

Public Document Pack



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Tuesday, 12 July 2022

Tel: 01285623208
e-mail - democratic@cotswold.gov.uk

COUNCIL

A meeting of the Council will be held at Council Chamber - Trinity Road on **Wednesday, 20 July 2022 at 6.00 pm.**

Rob Weaver
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Council

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

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 - 28)**
To confirm the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 25th May 2022 and the minutes of the Annual Council held on 25th May 2022.
4. **Announcements from the Chair, Leader of Chief Executive (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 to issues under the Council's or Committee's remit. Any member of the public wishing to ask a public question is requested to contact Democratic Services by no later than 5.00pm the working day before the meeting.
6. **Member Questions**
The following questions have been submitted:

Question from Councillor Tom Stowe to Councillor Andrew Doherty, Cabinet Member for the Environment, Waste and Recycling:

Regular exposure to even small amounts of pesticides has the potential to harm human health, with children and pregnant people being particularly at risk. These chemicals can also have negative impacts on the wellbeing of our pets, and on biodiversity, affecting plants and wildlife. Can the Cabinet Member confirm the level and scope of the use of pesticides by CDC and its contractors?

Question from Councillor David Cunningham to Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council:

At the last Council meeting, members were told that this administration was 'somewhat involved' in the delivery of 114 affordable homes in the District in 2020/21. Can the Cabinet member please clarify what that phrase means in practical terms and confirm what percentage of overall homes built or approved in the same period across the District, does that number of 114 represent?

Question from Councillor Stephen Hirst to Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

CDC have plans to borrow £75million and invest it to cover a possible shortfall in Government funding and yet this wasn't in the budget consultation and there is little

information available regarding what this is to be used for or how it is to be paid for.

Given your principle of 'openness and transparency', please could you give me that information and tell me when you will be publishing these details?

From Councillor Tony Berry to Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council:

When and why was the decision made to reserve specific parking places for Cabinet Members and how does this fit into the egalitarian principles vaunted by this administration?

From Councillor Tony Berry to Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council:

Questions and initial answers from members are currently invisible to members of the public following Council Meetings on social media. Why do we not briefly summarise these before asking the supplementary question (if required)?

From Councillor Julia Judd to Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council:

The Council's Recovery Investment Strategy is to borrow over £75m for projects to include £1.8m on housing, £49.7m on Green Energy Investments and £25m on Economic Development and Asset Utilisation. These projects align with and arguably mirror the ambitions of the Government's Levelling-Up Fund. We are only a small District Council, surely officer's time would be better spent preparing quality bids for the Levelling-up fund and using that money, rather than borrowing huge amounts which will place extra burdens on the residents of the Cotswolds and place this council at financial risk?

From Councillor Julia Judd to Councillor Lisa Spivey, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services:

At the December 2021 meeting, Council voted unanimously to install an e-Petition link to be activated on the Council's website front page. Five months have now passed, why has this not yet happened?

7. **Recovery Investment Strategy (Pages 29 - 76)**

Purpose

To refresh the Recovery Investment Strategy framework within which the Council can invest in the infrastructure of the Cotswold District that delivers on the Council's Priorities.

Recommendation(s)

That Council approves the Strategy attached at Annex B.

8. **Additions to the Constitution: a) Budget Council Protocol and b) Social Media Guidance for Members (Pages 77 - 98)**

Purpose

To update Council on the work and recommendations of the Constitution Working Group who have been modernising the Constitution.

Recommendation(s)

That Council:

1. Adopts the Budget Council Protocol for inclusion in the Council's Constitution.
2. Adopts the Members' Social Media Policy, as an annex to the existing Elected Members' Code of Conduct, for inclusion in the Council's Constitution.

9. **Appointment of Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer (Pages 99 - 102)**

Purpose

To recommend to Council, the appointment of David Stanley as the permanent Deputy Chief Executive Officer (s151) for Cotswold District Council

To recommend to Council, the appointment of Jo Moore as the Interim Deputy Chief Executive Officer (s151) for Cotswold District Council pending David Stanley commencing employment.

Recommendation(s)

The Appointment Panel **RECOMMEND** that Council:

1. Approves the appointment of David Stanley as Deputy Chief Executive Officer (s151) for Cotswold District Council.
2. Notes that the provisional offer of employment has been made, subject to two references, medical clearance and eligibility check in accordance with the Council's policies.
3. Agrees that the appointment commences on a date to be mutually agreed.
4. Agrees that the salary to be offered is £86,275 per annum.
5. Confirms that the appointment will be subject to a 6 month probation period.
6. Agrees to appoint Jo Moore as Interim DCE & Section 151 Officer until David Stanley commences employment.
7. Agrees that £35,000 is earmarked from the Council Priorities Fund to meet the costs associated with the Interim Deputy Chief Executive post.

10. **Notice of Motions**

Motion proposed by Councillor Gina Blomefield, Seconded by Councillor Tony Berry:

Debate not Hate

An LGA survey revealed that seven out of ten councillors at all levels have experienced abuse over the last year. These attitudes, having started on social media, have now become normalised and morphed into the real world - it needs calling out.

Most Councillors, at any level of operation do it in order to make a positive contribution to their local society and 'make a difference' – regardless of any political affiliation they believe what they might be suggesting will be of benefit to the residents. It is therefore totally wrong to be either rude or abusive in response to such proposals.

By setting an example to ensure all councillors get better recognition and appreciation as well as protecting them from personal attacks will encourage more people to play their part in local government including at Town and Parish Council level. It is important to have polite yet robust debate, ideally with a free vote at the conclusion.

I would like to introduce a Motion of Debate not Hate at CDC and throughout the Town and Parish Councils in the Cotswold District to remind everyone that whilst democracy thrives on good, frank discussions these should never turn into personal abuse.

Motion proposed by Councillor Joe Harris Seconded by Councillor Nikki Ind:

Cost of Living

This Council notes that:

Inflation is predicted to top 10% this year, the highest in 40 years.

The tax burden is the highest today since World War Two and that the Government has consistently increased the direct and indirect tax burden on families.

The increased energy price cap will see the average standard tariff energy bill increase by £693 per year and the average prepay meter energy bill increase by £708 per year.

The Government's suspension of the pensions triple lock for 22/23 will cost the pensioners in the Cotswolds on the full new state pension an average of £487 and those on the full basic state pension an average of £373.

This Government ended the uplift in Universal Credit and that changes to the taper will not compensate for the reduction in income of the poorest and most vulnerable people in society.

This Council also notes that:

An estimated 11 million people in the UK live in food poverty, with the cost of living crisis predicted to greatly exacerbate this problem. Those on the lowest incomes will be hardest hit by inflation, the lifting of the energy price cap and increased taxation.

This Council believes that:

No one should go hungry in the Cotswolds.

The cost of living crisis will increase the levels of food poverty and malnutrition in the Cotswolds.

This Council therefore declares a 'Cost of Living Emergency' and calls on the Government to:

Immediately reduce the standard rate of VAT from 20% to 17.5% for one year, saving the average household a further £600 this year.

Immediately use revenue from the windfall tax on energy companies to help Gloucestershire families with their energy bills.

Enshrine the right to food in law.

Council resolves to:

Set up a cross party working group which will report back to full council, in advance of the budget setting process, with steps the council could take to help address the cost of living crisis.

11. **Next meeting**

The next meeting of Full Council will be Wednesday 21st September 2022 at 6pm.

(END)

Council
25/May2022



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Wednesday, 25 May 2022.

Councillors present:

	Nikki Ind – Vice Chair	
Stephen Andrews	Joe Harris	Richard Morgan
Tony Berry	Mark Harris	Richard Norris
Claire Bloomer	Stephen Hirst	Nigel Robbins
Ray Brassington	Robin Hughes	Gary Selwyn
Patrick Coleman	Roly Hughes	Lisa Spivey
Rachel Coxcoon	Sue Jepson	Tom Stowe
David Cunningham	Julia Judd	Ray Theodoulou
Tony Dale	Richard Keeling	Steve Trotter
Andrew Doherty	Juliet Layton	Clive Webster
Mike Evemy	Andrew Maclean	
Jenny Forde	Nick Maunder	

Officers present:

Officers present:

Rob Weaver – Chief Executive
Jenny Poole – Deputy Chief Executive
Angela Claridge – Director of Governance & Development
Sarah Dalby – Electoral Services Manager
Kira Thompson – Elections and Democratic Services Support Officer
Stuart Wilson - Leisure Contract Specialist Officer
Jan Britton – Managing Director – Publica
Bill Oddy - Group Manager - Commercial Development, Leadership and Management Team
Claire Hughes – Business Manager - Corporate Responsibility
Caleb Harris – Democratic Services
Wayne Smith – Democratic Services

82 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Gina Blomefield and Dilys Neill

83 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Coleman declared an interest in Item 9, Changes to the Constitution – Update to the Council Procedure Rules, as the decision that would determine whether (or not) he could continue as Chair of the Audit Committee if proposed and re-elected.

Council
25/May2022

Councillor Andrews declared an interest in Item 9, Changes to the Constitution – Update to the Council Procedure Rules, as the decision that would determine whether (or not) he could continue as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee if proposed and re-elected.

Councillor Berry declared an interest in Item 10, Options Appraisal of the Leisure and Culture Management Arrangements, as a trustee of The Friends of Corinium Museum.

84 Minutes

Various amendments to the minutes were discussed as follows:

The report page header was incorrectly showing 16th February 2022. Amended to 16th March 2022.

Minute 62 (para 4) "...resigning the Armed Forces Covenant..." amended to "re-signing the Armed Forces Covenant..."

Minute 63 (para 6) "...centre of town at Ludd Lane." amended to "...centre of town at Love Lane."

Minute 66 "Record of VotingAbsent 4" amended to "Record of Voting...Absent 6"

Minute 69, 70 & 71, have no Voting Records. Amended to include Voting Records

It was considered that the Minute to the Member Questions item did not capture sufficient detail. The Minutes would be amended to provide more detail.

Minute 61 Paragraph 1 removed and replaced with " Cllr Berry stated that he had informed the Leader, prior to the meeting, that the Conservative Group didn't support this motion and in view of this asked that the motion be removed since it would be a purely Liberal Democrat motion not a full Council one. This having been refused, Cllr. Berry stated that the Conservatives would therefore write separately to the Boundaries Commission and separately attend the review."

Councillor Maclean stated that he had given apologies in advance of the Council meeting. The apologies will be amended to include Councillor Maclean

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2022 were agreed as a true record subject to the amendments

Voting Record – For 29, Against 0, Abstentions 3, Absent 2,

85 Announcements from the Chair, Leader and Chief Executive (if any)

The Vice-Chair Councillor Nikki Ind welcomed all Members, Officers and members of the public and press, both in person and online, to the Council meeting and thanked Members for accommodating the format of the day's meetings including the Annual Council meeting at 6.30 PM.

The Leader Councillor Harris addressed the Council and started by reflecting on the recent events in Texas where 19 children and their teachers had been killed. Council was also invited to reflect on the ongoing Ukrainian crisis, welcomed refugees that had moved into the District, and thanked Council Officers and Members who had provided support, help and advice.

Council
25/May2022

The Chief Executive, Rob Wheeler addressed the Council and reiterated his thanks for all the work that is being done to support the government's Ukraine support schemes and provide local community support to bridge any gaps.

86 Public Questions

Council Borrowing of £76.5M

Mr Dunn's question was directed to The Leader Councillor Harris.

He asked "Should the £76.5M that the Council is proposing to borrow, be the subject of a local referendum to enable Cotswold residents to understand the benefits and risks involved in borrowing such a large amount"

The Leader Councillor Harris stated that a referendum would not be held as the proposal to borrow the sum involved was complex and could not be reduced to a binary 'yes/no' decision. The context of the borrowing requirement was provided, along with an assurance that business cases would underpin each initiative that benefitted from the borrowing. There was also a commitment that only initiatives that benefitted the local area and delivered a return on investment would be successful.

Baunton Parish Boundary Change

Mr Milner's question was directed to the Council.

He asked "Given that:

- both CDC and Baunton Parish had undertaken consultation and shown that the local residents didn't want the proposed change,
- it offered no benefits,
- sharing facilities between communities was already routine,
- the area was a tourist destination and facilities were already widely shared,
- moving the households out of the parish caused an unnecessary existential risk to Baunton parish (as the voters number will reduce to 165 and the minimum is 150)

What possible justification is there for this proposal?"

The Leader Councillor Harris stated that the Council needed to make an objective view on whether the boundary should change or remain where it is and a debate would be held later in the Council meeting to discuss and vote on this.

Crowdfund Cotswold Grants

Mr Fowles' first question was directed to the Deputy Leader Councillor Evey.

He asked "The Council's Crowdfunding initiative has been a huge success raising nearly £300,000, however there had been some concern that very small projects that had previously received matched funding were no longer applying. Could the Council publish details of all of the projects including, those that were unsuccessful, the average grant, and how this had compared with the Community Projects Fund?"

The Deputy Leader Councillor Evey stated that the Community Project Fund had been complicated, bureaucratic and difficult to administer for relatively small amounts of money and did not have the added benefit of encouraging local engagement across the District. In the first round of Crowdfund Cotswold all 19 applications had received funding and details had already been listed on the Council's website.

Mr Fowles second question was directed to The Leader of the Council, Councillor Harris. He asked "Unlike Public Questions that tend to get read out in Council meetings, this no longer happens with Members Questions, and therefore in person attendance of Council

Council
25/May2022

meetings is required in order to hear these and read the agenda. In the interest of openness and transparency, could the Council revert to requiring all Members to read their questions and also offer members of the Public the opportunity to ask a supplementary question?

The Leader of the Council Councillor Harris stated that the current process enabled any member of the public to turn up to a Council meeting without prior notice or a requirement to submit questions in advance, and ask up to 2 questions. The Members Questions were printed also in the Agenda that was available on the Council website.

87 Member Questions

The following Members' questions had been submitted and responses provided by the Cabinet Members prior to the meeting. Supplementary questions and Cabinet Members responses were made in the Council meeting.

From Councillor Tom Stowe to Councillor Andrew Doherty, Cabinet Member for the Environment, Waste and Recycling

I understand that a review into the quantity, location and the emptying of public waste and dog bins across the district is being carried out. Can you please provide an update on the progress of this review and indicate when you expect the process to be completed and the findings available.

Response from Councillor Andrew Doherty, Cabinet Member for the Environment, Waste and Recycling to Councillor Tom Stowe

Following scoring of the projects identified within the Environmental Services Innovation Programme (ESIP), the litter bin review hasn't scored that highly because it will be unlikely to generate significant savings or deliver a benefit in the service. The programme resource available is therefore being focussed on higher priority projects and the litter bin review will now be completed in 2023/24.

If there are exceptional issues in certain areas of the district, then officers will deal with these on a case by case basis in the meantime

Supplementary Question from Councillor Tom Stowe to Councillor Andrew Doherty, Cabinet Member for the Environment, Waste and Recycling

Can you guarantee and reassure the town and parish councils and residents that no public litter or dog waste bins will be removed prior to the completion of the review and that any enquiries or localised issues with new bins will be handled in a swift manner?

Response from Councillor Andrew Doherty, Cabinet Member for the Environment, Waste and Recycling to Councillor Tom Stowe

Although it cannot be guaranteed that no public litter or dog waste bins will be removed this is usually only done in exceptional cases and in consultation with parish councils. Increasing fuel costs have required Ubico to refocus on reducing the impact on the revenue budget so the overarching policy on where and why bins are placed will take longer, but in the meantime Ubico Officers will continue to work with parish council where there are ongoing issues.

Council
25/May2022

From Councillor Tony Berry to Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

The cash payment option for car parking was due to be finally removed in the latter part of last year, but is still available in a number of car parks in Cirencester. Please could you advise Council if this is the policy change that the Conservative Group have been encouraging, or just a missed target date.

Response from Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to Councillor Tony Berry

Due to data connectivity concerns within parts of the District the phased approach to roll out cashless in all our car parks has been delayed. A trial of upgraded software will be undertaken in our Rissington Road and Old Station car parks. The aim of the trial is to ascertain whether the software will reduce waiting times for customers and speed up payments at the payment machines for those who pay by card. The trial will commence on 24 May for a two week period (ending 7 June) Full monitoring of the machines in both car parks will be carried out during this period; following which, reports will be forwarded to the Cabinet and Deputy Chief Executive with findings from the trial. Should the trial provide assurance that the updated software will provide a speedier car payment service to customers an amended timetable to 'roll-out' cashless in all car parks will be put forward for consideration. I'm unsure what the Conservative policy is as I note with interest the Conservative-run County Council are phasing out cash payments on their parking machines.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Tony Berry to Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

If the data connectivity speeds continue to be an issue across the District does that mean you would leave the cash facility open?

Response from Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to Councillor Tony Berry

The car parking card and phone payment facility is the same or similar to other payment facilities available across the country and a trial is currently underway to speed up the payment process by batching payments for later processing rather than verifying with each payment. Payment using the App is popular and even where cash payment is still available, people are migrating to card and phone payment therefore if the trial is successful we will be moving to remove cash payment as soon as possible.

From Councillor Gina Blomefield to Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council

The Conservative Group would very much like to give our thanks of appreciation to Jenny Poole who is leaving her role as both Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Chief Executive Officer at the end of July to enjoy a sabbatical with her husband. We are sorry to see her go after eighteen years of excellent service to Cotswold District Council. Are we correct in understanding that the candidate being sought to replace Jenny will be offered both roles and the same remuneration package?

Response from Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council to Councillor Gina Blomefield

Council
25/May2022

I can confirm that the Council is actively recruiting a replacement for Jenny on a like for like basis and at the same level of remuneration.

From Councillor Stephen Hirst to Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council

Since the commencement of the Covid-19 Pandemic CDC Officers have been encouraged to work from home with only occasional contact with the Office.

Now that the Pandemic is easing Officers should now be returning to work in the relevant offices. Could the Leader please advise Council when it is expected that all officers will be returning to work, particularly in those departments such as Planning where direct contact with members of the public is so important to quickly progress applications in the necessary time frames?

Response from Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council from Councillor Stephen Hirst

Thank you for your question. I would refer you back to the report that Cabinet agreed in December 2021, which stated that an Agile Working Policy had been adopted and set out the business and staff benefits to a more flexible approach to working. Cabinet agreed to move forward with changes to the Trinity Road Offices based on a reduction in the Council's workspace, with most staff working remotely for broadly 50% of the time. Throughout the pandemic our staff have continued to meet the needs of residents and businesses across all of our services. Whilst we will now permanently see a reduction of staff in the offices, we continue to offer direct contact with the public, with site visits taking place and members of the public able to attend the offices in person if they wish to, although we are increasingly seeing residents switch to virtual forms of contact by choice.

Supplementary Question from Councillor Stephen Hirst to Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council

In support of your action to introduce Ukrainian refugees to the District, will you be inviting all Members to the sessions so we can all welcome and get to know our new neighbours?

Response from Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council from Councillor Stephen Hirst

No firm plans have been put in place yet but as soon as they are, all Members will be invited. The event will be community focussed rather than official to make them feel welcome.

88 Update to the Council's Corporate Plan (2020-2024)

The purpose of this item was to introduce the update of the Council's Corporate Plan, which was adopted by the Council on 23 September 2020.

Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council, introduced the report and summarised the 3 priorities included in the Liberal Democrat manifesto (Providing Genuinely Affordable Housing, Take Real Action on Climate Change and Deliver a Sustainable Local Economy), and how these now informed the updated Corporate Plan.

Councillor Berry commented that none of the problems facing the Council had been included and many of the successful Council's initiatives had originally been developed by the Government, the County Council or other organisations or are not due to be delivered until 2024.

Council
25/May2022

Councillor Brassington commented that the difficulties recruiting Planning Officers is a nationwide issue and any criticism of the Council's Planning Service was demoralising for hard working Planning staff.

Councillor Coleman commented that the Corporate Plan was easy to read and understand, and that it was encouraging to see vacancy of retail premises in the centre of Cirencester had fallen from 11% to 5%, significantly below the national average of 14%.

Councillor Maclean commented that Planning Officers are not currently required to include planning conditions that specifically respond to the climate change crisis and advised the Council that there had never been a better time to introduce these requirements.

Councillor Layton commented on the easy accessibility of the Corporate Plan and that specific details of each initiative would be considered and defined by Committees and Working Groups when appropriate.

Councillor Mark Harris agreed that the recruitment of Planning Officers was very difficult across the country, leading to some Councils choosing not to accept any future planning applications but this was not the case at Cotswold District Council. The vibrancy of the Cotswolds as a great place to live, work, and shop was also celebrated.

Councillor Coxcoon commented that although the planning regulations encourage consideration of measures that contribute to reducing climate change they do not specifically require them to be included. Comment were also made challenging the importance of car-friendly, town-centre initiatives in other towns and cities.

Councillor Theodoulou commented that the issue with the high number of planning applications being handled by a reduced number of Planning Officers would inevitably create backlogs and delay decision making and this needed to be resolved. Support was also given for adequate parking for residents with mobility issues and those living in rural areas.

Councillor Andrews welcomed the improved design of the Corporate Plan but noted that some of the successful initiatives being delivered were put in place by the previous administration and newer initiatives appeared to be aspirational without clear timescales for their completion.

Councillor Evemy commented that it was important that the Corporate Plan was both clear and accessible, and this had been achieved, and noted that Planning and Parking appeared to be the only issues that concerned opposition Members. It was also stated that a referendum on the Recovery Investment Strategy was not needed, as the election that will be taking place within the year will enable all residents to decide whether the current administration's priorities policies were supported or a new Administration should take over.

Councillor Berry questioned why overall spending had increased when social housing spending had reduced.

Councillor Evemy commented that the return on social housing spending was small within the overall spending review that had taken place and current spending reflected the priorities of the Administration.

Council
25/May2022

Councillor Spivey commented that the development of Housing in Kempsford was controlled by the Bromsford Housing Association, and the Council had consistently encouraged them to commence work as soon as possible to deliver socially rented homes.

Councillor Cunningham enquired whether Cotswold District Council had actually delivered the new homes or was this done through partner organisations. Councillor Spivey confirmed the Council no longer had housing stock and new housing was being delivered through other association and market developers. The Council's priority to deliver affordable social housing would however ensure the correct type of housing would be developed.

Councillor Harris, The Leader of the Council stated that across the country Councils of various administrations were delivering for their residents, and was disappointed that opposition Members had not suggested positive improvements or supported the Corporate Plan and suggested their alternative Corporate Plan would include cuts to Council services.

RESOLVED: Having considered the Corporate Plan Update, the Council agreed to its adoption.

Voting Record – For 18, Against 13, Abstentions 1, Absent 2,

89 Community Governance Review

The purpose of this report was for Council to consider the consultation responses and approve the final recommendations of the Community Governance Review for each of 6 areas across the District.

In addition, to consider a request from Bourton-on-the-Water Parish Council to change in their governance arrangements

Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council presented the report and recommended that each of the 6 proposals should be considered individually with the Electoral Services Manager providing context, background and expert advice.

The Council agreed to consider and vote on each application individually and once completed, consider and vote collectively to make the required electoral and legal changes.

1. Ampney Crucis – Driffield

The Electoral Services Manager introduced the proposal to 'draft a recommendation to move the current parish boundary line' that cuts through a property and its land that leaves part in Ampney Crucis and part in Driffield.

Recommendation

Following consultation, and In light of the lack of consensus and additional proposals from Ampney St Mary, it was recommended that further consultation is carried out with the parish councils/meeting and local residents to understand their views more fully with final recommendations brought to Council on 20th July 2022.

The Council noted that there was currently a lack of consensus and additional consultation was required.

Council
25/May2022

RESOLVED: The Council agreed with the Officer's recommendation that further consultation should be carried out and final considerations should be brought to Council in July

Voting Record: For 32, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 2,

2. Coberley – Withington

The Electoral Services Manager introduced the proposal that Coberley Parish Council had submitted to move the property known as Needlehole from Withington into Coberley. This request was originally made a few years ago, and this was the first opportunity for it to be considered

Recommendations

It was recommended that the boundary between Coberley Parish and Withington Parish is amended to bring the property known as Needlehole into the parish of Coberley. If agreed details of the recommendation would be submitted to the Boundary Commission for England for their consideration in amending the Ward boundary between Ermin and Sandywell.

The Council noted that although 4 buildings would be included in the move, only one of these was a dwelling.

The Council noted that the roads on the associated map could give the impression that the property was part of Withington, but that the topography of the land made it part of Coberley.

RESOLVED: The Council agreed with the Officer's recommendation that the boundary between Coberley Parish and Withington Parish should be amended to bring the property known as Needlehole into the parish of Coberley, and details of the recommendation should be submitted to the Boundary Commission for England for their consideration in amending the Ward boundary between Ermin and Sandywell.

Voting Record: For 32, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 2,

3. Birdlip, Brimpsfield and Cowley Boundaries

The Electoral Services Manager introduced the proposal following a request from Cowley Parish Council that draft recommendations were drawn up to split the parish into two, to create Birdlip Parish Council and to continue with Cowley Parish Council.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the parish of Cowley is split to create two new councils; Birdlip Parish Council and Cowley Parish Council, and the boundary between the new Birdlip Parish Council and Brimpsfield Parish is altered to include the properties at Parsons Pitch/Hawcote Hill into the new Birdlip Parish Council area

It is also recommended that Birdlip Parish Council has 7 councillors and Cowley Parish Council has 5 councillors; and Legal Services put the necessary procedures in place to effect this change with elections to the two new councils taking place alongside the ordinary elections on 4 May 2023

The Council noted that the historic Cowley Parish area had been defined by the importance of the Cowley estate and village, with workers cottages at Birdlip originally marking the boundary

Council
25/May2022

of the estate. The development of the A417 into a major highway, and Birdlip developing into a vibrant village that was now twice the size of Cowley, had changed the needs and priorities of the two communities.

The Council noted that although the split would leave only 100 residents in Cowley Parish, the CEO of the Gloucester Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC) had confirmed that as an existing parish council, Cowley Parish Council, a could remain in existence to serve the smaller parish area.

The Council noted that Cowley Parish Council would continue to exist until the parish council decided to dissolve it, and that electoral and legal support would be provided to help establish Birdlip Parish Council and elect its Members.

RESOLVED: The Council agreed that the parish of Cowley is split to create two new councils; Birdlip Parish Council and Cowley Parish Council, and the boundary between the new Birdlip Parish Council and Brimpsfield Parish is altered to include the properties at Parsons Pitch/Hawcote Hill into the new Birdlip Parish Council area

The Council also agreed that Birdlip Parish Council would have 7 councillors and Cowley Parish Council would have 5 councillors, and Legal Services would put the necessary procedures in place to effect this change with elections to the two new councils taking place alongside the ordinary elections on 4 May 2023

Voting Record: For 32, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 2,

4. Northleach - Eastington

The Electoral Services Manager introduced the proposal from Northleach-with-Eastington Town Council requesting consideration was given to moving the boundary between itself and Farmington Parish Meeting.

The Council noted that the proposal did not affect any properties and that Farmington Parish Meeting was against the proposed changes.

The Council noted that no evidence of litter or road safety issues had been produced by either Eastington Town Council or Farmington Parish Meeting.

Recommendation

As there was no clear consensus for this change and no properties were affected, it was recommended that no changes were made and the boundary remained as it was.

RESOLVED: The Council agreed with the Officer's recommendation that, as there was no clear consensus for this change, and no properties would be affected, that no changes were made and the boundary remained as it was.

Voting Record: For 32, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 2,

5. Westonbirt-with-Lasborough

The Electoral Services Manager introduced the proposal that a number of properties currently in Shipton Moyne and Tetbury Upton were moved into Westonbirt-with-Lasborough. The proposal was requested by Westonbirt-with-Lasborough Parish Council as they felt that these properties were more aligned to Westonbirt-with-Lasborough.

The Council noted that there was no compelling reason to move the properties to a different parish and the residents of the Shipton Moyne (that would be affected) did not support the move.

The Council noted that should the Council be minded to agree to the move taking place, then this would have an impact on ward boundaries, which may need to be changed.

Recommendation

It was recommended that the boundary remained the same and the proposal was refused.

RESOLVED: The Council agreed with the Officer's recommendation that the boundary remained the same and the proposal was refused.

Voting Record: For 31, Against 0, Abstentions 1, Absent 2,

6. Stratton (Cirencester) – Baunton

Councillor Robbins introduced the proposal that, following a request from Cirencester Town Council, the Community Governance Review look at the boundary between Cirencester and Baunton which runs along Baunton Lane. The proposal was to move the properties currently in Baunton Parish into the Cirencester Town Council area.

The Council noted that the residents of the properties affected, currently benefited from being part of Cirencester, and all that the town provided, but did not contribute to the town's precept through their Council Tax charges.

The Council noted that the residents of the properties currently paid precept payments to Baunton Parish Council and, should the move be approved, Cirencester Town Council had agreed to pay a grant equal to the amount of precept that would be lost (around £750 per year) for a period of 4 years, to enable Baunton Parish Council to adjust to the lost income.

The Council noted that the residents believed their views (not move the properties) should take precedence, as the move provided no benefit for them and risked the long-term sustainability of Baunton as a parish.

The Council noted that the Council Tax charge of the residents affected would increase by around £200 per year.

The Council were reassured that the boundary changes would not affect the Council's planning policy or change the criteria and development regulations applying to development on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty land behind the houses that are affected.

The Council noted that the distance between the last houses in Baunton village and Stratton was 48 meters and the distance between the same house and the first of the houses that would be affected was over 500 meters.

Recommendations

It was recommended that the Council consider the outcome of the consultation and the recommendation and decide whether the boundary should be changed.

Council
25/May2022

RESOLVED: Having considered the outcome of the consultation and discussed the proposal, the Council agreed that the properties on and near to Baunton Lane (indicated on the associated map) were moved from Baunton Parish area to Cirencester Town.

Voting Record: For 18, Against 12, Abstentions 1, Absent 3,

RESOLVED: Following consideration and decisions and votes taken by the Council in respect of the 6 proposals, the Council authorises the Electoral Services Manager to request the Local Government Boundary Commission to change District Wards and County Divisions to reflect the changes made to Parish boundaries and authorise the Head of Legal Services to make a Reorganisation of Community Governance order to implement the changes agreed by Council

The Council also agrees to increase the number of Parish Councillors on Bourton-on-the-Water Parish Council from 11 to 13.

Voting Record: For 30, Against 0, Abstentions 1, Absent 3,

90 Changes to the Constitution - Update to the Council Procedure Rules

The purpose of this report was to seek agreement to make two changes to the Council Procedure Rules, Part D, of the Constitution that would remove the requirement that no member of the Council holds the office of Chair of the Council, or Chair of a Committee, for a continuous period of more than three years. Additionally, that Council introduces a new requirement that the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee must always be a member from an opposition.

Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council introduced the report and commented that the rules were an anomaly and it was not usual for Councils to limit the term that Members held the office of Chairs of Committees. It was also not considered best practice to have Members from an incumbent administration's party serving on Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

RESOLVED: That the Council Procedure Rules, Part D of the Constitution are amended with immediate effect to remove the requirement that no member of the Council holds the office of Chair of the Council, or Chair of a Committee, for a continuous period of more than three years, and introduce a requirement that the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee must always be a member from the opposition.

Voting Record: For 24, Against 0, Abstentions 6, Absent 4,

91 Options Appraisal of Leisure and Culture Management Arrangements

The purpose of this Report was to inform Council of the Leisure and Culture Management Options Appraisal outcomes and to seek authority to commence the procurement process for the appointment of Leisure and Cultural Services Contractors.

Councillor Forde presented the report and provided context for the requirement for the Leisure and Culture Management Options Appraisal to ensure leisure and cultural services continue to be available across the District. The current Leisure and Cultural management contracts were due to end on 31st July 2023, and the Council was now required to discuss and agree how these services would be managed thereafter.

Council
25/May2022

RESOLVED: That Council considered the outcomes of the Leisure and Culture Management Option Appraisal, and granted authority for the commencement of a procurement process for the appointment of Leisure and Culture Management Contractors, for the operation of the Council's Leisure and Culture facilities, as outlined in this report.

Voting Record – For 31, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 3,

92 Approval of the Cabinet Decision For Use of Funds From the Capital Programme

The purpose of this report was to seek approval for the use of funds in the Capital Programme for the delivery of a capital investment project, as detailed in this report and supporting documentation, by SLM Everyone Active (SLM).

Councillor Forde presented the report that essentially enables the Council to provide (already committed) capital funding for the procurement of leisure equipment at leisure facilities that are managed for the Council by partner organisations. The Council would retain ownership of the assets (equipment) when the contract ends.

Councillor Andrews commented that the investment in the Council's existing leisure facilities is welcomed the strategic Options paper revealed that leisure facilities were lacking in Fairford and Tetbury and it was important that similar investment and support should be provided to these areas.

Councillor Berry asked if leasing of equipment had been considered. The Leisure Contract Specialist Officer stated that leasing had not been considered as part of this procurement.

Councillor Doherty commented that there was a gym in Fairford.

Councillor Ind agreed that Tetbury and Fairford should not be forgotten and support and funding should be provided across the District and not just focussed in Cirencester. As there were no longer any Council owned leisure facilities in Tetbury, it was requested that consideration was given to Council/NHS/CCG funded subsidised membership of either or both of the 2 privately owned gyms in Tetbury for residents whose health and wellbeing would be improved by access to these facilities.

Councillor Harris. Leader of the Council commented that all areas of the District would receive support and the leisure centre in Cirencester helped to subsidise other leisure services in Bourton-on-the-Water and Chipping Campden.

Councillor Coleman agreed that from personal experience, subsidised access to leisure facilities (through the NHS and other organisations) could be effective and the increase in social subscribing may be a way of achieving this and, considering the growth of the competitive leisure market, it was unlikely that Council's would be providing all leisure services in the future.

Councillor Cunningham requested details of how Cirencester benefits other centres. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed these details would be provided to all Members

Councillor Theodoulou commented that although leisure services are provided by other organisations, these services are still widely associated with the Council and for reputational reasons the Council would end up having to step in if things go wrong.

Council
25/May2022

RESOLVED: That Council approved the use of funds from the Capital Programme and the following recommendation(s):

- a) That SLM is given approval to complete the Capital Investment project.
- b) That SLM's proposed Option (I) as set out in Annex A is approved with the remainder of the Capital budget being retained for investment in Leisure Equipment.
- c) That the authority approve expenditure of the retained balance of the Capital budget, if Option (I) was supported, and final approval would be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing once the procurement has been completed.

Voting Record – For 30, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 4,

93 Notice of Motions

No motions were received for the Council to consider.

94 Next meeting

The Annual Council Meeting would take place later on 25th May 2022 at 6.30 PM. The next meeting of Council will be held on Wednesday 20th July 2022

The Meeting commenced at 2.00pm and closed at 5.23.pm

Chair

(END)



Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Wednesday, 25 May 2022.

Councillors present:

	Nikki Ind – Vice Chair	
Stephen Andrews	Jenny Forde	Andrew Maclean
Tony Berry	Joe Harris	Nick Maunder
Claire Bloomer	Mark Harris	Richard Morgan
Ray Brassington	Stephen Hirst	Nigel Robbins
Patrick Coleman	Robin Hughes	Gary Selwyn
Rachel Coxcoon	Roly Hughes	Lisa Spivey
David Cunningham	Sue Jepson	Tom Stowe
Tony Dale	Julia Judd	Ray Theodoulou
Andrew Doherty	Richard Keeling	Steve Trotter
Mike Evely	Juliet Layton	Clive Webster

Officers present:

Rob Weaver – Chief Executive
Jenny Poole – Deputy Chief Executive
Angela Claridge – Director of Governance
Jan Britton – Managing Director Publica
Claire Hughes – Business Manager, Corporate Responsibility
Caleb Harris – Democratic Services
Wayne Smith – Democratic Services

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Dilys Neill and Gina Blomefeld
Councillor Richard Norris attended the meeting but left early before any votes were taken.
One other Councillor was temporarily absent during the votes.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest from Members

There were no Declarations of Interest from Officers.

3 Election of Chair of the Council

The Chief Executive, Rob Weaver, in his role as Proper Officer of Cotswold District Council sought nominations for the role of Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2022-23.

Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of The Council proposed Councillor Dilys Neill
This was seconded by Councillor Robins.

Council
25/May2022

As Councillor Dilys Neill was the only nominee, The Chief Executive and Proper Officer Rob Wheeler announced that Councillor Dilys Neill was confirmed as Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2022-23 and confirmed that Councillor Neill would be invited to read and sign The Declaration of Acceptance of Office upon her return.

4 Election of Vice-Chair of the Council

In the absence of Councillor Dilys Neill, Chair of the Council, the Chief Executive Rob Wheeler, in his role as Proper Officer of Cotswold District Council sought nominations for the role of Vice Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2022-23.

Councillor Tony Dale proposed Councillor Nikki Ind
This was seconded by Councillor Maclean.

As Councillor Nikki Ind was the only nominee, The Chief Executive and Proper Officer Rob Weaver announced that Councillor Nikki Ind was confirmed as Vice Chair of the Council for the Civic Year 2022-23, and invited Councillor Ind to read and sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor Ind accepted the Chain of Office of the Vice Chair of the Council and, in the absence of the Chair of the Council, continued to Chair Annual Council for the remainder of the meeting.

5 Announcements of Chair, Leader and Chief Executive

Councillor Ind, Vice-Chair of the Council, thanked Members for their support.

Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council, thanked Members for their hard work during the previous Civic Year.

6 Record of Attendances

The Vice-Chair of the Council addressed the Council and confirmed that following comments and suggestions from Members, the format of the Record of Attendance would be amended to clarify the attendance totals for Committee meetings which included the total number of meetings expected. Councillor Stowe's total was also noted as needing to be amended to reflect attendance at Full Council on 20th February 2022.

RESOLVED: The Council noted the Record of Attendance and the proposed amendments.

7 Appointment of Cabinet

Councillor Joe Harris, The Leader of the Council congratulated Councillor Ind on being appointed Vice-Chair of the Council and confirmed that some portfolio responsibilities had been changed and the appointment of Cabinet Members for the Civic Year 2022-23 would be:

Councillor Joe Harris as Leader of the Council holding a portfolio and responsibilities for: Coordination of Executive Functions, Policy Framework including the Corporate Plan, Publica, Housing and Homelessness, Town and Parish Council Liaison, Clean and Green campaign and UBICO (including street cleaning).

Council
25/May2022

Councillor Mike Evey as **Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance** holding a portfolio and responsibilities for: Financial Strategy and Management, Revenue and Benefits and Grants

Councillor Lisa Spivey as **Cabinet Member for Corporate Services** holding a portfolio and responsibilities for: Property and Asset Management, Trinity Road, Transformation, Public Conveniences, Democratic Services, Communications and Consultation, Customer Experience and Channel Shift.

Councillor Tony Dale as **Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transformation** holding a portfolio and responsibilities for: Car Parking Operations and Strategy, Business Transformation, Local Enterprise Partnership and County-Wide Partnerships, Economic Development, Recovery Investment Strategy, Tourism and Visitor Information Centres and Chamber of Commerce Liaison

Councillor Andrew Doherty as **Cabinet Member for the Environment, Waste and Recycling** holding a portfolio and responsibilities for: UBICO (Waste and Recycling), Waste and Recycling and Flooding

Councillor Jenny Forde **Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing** holding a portfolio and responsibilities for: Refugee Support, Public health, Well-Being and Mental Health, Improving Social Mobility and Tackling Social Isolation, Crime, Disorder and Safety, Supporting and Safeguarding People, Health Centres, Museums and Culture and Young People

Councillor Juliet Layton **Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services** holding a portfolio and responsibilities for: Development Management, Heritage and Design Management, Environmental and Regulatory Services and Cotswold Water Park

Councillor Rachel Coxcoon as **Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning** holding a portfolio and responsibility for: Climate Change and Energy Planning, Sustainable Transport, Strategic Forward Planning, Local Plan, Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 and Allowable Solutions.

RESOLVED: The Council noted the appointment of the Cabinet Members and their portfolios and responsibilities.

8 Political Composition of the Council and Formation of Political Groups

The purpose of this report was to advise the Council of the notifications received under Regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 giving the composition of political groups.

The Political Composition of the Cotswold District Council - May 2022

Liberal Democrats Group – 18 members

Claire Bloomer - New Mills

Ray Brassington - Four Acres

Patrick Coleman - Stratton

Rachel Coxcoon - Moreton East

Tony Dale - Northleach

Andrew Doherty - Fairford North

Mike Evey - Siddington and Cerney Rural

Jenny Forde - Chedworth and Churn Valley

Council

25/May2022

Joe Harris - St Michael's

Mark Harris - Abbey

Roly Hughes - Chesterton

Juliet Layton - South Cerney Village

Nick Maunder - Bourton Village

Dilys Neill - Stow

Nigel Robbins - The Beeches

Gary Selwyn - Watermoor

Lisa Spivey - The Ampneys and Hampton

Clive Webster - Moreton East

Conservative Group – 14 members

Stephen Andrews - Lechlade, Kempsford and Fairford South

Tony Berry - Kemble

Gina Blomefield - Campden and Vale

David Cunningham - Fosseridge

Stephen Hirst - Tetbury Town

Robin Hughes - Sandywell

Sue Jepson - Blockley

Julia Judd - Ermin

Richard Keeling - Bourton Vale

Richard Morgan - Grumbolds Ash with Avening

Richard Norris - Tetbury with Upton

Tom Stowe - Campden and Vale

Ray Theodoulou - Coln Valley

Steve Trotter - Lechlade, Kempsford and Fairford South

The Council also consisted of 1 Green Party and 1 Independent Member. In accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 these do not constitute a political group, however the Constitution makes provision for them to receive one Committee seat each.

Green Party – 1 member

Andrew Maclean - The Rissingtons

Independent – 1 member

Nikki Ind - Tetbury East and Rural

Total 34 members

RESOLVED: The Council noted the political composition of Cotswold District Council and the formation of political groups.

9 Appointment of Committees

The purpose of this report was to set out those matters reserved to Council at its Annual Meeting:

1. To establish the allocation of seats to political groups based on proportionality and to agree arrangements for making the necessary adjustments to proportionality based on appointments to individual Committees.
2. To make appointments to Committees for the Civic Year 2022/23

Council
25/May2022

3. To make appointments to the positions of Chair and Vice Chair of Committees for the Civic Year 2022/23

The Council noted that the list of Members appointed to committees had been issued as a supplementary addition to Annex A

Members of Committees

Planning and Licensing Committee (11 seats)

Liberal Democrats (6 seats)	Councillor Ray Brassington,, Councillor Patrick Coleman, Councillor Dilys Neill, Councillor Mark Harris, Councillor Gary Selwyn, Councillor Clive Webster
Conservatives (4 seats)	Councillor Sue Jepson, Councillor Stephen Hirst, Councillor Stephen Trotter, Councillor Julia Judd
Green Party (1 seat)	Councillor Andrew Maclean

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (10 seats)

Liberal Democrats (5 seats)	Councillor Claire Bloomer, Councillor Patrick Coleman, Councillor Roly Hughes, Councillor Nigel Robbins, Councillor Gary Selwyn,
Conservatives (4 seats)	Councillor Andrew Stephens, Councillor Gina Blomefield, Councillor Richard Norris, Councillor David Cunningham
Independent (1 seat)	Councillor Nikki Ind

Audit Committee (7 seats)

Liberal Democrats (4 seats)	Councillor Nigel Robbins, Councillor Nick Maunder, Councillor Gary Selwyn, Councillor Patrick Coleman
Conservatives (3 seats)	Councillor Tony Berry, Councillor Ray Theodoulou, Councillor Tom Stowe

Performance and Appointments Committee (Statutory Officers) (7 seats)

Liberal Democrats (4 seats)	Councillor Joe Harris, Councillor Mike Evely, Councillor Jenny Forde, Councillor Gary Selwyn
Conservatives (3 seats)	Councillor Tony Berry, Councillor Ray Theodoulou, Councillor Sue Jepson

RESOLVED: The Council agreed to establish the allocation of seats to political groups based on proportionality and to agree arrangements for making the necessary adjustments to proportionality based on appointments to individual Committees and to make appointments to Committees for the Civic Year 2022/23 as listed above.

Voting Record: For 30, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 4,

Members of Working Groups

Constitution Working Group

Liberal Democrats (4 seats)	Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council, Councillor Mike Evely, Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Lisa Spivey, Councillor Patrick Coleman
Conservatives (2 seats)	Councillor Stephen Andrews, Councillor Ray Theodoulou
Independent (1 seat)	Councillor Nikki Ind

Council
25/May2022

Capital Programme Investment Board

Liberal Democrats (3 seats)	Councillor Tony Dale, Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Gary Selwyn
Conservatives (2 seats)	Councillor Stephen Andrews, Councillor Ray Theodoulou

Leisure Working Group

Liberal Democrats (4 seats)	Councillor Jenny Forde, Councillor Gary Selwyn, Councillor Juliet Layton, Councillor Nick Maunder
Conservatives (4 seats)	Councillor Stephen Andrews, Councillor Tom Stowe, Councillor Richard Norris, Councillor Stephen Hirst
Independent (1 seat)	Councillor Nikki Ind

RESOLVED: The Council agreed to establish the allocation of seats to political groups based on proportionality and to agree arrangements for making the necessary adjustments to proportionality based on appointments to individual Working Groups and to make appointments to Working Groups for the Civic Year 2022/23 as listed above.

Voting Record – For 30, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 4,

Chairs of Committees

Audit Committee

Chair:	Councillor Nigel Robbins
Vice-Chair:	Councillor Nick Maunder

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Chair:	Councillor Stephen Andrews
Vice-Chair:	Councillor Gary Selwyn

Performance and Appointments Committee (Statutory Officers)

Chair:	Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council
Vice-Chair:	Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader of the Council

Planning and Licensing Committee

Chair:	Councillor Ray Brassington
--------	----------------------------

Voting Record – For 30, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 4,

The Vice-Chair of the Council invited nominations for the office of Vice-Chair of the Planning and Licensing Committee

Councillor Evemy, the Deputy Leader of the Council, proposed Councillor Coleman, and this was seconded by and Councillor Coxcoon.

Councillor Jepson proposed Councillor Judd, and this was seconded by Councillor Hirst.

Voting Record – For Councillor Coleman 17, For Councillor Judd 13,

RESOLVED: The Council elected Councillor Coleman as Vice-Chair of Planning and Licensing Committee

I0 Appointment to External Bodies

The purpose of this report was to provide the Council with an up to date list of Members appointed to Outside Bodies.

Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council stated that it was important for all Members to be aware of which Member represented the Council on external bodies and groups, and asked if any Member had been appointed to an external body or group that had not been included in the list, they should notify Democratic Services.

It was also stated that it was best practice that the Chair of Audit Committee should also represent the Council at the South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) and therefore Councillor Robbins was appointed to this role.

RESOLVED: The Council noted the list of Appointments to External Bodies.

II Next meeting of Council - 20 July 2022 at 6.00pm

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 PM and closed at 7.16 PM

Chair

(END)

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 7



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	COUNCIL - 20 JULY 2022
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 7
Subject	REFRESH OF RECOVERY INVESTMENT STRATEGY
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	<p>CLlr Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for the Economy and Council Transformation</p> <p>Email: tony.dale@cotswold.gov.uk</p>
Accountable officer	<p>Jenny Poole , Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer</p> <p>Email: jenny.poole@cotswold.gov.uk</p>
Summary/Purpose	To refresh the Recovery Investment Strategy framework within which the Council can invest in the infrastructure of the Cotswold District that delivers on the Council's Priorities.
Annexes	<p>Annex A Medium Term Financial Strategy</p> <p>Annex B Draft Recovery Investment Strategy</p>
Recommendation(s)	That Council approves the Strategy attached at Annex B.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respond to the Climate Crisis ● Provide Socially Rented Homes ● Enable a Vibrant Economy
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>Capital Programme Investment Board</p> <p>Cabinet meeting 4 April 2022</p>



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In September 2020 the Council approved its first Recovery Investment Strategy to support the key priorities in the Corporate Plan 2020- 2024. The Strategy recognised the financial challenges facing the Council and sought to guide investment decisions to ensure that investments delivered a return to cover the cost of capital and, where possible, an additional return, to cover risk and the financial gap identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 1.2 The Strategy also took account of the changing landscape around commercial investment with a clear 'steer' from Government and professional bodies that pure commercial investments should be avoided. To this end the Strategy clearly set out a framework which put delivery of corporate priorities as the key driver on investment decisions with yield being a secondary factor.
- 1.3 The Strategy sought to balance the delivery of local priorities with the principles of affordability and value for money. In essence, the Strategy formed a framework within which the Council can operate to deliver on its priorities whilst also closing the emerging budget gap without the reliance upon service cuts.
- 1.4 The impact of the global pandemic has slowed both the delivery of actions within the Strategy but also the fundamental review of the local government funding regime that was anticipated and has driven the financial considerations. As a consequence the Council has received a series of largely 'standstill' financial settlements from Government although the consequence of these is that the funding 'cliff edge' identified has actually worsened.
- 1.5 Whilst opportunities to deliver against the approved Strategy have proved difficult to achieve in light of the Pandemic some useful groundwork has been done which has identified a pipeline of opportunities to deliver on the Council's Priorities.
- 1.6 Cabinet considered the draft refresh of the Strategy on 4 April 2022 and recommends the Strategy to Council for approval.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), approved by Council in February 2022, identified an overall funding gap of almost £8.9m by March 2026 if left unaddressed. For convenience this is attached at Annex A as this forms the basis for the updated Recovery Investment Strategy.
- 2.2 The updated Recovery Investment Strategy attached at Annex B sets the revised framework within which the Council can consider investment opportunities that deliver on the agreed corporate priorities. Whilst the previous version did not in itself present any specific



opportunities (but rather a mechanism by which the Council can assess how opportunities are developed) this version sets out a clearer delivery plan with a pipeline of opportunities.

- 2.3 The delivery plan is principally based upon the work of the officers recruited to lead on the key corporate priorities of Climate Change and Economic Development. The posts have been identified as crucial to leading on these priority themes and have now been embedded within the permanent establishment as they are crucial to the delivery of the Corporate Plan and this Strategy.
- 2.4 The Strategy sets out the financial context within which the Council finds itself based upon the known position in February 2022. Regrettably many of the uncertainties around funding that existed when the first Strategy was written remain, although it is anticipated that these will become clearer over the summer of 2022.
- 2.5 As a consequence of this continuing uncertainty the financial targets need to be taken as a guide rather than an absolute position. This relates not only to the funding gap the Council faces, but also debt financing costs, return yields, and therefore the level of capital investment necessary to deliver the revenue returns.
- 2.6 Whilst the first generation of the Strategy set the tactical plan to be coherent with the Budget and MTFS this version presents a tactical delivery plan that is based upon clearer opportunities and delivery timescales that are consistent with those opportunities whilst retaining an eye on the overall targets.
- 2.7 As a consequence of moving to a more realistic delivery plan there is an increasing emphasis on Green Infrastructure within the Strategy. This is because it is both consistent with the Council's Climate Emergency announcement but also recognises the deliverability of these schemes with partners.
- 2.8 Whilst the Strategy identifies the key project opportunities that could be considered to meet the priorities, the Council will need to take individual decisions on these that come forward with the overall Strategy in mind. It is very clear from guidance that schemes should not be pursued 'primarily' for yield. The key driver must be the delivery of Council priorities. This will not mean for example sticking slavishly to investment returns on individual schemes as long as, in the round, the investment returns are being achieved.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Council is facing a significant challenge to its financial sustainability brought about by significant real term reductions in Government funding over the last ten years. This funding has been supplemented through incentivised funding streams such as Business Rates Retention and New Homes Bonus.



- 3.2 Over the last few years New Homes Bonus has started to be phased out and the government seem committed to its eventual withdrawal. The Business Rates Retention scheme is due to have a reset in April 2023 and this will potentially remove all the business growth received since 2013.
- 3.3 In addition to this further changes to Local Government Finance are planned via the Fairer Funding Formula. It is not yet known how this will affect this Council but there are risks that this will alter the balance of funding in favour of Councils who provide Social Service functions.
- 3.4 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, approved in February 2022, identified an overall funding gap of almost £8.9m by March 2026 if left unaddressed.
- 3.5 The guidance within the Council's Recovery Investment Strategy seeks an average return of 7.4% to cover the cost of capital (principal and interest repayments) and a return consistent with the MTFS funding gap. The actual return will vary from scheme to scheme based upon asset life and market conditions. For example a solar scheme would face higher capital financing costs because the asset life is shorter than say the construction of a building supporting economic growth. Under accounting regulations the maximum asset life is 50 years.
- 3.6 To be clear taking no action will leave the Council with a very significant funding gap which would require alternative resolutions such as significantly raising Council Tax, in accordance with the Government requirement to hold a referendum for increases which exceed the limit determined by the Secretary of State, or significantly cutting services. Neither of these solutions will deliver on the priorities of the Council indeed they will weaken the outcomes deliverable by the Council.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The focus of the Strategy is delivering on the priorities of the Council. It is likely therefore that almost all investments will be within the District. The Council will be reliant upon its legal powers to invest that are related to the social, environmental and economic prosperity of the place to support its actions rather than investment powers more recently highlighted and criticised by the Government and others in respect of commercial property.
- 4.2 Any investment brought forward will clearly state the legal powers being utilised. This is important to ensure that the lower rates for local government borrowing can be achieved.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT



- 5.1 The key risk with regard to adopting this Strategy is around deliverability. It is a bold Strategy which delivers against Council Priorities but has significant borrowing and investment targets to meet. The availability of opportunities within the District to meet these targets will be challenging and should not be underestimated.
- 5.2 Risks around individual investments projects will be set out clearly in each business case that is presented for Council to consider at the time the proposal comes forward.
- 5.3 There remains a risk that the Government may further alter the borrowing rules to prevent Councils from borrowing for some of the potential opportunities set out in this Strategy but with the focus of this Strategy on place based investment that is largely mitigated.
- 5.4 The Strategy makes a number of assumptions around borrowing rates, rates of return on investment categories and requirements for 'Minimum Revenue Provision'. All of these may change and alter the balance of funding required to deliver the revenue returns.
- 5.5 The review of local government funding may impact on the MTFs which may subsequently alter the targets set out in this Strategy and it therefore also needs to be further reviewed in light of any changes and in light of any other Government funding announcements.
- 5.6 Should the Council not adopt this Strategy (i.e. do nothing) the risks to the delivery of the Council priorities and its overall financial stability are very significant and would require an alternate approach to balancing the budget such as significant Council Tax rises or service cuts.

6. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There is a strong focus within this Strategy to deliver green infrastructure that will have a positive impact on the climate emergency declaration.
- 6.2 Any investment opportunity brought forward will clearly set out the implications in respect of climate change.
- 6.3 Investment opportunities that make a positive change to the carbon footprint of the District are a fundamental part of this Strategy and therefore this Strategy should be seen as a key tool to help deliver this Council priority.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1 The Council could chose not to support this Strategy and seek to reduce the funding gap it faces through other means such as raising Council Tax, further significantly increasing fees and charges such as Car Parking and Garden Waste or cutting service provision.



8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1. None
(END)

Cotswold District Council

Medium Term Financial Strategy

2022/23 to 2025/26

Introduction

The Council approved a new Corporate Plan for the period 2020 to 2024 in September 2020. The Plan sets out the Council's aims, priorities and principles.

“Aim, priorities and principles

Cotswold District is at the heart of the larger area of the Cotswolds – an area that’s known around the world for its natural beauty and heritage. Around 84,000 people call our district home, and they deserve the services and support that a progressive council can provide.

This corporate strategy recognises and embraces the challenges facing the district, and states our aims and ambitions. It is underpinned by a set of action plans that describe in detail how we plan to deliver these ambitions.

Our aims is to recreate a council that’s proactive and responsive to the needs of our residents and businesses in a fast-changing environment, and to build for the future while respecting our heritage.

We will do this by:

- *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*

Our principles:

Everything we do is built on the following 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.”*

The Council has an ambitious agenda and this Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out the financial parameters in which to deliver the Council’s Corporate Plan. Investment in Council Priorities will be through:

- Capital programme investment, for example, delivery of new social housing, installation of facilities for charging electric vehicle, partnership working to deliver green energy generation;
- One-off revenue funding from Council reserves for projects, for example, reviewing the Local Plan to make it green to the core, temporary extra resource to develop a green travel plan;
- A permanent increase to the Council's revenue budget to provide additional resources in priority service areas, for example, funding a post to lead on the Council's response to its climate change emergency declaration.

Annex AI-4 sets out the details of the Council's plans for revenue income and expenditure, capital income and expenditure and earmarked reserve funded expenditure.

Service Provision

The Council has a small Management Team of directly employed officers who support the Council and who work with service providers to deliver the Council's priorities. The Council uses a number of local authority owned companies to deliver the majority of its services. Publica Group (Support) Ltd provides commissioning advice and support to the Council as well as directly providing many services. Ubico Ltd provides waste collection, street cleansing and other environmental services. SLM provides the Council's leisure and cultural services across the District.

The 2021/22 contract costs for these significant partners are:

Publica £9.4 million

Ubico £7.0 million

SLM provides a contribution to the Council of around £100,000 per annum. However, SLM has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic as fewer customers were able to attend the leisure centres and the Corinium Museum. In order to ensure that these facilities, which are vital to residents' physical and mental health and well-being, were able to re-open, in line with national policy, the Council has waived the income from this contract and also provided additional financial support to the contractor for the period from April 2020 to July 2021.

Financial Context

The Council's current (2021/22) service provision costs £24.2 million each year and is funded by:

Fees, charges and grants for specific services	£11.6 m	48%
Retained Business Rates	£3.3 m	14%
Rural Services, New Homes Bonus and Lower Tier Government Grants	£3.4 m	14%
Council tax	£5.9 m	24%

At the end of the last financial year, on 31 March 2021, the Council held capital resources of £8.5 million, revenue reserves of £16.6 million and a General Fund balance of £0.9 million.

The Council set its 2020/21 budget in February 2020, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The budget was expected to increase the General Fund Balance by £212,000. The impact of the pandemic on the Council's finances resulted in a reduced operating surplus of £22,000, a net cost of £190,000.

In 1997, the Council transferred its social housing to a registered provider. Following the transfer, the Council was debt free and held significant levels of capital receipts and revenue reserves. Since 1997, the capital and revenue reserves have funded projects and investments have contributed towards the delivery of the Council's priorities. The Council is now facing the prospect of borrowing to fund capital investment for the first time since the housing stock transfer.

For a full picture of the Council's financial management, this Financial Strategy should be read together with the Council's Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies. Further information on how the Council plans to deliver its Priorities is contained within the following strategies:

- Green Economic Growth Strategy approved on 7 December 2020
- Climate Emergency Strategy approved on 23 September 2020
- Recovery Investment Strategy approved on 23 September 2020

This Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out the financial envelope within which the Council will deliver its Priorities.

National and Local Financial Risks

Fairer Funding Review

The Government decides how to spend income generated from taxation through a Spending Review. The Spending Review announced in 2021 covers the three year period from 2022/23 to 2024/25. The Spending Review determines the overall funding available for each Government Department. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is responsible for the allocation of its share of funding from the Spending Review to individual councils.

For a number of years DLUHC, previously the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), has been conducting a "Fairer Funding Review" to change the method of allocating funding to individual councils. The outcome of the Fairer Funding Review was to be implemented in the 2021/22 financial year. For various reasons, including the negotiation of the UK's exit from the European Union and responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, MHCLG delayed consultation upon and implementation of the Fairer Funding Review.

In his statement on the Provisional Local Government Statement, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities referred to future changes to Local Government funding as follows:

“Government is committed to ensuring that funding allocations for councils are based on an up-to-date assessment of their needs and resources. The data used to assess this has not been updated in a number of years, dating from 2013-14 to a large degree, and even as far back as 2000. Over the coming months, we will work closely with the sector and other stakeholders to update this and to look at the challenges and opportunities facing the sector before consulting on any potential changes.

As part of this we will look at options to support local authorities through transitional protection. Councils should note the one-off 2022/23 Services Grant provided in the Local Government Finance Settlement in 2022/23 will be excluded from potential transitional protections.”

The Council has been planning for this change of funding for several years and the MTFS includes the possible impact of reduced Government funding and includes savings targets to address the reduced funding.

Business Rates Retention

The Council administers Business Rates (National Non Domestic Rates) of around £44.7 million per annum on behalf of the Government. The Council retains some Business Rates income as part of its core Government Funding. For the 2021/22 financial year, this amounts to £3.3 million.

In 2013, the Government implemented the Business Rates Retention Scheme for local authorities. Each year DLUHC sets the “baseline” funding for local authorities from business rate retention. For this Council, the baseline funding for 2021/22 is £1.9 million. As part of the Business Rate Retention Scheme, the Council shares business rate income growth with Government on a 50/50 basis. The Cotswold District has seen a significant increase in income from business rates since 2013 as the economy has grown. The growth retained by this Council now represents £1.4 million of additional Government funding over the £1.9 million baseline.

For 2022/23 the baseline funding level remains at £1.9 million. The retained growth above baseline is forecast to grow to £1.5 million.

The Fairer Funding Review will reset this Council’s level of Business Rate Retention. It is also likely that the share of the gain from economic growth will change. For both of these reasons, the Council is facing a significant risk that its core Government funding will fall sharply - a financial ‘cliff-edge’.

New Homes Bonus

Another part of the Council’s core government funding comes from New Homes Bonus. This grant is a reward to Councils for delivery against the Government’s national priority of

increasing the number of homes. The value of the grant depends upon the increase in the Council's "Council Taxbase".

Originally, New Homes Bonus grant was paid for a period of six years. In later years, the period that the grant was payable for was reduced to four years. The grant for 2021/22 was payable for one year only. Funding from the New Homes Bonus Scheme is being reviewed as part of the DLUHC Fairer Funding Review.

The value of New Homes Bonus to the Council in 2021/22 is £2.1 million. For 2022/23, DLUHC have announced a further round of funding which is being provided for 2022/23 only. The MTFs reflects that the Bonus will reduce, so that only the "legacy" grant payment from 2019/20 of £0.7 million and the 2022/22 award of £0.1 million will be due in 2022/23, totalling £0.8 million.

Given that the Government still wishes to increase the supply of new homes nationally, it is likely that there will be an alternative funding stream from the Government related to the local provision of housing.

The Council's plan for addressing reduced Government funding is set out in the Recovery Investment Strategy. This Strategy assumes there will be some replacement funding from Government for New Homes Bonus. Should this not be provided, the Council will need to increase income or find alternative savings.

Cost of service delivery in a rural area

The Council covers a large geographical area, some 450 square miles, with many small towns and villages. This low population density means that the cost of delivery of Council services at a local level is high. For example, the Council collects recycling and waste from every property in the District, meaning that our vehicles need to travel many miles per household. This means that the Council requires more vehicles and operatives to deliver the service per household than in urban areas where households are closer together.

The Government has recognised this cost driver and has provided Rural Services Delivery Grant funding since 2016. For 2021/22 the grant is worth £0.6 million on top of funding from Retained Business Rates. The Provisional Local Government Settlement has confirmed that this grant will remain available in 2022/23. The implementation of the Fairer Funding Review puts this funding at risk from 2023/24.

Covid-19 impact upon income and costs

The Council set its budget for 2020/21 on 26th February 2020, just before the first Covid-19 lockdown. Demand fell for the Council's income generating services from early in March 2020, and this decline accelerated following the announcement of the first lockdown on 23 March 2020. The Council's service related income continued to be impacted throughout the year and in to 2021/22.

In addition to reduced service income, the Council also faced pressure on its expenditure budgets. In particular, providing emergency accommodation for individuals and families facing homelessness; collecting additional waste and recyclable materials presented by households and ensuring that the Council's leisure contractor was able to fulfil its contractual obligations.

The Council regularly reported the impact of Covid-19 on its finances to the Government. In response the Government provided grant funding in recognition of expenditure pressures and compensation for income losses.

The financial impact of Covid-19 was felt across the Council's services and therefore across many of the 2020/21 service budgets. In September 2020, Council approved a revised budget for 2020/21 which:

- revised income budgets to reflect forecast service income for 2020/21;
- revised expenditure budgets to reflect additional cost pressure in 2020/21;
- incorporated the initial three tranches of funding received from Government for Covid-19 and the promised support for income losses; and
- set out revised funding for the 2020/21 budget.

The overall impact of Covid-19 in 2020/21 was a net cost of £190,000 to the Council which was funded through the General Fund.

The basis for the 2021/22 budget was the original 2020/21 budget. However, it reflected the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on income and expenditure and Included Government funding for Covid-19 cost pressure and compensation for the impact of lost income from sales, fees and charges for the period April to June 2021.

Financially, income from the Council's cash investments fell significantly due to interest rate reductions as interest on cash deposits fell from around 1% to 0.4% per annum. However, this also provides the opportunity for the Council to reduce its borrowing costs either by using some of its cash balances to provide cash flow for some of its planned capital expenditure (rather than raising finance from external borrowing) or entering into loans at historically low interest rates. Further information on the Council investments and borrowing plans are set out in the Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies.

Development of the Proposed Budget 2022/23 and Medium Term Financial Strategy

The basis of the 2022/23 budget is the budget for 2021/22, excluding the changes required to reflect the impact of Covid-19. The budget for 2022/23 and the MTFS reflects the following:

1. The impact of inflation;
2. Investment in Council Priorities;
3. Provision for the ongoing impact of Covid-19;
4. Unavoidable budget pressures;
5. Planned savings;
6. Changes to income from fees and charges and Government grants for specific services;
7. Changes to Government funding;
8. Estimates of the Council Taxbase and the Council's Council Tax proposal;
9. Estimates of income from Business Rates Retention;
10. Changes to the Capital Programme; and

11. Use of revenue reserves;

The Council engages with its partners in Publica and Ubico to develop its budget proposals. A detailed analysis of all of the changes to the budget over the life of the MTFS is included in **Annex A**. Details of key items in the 2022/23 budget and plans for 2023/24 to 2025/26 are set out below:

1 Impact of inflation

The Council has provided for inflation on salaries for Council and Publica employees and allowances for Members in 2022/23 based upon an assumed local government pay award of 2.5%. The pay award offer of 1.75% for 2021/22 is still under negotiation, the baseline 2021/22 budget has been uplifted to reflect the current offer.

In November 2021, HM Treasury published a comparison of independent inflation forecast for the UK economy. Over the medium-term inflation is forecast as follows:

	2022 %	2023 %	2024 %	2025 %
Consumer Price Inflation	4.0	2.6	2.5	2.3
Retail Price Inflation	5.8	4.1	3.7	3.5

As pay inflation is linked to the rate of inflation in the economy, the MTFS assumes pay inflation of 2.5% from 2022/23 and that inflation will continue at that level for the remainder of the life of the MTFS.

Inflation in the Ubico environmental services contract reflects employee pay award inflation, and additional costs of repairs and maintenance to the vehicle fleet as the fleet ages.

2 Investment in Council Priorities

Over the term of the Council from 2019 to 2023, the Council is planning to invest in its Priorities as follows:

a. **£750,000 towards addressing climate change**

This funding will kick-start the action plan to make the Cotswold District “green to the core”. Actions include:

- 1 encouraging residents to switch to electric vehicles by delivering charging points across the district;
- 2 reviewing our use of offices and buildings as large numbers of staff continue working from home;
- 3 identifying opportunities to use our assets to support our climate strategy;
- 4 minimising costs so we can use more of our funding in support of climate action.

- b. **£740,000 towards reviewing the local plan.** The outcome is to ensure new developments in the District suit the needs of communities and protects the District landscapes and heritage.
- c. **£400,000** for investment in feasibility studies and other work to support the provision of social housing built to carbon zero.
- d. **£200,000 to improve the cleanliness and appearance of the District** through the Clean and Green Programme.
- e. **£100,000** to plan and develop better, greener transport options in the District, including cycle and walking routes and innovative bus options.
- f. **£35,000** each year to continue to fight against fly-tipping
- g. **£25,000** towards a review of open space on new developments, working with builders and residents on new public open space.
- h. **£23,000** towards helping individuals with complex needs, who are facing homelessness to access secure accommodation and support.
- i. **£350,000** to fund the Recovery Investment Strategy which aims to make the Council's money go further and maximise support for the District in its recovery from Covid-19. Investment include:
 - 1 specialist skills and expert advice on how we can invest in the economic recovery of the district;
 - 2 giving our workforce access to training to build skills and knowledge fit for the new working environment created by Covid-19;
 - 3 enabling the production of new truly green energy supplies in the district; and
 - 4 delivering additional social housing.
- j. **£30,000** to engage with communities and encourage change in line with the Council's climate change emergency declaration.
- k. **£30,000** to develop the Council's Leisure Strategy.
- l. **£12,000** to fund one-off costs for transferring the car park enforcement services from a third party to management within Publica.
- m. **£13,000** to conduct feasibility work on options for insulating the Council's Trinity Road office building roof to minimise carbon emissions.
- n. **£360,000** provision for additional costs associated with waste and recycling services due to increased working from home related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

3 Provision for the impact of Covid-19

Covid-19 has continued to impact Council income and expenditure during 2021/22, due to the impact of national restrictions. The impact of embedded behaviour change, such as the continuation of working from home and the continued use of online shopping, on the Council's future revenue budget remains unclear. The 2022/23 budget includes a provision for reduced income from sales, fees and charges of £400,000. The MTFS assumes that this will not be a permanent change to the budget but will recover by 50% in 2023/24 and the Council's revenue will return to pre-pandemic levels from 2024/25. In addition, provision for additional costs of £360,000 for the collection of garden waste and recycling from households has been made available from the Council Priorities Fund for 2022/23.

The impact of Covid-19 on the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates in 2020/21 are shown in the Collection Fund account at the end of the 2020/21 financial year. Losses on the Collection Fund are usually "repaid" from the Council's revenue account in full in the following financial year. The Government has provided for losses in 2020/21 to be spread over the following three financial years – 2021/22 to 2023/24. This change of practice is reflected in this Strategy.

4 Unavoidable budget pressures

In addition to inflationary pressure, the Council monitors external factors which impact upon its budget. Unavoidable funding pressure arises from the following:

- a. Complying with financial reporting requirements. For example, providing for the payment of interest and repayment of borrowing related to the Capital Programme (Minimum Revenue Provision);
- b. Changing market conditions. For example, the processing cost of recycling materials, the impact of lower interest rates on Council investment returns and reducing demand for Council services which lowers income from fees and charges;
- c. Decisions taken by other bodies which impact upon this Council. For example, any County Council decisions related to waste disposal which impact upon collection arrangements for waste and recycling;
- d. Changes to the Government legislation or regulation. For example, changes to external audit regulations are increasing the work carried out by the Council's external auditors, who are therefore raising the external audit fee.

The most significant unavoidable budget pressures include:

- a. £50,000 to replace the current part-time Monitoring Officer role with a full-time Director of Governance and Development role which will increase capacity within the Council leadership team to support delivery of Council Priorities and will include responsibility for Member development.
- b. £47,000 to make permanent a resource to support economic growth in the District, recognising the value of work delivered since 2020.

- c. £39,000 to reflect the cost of attracting and retaining drivers for the Ubico Ltd contract.
- d. £70,000 for unavoidable growth in the costs of software maintenance, and cyber security enhancements. The software market is moving from one-off capital investment to annual charges. Investment in ICT in the Capital Programme has been reduced by £50,000 to acknowledge the move from capital to revenue costs. The net impact upon the revenue budget is £20,000.
- e. £14,000 for the flood warden programme enabling the Council to provide a supportive role, whilst capitalising on the wealth of local knowledge and experience that can be harnessed through volunteer programmes.
- f. £10,000 for the Council's contribution to Active Gloucestershire which delivers projects using the "we can move" approach that aims to increase physical activity levels in the District.
- g. £44,000 for increases cost of insurance policies.
- h. £7,000 for rising energy prices

To offset some of these unavoidable cost increases, the following savings will also be included in the 2022/23 revenue budget:

- a. £110,000 reduced requirement for contributions to the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- b. £22,000 due to the end of a property lease.
- c. £13,000 to reflect the reduced cost of Business Rates payable on certain Council owned properties.
- d. £78,000 reduced recycling processing costs.

The Council is also able to recognise additional income in its revenue budget from 2022/23 as follows:

- a. £26,000 from the Council's leisure contract.
- b. £12,000 for lease income from the Cirencester Leisure Centre
- c. £141,000 from other commercial property leases
- d. £60,000 from interest on a short-term loan to Cottsway Housing Association.

Details of all budget pressures and changes to income budgets over the life of the MTFs are set out in **Annex A2**.

5 Planned Savings

The Council has included the following savings targets over the life of the Financial Strategy:

	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000
Savings	822	3,824	2,062	2,160

These savings will be delivered through:

1. changes to Council policies, which increase income or reduce the cost of service provision;
2. return on investments made to support delivery of the Council Priorities;
3. efficiencies delivered through the Council's service delivery partners;
4. new Government funding streams; or
5. changes to the Council's asset portfolio.

A tactical plan for delivery of these savings is included in the Recovery Investment Strategy.

The Council will seek to maximise the use of the land and property assets it owns to support delivery of the Council priorities. The Council will also seek to work in partnership with other public sector service providers to make best use of the public estate within the District and the County.

The Council will consider business cases for the acquisition, disposal or enhancement of assets including the contribution towards Council Priorities, financial implications, risk, legal and governance matters. The Council will ensure that appropriate due diligence is carried out in line with the requirements set out in the Council's Capital Strategy.

6 Fees, charges and Government grants for specific services

The Council charges for many of the services it provides including car parking, planning advice and garden waste collection. The Government sets some fees, such as planning application fees. Where the Council has the discretion to set its own fees, the Council will charge for these services to ensure they are not subsidised by other taxpayers. The Council may decide to subsidise some fees and charges. Reasons for this will be clearly set out and will be subject to decision by councillors.

The budget proposals for 2022/23 include the following change to fees and charges:

The Council plans to continue with its budget resolution from February 2020 to increase garden waste service fees, over a three year period, so that the Council is recovering in full the cost of service provision. For 2022/23, this means implementing an increase to £47 for each bin licence. The revenue benefit is expected to be £264,000.

The Council resolved in 2020 to review car park charges every two years. On 10 January 2022, Cabinet approved changes to car park fees and charges, including charging for the period between 3 PM and 6 PM across the District. These changes are estimated to increase income to the Council by £300,000. In line with the Council's policy of reviewing car park tariffs and permit fees for inflation every two years, an inflationary increase has also been applied to car park tariffs and permit fees. This is expected to increase income by £100,000.

7 The Local Government Settlement 2022/23

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has used the outcome from the Spending Review to set the Local Government Finance Settlement 2022/23. The Local Government Finance Settlement, announced 7 February 2022, sets Government funding for individual councils.

The key announcements for district councils included:

- Nationally, an above inflation cash increase of 6.9% has been announced; however, this is different for individual councils. For Cotswold District Council, the settlement is essentially a flat roll-over from 2021/22.
- Councils impacted by “negative Revenue Support Grant”, which includes this Council, continue to be protected from this funding cut;
- New Homes Bonus funding will continue for 2022/23 but the grant will be for one-year only. The 2021/22 New Homes Bonus grant remains payable for that year only, so will not continue in 2022/23. Prior to 2020/21, New Homes Bonus grant was awarded for multiple financial years, initially six years and latterly four years. A consultation paper on the future of New Homes Bonus is due to be published shortly with an indication that changes will be implemented in 2023/24;
- Rural Services Delivery Grant continues in 2022/23;
- A new Services Grant has been introduced in 2022/23 and will be payable for one year only. This Grant includes funding for the national increase to National Insurance Contributions. This grant will be excluded from potential “transitional protection” as the Government implements changes to local government funding. This change is expected to take place from 2023/24.
- The Lower Tier Services Grant which was introduced in 2021/22 to ensure that no local authority saw an overall reduction in Core Spending Power in 2021/22 continues in 2022/23. Core Spending Power includes income from Retained Business Rates, Council Tax, Lower Tier Support Grant, New Homes Bonus, Rural Services Delivery Grant and the new Services Grant.
- Disabled Facilities Grant funding will continue at current levels;
- The Government delayed changes to local government funding from the Fairer Funding Review and Business Rate Retention Scheme for a year to April 2023.

In October, the Council’s draft budget for 2022/23 prudently included only legacy New Homes Bonus Grant from 2019/20 as the future of New Homes Bonus was uncertain. In terms of overall Government funding, it was assumed that funding would be broadly neutral but that increased income from a Council Tax increase would be considered as part of core Government Funding and cash funding from the Government would fall in line with the Council Tax increase.

The impact of the Local Government Settlement on the Council’s revenue budget for 2022/23 compared to 2021/22 is set out below:

Government Funding	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	Change £000
Retained Business Rates	3,280	3,462	182
Lower Tier Services Grant	691	1,435	744
Rural Services Delivery Grant	632	632	0
New Homes Bonus	2,093	810	(1,283)
Services Grant	0	129	129

Total Government Funding and the cut compared to 2021/22	6,696	6,468	(228)
---	--------------	--------------	--------------

The 2022/23 revenue budget funded by core Government funding has therefore reduced by £228,000.

8 Council Taxbase and Council Tax Proposal

The Council's current (2021/22) Council Tax for a Band D property is £138.93 for the full year. Each year the Government sets the maximum increase that a council may apply without requiring a local referendum. For district councils in 2022/23, the maximum increase is 2% or £5, whichever is the higher.

In order to deliver against its Priorities, the Council has recognised the need to generate income to fund investment in Council services. The Council therefore proposes implementing the maximum increases to Council Tax, allowable without holding a referendum, over the life of the MTFS.

For residents on low income, the Council has a Local Council Tax Support Scheme available to provide financial support with Council Tax payments. The Scheme was revised for 2020/21 to make it more generous.

The MTFS assumes a growth in the Council Taxbase of 1.2% over the life of the MTFS. The Taxbase for 2022/23, however, has grown at a lower rate of 0.8%. The lower Taxbase reflects an increase in the number of single person households (where an occupier is entitled to a discount of 25%), an increase in the impact of Local Council Tax Support payable as a result of the economic conditions in 2022/23 and promotion of the support available to low income households in the District. In addition, growth in housing supply has been slower than previously expected.

The outcome from a £5 Council Tax increase (for Band D properties) and growth in the Taxbase is forecast to deliver an increase in overall income from Council Tax in 2022/23 of £259,000. The proposed increase to Council Tax for 2022/23 for each Council Tax band is set out in the table below:

Council Tax Band	Proportion of Band D	Proposed increase 2022/23
A	6/9	£3.33
B	7/9	£3.88
C	8/9	£4.44
D	9/9	£5.00
E	11/9	£6.11
F	13/9	£7.22
G	15/9	£8.33
H	18/9	£10.00

9 Retained Business Rates

A key element of funding from the Government is from retained business rates. The MTFS assumes the Council will be compensated (through section 31 grant) for any negative impact upon business rates which relate to any nationally announced discounts or reliefs to businesses (such as the Covid Additional Relief Fund announced at the time of the Provisional Local Government Settlement).

The retained business rates scheme was due to be changed from April 2022. In November 2021, the Communities Secretary announced that plans to reform the Business Rates Retention Scheme to enable councils to retain 75% of their business rates would conflict with the Government's levelling up agenda and that the government would now "proceed with caution" on the issue. In his statement on the Provisional Local Government Statement, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities referred to future changes to Local Government funding as follows:

"Government is committed to ensuring that funding allocations for councils are based on an up-to-date assessment of their needs and resources. The data used to assess this has not been updated in a number of years, dating from 2013-14 to a large degree, and even as far back as 2000. Over the coming months, we will work closely with the sector and other stakeholders to update this and to look at the challenges and opportunities facing the sector before consulting on any potential changes.

As part of this we will look at options to support local authorities through transitional protection. Councils should note the one-off 2022/23 Services Grant provided in the Local Government Finance Settlement in 2022/23 will be excluded from potential transitional protections."

The impact of the review on needs and resources will be reflected in the amount of business rates which can be retained locally by the Council. The MTFS has been updated to reflect forecast income from the revised Government funding scheme using advice from Pixel Financial Management who are providing expert advice to support local authorities and national bodies such as Sparse and the Local Government Association. The MTFS takes a prudent view of implementation in April 2023.

The Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool

The Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool was set up in 2013/14 to maximise the business rate income retained within the County and to support economic growth within the area of the Local Enterprise Partnership. Since 2013/14 the Pool has delivered the following surpluses/(losses):

	Pool Surplus/(Loss) £	Cotswold DC Share Surplus/(Loss) £
2013/14	774,862	25,156
2014/15	(2,336,565)	(228,988)

	Pool Surplus/(Loss) £	Cotswold DC Share Surplus/(Loss) £
2015/16	877,948	114,854
2016/17	2,138,143	275,600
2017/18	3,992,000	482,179
2018/19	14,270,000	497,975
2019/20	4,547,000	539,000
2020/21	3,572,000	403,000

For 2018/19, the Council was part of the Gloucestershire 100% business rates retention pool pilot, which included all of the Gloucestershire local authorities and aimed to maximise the retention of business in Gloucestershire. In return for the gain of retaining all of the growth above baseline funding within Gloucestershire, some of the central government grants such as Rural Services Delivery Grant and Revenue Support Grant were directly funded from the Business Rates Retention Scheme.

The results of the 100% pool pilot were very successful with county-wide gain being in excess of £14 million. Of this gain, 20% was set aside for strategic economic development, 50% was allocated to the County Council to reflect the higher risk to the County Council of being part of the pool and the remaining 30% was shared across the District Councils. The District Council gain was allocated according to growth at a District Level and an equal share of the pool proportion gain so that each District gained from being part of the pool.

For 2019/20 the pool was no longer a 100% pilot, and reverted to the original 50/50 pool. The windfall gain for this Council was allocated to the Council Priorities Fund for investment in priority projects.

The Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool continues in operation in 2021/22 and will continue for 2022/23. The MTFs assumes that any windfall gain associated with the Business Rates Pool will be allocated to the Council Priorities Fund.

Each year the Council forecasts whether its collection of Business Rates will be higher than anticipated, resulting in a “surplus” on the Collection Fund, or lower than anticipated, resulting in a “deficit” on the Collection Fund.

Where this Council forecasts a surplus on the Collection Fund, the surplus is paid out in the following financial year to the County Council (10%), Government (50%) and the District Council (40%). Similarly, where the Council forecasts a deficit, the deficit is recovered in the same proportions in the following financial year. Due to the impact of Covid-19 on Councils ability to collect Business Rates, Government is permitting the exceptional Collection Fund deficit in 2020/21 to be recovered over the following three financial years rather than in the whole deficit being funded in 2021/22.

The business rate estimates for 2022/23 are set out in the Table below. The Final Local Government Finance Settlement increased the value of the Section 31 Grant by £37,642, offsetting a reduction in the Lower Tier Services Grant of the same amount.

	2022/23 £
Estimate of business rate income to the District	11,128,047
Tariff to Government	(11,485,278)
Section 31 Grants – reflecting impact of Government decisions on local government financing	4,981,628
Estimated Levy Payable to Government	(1,108,015)
Net Retained Business Rates 2022/23	3,516,382
Collection Fund Surplus/(Deficit) forecast to end 2021/22	(4,896,518)
Transfer from Business Rates Smoothing Reserve	4,841,778
Net Overall Income from Retained Business Rates	3,461,642

10 Capital Programme, Investment and Borrowing

The Council has set out its plans for investment in Council Priorities in various strategies including: this Medium Term Financial Strategy, the Climate Emergency Strategy and the Green Economic Growth Strategy. This investment is for service provision rather than investment to generate income to the Council. As such, the Council will be able to access borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board. The Council acknowledges that funding significant capital investment from its own internal resources is not possible and that external borrowing will be necessary. The Council is required to provide for the eventual repayment of debt from revenue. The Council's Recovery Investment Strategy sets out the return on investment which new investments will be required to meet to fund both the revenue cost of the investment and to provide additional income to the Council.

The detailed Capital Programme has been updated to reflect decisions taken by the Council and to reflect the expected profile of expenditure. The updated Capital Programme is included at **Annex A3**. The value of the Capital Programme and the associated funding is set out below:

Capital Programme Funding	Revised2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000
External sources	3,468	700	700	700	700
Capital receipts	8,060	805	2,864	2,159	105
Revenue budget	200	150	150	150	150
Reserves	2,165	0	0	705	0
Borrowing	499	37,450	25,657	23,812	736
Total Funding	14,392	39,105	29,371	27,526	1,691

Further information on the Capital Programme is contained within the Council's Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies.

11 Earmarked Reserves

Earmarked reserves are amounts set aside for specific policy purposes or for general contingencies and cash flow management. Revenue reserves result from events that have allowed or required monies to be set aside, year-end surpluses or circumstances that have led to anticipated expenditure being delayed or cancelled. Revenue reserves can be used for revenue or capital purposes.

Capital reserves are created from usable capital receipts. Capital reserves are not available for revenue purposes.

It is the responsibility of the Chief Financial Officer to advise the Council about the level of reserves that should be held and to ensure that there are clear protocols for their establishment and use.

Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 places a specific personal duty on the Chief Financial Officer to report on the adequacy of reserves and the robustness of the budget. The Chief Finance Officer includes this report in the budget setting report to Council in February each year.

The Council holds an earmarked reserve to support funding on Council Priorities. Any funding not used at the end of the financial year is rolled forward in to the next financial year. The use of Council Priorities Fund over the life of the MTFS is set out below:

Key use of earmarked reserves	Revised 2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000
Clean and Green Cotswolds	133	100		
Climate Change Emergency	126			
Covid-19 Recovery – impact upon contractors	240	360		
Devolution	75			
Economic Development and Regeneration	1,860			
Grants	33			
Leisure Strategy	30			
Local Plan Refresh	480	355		
Local Transport Engineer	50	50	45	
Open Space Review	25			
Recovery Investment Strategy and Economic Development	422	74		
Service Improvements	504	138	70	707
Social Housing	125	47		

Key use of earmarked reserves	Revised 2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000
Other	278			
Total	4,381	1,124	115	707

Conclusion

The Council has approved an ambitious Corporate Plan for delivery over the 2020-2024 period. This Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out the financial envelope for delivery of this Plan.

There are some significant risks to the Council from changes to Government funding. The Council has been planning for these changes and has approved a Recovery Investment Strategy to respond to potential reductions in Government funding.

In order to deliver action to support the new Council Priorities, the Council will need to invest in capital projects and this will require the Council to borrow for the first time since 1997. The MTFs reflects the financial implications of the borrowing plans set out in the Capital Strategy. All new capital investment will be subject to governance arrangements set out in the approved Recovery Investment Strategy and the due diligence requirements set out in the Capital Strategy.

The net cost of the Council's revenue plans, over the life of this Strategy, is as follows:

	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000
Operational revenue budget (surplus)/deficit	791	3,824	2,062	2,160
Savings/income generation target	(822)	(3,824)	(2,062)	(2,160)
Contribution (to)/from General Fund	(31)	0	0	0

The savings targets in 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 reflect the impact of reduced funding from Government from the DLUHC Fairer Funding Review and the savings required to fund unavoidable budget pressures such as inflation and the costs associated with borrowing for investment in Council services.

The Council will manage these budget deficits through application of the General Fund Balance. The forecast level of General Fund Balance is set out below:

	31 March 2023 £000	31 March 2024 £000	31 March 2025 £000	31 March 2026 £000
General Fund Balance	4,202	4,202	4,202	4,202

Overall, the Council revenue and capital plans are affordable and the forecast balances on Council resources is set out below:

	31 March 2023 £000	31 March 2024 £000	31 March 2025 £000	31 March 2026 £000
Capital Reserves	1,289	1,379	318	1,311
Earmarked Revenue Reserves	914	751	44	44
General Fund Balance	4,202	4,202	4,202	4,202

This page is intentionally left blank

Cotswold District Council

Recovery Investment Strategy 2022-2026

Foreword

At Cotswold District Council we recognise that we are facing a future funding challenge due to anticipated cuts in government funding and increased service cost pressures. Whilst central government has recently increased funding levels to local government in general this has been clearly focused upon upper tier services such as Adult Social Care and Children’s Services.

Additional resources to finance district level services are likely to be limited in the future and at level lower than that historically delivered through incentive based funding such as New Homes Bonus. These reductions in funding have already started to bite.

Before the Coronavirus Pandemic we had an ambitious agenda of change to deliver better services for our residents. The impact of the crisis on our Council, our residents and our place has made this Strategy even more important. To match our delivery ambitions to our revenue streams will require the whole Council to be more creative and commercially minded with all our services – reassessing the delivery of efficiencies, savings and income generation.

This Strategy builds upon our initial plans which were set out immediately after the start of the global pandemic but updates the finances based upon latest information and the increasing challenges in a post-Covid economy. The Strategy re-emphasises the Council Plan framework to provide value for money for our residents and businesses in respect of all of our services. As such, this represents an approach which all Councillors, Officers and Partners should adopt.

Our approach to deliver the much needed capital investment for our Housing, Jobs and Green Infrastructure is to ensure that the Council makes an appropriate return on capital employed to support the cost of capital and an appropriate return to support the revenue budget.

With an estimated funding gap of £8.9m against a net service cost of circa £12.5m this represents a significant challenge and requires us to be innovative, bold and ambitious in our approach. To meet this challenge we must focus on delivering the Council priorities whilst also at the same time closing the funding gap.

Joe Harris
Leader of the Council

Mike Evemy
Deputy Leader of the Council and
Cabinet Member for Finance

Tony Dale
Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transformation

Scope

The scope of this Strategy is to cover the range of tools and activities that help to improve the general approach to matching income and expenditure across the activities of the District Council whilst delivering upon the Council Priorities.

It is recognised that it is neither possible nor necessarily desirable for all the activities of the Council to be funded from the users of those services alone, but, the approach of this Strategy is to propose that ‘user funding’ should be the ‘normal’ position and exceptions to this be specifically approved. This Strategy does this by seeking to improve the general awareness amongst councillors and officers of commercialisation as a major tool for raising revenue.

The Strategy focuses strongly on how future capital investments should be appraised to ensure that they do not add to the burden on residents via Council Tax unless there is a clear social value reason for this and it is affordable and sustainable for the Council to support over the long term.

The Strategy starts from a premise that the Council has a clear need to deliver on its priorities and that capital investment is a tool to deliver these priorities and it needs to be bold if it is going to deliver on these. However it also recognises that there is a significant funding gap that needs to be closed and that the capital investment required to deliver on priorities also needs to support the underlying revenue budget by making an appropriate return.

Capital investment is also key to delivering the ambitious programme of the Council and the Strategy sets out some general principles to support business case decision making.

Council Aim

The Council's aim is to:-

“Recreate a council that's proactive and responsive to the needs of our residents and businesses in a fast changing environment, building for the future whilst respecting our heritage”.

The objective of the Recovery Investment Strategy is to ensure the Council has the necessary resources to deliver its overall aim and ensure investment decisions are aligned with the overall Council aim and priority themes whilst contributing to the financial viability of the Council.

The Council approved its Priorities in September 2020 as:

Our priorities

- 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

Our principles

Everything we do will be built on the following 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

Strategic Aims of the Recovery Investment Strategy

To become a more commercially focused Council we will need to deliver on the following key strategic aims:-

- Develop Commercial Skills across the Council and embed within the organisation;
- Improve our overall financial position by closing the gap between income and expenditure;
- Maximise income generation opportunities whilst not losing sight of social value;
- Leverage the intrinsic strength of our balance sheet to generate returns to support our service priorities for residents;
- Deliver projects that meet our priorities in an environmentally and financially sustainable way;

Priority Delivery Themes

The delivery themes that the Council will focus on in meeting its ambitions are:-

- Affordable Social Housing;
- Green Energy & Carbon Reduction;
- Delivering Infrastructure for Jobs & Economic Growth;
- Reinvigorating Commercial Centres to ensure our economic vibrancy;
- Maximising existing and new income streams from service delivery;
- Developing a commercial culture to our decision making whilst retaining a public service ethos

Required Outcomes

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out the following high level budget targets:-

Cotswold Commercial Strategy - Tactical Plan	Total £	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	Total £
MTFS Target Annual Revenue Savings	8,868,000	822,000	3,824,000	2,062,000	2,160,000	8,868,000
Policy Change & Efficiency						
Replacement of Incentive Based Funding Schemes by Govt	900,000		900,000			900,000
Environmental Services Improvement Programme	995,000	145,000	250,000	200,000	400,000	995,000
Increasing existing revenue streams /new streams	701,000	592,000	-	106,000	3,000	701,000
Efficiency savings from Publica	612,000	25,000	74,000	156,000	357,000	612,000
Sub Total Policy & Efficiency	3,208,000	762,000	1,224,000	462,000	760,000	3,208,000
Income per annum from capital investment						
Housing Association Loans	60,000	60,000	-	-	-	60,000
Climate Change & Green Energy Investments	4,000,000	-	2,000,000	1,200,000	800,000	4,000,000
Economic Development & Assets	1,600,000	-	600,000	400,000	600,000	1,600,000
Sub Total Capital Investment	5,660,000	60,000	2,600,000	1,600,000	1,400,000	5,660,000
Total MTFS Target	8,868,000	822,000	3,824,000	2,062,000	2,160,000	8,868,000
Investment Return Required from Capital Expenditure	5,660,000	60,000	2,600,000	1,600,000	1,400,000	5,660,000
Capital Exp Required to Deliver @ 7.5% ROI Loan @ 3.3%	7.5% 76,500,000	1,800,000	34,700,000	21,300,000	18,700,000	76,500,000

These targets represent the revenue savings that need to be made to achieve a balanced budget over the medium term and are a mixture of policy changes, efficiency savings and investment returns. The investment returns are targeted to ensure the investment delivers a return that covers the capital financing costs (principal and interest) and a return on capital employed. Please note that the capital expenditure required to deliver the assets may fall into an earlier year for financing purposes.

Tactical Delivery Plan

A delivery plan to meet the targets set out in Medium Term Financial Strategy is shown below. The nature of the transactions requires confidentiality to be maintained until appropriate levels of approvals are reached. It should also be regarded as a working document through which we can monitor progress of delivery against the plan. The Capital Programme Investment Board will review confidential information to ensure appropriate due diligence is conducted.

Cotswold Investment Strategy - Delivery Plan Public	Capex	Thematic Target £	Pre Debt ROI	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	Total £
Thematic Council Priority / Target	76,500,000	5,660,000		60,000	2,600,000	1,600,000	1,400,000	5,660,000
Housing	1,800,000	60,000		60,000	0	0	0	60,000
Loan to Cottsway	1,800,000	60,000	3.3%	60,000				60,000
Shortfall to Target		0		0	0	0	0	0
Climate Change & Green Energy Investments	49,700,000	4,000,000		0	2,000,000	1,200,000	800,000	4,000,000
Solar Provision 1	25,000,000	2,000,000	8.0%		1,000,000	1,000,000		2,000,000
Solar Provision 2	7,350,000	588,000	8.0%		588,000			588,000
Solar Provision 3	7,350,000	588,000	8.0%		400,000	188,000		588,000
Solar Provision 4	5,000,000	400,000	8.0%				400,000	400,000
Solar Provision 5	5,000,000	400,000	8.0%				400,000	400,000
Shortfall to Target	0	24,000		0	12,000	12,000	0	24,000
Economic Development & Asset Utilisation	25,000,000	1,600,000		0	600,000	400,000	600,000	1,600,000
Trinity Road Commercial	1,345,000	202,000	15.0%		202,000			202,000
EVCPs Phase 1	163,000	36,000	22.1%	9,000	27,000			36,000
EVCPs Phase 2	163,000	18,000	11.0%		9,000	9,000		18,000
Employment Land	15,000,000	900,000	6.0%		350,000	300,000	250,000	900,000
Cirencester Strategic Site	5,500,000	330,000	6.0%				330,000	330,000
Other e.g. Green Burials	2,829,000	114,000	4.0%		14,000	100,000		114,000
Shortfall to Target		0		(9,000)	(2,000)	(9,000)	20,000	0
Overall Delivery Plan Shortfall		24,000		(9,000)	10,000	3,000	20,000	24,000
Current Planned Return on Investment	76,500,000	5,636,000	7.4%	69,000	2,590,000	1,597,000	1,380,000	5,636,000

Resource Requirements

The Council has matched its ambition by investing in resources to deliver the development of strategies and policies that support the implementation of the Recovery Investment Strategy, including enhanced support for economic development activity, actions to tackle climate change, and the delivery of social rented housing. These have now been included in the base revenue budgets as permanent additions. In addition the Council is supporting additional project management capacity within Publica to deliver a range of projects including those within the strategy.

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
Economic Development Officer	47,000	48,000	49,000	50,000	194,000
Climate Change Officer	65,000	66,000	67,000	68,000	266,000
Project Management Resource	60,000	61,000	62,000	63,000	246,000
Total	172,000	175,000	178,000	181,000	706,000

Constraints – Powers and Guidance

The landscape around local authority involvement in what is loosely described as commercial activity continues to change. It is clear that Government is keen to ensure that investment is not driven primarily for yield and additional guidance has been produced by Department for Levelling Up Housing, and Communities (DLUHC) and guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) in respect of Prudential Property Investment (Investments financed through Prudential Borrowing).

Statutory and Advisory Guidance

CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services (revised December 2017 and 2021 code)

CIPFA's Prudential Code for Local Authority Capital Finance (revised December 2017 and 2021 code)

CIPFA Prudential Property Investment Guidance (Nov 2019)

MHCLG 2018 Statutory Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision

The Council's Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Finance Officer and the Public Finance Director are all aware of the core principles of the prudential framework and of the regulatory regime within which local authorities operate. There are a number of changes to how the prudential framework will operate from 2023/24.

One key change, which came in to effect from December 2021, related to the approach to borrowing in advance of need in order to profit from additional sums borrowed. This has been updated to be clear that borrowing for debt-for-yield investment is not permissible under the Prudential Code.

Officers will work with a team of specialist officers to prepare business cases for consideration by Members under the Council's Recovery Investment Strategy. It is the responsibility of the Finance Team to ensure that the implications of the prudential framework and the regulatory regime are considered as business cases are developed.

Governance Framework

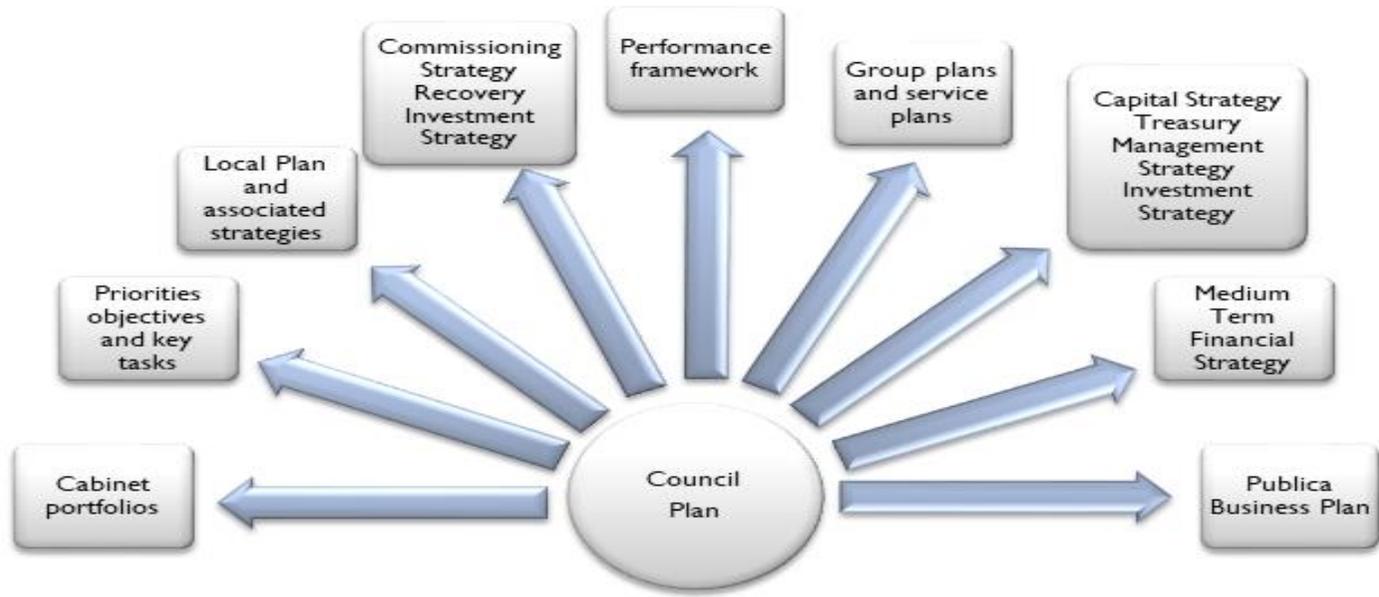
The Recovery Investment Strategy helps to guide all outcomes and deliverables from all other strategies and plans of the Council – programmes and projects need to be aligned with the Strategy in the same way as they are aligned with the Corporate Plan.

As the Strategy is a guidance framework it, of itself, does not have any other governance arrangements as these sit within the overall governance framework of the Council. Key controls around investment decisions remain with Cabinet and Council as currently expressed within the Financial Rules, Capital Strategy, Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy. However, a Capital Programme Investment Board has been established to ensure that Members from the Administration and the Opposition Group have the opportunity to oversee the implementation of the Strategy and to consider draft business cases before they are presented for formal decision making.

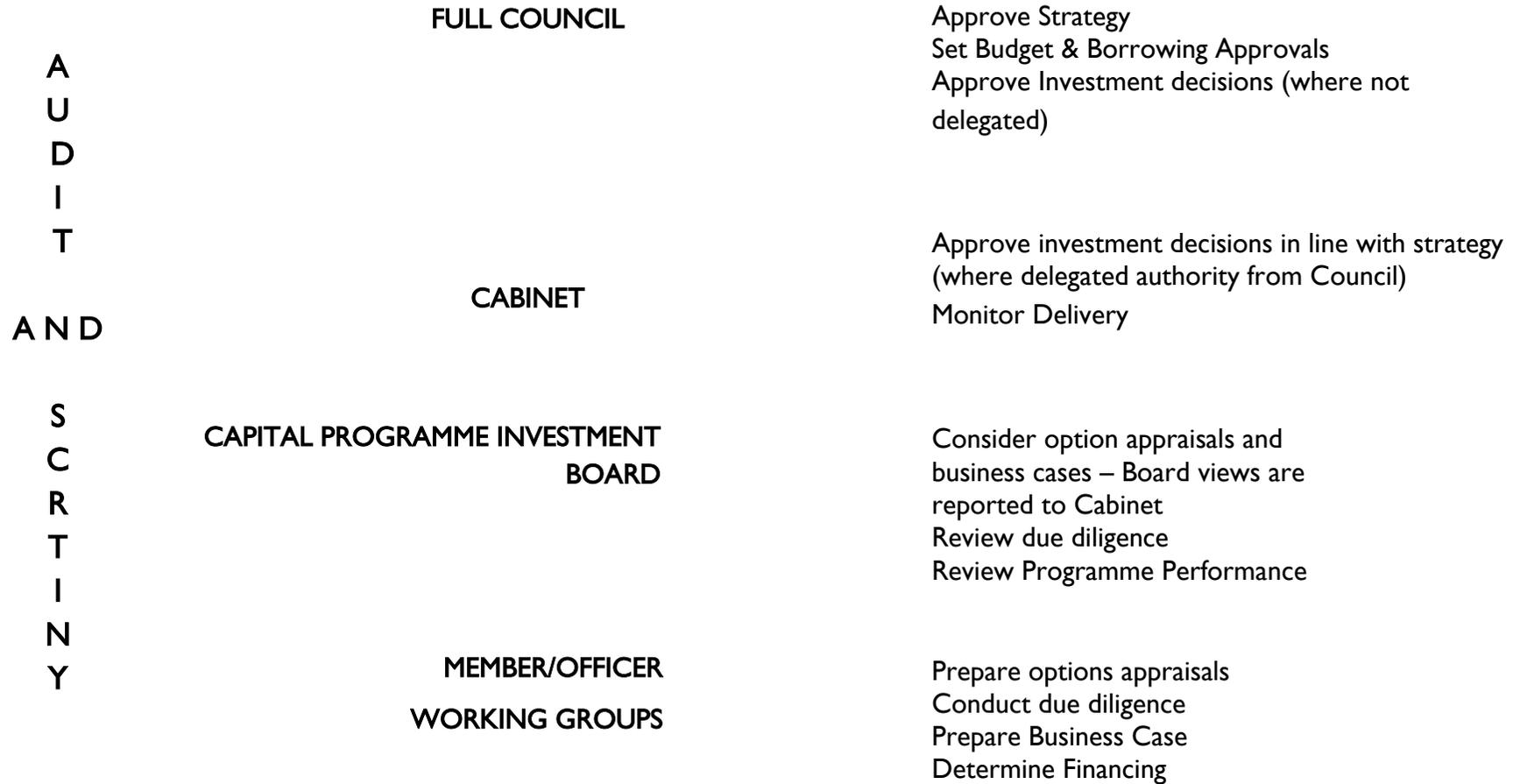
This Strategy seeks to guide all the Council investment decisions to meet the challenges and constraints set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

No new capital expenditure funding bids will be placed before decision making meetings without the express approval of the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills and the Council's Chief Financial Officer. An open and inclusive approach is recommended to governance with meetings open to all councillors to observe.

All investment decisions will be taken in line with the Council's Financial Rules which permit the Cabinet to take investment decisions up to £3 million. Investments in excess of this will require full Council approval. A diagrammatic representation of how this strategy fits with other Council Strategies is set out below.



RECOVERY INVESTMENT PROGRAMME DECISION MAKING FRAMEWORK



Key Actions

Affordable Social Housing

- Develop business case methodology that enables delivery of affordable housing
- Identify existing and potential future sites for development and acquisition
- Consider long term vehicle for holding housing and housing sites

Green Energy & Carbon Reduction

- Develop business case methodology that enables delivery of green energy
- Identify existing and potential future sites for development and acquisition
- Explore partnership delivery options

Delivering infrastructure for high value, highly skilled jobs, green economic growth, and supporting businesses to embrace digital technology

- Develop business case methodology that enables delivery of sites for jobs and growth
- Identify existing and potential future sites for development and acquisition
- Explore partnership delivery options

Reinvigorating Commercial Centres to ensure our economic vibrancy

- Develop business case methodology that enables delivery of sites for commercial development
- Identify existing and potential future sites for development and acquisition
- Explore partnership delivery options

Maximising existing and new income streams from service delivery

- Develop model to ensure all service revenue streams meet full cost recovery principles
- Undertake benchmarking for all existing revenue streams with local government comparators
- Review all fees and charges in light of service cost and market potential
- Review local government comparators to identify new income streams for existing service lines
- Review services to identify any complimentary services that could deliver revenue stream (e.g. Commercial Waste or Recycling)
- Review existing asset footprint to deliver further rental opportunities

Developing a commercial culture to our decision making whilst retaining a public service ethos

- Deliver commercial skills training for staff via a series of masterclasses in “Commercial Councils” for Councillors and staff
- Support our service leaders by providing service diagnostics to understand cost drivers
- Actively seek to move transactional services to self service
- Support our service leaders to move towards the desired operating model
- Review service provision to consider whether Council remains best delivery vehicle
- Review availability of external grant programmes to support Council and partner services

Technical Appendices

Cost of Capital and Target Returns

Funding Cost Baseline Calculations

Business Case Decision Tool Example

Example Investment Opportunities

Cost of Capital & Target Returns

To deliver capital investment schemes that meet the ambitions of the Council but do not worsen the ongoing revenue position of the Council requires the Council to at least meet the annual revenue cost of capital. This cost is made up of two elements:-

- Minimum Revenue provision (in effect principal debt repayments)
- Interest Charges

In addition to this the Council has identified a requirement to deliver a return on capital above cost to close the budget gap. This equates to 2%.

Minimum Revenue Provision is typically related to the lifespan of an asset with a maximum of 50 years. An asset with a lifespan of 25 years will require a Minimum Revenue Provision twice that of an asset that lasts 50 years.

Example target returns are set out below:-

<u>Target returns:</u>	<u>MRP</u>	<u>+ Interest</u>	<u>+ Return</u>	<u>= Total Return</u>
Renewable Energy	3.3	+ 2.5	+ 2.2	= 8%
Housing	2.0	+ 2.4	+ 1.0	=5.4%

Returns will reflect market conditions and risk assessed at the time of capital investments.

Constraints - Funding Costs

Borrowing Availability £76.5m – gross average return required 7.4% =£5.6m

Minimum Revenue Provision: Asset Life Method

Typical Renewable Energy Schemes (30 year) 3.3%

Typical Housing/ Econ Dev Schemes (50 year) 2%

Borrowing Rates

PWLB Certainty rate 30 year 2.5%

50 year 2.4%

Statutory and Advisory Guidance

CIPFA Prudential Property Investment Guidance

MHCLG Statutory Guidance

On-lending and Forward Financing rules

Business Case Decision Tool

Any business case requiring capital investment will need to complete a business case worksheet to assess whether a proposal will meet the appropriate test of affordability.

A capital investment that delivers a cost reduction will be dealt with in the same way with cost reduction replacing the income line.

An example worksheet is attached – all need to be signed off by the Council's Chief Finance Officer and Publica Group Finance Director.

Pass/Fail decisions do not automatically lead to equivalent funding decisions but are advisory to decision makers.

Business Case worksheet	Revenue Account Impact	Scenario	Medium Use Scenario I
MANUAL INPUT			
Capital Scheme:			
	All CDC Sites		Average Annual Return
Net Yield Required to deliver cap ex financial target			2.50%
Capital Expenditure			259,123
less Govt Grant			(96,000)
Net Financing Required			163,123
Net Income Target to support Council Budget			4,078
Gross Income			141,091
Expenses			
Electricity			92,156
Service & maintenance			1,835
Software and Back office			1,700
Bank Charges			1,411
Admin Officer Contribution	per charger		7,792
			-
Total deductions			104,893
Net income before financing			36,197
Debt Financing incl MRP		2.25%	10,212
Net Income after financing	Revenue Account Impact		25,985
Net Income Yield on debt			16%
Income above Target Return			21,907

Examples of Investment Opportunities

This list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive – it gives some typical examples how we might meet our service delivery priorities whilst also delivering on the financial challenge of commercialisation.

- Delivery of Affordable Housing on Council Owned Land – part financed through market housing sale;
- Delivery of Solar PV Generation Capacity on owned or leased land/buildings to deliver reduced utility cost or generate a revenue stream;
- Delivery of Business Park with infrastructure delivered in partnership with Local Enterprise Partnership – ground rent or leased units delivering revenue stream to partners and improving local economy;
- Regeneration of Town Centre site to deliver long term rental stream from commercial tenants in respect of mixed uses such as offices, leisure and retail;
- Acquisition of Commercial Property within district to secure revenue stream but also enable better control of Town Centre;
- Investment in Electric Vehicles to deliver reduced fleet costs;
- Investment in new technology to reduce cost of existing service provision;
- Loan to a Housing Association or Council Company.

This page is intentionally left blank

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	COUNCIL 20th JULY 2022
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 8
Subject	ADDITIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION: a) BUDGET COUNCIL PROTOCOL AND, b) SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS.
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member(s)	Cllr Joe Harris - Leader of the Council Email: joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer(s)	Angela Claridge, Director of Governance & Development Tel: 01282 623219 Email: angela.claridge@cotswold.gov.uk Jenny Poole, Deputy Chief Executive Tel: 01282 623313 Email: jenny.poole@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To update Council on the work and recommendations of the Constitution Working Group who have been modernising the Constitution.
Annexes	Annex A: Budget Council Protocol and flowchart Annex B: Social Media Guidance for Members
Recommendation/s	That Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Adopts the Budget Council Protocol for inclusion in the Council's Constitution. II. Adopts the Members' Social Media Policy, as an annex to the existing Elected Members' Code of Conduct, for inclusion in the Council's Constitution.
Corporate priorities	Ensure that all services delivered by the Council are delivered to the highest standard
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	Elected Members of the Constitution Working Group Local Management Team Finance Team Communications Team

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. The Council has a legal duty to publish an up to date Constitution and it should be reviewed annually with any necessary changes being considered at the Full Council.

1.2 The Constitution must contain:

- the Council's Standing Orders/Procedure Rules;
- the Members' Code of Conduct;
- such information as the Secretary of State may direct;
- such other information (if any) as the authority considers appropriate.

1.3 In 2019, the Council established a cross party Constitution Working Group who agreed a work programme of proposed changes to ensure the Constitution is kept up to date.

1.4 This report deals with proposals for two new parts to the Constitution which have been agreed with the Constitution Working Group.

- a) A Budget Council Protocol
- b) Social Media Guidance for Members.

2.0 BUDGET COUNCIL PROTOCOL

2.1 The Council budget setting meeting is the meeting of Council where the revenue budget for the forthcoming year, the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the Capital Programme and documents including the Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies are considered and approved. In order to help councillors and members of the public with the process and running of the meeting, a protocol was utilised for Budget Council in February 2022. The proposal is to adopt this protocol for inclusion in the Council's Constitution for subsequent use.

3.0 SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

3.1 In recent years, there has been an increase in Code of Conduct complaints against Councillors in respect of their social media use. Many local authorities have sought to limit the amount of complaints by introducing guidance on social media and policies. At present, the Council does not have any specific guidance on social media use for its Councillors.

3.2 The Local Government Association (LGA) Model Code of Conduct for elected members was published on 23 December 2020, and adopted by the Council in March 2021. The Code of Conduct for Elected Members specifically states that the Code extends to; *'all forms of communication and interaction, including ... in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments'*.

3.3 When the LGA's Model Code of Conduct was being consulted on nationally during 2019/20, 69% of respondents believed that social media guidance should be integrated into the Model Code of Conduct. Despite the overwhelming support for the incorporation of social media guidance into the Model Code, this didn't happen. Therefore, the Council has developed its own Social Media Guidance, as an annexe to the Code of Conduct for Elected Members, to assist Councillors of Cotswold District Council.

3.4 If the Social Media Guidance is adopted by Council it will be followed with a social media training session for interested Members.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None specific or arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Save that any changes to the Constitution need to be approved by Council, there are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1 There are no specific risks associated with this report. However, failure to have a robust and up to date Constitution does place the Council at the risk of legal challenge.

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

7.1 Full Council could decide:

- not to adopt either the Budget Council Protocol and/or the Social Media Guidance for Members;
- refer back to the Constitution Working Group for further consideration and amendments.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Council's Constitution.

This page is intentionally left blank

BUDGET COUNCIL PROTOCOL

1. Legal Requirements

- 1.1 The requirements of relevant legislation, particularly the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) (referred to in this Protocol as "the Regulations") must be complied with.
- 1.2 The Regulations require the budget to be presented to Full Council by way of a recommendation from the Cabinet.
- 1.3 The budget proposal may be amended, see section 3. While an amendment can be quite wide ranging it is not permissible for a Member to introduce a different motion recommending a different budget. This would be contrary to the Regulations which require that the budget be recommended to the Council by the Cabinet.
- 1.4 Under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 the Deputy Chief Executive, fulfilling the role of Chief Finance Officer, is under a statutory duty to report on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves ("the Section 25 report") before the budget decision is taken. The Council must have regard to the Deputy Chief Executive's report before reaching a decision. This will apply to amendments as outlined in section 3.
- 1.5 A flowchart illustrating the procedure set out below is included as Annex A to this protocol.

2. Procedure

- 2.1 The procedure at Budget Council as at all Council meetings is governed by the Constitution.
- 2.2 The Cabinet recommendation on the budget will be proposed by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance or by another Member of the Cabinet. The Seconder will have the right to speak next or to reserve the right to speak until later in the debate.
- 2.3 The budget proposer will have 15 minutes to introduce the budget. The Seconder will have 5 minutes to speak.
- 2.4 The Chair will then ask the Opposition Group if they wish to respond to the budget proposals at this point or reserve their right to speak until after amendments have been dealt with. The Opposition Group has the right to a 15 minute speech on the budget proposals either at this point in the debate or after amendments have been dealt with.

3. Amendments

- 3.1 Amendments to the budget motion may have significant implications for the calculations used in producing the budget recommendation and for the level of Council Tax and/or the Council's reserves. Therefore, **any** Member wishing to move an amendment which affects any of the proposals in the budget recommendation to any material extent should provide a copy of the amendment to the Deputy Chief Executive as early as possible before the meeting, preferably at least 2 days before the meeting, but by no later than **3.00 p.m. on the day before the Council meeting**. The Deputy Chief Executive may need to discuss any proposed amendment with Officers and will need to show the proposed amendment to the Monitoring Officer but otherwise the Deputy Chief Executive guarantees absolute confidentiality in relation to any amendment received. The Monitoring Officer will also maintain this confidentiality.
- 3.2 The Section 25 report provisions apply also to any amendments which affect the estimates. The Section 25 report provisions do not, however, apply to an amendment which does not affect the estimates, such as an amendment to refer the matter back to the Cabinet for reconsideration. It should, however, be borne in mind that any resolution of the Council to refer the budget back to the Cabinet may have cost implications for the Council in that it may cause a delay in the Council Tax billing process.
- 3.3 If an amendment to refer a recommendation back to the Cabinet is carried then it is likely that a special meeting of the Cabinet will be called early in the week following the Budget Council meeting, with the matter then being reported back to a special Full Council meeting later that week.
- 3.4 While the figures in the budget proposal may be amended in any way, subject to the Section 25 report by the Deputy Chief Executive, an amendment which seeks to give an instruction to the Cabinet in relation to a specific service or services (e.g. to maintain or discontinue a specific service or budget provision) will not be in order as once the budget has been approved the Cabinet is free to spend or not spend, and to vire within the rules of the Budget Framework as set out in the Council's Financial Rules.
- 3.5 The Section 25 report on the robustness of any amendment, will be submitted by the Deputy Chief Executive before an adjournment allowing Groups to discuss the amendment(s).
- 3.6 The Deputy Chief Executive will use a pro forma for the Section 25 report which will be handed to the Chief Executive.
- 3.7 The Opposition Group will have the first opportunity to present budget amendments. The Opposition Group will have 5 minutes to present the amendment(s). The Secunder of the amendment will have 5 minutes to speak and may reserve their right to speak until later.
- 3.8 Members of any other Group will then have 5 minutes to present amendments. The Secunder of the amendment will have 5 minutes to speak and may reserve their right to speak until later.

- 3.9 Any Independent Members will then have 5 minutes to present amendments. The Seconder of the amendment will have 5 minutes to speak and may reserve their right to speak until later.
 - 3.10 After all amendments have been presented, there will be the opportunity for points of clarification to be raised and responses given.
 - 3.11 Once points of clarification have been dealt with the Chief Executive will formally report that the Deputy Chief Executive has certified that each amendment is robust. In the event that the Deputy Chief Executive concludes that amendment(s) is/are not robust, this will be reported by the Chief Executive. If necessary, the Deputy Chief Executive will address the Council on the issue(s).
 - 3.12 There will then be a 20 minute adjournment of Council to allow Groups 20 minutes to consider the amendments.
 - 3.13 The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, or other Cabinet Member if they introduced the budget proposals, will address Council advising of any budget amendments which have been accepted by the Administration.
 - 3.14 The amendments not accepted by the Administration will then be debated in the order in which they were originally presented to Council.
 - 3.15 For any amendments which are not accepted, the Proposers of the amendments have the right to speak for 5 minutes each to sum up the debate.
 - 3.16 The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, or other Cabinet Member if they introduced the budget proposals, has the final right of response before a recorded vote is taken on the amendment.
- 4. Return to the Substantive Budget Debate**
- 4.1 Once all of the amendments have been determined, the proposed budget will be debated.
 - 4.2 Any Member will then be able to ask questions on the proposed budget. Questions may only be asked of the Member who proposed the motion and not of any other Member of the Cabinet or other Member of the Council.
 - 4.3 A Member may only ask one question, plus any supplementary questions.
 - 4.4 A Member who has asked a question may ask supplementary questions. A supplementary question must relate to the original question, or to any answer given to the original question or any previous supplementary question. A supplementary question may not introduce a new matter.
 - 4.5 The Opposition Group may respond to the budget proposals if they have reserved the right to speak following the Administrations introduction of the budget proposals. The Opposition Group have the right to a 15 minute speech on the budget proposals.

- 4.6 The Seconder of the proposed budget has the right to speak for 5 minutes if they have not spoken before.
- 4.7 The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, or other Cabinet Member if they introduced the budget proposals, will sum up the debate.
- 4.8 A recorded vote will be taken.

Budget setting process

Annex A to Budget Council Protocol



15
minutes

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member
for Finance Proposes the Budget



5
minutes

Seconder speaks or reserves right to
speak



15
minutes

Chair asks whether Opposition
Group wishes to respond here or
later in the debate on the
substantive budget



5
minutes

Opposition Group
Amendments
proposer

Seconder



5
minutes



5 minutes

Any Other Budget
Proposals – Other
Group
Representatives

Secunder



5 minutes



5
minutes

Any Other Budget
Proposals –
Independent
Members

Secunder



5 minutes

No time
limit

Points of clarification

Chief Executive announces the Deputy Chief Executive
views on the budget amendments



20
minutes

Adjournment
Groups Meet to discuss proposals



5 minutes

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to advise Members where Administration has accepted budget amendments

No time limit

Debate – on amendments any Member can speak if they have not spoken before



5 minutes EACH

Opposition Proposer and/or
Other Group Proposer and/or
Independent Member Proposers
Sum up debate on any amendments not accepted by the Administration

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance right to respond to each amendment

Recorded Vote on Individual Amendments

Return to Substantive Budget

Questions on Budget

Opposition Group may respond here to the substantive budget if right was reserved prior to budget amendments

General Debate –any other points on the budget to be raised

Seconder of the budget has opportunity to speak if they have not spoken before

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to sum up

Recorded Vote

This page is intentionally left blank



DRAFT SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE FOR COUNCILLORS OF COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

July 2022

What is the purpose of this Guidance and who does it apply to?

Cotswold District Council has always been committed to innovation and creativity in the digital revolution which has taken place over recent years. We actively encourage the use of social media, which has become an integral part of everyday life for many of us as it is a useful way to communicate and connect with people from all over the world.

This Guidance doesn't seek to inhibit "freedom of expression", and means that Councillors are generally free to talk about, or write about, or otherwise, express their ideas and opinions without any censorship or interference - subject only to a few exceptions.

In respect of Councillors, social media has many benefits including raising a Councillor's profile, helping to deliver information to constituents in a fast and effective manner and for improving reputation. However, there are also many ways in which Councillors may use social media inappropriately, and this can have long lasting consequences for Councillors, and the Council's reputation.

The Social Media Guidance for Councillors ('the Guidance') is intended to assist Councillors when using social media, in a personal or professional capacity, to avoid potential breaches of their Code of Conduct. Whilst Standards matters are and dealt with on a case by case basis, this Guidance is designed to assist Councillors on what is and isn't appropriate behaviour when using social media.

Importantly, this Guidance should be read in conjunction with the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors.

Who is this Guidance for?

The Guidance applies to all Councillors of Cotswold District Council.

Pros and Cons of Social Media



The Code of Conduct

Councillors are personally responsible for their conduct online and should always be mindful of the Code of Conduct and the Nolan Principles.

'Acting in Capacity' as a Councillor

This is a subjective test. However, there are actions which increase the likelihood of a Councillor being found as 'acting in their capacity as a Councillor'. For example, by identifying that they are a Councillor on their profile page, by using social media to campaign or to share Council news/developments with the public.

A Councillor may wish to consider the following when using social media:

- Keep separate accounts for professional and private matters

By having one account which incorporates both a Councillor's professional and personal life, Councillors are increasing the risk of being found as acting in their capacity if a complaint is made.

- If a Councillor wishes to keep just one account, be clear on what the account is used for. For example, if the account is personal, keep it private and refrain from using Council or Councillor terminology or referring to your role as a Councillor.
- While a Councillor may make a distinction on social media about what is a personal account/ content and what is a Council business account/ content,

that does not mean what a Councillor posts on a personal account is private, and it could be shared by other people in public forums or used by the media.

General Responsibilities When Using Social Media

In addition to the Code of Conduct, Councillors should be mindful of the following responsibilities:

- Councillors should take particular care to ensure that, in any comment or post they create, they do not imply that they are speaking on behalf of the Council as a whole.
- Once a post is made on social media, it is there for the world to see. Even if it is deleted this does not mean that someone has not already saved a copy of it. Councillors should never post anything on social media that they would not be prepared to discuss in public meetings, with the local media, with their constituents, and with their friends and family. Councillors should think carefully before engaging in activity on social media.
- Councillors should be honest about who they are on social media and not impersonate anybody if it could lead to bringing the Council into disrepute.
- Councillors should be mindful of the safety of themselves, their families and others. Any information posted to social media is public including pictures, profile information, friends list and comments. Individuals will be able to see your information and link you to other people, which may include vulnerable children and adults.
- Councillors should only share accurate information from reliable sources and should be mindful of 'fake news' stories and outlets. It's evidenced that anonymous profiles can contribute to the spread of misinformation or fake news, as well as cyberbullying, trolling and hate crime.
- Councillors should be trustworthy and not use social media to divulge any confidential or exempt information which has been shared with them.
- Councillors should keep their social media accounts secure and protected by passwords. They should not allow anybody else access to any of their social media platforms.
- Councillors should remain professional and polite when conversing with members of the public. This includes the use of private messaging, commenting on posts or replying.

- The way we interact with people in person is not just limited to the things we say. Body language, expression, tone of voice and who we are speaking to are all contributing factors to interaction. Considering this, Councillors should always consider how any comment/post they make on social media could be construed.
- Councillors should be mindful of the public perception of using social media during Council meetings and consider whether it is appropriate.

Dealing with Harmful Rumours and Mis-information.

It is difficult not to engage when you are the subject of rumours, misinformation and smear campaigns. While it is always tempting to respond and clarify every rumour and falsehood circulated about you, it is also useful to think about the emotional, economic and time costs of engaging as in many cases, rumours disappear as quickly as they emerged. Councillors from other local authorities have shared some strategies they have found useful to deal with this.

Calmly try to understand who is behind the attack. Most of the time, they are people with a clear agenda trying to gain control or to manipulate.

Correct the facts. This can be done with a formal statement or if you can identify the source, then do it publicly by correcting their posts with facts and evidence. Remember that Officers are there to give advice, support and provide factual information.

Remember that rumours and misinformation are fed by repetition. It is good to defend your reputation but Councillors find that the most efficient way is to do it once and then stop engaging this way.

Leave the environment the rumour is being spread within. A smear campaign tries to manipulate and gain control but no control can be gained if you do not participate. You may wish to advise your followers that you will be logging out of social media for a period of time, which gives the rumour time to calm down while protecting your own emotional and mental wellbeing.

Rumours and smear campaigns can be very stressful and at times, they can feel very isolating. Keep your self-confidence by talking to family, friends and others in your support network. Some may also feel able to counteract rumours with factual information.

If you can identify the source of the rumours and smear campaigns, you should document it and keep a record. This may be useful if further disciplinary or legal action is required.

Potential Legal Issues

Councillors should be mindful that, in addition to a potential breach of the Code of Conduct, misuse of social media may give rise to other consequences. The following issues, which may lead to criminal or civil legal proceedings, may also arise:

- Data Protection
- Publication of Obscene Material
- Incitement
- Copyright
- Harassment
- Discrimination
- Bias
- Defamation
- Judicial Review

Training

Training on the use social media will be made available to Councillors.

The LGA has also published a Checklist for Councillors. This can be found at Appendix A.

If you are unsure, or have any questions about your social media use, contact the Monitoring Officer.

Review

This guidance will be reviewed periodically by the Constitution Working Group.

Appendix A

LGA Checklist for Councillors

<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/guidance-and-resources/comms-hub-communications-support/digital-communications/social-1>

Be a person

In the words of Digital Specialist [Euan Semple](#), "Organisations don't tweet, people do". You are likely to be more effective if your social media profile is you (with a picture of you) rather than an organisation with a logo.

Don't worry about reaching everyone in your ward

Social media will be more effective in some wards than others. University towns, urban areas with good broadband and mobile connections, and a working age population tend to work best. Wards with an older population and poor internet connectivity tend not to be so effective at reaching your ward. However don't let this stop you as connections are getting continuously improving as we move towards a higher level of digital inclusion.

Don't let it replace your traditional work

To be an effective councillor you won't stop meeting people and posting leaflets simply because you are posting online. The traditional work of a councillor still has to be done. You will know your residents best—consider which channel works best for them to connect with you, online and offline.

Think about the platform you'll use

If people in your ward are keen Facebook users then think seriously about Facebook. Twitter is popular among politicians because it's easy to use and connects people really well. Whichever one you choose, learn one at a time before even thinking of trying something else. You will know your residents better than anyone else so ask them which channel works best for them.

See how other councillors use it

Watch and learn from other councillors who are using social media. Have a chat to them. You'll very often find they will be happy to talk. Even to those from different parties.

Don't be a slogan machine

There is a really important decision to be taken over how political to be. You may have been elected on a party political ticket. But you are also a rounded human being. Social media is a chance for you to show your human side. Just posting party

political content is likely to switch many people off and you may be talking only to the party faithful.

Have a conversation

Social media works best as a two-way conversation connecting people and sharing information. Good councillors do this every day face-to-face with residents—social media should be no different to this.

Don't wait for people to come to you

You've got your Facebook profile or your Twitter profile. People won't just come flocking to you. Run a search on your chosen profile for the name of your ward or an issue. Make a connection. Join a Facebook group set-up by residents. Comment on a blog, a website or a video clip.

Think about times when you won't post

From experience, many elected members say that Friday and Saturday nights are not always the best time to post overtly political messages. You won't always get the most rounded debates. Many councillors post sparingly on religious holidays.

To post in meetings or not?

Some authorities frown on posting from social media in meetings. Check the situation where you are. Residents, residents groups, journalists and bloggers are being encouraged to use social media from meetings. So adding your voice to the conversation may be a good thing as part of democracy. If you can post an update from a meeting and it doesn't hamper your role in that meeting then it's something to think about.

Don't have a row

Robust debate is fine from time-to-time and it's part of the cut and thrust of local politics. Most people can accept that. But remember how this debate is playing out to passers-by who are not interested in the detail of the issue. They are likely to be switched off. Take the row offline with a phone call or an email.

Don't be abusive

An absolute 'no no' is abusing people online. It doesn't work. It will make you look awful and is a sure-fire way to land you in trouble with your electorate, the party and the council. Be professional. Don't say anything you wouldn't be happy saying in a public meeting with the Press there.

Don't discuss case work detail

Case work can be reported to you on social media. Everything from uncollected rubbish and a cracked paving slab to concerns about child protection. As a good rule of thumb, ask residents to tell you the detail of an issue offline. Social media platforms usually have an easy-to-use way to talk one-to-one. Email and telephone can come into play too.

Pictures work

People respond really well to pictures. They don't have to be print quality. They don't have to be posed. If you are on a ward walk post some pictures. Include the people you are with if they are happy with that. Post pictures that show your human side too. That sunrise you just noticed. Your dog. Things that make you human.

Enjoy it

It's not meant to be scary. It's not meant to be hard work. Relax. Be yourself. Be a responsible elected member. Enjoy it.



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	FULL COUNCIL 20 JULY 2022
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 9
Subject	Appointment of the Deputy Chief Executive Officer (s151)
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Joe Harris Email: joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver Chief Executive Officer Email: Robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To recommend to Council, the appointment of David Stanley as the permanent Deputy Chief Executive Officer (s151) for Cotswold District Council To recommend to Council, the appointment of Jo Moore as the Interim Deputy Chief Executive Officer (s151) for Cotswold District Council pending David Stanley commencing employment.
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	The Appointment Panel RECOMMEND that Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approves the appointment of David Stanley as Deputy Chief Executive Officer (s151) for Cotswold District Council. 2. Notes that the provisional offer of employment has been made, subject to two references, medical clearance and eligibility check in accordance with the Council's policies. 3. Agrees that the appointment commences on a date to be mutually agreed. 4. Agrees that the salary to be offered is £86,275 per annum. 5. Confirms that the appointment will be subject to a 6 month probation period. 6. Agrees to appoint Jo Moore as Interim DCE & Section 151 Officer until David Stanley commences employment. 7. Agrees that £35,000 is earmarked from the Council Priorities Fund to meet the costs associated with the Interim Deputy Chief Executive post.



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	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>The recommendations are made following a recruitment campaign and robust candidate assessment and interview process. Following assessment and final interviews the Appointments Panel were unanimous in their decision that, subject to the approval of Full Council, David Stanley should be offered the post of Deputy Chief Executive Officer (s151).</p> <p>In accordance with the Council's Officer Employment Procedure Rules and Regulations introduced under the Local Government Act 2000, all Members of the Cabinet have been informed of the Appointments Panel's recommendation. The Leader has confirmed to the HR Manager and the Council's Director of Governance and Development (MO) that the Cabinet has raised no objections to the proposed appointment.</p>



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Local Government & Housing Act 1989 S (1) (a) places a duty on a local authority to designate one of its officers as s151 Officer. This is one of three statutory roles; Head of the Paid Service, s151 Officer and Monitoring Officer.
- 1.2 In March 2022, the Council's Deputy Chief Executive (s151), Jenny Poole, announced her intention to leave the Council in July 2022.
- 1.3 Following a national recruitment campaign and robust candidate assessment, final interviews took place with the Appointments Panel on the 27th June 2022.
- 1.4 The Appointments Panel consisting of:
 - Cllr Joe Harris – Leader of the Council
 - Cllr Mike Every – Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance
 - Cllr Jenny Forde – Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing
 - Cllr Gary Selwyn – Member of the Liberal Democrats Group.
 - Cllr Tony Berry – Leader of the Conservative Group
 - Cllr Ray Theodoulou – Member of the Conservative Group
 - Cllr David Cunningham – Member of the Conservative Group
- 1.5 Cllr Joe Harris acted as Chair of the Appointments Panel.
- 1.6 The Appointments Panel, having regard to feedback from the technical interviews, and taking account of the final interview scores, were unanimous in recommending that David Stanley be offered, subject to the necessary pre-employment checks and ratification at Council, the position of Deputy Chief Executive Officer (s151).

2. CONCLUSIONS

- 2.1 The Deputy Chief Executive Officer (s151) is a key role in working with elected members and senior management to shape and deliver the long term vision and corporate business plan of this Council.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The salary applicable to this permanent position is within the budgeted salary range.
- 3.2 It is proposed that £35,000 is earmarked from the Council Priorities Fund to meet the costs associated with the Interim Deputy Chief Executive post.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS



- 4.1** The Council has a duty to appoint to the statutory role of s151 Officer. The Appointments Panel may recommend who to appoint but no appointment may be made without the formal approval of Council.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1** If the Council does not ratify the appointment, or if the successful candidate is not able to take up the role prior to Jenny Poole's departure, then there is a risk that the Council may not fulfil the statutory responsibilities covered by this role and this may also risk the delivery against the Councils Business Plan priorities. The Council has sought to mitigate this risk by securing Jo Moore as an interim Deputy Chief Executive (s151) to undertake the role until the permanent appointee commences their employment.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 6.1** None

7. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** None

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 8.1** None

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1** None