings will be carbon neutral throughout their entire lifespan, with Gloucestershire-based carbon offsetting to capture any technically unavoidable performance gap)....

Legally bind developers, or work with procured developers, to ensure that all residential and commercial developments on CDC disposed land are carbon neutral throughout their entire life-span with developers funding Gloucestershire-based carbon offsetting to capture any technically unavoidable performance gap).”



- 9.4** If the decision is made to sell the property there is a risk that any requirement placed on the purchaser to achieve carbon neutrality will substantially devalue the land or prevent disposal. The Council could reduce the value of the land by the equivalent value of carbon reducing measures it would like to see achieved. However, this means the Council will be selling at undervalue and will be reducing the capital receipt it receives to invest in affordable homes elsewhere.
- 9.5** Under Section 123 the Local Government Act 1972 the Council must seek, for all disposals, to achieve the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained for the type of property and the agreed terms. However, where appropriate the Council can consider non-financial benefits as part of the consideration for a disposal. The Council can sell at an under-value without the requirement for approval from the Secretary of State in line with certain circumstances including the promotion or improvement of environmental wellbeing but a strong case needs to be set out to do this.
- 9.6** It may also be difficult to impose and enforce any requirement on a private buyer to undertake carbon reducing measures to the value of the discount applied. It would not make financial sense to carry out the carbon reduction works in advance of the sale as the appropriate works will be dependent on future use and some should be carried out after building repairs. It is therefore considered extremely difficult to impose these requirements on a market sale.
- 9.7** It is therefore recommended that the Council focuses on requiring new developments on land it owns or controls to be carbon neutral and that it seeks to achieve significant carbon reduction on any conversion of properties (where carbon neutrality cannot be achieved by retrofit) but does not try to impose carbon neutrality terms as a blanket approach on disposals.

10. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 10.1** The Council could decide to select a different option as set out above or to retain the property but not carry out any conversion, lease or sale. However, this will result in ongoing holding costs which will increase as the property deteriorates further.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1** None

(END)



Annex A



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CABINET – 6 DECEMBER 2021 - AGENDA ITEM 15

SCHEDULE OF DECISION(S) TAKEN BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND/OR INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBERS

Note: Further details regarding the decision(s) are available in the relevant Decision Notice(s).

Cabinet Member	Meeting Date	Subject	Decision(s)
Leader of the Council	16 November 2021	To seek the approval of the Leader of the Council in relation to the contract for provision of printing services for elections and electoral registration as set out in the tender acceptance form.	RESOLVED that the Leader of the Council agreed to approve the contract for provision of printing services for elections and electoral registration as set out in the tender acceptance form.

(END)

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