

Public Document Pack



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Tuesday, 8 November 2022

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COUNCIL

A meeting of the Council will be held at Council Chamber - Trinity Road on **Wednesday, 16 November 2022 at 2.00 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.

Cotswold District Council, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1PX
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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 9 - 26)**
To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the ordinary Council meeting held on 21 September 2022 and the extraordinary Council meeting held on 5 October 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. Written responses will be published prior to the meeting:

Question 1 from Councillor Claire Bloomer to Councillor Joe Harris, The Leader of the Council

I am concerned about the spread of graffiti in our towns and the increasing effort and cost to clean it up. Has the Council considered using community payback by offenders to clean up areas blighted by graffiti thereby saving both officer time and council funds?

Question 2 from Councillor Claire Bloomer to Councillor Joe Harris, The Leader of the Council

We have recently seen more cuts to bus services in the Cotswolds. These cuts will have a huge impact on residents who rely on them to get to work, to the shops, for medical appointments and to see friends and family. What can the Council do to help residents whose bus services are being withdrawn?

Question 3 from Councillor Tony Berry to Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation

I note that Cabinet has approved a sum of £125,000 for new car parking charge machines which have a higher speed for authorising card charges and don't accept cash. Given the inflationary challenges facing the Council, would this not be a good opportunity to save a not unsubstantial amount of money by retaining our existing machines and at the same time pleasing all those members of the public who still want to pay for their parking in cash?

Question 4 from Councillor Tony Berry to Councillor Joe Harris, The Leader of the Council

Please could you tell us how many old road signs you sold at the recent auction and the amount received for them net of commission?

Question 5 from Councillor Stephen Andrews to Councillor Joe Harris, The Leader of the Council

In September 2020 the Council approved its first Recovery Investment Strategy to provide critical support to the key priorities in the Corporate Plan 2020-2024. This was re-approved more recently in July of this year to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan to 2020-2024. At the same time, there was no analysis of the financial risks within the strategy that might impact upon the delivery of key Corporate Plan outcomes and there was no prioritisation within the Corporate Plan of those outcomes.

Given the stated intent to rescind the Recovery Investment Strategy, which outcomes within the Corporate Plan is it proposed to scale back or will no longer be delivered?

Question 6 from Councillor Julia Judd to Councillor Andrew Doherty, Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste and Recycling

We were told earlier this year that instances of green waste fly tipping have greatly increased. Please could we be told by what percentage (ideally since 2019 or from whenever there are recent records) and how much it has cost the council to collect green waste fly tipping?

Question 7 to Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transformation, from Councillor Tom Stowe

Following the news of the Cabinet's u-turn and its decision to rescind the planned £75,000,000 Recovery Investment Strategy. Can the Cabinet Member please confirm the sunk costs incurred by the council in relation to developing these now abandoned plans over the last 3 years, including Consultancy fees, Officer's time and any other associated costs.

Question 8 to Councillor Jenny Forde, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, from Councillor Ray Theodoulou.

Is the administration planning to increase the cost to the public of any leisure facilities?

7. Cost of Living Working Group (Pages 27 - 34)

Purpose

To set out how the Council is responding to the Cost of Living and Warm Places Motions and to make recommendations for funding allocations for specific initiatives.

Recommendations

That Council resolves to:

- a) Agree to allocate match funding of £20,000 for the Council Tax Hardship Fund from the balance of the Covid-19 Hardship Fund earmarked reserve, and,
- b) Agree to allocate £40,000 from the Council Priorities Fund towards establishing a Food Network.

8. **Council Tax Support Scheme Proposals for 2023/24 (Pages 35 - 46)**

Purpose

To present the results of the public consultation on proposals for revising the current Council Tax Support scheme with effect from 1 April 2023.

Recommendation

That Council resolves to:

- a) Agree the increase to income bands as detailed within paragraph 2.8 and Annex B of this report from 1 April 2023.
- b) Agree that officers may consider backdating Council Tax Support for a period beyond four weeks, but for no longer than six months, if there are exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances (or good cause) would apply in situations such as:
 - (i) The claimant was seriously ill (physically or mentally)
 - (ii) Someone the claimant should have been able to rely on for support did not give the support required (such as the Council, Advice Agency, DWP or a support worker) and therefore the claimant was not aware they were able to claim for Council Tax Support
 - (iii) Some external factor that prevented a claim being made (such as imprisoned, detained under the Mental Health Act)

9. **Recommendation from Cabinet 3rd October 2022: Changing Places Toilets (Pages 47 - 50)**

Purpose

To consider a recommendation from Cabinet on 3 October 2022 relating to funding for “Changing Places” toilets.

Recommendation

That Council resolves to allocate a capital budget of £162,500 in 2022/23 to install four accessible ‘Changing Places’ toilets across the district for people with severe disabilities following a successful bid for funding from the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities.

10. **Recovery Investment Strategy (Pages 51 - 56)**

Purpose

To rescind the Recovery Investment Strategy.

Recommendation

That Council resolves to agree to rescind the Recovery Investment Strategy for the reasons as set out in the report.

11. **Implications of Elections Act 2022 (Pages 57 - 62)**

Purpose

To provide an update on the key elements of the Elections Act 2022 and its implications for the Council’s Returning Officer and Electoral Services team.

Recommendation

That Council resolves to:

- I. Note the report and the allocation of £23,910 from the Council’s Priorities Fund to provide additional staff resource to enable the Council to meet the requirements for Voter ID at elections taking place on or after 4 May 2023.

12. **Executive Scrutiny Protocol (Pages 63 - 72)**

Purpose

To consider a recommendation from Cabinet on 3 October 2022 and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 October 2022 relating to the Executive Scrutiny Protocol.

Recommendation

That Council resolves to approve the addition of an Executive Scrutiny Protocol into the Constitution.

13. **Draft Programme of Meetings 2023-24 (Pages 73 - 82)**

Purpose

To set a programme of Council and committee meetings for 2023-24.

Recommendation

That Council resolves to:

- a) Approve the programme of meetings for May 2023 and the inclusion of a Licensing Sub-Committee meeting on 26 April 2023 as set out in part 2 of the report and shown in Annex A;
- b) Note that the Leader of the Council has agreed to move the Cabinet meeting originally scheduled for 6 March 2023 to 13 March 2023 and to cancel the Cabinet meeting that was scheduled for 3 April 2023;
- c) Approve the programme of meetings for June 2023 to May 2024 (Annex B);
- d) Delegate authority to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer), in consultation with Group Leaders, to make changes to the programme of meetings in the event that there is any future decision of Council to change the committee structure or committee remits that impacts the programme of meetings;
- e) Delegate authority to the Democratic Services Business Manager to set meeting dates for the Performance and Appointments Committee and the Licensing Sub-Committee (Licensing Act 2003 Matters);
- f) Agree that, subject to any alternative proposals Council considers and agrees, meeting start times will be rolled forwards from 2022/23;
- g) Delegate Authority to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) to set dates for member training and briefing sessions and any working groups established by the Council.

14. **Notice of Motions**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12, the following Motions have been received:-

Motion I on Provision of Community Public Access Defibrillators on New Developments. Proposed by Councillor Tom Stowe, seconded by Councillor Stephen Andrews.

This Council notes:

According to the British Heart Foundation there are over 30,000 out-of-hospital cardiac

arrests in the United Kingdom each year where emergency medical services attempt to resuscitate the victim. However, the survival rate is very low.

Early use of Automated External Defibrillators can double the chances of survival. However, unfortunately, for every 1 minute delay the chances of survival can reduce by 10%.

Given the rural nature of our district, the chances of swift medical intervention from the emergency services are limited, therefore, access to a good network of Community Public Access Defibrillators, that can be accessed swiftly, is vital to safeguard the health and well-being of our residents.

This council also notes.

In many cases the responsibility for the installation of CPADs in our communities falls to local voluntary and community groups. This presents many challenges, not just for funding, but also working and negotiating with various parties with regards to finding suitable siting and electrical supplies for the devices.

With ongoing and future development throughout the district, keeping up with the installation of new CPADs can be a very difficult task. Best practice guidance states that CPADs should be located no further than 400 metres apart.

This council believes that the Health and Well-being of our residents should be at the forefront of everything that it does.

This council therefore resolves to give authority to the Forward Planning Team to investigate options to amend the Regulations in the new Cotswold Local Plan to address this issue, and to ensure that any new housing developments within the district include the provision for the supply and installation of sufficient Community Public Access Defibrillators to cover the housing and industrial area of the new development. An exception may be considered for smaller developments of less than 6 properties.

Motion 2 on Menopause. Proposed by Councillor Claire Bloomer, seconded by Councillor Andrew Doherty.

Council notes that:

- i. 51 per cent of the UK population will directly experience the menopause during their lifetime;
- ii. Over 13 million women in the UK are either menopausal or peri-menopausal at any time;
- iii. 4.5 million of those 13 million women are in the workplace;
- iv. Three out of four women experience menopause-related symptoms with one in four experiencing serious symptoms;
- v. 1.6 million working days are lost to menopause symptoms annually as a result.

Menopause can see women experiencing a wide range of symptoms including hot flushes, fatigue, anxiety, disturbed sleep, heavy and erratic periods, mood swings, rage, heart palpitations, and itchiness.

The intensity and combination of some of these symptoms can be unsettling. In particular, when oestrogen levels decrease in the lead up to menopause, cognition suffers. Women may struggle with memory, word retrieval, and other cognitive

activities. For some, the change in cognitive function is so pronounced they fear they are developing dementia or Alzheimer's. These changes can also reduce their confidence to manage their work, home and social life.

Hormone levels may exacerbate existing conditions such as ADHD, and medication and strategies for managing those conditions may not work as effectively as they once did.

Many menopausal women are finding it difficult to obtain Hormone Replacement Therapy medicines due to increased demand and supply chain issues, adding to their anxiety.

Support for women with menopausal symptoms in the workplace is variable and understanding by managers and other employees is often limited. In some cases, understanding and empathy is so poor that women receive insults and rude comments from colleagues and managers. As a result, many women end up leaving their workplace as they feel unable to continue in their role.

Cotswold District Council welcomes steps taken by Cirencester Town Council to develop a menopause policy for its staff. Adjustments that can be made include:

- i. Allowing flexibility in work patterns
- ii. Increasing ventilation
- iii. Allowing people to move their work location to be closer to a toilet
- iv. Giving time off to attend medical appointments and support groups
- v. Designating a member of staff for women to approach about the effect of the menopause on their work
- vi. Providing professional counselling if requested

Cotswold District Council also welcomes the establishment of an All Party Parliamentary Group on Menopause in 2021.

Cotswold District Council asks its Teckal companies, Publica and Ubico, to review their menopause policies to ensure that their staff and CDC retained staff going through the menopause have the understanding and support they need.

The Council also commits to:

- i. Campaign for menopause support to form a central part of the next national Women's Health Strategy;
- ii. Working with Gloucestershire County Council and other local health organisations to ensure that support for those experiencing menopause is a central part of the next Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing strategy;
- iii. Supporting the #MakeMenopauseMatter campaign which is calling for:
 - a) Mandatory menopause training for all GPs and menopause to be taught as part of every medical school curriculum,
 - b) Menopause guidance and support in every workplace,
 - c) Menopause to be added to the Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum for schools throughout the UK.

15. **Next meeting**
Wednesday 18 January 2023 at 2.00pm.

16. **Matters exempt from publication**

If Council wishes to exclude the press and the public from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the exempt from publication part of the agenda, it will be necessary for Council to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Council may maintain the exemption if and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

17. **Exempt minutes of 21 September Council meeting (Pages 83 - 84)**

Purpose

To approve the exempt minutes from the 21 September 2022 Council meeting

(END)

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Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Wednesday, 21 September 2022.

Councillors present:

Dilys Neill - Chair
Stephen Andrews
Gina Blomefield
Claire Bloomer
Patrick Coleman
David Cunningham
Tony Dale
Andrew Doherty
Mike Evely
Jenny Forde
Joe Harris

Nikki Ind –Vice Chair
Mark Harris
Stephen Hirst
Robin Hughes
Sue Jepson
Julia Judd
Richard Keeling
Juliet Layton
Andrew Maclean
Nick Maunder
Richard Morgan

Richard Norris
Nigel Robbins
Gary Selwyn
Lisa Spivey
Tom Stowe
Ray Theodoulou
Steve Trotter
Clive Webster

Officers present:

Rob Weaver – Chief Executive
Jo Moore – Deputy Chief Executive
Angela Claridge – Director for Governance
Susan Gargett – Head of Legal Services
Jan Britton – Managing Director – Publica
Caleb Harris – Democratic Services
Wayne Smith – Democratic Services

23 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Tony Berry, Ray Brassington, Rachel Coxcoon and Roly Hughes

Councillors Richard Morgan and Mark Harris had advised they would be arriving late.

24 Declarations of Interest

A declaration of interest was made by Councillor Webster as a Member of Morton-In-Marsh Town Council

There were no declarations of interest from Officers

25 Minutes

Minutes of the Full Council held 20 July 2020 were considered.

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Councillor Cunningham stated that the Minutes confirmed that he had asked a supplementary question to Members Question 2, asking: "How many of the 114 homes delivered were taken up by residents of the Cotswolds", but had not received an answer.

Councillor Joe Harris, The Leader of the Council apologised that this had not been provided, and advised Councillor Cunningham that he would ensure this was sent without delay.

RESOLVED: Council agreed that the Minutes of Full Council held on 20 July 2020 were an accurate record

Voting Record – For 23, Against 0, Abstentions 5, Absent 6

26 Announcements from the Chair, Leader of Chief Executive (if any)

The Chair Of The Council welcomed Members Officers and the Public and thanked them for attending Council both in person, and online.

The Chair stated that the death of Her Majesty The Queen had been a momentous time for the country, bringing an end to the reign of (whom Boris Johnson described as) Elizabeth 'The Great'. The Chair had been captivated by the number of people paying final respects to a 'gracious' and 'noble' Queen, whose faith and sense of duty had both guided and supported her and would no double do the same for King Charles III.

The Vice-Chair stated that the Queen was an extraordinary woman whose steadfast duty and service to the Nation and been an example to everyone. The Vice-Chair reflected that although the Nation had lost its Queen, The King and the Royal Family had lost a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, and our thoughts and condolences went out to them at this time of sorrow.

The Leader of the Council extended condolences to King Charles III and the Royal Family on behalf of all residents across the Cotswolds, and remarked that the outpouring of respect and affection that had been shown to the Queen was a testament to how highly she was regarded. The Leader of the Council then recounted a personal experience when he was lucky enough to meet and speak to the Queen at the Royal Windsor Horse Show and hoped that King Charles III, who had made the Cotswolds his home, would continue to his close association with the District.

The Chief Executive concurred with everything that had been said about Her Majesty the Queen, and reflected that although the enormous responsibility of the Crown had been placed upon Her Majesty at such an early age, she had demonstrated humility and strength when seeking the advice and support of her first Prime Minister Winston Churchill to help her through her early years. In later years it was Her Majesty that would be providing guidance and advice, without imposed opinions to 16 subsequent Prime Ministers.

On behalf of the Conservative Councillor Group, Councillor Jepson paid a heartfelt tribute to the dearly departed Queen Elizabeth in which she reflected on the number of tributes that had been paid, and the magnificent funeral that united the Nation and brought her reign to an end. Councillor Jepson described the personal qualities that the Queen had demonstrated, during her long reign, that had led to the respect and affection that has been shown across the country and around the world.

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After spending many hours queuing with mourners from around the Country and further afield, Councillor Blomefield had been able to make her own personal tribute to Her Majesty lying in State in Westminster Hall. Councillor Blomefield then reflected on the Queen's reassuring presence throughout everyone's life as she united her people, and personified and promoted the finest aspects of the Nation both at home and abroad.

Councillor Forde recognised police officers and military personnel from the Cotswolds that had been part of the 10,000 strong security force protecting the State Funeral. The magnificent event had been truly World Class and served as a fitting to the life and reign of an extraordinary Queen.

Council stood for one minutes silence in reflection and respect Her Majesty the Queen.

The Council declared in one voice "GOD SAVE THE KING"

27 Public Questions

Parish Councillor Doug Crook made a statement supporting a change to the parish boundaries between Ampney Crucis Parish, Driffield Parish and Ampney St Mary Parish, detailed in Map A of the Community Governance Review 2022, and asked if this statement could be considered when reaching a final decision on the parish boundary.

Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council stated that he was in agreement with what Parish Councillor Doug Crook had stated and would be proposing this when the Council agenda item was debated later in the meeting.

28 Member Questions

The following questions have been submitted by members

Question I From Councillor Nikki Ind for Councillor Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Development Management and Licensing

Having attended the very informative Member Development – Gypsy & Traveller Cultural Awareness Training in July, could I please ask what, if any, progress CDC is making with the County Council and other District Councils in Forward Planning for a transient stop over site in Gloucestershire?

Response From Councillor Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Development Management and Licensing to Councillor Ind

The Gloucestershire local authorities have commissioned RRR Consultancy Ltd to undertake a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for the period 2021-2041. The Council expects to receive a final draft in the coming weeks. The results will be used as an evidence base for policy development in housing and planning and supersede any previous GTAA (including any levels of accommodation needs calculated prior to this assessment) for the Gloucestershire local planning authorities.

The requirement to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, Showpeople, non-Gypsy and Traveller Gypsy and Traveller residential caravan dwellers, and boat dwellers is established through national guidance contained in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (DCLG, 2015). In relation to transit provision (the focus of the question) the emerging GTAA is likely to recommend that in addition to the existing transit pitches, that Gloucestershire authorities

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adopt a negotiated stopping policy. This involves caravans being sited on suitable specific pieces of ground for an agreed and limited period of time, with the provision of limited services such as water, waste disposal and toilets. This is land temporarily used as authorised short-term (less than 28 days) stopping places and in some cases may not require planning permission.

The Council has committed to work with Gloucestershire partners to translate needs presented in the aforementioned GTAA into sites This will be the subject of a separate commission, which Gloucestershire councils are looking to commission following the final receipt of the GTAA. This commission will need to reflect the findings of the GTAA and in particular the reasons for unauthorised encampments. e.g.

- a lack of available permanent pitches in suitable locations and certain times in the year (e.g Stow Fair, Cheltenham Races and summer solstice); households temporarily moving through the study area;
- insufficient number of transit sites to: find work, undertake holidays and attend weddings and funerals; and
- there is a need for additional transit provision within Gloucestershire and neighbouring authorities This is in addition to the transit site consisting of 32 pitches located in Tewkesbury and the 15 transit pitches at Bromsberrow, in the Forest of Dean. When considering new emergency stopping places/sites it should be borne in mind that it will only be used for a proportion of the year and individual households will normally only stay on the agreed location for a few days. Amenities such as portaloos and showers (or access to alternative nearby facilities) and skips or wheelie bins should ideally be made available for the duration of the agreed period. Furthermore and beyond the confines of the local planning system, agreements could be made with households residing on sites and yards and allowing visiting family and friends to stay for agreed periods of time. This could lead to fewer unauthorised encampments and therefore reducing the impact on the local community

Question 2 to Councillor Rachel Coxcoon, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning from Councillor Nikki Ind

Can you please confirm if CDC has applied for grant funding via the On Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme or if we are working in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council to secure this funding, to allow us to proactively support and deliver the rollout of electric vehicle charge points?

Response From Councillor Rachel Coxcoon, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning for Councillor Nikki Ind

The Council has applied for funding via the On-street Residential Chargepoint scheme (ORCS) to install EVCP in the Rissington Road carpark, Bourton on the Water and the carpark at Trinity Road Cirencester. The outcome of this bid is awaited. Both car parks are available to the public free of charge overnight and would provide access to charging for nearby residents. This is part of phase one of our EVCP infrastructure plans which has already seen new units installed in the Beeches car park, Cirencester and Old Market Way Carpark, Moreton in Marsh. Further locations are planned for phase 2 although the ORCS funding will be replaced by the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding. We are also liaising with GCC to ensure plans for on-street charging supports the needs of our Cotswold Communities

Question 3 From Councillor Cunningham to Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

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The Government's initiative to put funds directly into local projects via the Rural England Prosperity Fund is to be applauded. A number of Parish Councils are eager to gain access to CDC's proportion of this pool of cash, in order to help promote and fund local projects for rural communities. Will the Cabinet Member for Finance please set out in detail what is required for a project to be deemed eligible for such a grant and how Parish Councils can apply.

Response From Councillor Mike Evey, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to Councillor Cunningham

The Rural England Prosperity Fund was launched on 3 September and is being provided as a top-up to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). Cotswold District Council was allocated a total of £764,292 to be spent in the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25. Under guidance issued by Government, project eligibility under this new fund will be broadly the same as the UKSPF with two additional interventions:

- small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas
- rural circular economy projects

Councils will need to submit an addendum to their UKSPF plans by 30 November. The submission window opens on 3 October. This is a very recent announcement and DEFRA is holding briefings for lead officers at councils on 22 and 23 September. Following those briefings, the Council will have a clear understanding of the Fund requirements and eligibility and will then consider how to engage with key stakeholders and communicate further information about the Fund

Supplementary Question From Councillor Cunningham to Councillor Mike Evey, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

Your response refers to the Government's UKSPF, are you able to provide details of the initial UKSPF submission made by Cotswold District Council.

Response From Councillor Mike Evey, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to Councillor Cunningham

The original UKSPF went through Cabinet and the details were available at that time and there are no reasons why those details should not be provided now.

Question 4 to Councillor Mike Evey, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance from Councillor David Cunningham

At a recent Council meeting Councillor Joe Harris reported to this Council that the cost of replacing street signs would be offset by the sale of old signs. In light of the budgetary concerns so often espoused by Cllr Harris, can he please give an update on the actual cost to date of this project.

Response from Councillor Mike Evey, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to Councillor David Cunningham

Whilst there is some variation depending on mounting and fixing etc. each sign costs around £170 to purchase and install. The amount spent on replacing signs so far in 2022/23 is £7,532. Last year £1,818 was spent with £14,116 spent in 2020/21
Total expected spend for the project is £27,200. This is to be funded from underspends in the street sign budget in 2020/21 and 2021/22 which were transferred to an earmarked reserve. A

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number of old signs are due to be sold at auction in October 2022 to raise revenue and enable residents to own a piece of local history.

Supplementary Question to Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance from Councillor David Cunningham

Could the number of signs sold be provided and, in light of current financial pressures, what consideration was given to not incurring the non-essential expense of new signs, rather than borrowing to cover the cost of replacements?

Response from Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to Councillor David Cunningham

I am happy to provide details of the number of signs sold once the sale of the first 'lot' have been sold. The replacement of street signs is a statutory function of the Council and was therefore required and was completed within the allocated budget. The additional financial pressures e.g. inflation currently being faced by everyone, including the Council are currently being closely considered by the Chief Finance Officer, and will be included in the MTFS.

Question 5 From Councillor Stephen Hirst to Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council

In view of the ever-increasing number of electric cars being used on a daily basis, could I ask when all the District Car Parks will be fitted with Quick Charging Points in order to provide a valuable service to all motorists who drive cars requiring battery charging on a regular basis?

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

The electric vehicle charging market is in flux, not least since the number of electric vehicles being sold is increasing more quickly than had been forecast a couple of years ago. That's a good thing in itself, but the rate of growth in demand for electric vehicle charging is creating its own problems – examples are:

- the challenge for electric vehicle chargepoint installers / operators / equipment manufacturers to scale-up their businesses fast enough to keep up with demand;
- too much merger and acquisition activity in the charge point market leading to distraction and inefficiency;
- increasing costs of equipment and installation caused partly by global supply lagging demand (and global supply chain problems from, eg, Chinese drought conditions and other things), often over short timeframes;
- pressure on local electricity distribution companies for connections, leading to longer lead times and the need for more (expensive) upgrade work to local Supplies. All of the above makes it hard for the electric vehicle charging providers to keep up, including the Council as a provider of electric vehicles charging facilities.

The Council has been in contract with a supplier for the provision of electric vehicle charge points in Council-owned car parks for more than a year, but that installer has been impacted by all the factors above, and this has meant our roll-out is going more slowly than we had expected. Our phase 1 roll-out included the Rissington Road car park at Bourton-on-the-Water, plus the council offices in Cirencester. We are very keen to progress with phase 2 as well, which could include sites in other principal settlements (eg Tetbury), but we are first trying to overcome the current blockages for phase 1 projects, and making sure the same delays won't affect phase 2 projects.

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Owing to the above we can't make firm promises right now on when all the car parks in the district will contain EVCPs, but it remains a priority for the administration and we have dedicated project management resources working on it right now. In respect of the other part of the question –specifically the rate (power) of charging, it is unlikely that any town centre locations will be appropriate for the fastest (“ultra rapid”) charge points. At the top end, these can charge at up to 350kW DC, and are only ever going to be relevant for main motorway and trunk routes where drivers may need that filling speed (and note that very few current electric vehicles can charge at these speeds). All town centre locations are likely to be mainly 22kW AC or lower, with the occasional so-called rapid charger operating around 50kW DC, or perhaps around 40kW AC.

The reason for this charger choice is that demand for car park charging is for shoppers or users of local services ‘topping up’ while they go about their business

– not for drivers in a hurry from A to B over a long distance needing the maximum fill.

Around 80% of electric vehicle user's charge mainly at home (which is why EVs are still cheaper to run than fossil burners, despite what some papers have said), and therefore car parks are just a convenient top-up, not the sole source of power.

For prospective electric vehicle drivers with no access to their own domestic off-street charge point, there are three options that the Council can help with:

1) look to work with neighbours through a chargepoint sharing facility like Co-Charger (see: <https://co-charger.com>). If you're a current electric vehicle user with your own chargepoint, have a look and see if you can provide a paid-for service to your neighbours and local residents.

2) Charge in Council car parks near where you live, outside of shopping or office hours – we will be making our car parks available for this purpose

3) Look out for on-street charging solutions: Cotswold DC is working with Gloucestershire CC to identify priority streets where on-street charge points can be installed, as part of the Connected Kerb contract to roll-out this kind of technology across the whole county.

Question 6 From Councillor Tom Stowe to Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council

Given the nature of the content of the last "Cotswold News" which included in total 10 photographs of yourself (including identical ones in the issue) will the Leader of the Council please confirm that there will be no more issues printed this side of the all-out elections in May 2023. Will he also please confirm the total costs incurred in printing and distributing the last two issues?

Response From Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council to Councillor Tom Stowe

Staying in touch with residents across the Cotswolds is important to our administration. Cotswold News is one way we do this alongside press releases, social media and email. Cotswold News is delivered twice per year in Autumn and Spring. The autumn 2022 addition is scheduled to be delivered in October 2022 and is currently in development. Another edition is scheduled to be delivered in March 2023.

Total costs incurred are as follows:

October 2021- £14,699

March 2022 - £14,975

The next edition will be particularly important in terms of signposting residents to the support available as they seek to survive the cost of living emergency.

Supplementary Question From Councillor Tom Stowe to Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council

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In 2010 the cost of publishing and distributing 'Cotswold News' was £12,200, and at that time consideration was given to cancelling production and using the cost savings to subsidise car parking charges. As publishing and distribution costs have now risen by 240% would you consider cancelling production of the next two editions and re-allocating the cost-savings to more urgent Council priorities.

Response From Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council to Councillor Tom Stowe

No. It is important to keep in touch with Cotswolds residents, especially when we are facing a severe cost of living crisis. Cotswold News can provide Cotswold residents with details of Council support, signpost residents other organisations for support and ensure residents are receiving everything that they are entitled to.

Question 7 From Councillor Tom Stowe to Councillor Jenny Forde, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

Leisure Centres are disproportionately affected by the current energy price increases and other inflationary pressures. Bearing in mind Chipping Campden Leisure Centre's unique dual-use arrangement with CDC, will the Cabinet Member please confirm they are open to a dialogue to increase financial support to the school to enable it to weather the current challenges, thus maintaining services to the people of the North Cotswolds and keeping it on a level playing-field with Cirencester Leisure Centre?

Response From Councillor Jenny Forde, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing to Councillor Tom Stowe

As you may recall, I met with you and Cllr Blomefield in June this year to discuss the support Chipping Campden School has from the Council. The school currently receives £70k per annum which goes towards upkeep and maintenance of the areas used by leisure visitors. I'm very sympathetic to the school and the financial challenges it faces. I have suggested that following the very successful overfunding of their new Ampitheatre via our Crowdfunding platform on Crowdfund Cotswold, it might be a great way to generate some support for the leisure facilities supporting a more sustainable approach to its long term future supported by the communities who use it.

Supplementary Question From Councillor Tom Stowe to Councillor Jenny Forde, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

The unprecedented increase in energy costs and inflation has made it impossible to cover the maintenance and running costs of the dual use leisure services within Chipping Campden School. As other dual-use leisure services have been lost, and the maintenance and running costs of other leisure services that remain are shouldered by the Council, would the Council consider providing support to the Chipping Campden School to ensure these leisure facilities remain available to Cotswold residents.

Response From Councillor Jenny Forde, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing to Councillor Tom Stowe

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Although I am sympathetic to the current situation, the Council is not responsible for school properties and as such do not have the budget to contribute to their running costs. The Council recommendation to approach Cotswold Crown Funding was to upgrade and transform the heating and fuel system (e.g. air source heating, solar panels) to put them on a more sustainable footing, rather than funding ongoing energy bills.

Question 8 From Councillor Andrew Maclean to Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council

As the Council is committed to Net Zero for all new homes and expect energy efficiency improvements measures to be applied to all development and changes to existing properties across the District. What are the impediments that have prevented us from asking for full details on the energy performance of each property for which we receive a planning application, both for new build and even more so for the effective extension on the holistic performance of an existing property

Response from Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council to Councillor Andrew Maclean

The principle impediment is Government Legislation which implies that planning applications should meet the requirements of Net Zero or improvements to energy efficiency, but do not compel applicants to include plans for consideration by Planning and Licensing Committee. The completion of the review of Building Regulations will go a long way to strengthening legislation and this needs to be completed sooner rather than later.

The Leader is meeting the Minister Simon Clarke within the week and offered to take the Councillor's question to put this directly to him and provide Councillor Maclean with his feedback.

29 Short Term Lets Working Party (STLWP) Update Report

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an update on the ongoing work of the STLWP since the last report to Council in July 2021, to advise as to areas where progress is still to be made and to seek members agreement to a consultation response to be passed to Government - who are currently consulting upon the impacts of Short-Term Lets. It also seeks clarification as to the composition of the Party as its focus shifts.

Councillor Webster, the joint Chair of STLWG presented the report and provided a summary of the work completed by the STLWG and the report that will be shared with local Members of Parliament (to enable them to make strong representations in Parliamentary debates on Short Term Lets and the wider Government Short Term lets consultation.

Council noted that a availability of affordable rental properties and transport links affected adult social care staff and (beat) police officers' decisions to accept jobs in the Cotswold District area.

Council noted that now that the Planning elements of Short Term Lets had been investigated and reported, consideration should be given to changing the scope of the working group to focus on the spatial elements of towns and villages affected by large numbers of Short Term Lets to ensure communities remain viable and local services and transport links are maintained

RESOLVED: Council noted the progress made by the STLWG since the last update report in July 2021 and agreed to the suggested response to Government and that the future composition of the STLWP would be considered as the focus of the work shift

Voting Record – For 28, Against 0, Abstentions 1, Absent 5,

30 Community Governance Review - Final Recommendations for Ampney Crucis

The purpose of this report was to enable Council to consider the responses and approve the final recommendations of the Community Governance Review in relation to the Parish boundaries of Ampney Crucis, Driffield and Ampney St Mary and authorise the Head of Legal Services to make a Reorganisation of Community Governance order to implement the changes agreed by Council

Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council introduced the report and provided an overview of the consultation process, the boundary change options and the recommendations that would enable Council to make take and objective view and make a final decision on the location of the boundary. Ampney Crucis Parish Councillor Doug Crook had made a statement during Public Questions supporting the boundary changed outlined in Map A and this option was being recommended.

Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council proposed and Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Chair of the Council seconded that the Council approve the change to the Parish boundaries of Ampney Crucis, Driffield and Ampney St Mary shown in Map A.

Council noted that the proposed boundary change would remove properties from Driffield Parish Council and thereby reduce the annual precept (income) to the Parish Council by around £600.

Council noted that Driffield Parish residents' annual Council Tax bills may increase if Driffield Parish Council choose to increase their precept.

Council noted that there had been representations both for and against each of the options and no overall consensus had been reached.

Council noted that no Driffield Parish Councillor's had taken part in the consultation but had not requested to speak at the Council meeting.

RESOLVED: Council agreed to change to the Parish boundaries of Ampney Crucis, Driffield and Ampney St Mary shown in Map A, and authorised the Head of Legal Services to make a Reorganisation of Community Governance order to implement the changes agreed by Council

Voting Record – For 22, Against 1, Abstentions 5, Absent 6

31 Options and Funding Allocation for Roof Repairs to Trinity Road Council Offices

The purpose of the report was to consider high level options for improvement of roofs at the Cotswold District Council's Offices at Trinity Road, Cirencester

Councillor Lisa Spivey, the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services introduced the report and provided a summary of the glazing and flat-roof replacement options being considered to repair and improve the Council Offices at Trinity Road.

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Council noted a correction to the annual revenue impact figure in the report had increased from £4,623 to £11,648, although both of these figures were estimates, and actual figures would be given in the tender process and would be returned to Council for approval.

Council noted that the 50 year period referenced in the Financial Impacts section 3.1 was a standard measure of useful economic life rather than indicating the lifetime of the fabric of the roof. The Chief Finance Officer agreed to provide further clarification how these two periods differ to Councillor Ind

Council noted that the installation of solar panels on Public buildings is being considered as a separate project.

RESOLVED: Council agreed that based on the high level option appraisal, the options at 2.2 of the report for glazing replacement and recovering to flat roofs are pursued, to provide a more sustainable solution. A further report will be brought back to Council once works have been tendered, seeking allocation of budget to fund the repairs and improvements.

Voting Record – For 29, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 5,

32 Independent Remuneration Panel

The purpose of this report was to appoint a person to be a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council introduced the report to ask Council to Consider appointing a third member of the of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

The Director For Governance advised that Stefan Robinson had been recommended by the new Business Manager for Democratic Services and Elections having previously undertaking the role at Cherwell District Council.

Council noted that the role of Independent Remuneration Panel was not time limited, and the Director For Governance was asked to investigate whether this could be changed.

RESOLVED: That Council agreed to appoint Stefan Robinson as the third member of the Independent Remuneration Panel with immediate effect.

Voting Record – For 27, Against 0, Abstentions 1, Absent 4

33 Use of Unilateral Undertaking Funding for Moreton-in-Marsh Integrated Transport Hub

The purpose of the report was to seek approval to contribute £250,000 to the Moreton-in-Marsh Town Council community infrastructure schemes.

Councillor Layton the Cabinet Member for Development Management and Licensing introduced the report that enabled Council to consider approving a contribution of £250,000 to Morton-in-Marsh Town Council for community infrastructure schemes.

Council noted that the £250,000 was part of a Unilateral Undertaking Agreement entered into by Cotswold District Council (CDC) and the Fire Service College Ltd in December 2014

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Council noted that the funds must be spent or allocated to a Community Infrastructure Scheme by the 17th November 2022 or repaid to the College (with interest).

Council noted that Moreton-in-Marsh Town Council (MIMTC) will use the funds to refurbish Redesdale Hall and develop an integrated transport hub as detailed in Annex A.

Council noted that the Chief Executive will provide a briefing note to Members giving more details of the allocation of funds between the hall refurbishment and the development of the transport hub.

Council noted that there will be a formal grant agreement between CDC will and MIMTC that will include a clawback clause should the funds not be spent appropriately on the two Community Infrastructure Schemes.

The Chief Executive confirmed other CDC community buildings in Morton-in-Marsh will be made available for community events whilst improvements to Redesdale Hall are completed, and the Council will provide project support to MIMTC in the unlikely event that this if required.

RESOLVED: Council agreed to enter into a grant agreement with Moreton-in-Marsh (MIM) Town Council to provide a contribution of £250,000 to the MIM community infrastructure schemes as Annex A and noted that the £250,000 is funded from a developer contribution which was received by the Council under a Unilateral Undertaking agreement entered into in 2014

Voting Record – For 28, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 6,

34 Reports for Agenda Item 11

35 Notice of Motions

The following Motion had been received:

Motion on providing warm places for people struggling to heat their homes during the day. Proposed by Cllr Gina Blomefield; seconded by Cllr Sue Jepson:

We are all keenly aware that many people and especially those who are elderly pensioners, disabled or in some way vulnerable will find it challenging to keep their homes sufficiently warm during the day as well as at night this winter due to the soaring costs of energy. Some of the councils around the country are already making contingency plans to open 'public warm spaces' where those in most need can go during the day safe in the knowledge that they will be warm and cared for.

Many of the parish halls, church rooms and other community buildings such as libraries, leisure centres and museums in the Cotswolds including CDC's offices could be used in the same way by enlisting the support of parish and town councils, faith organisations, community and the voluntary sector to organise this. They would also be able to offer warm drinks or soup as well as advice on how to obtain help with energy related problems. We suggest this would provide wonderful humanitarian support for some of the most vulnerable in our communities and recommend a simple process is agreed to fund this vitally needed help by identifying available grants to enable financial assistance to organisations prepared to get involved.

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We ask that the agreement at the last Full Council for a cross party working group to be set up should be done urgently to implement 'public warm places' and also to look at other ways to help our Cotswold residents most negatively impacted by unaffordable heating and living costs.

The Motion will be referred to November Cabinet and feed into the key objectives and requirements of the wider Cost Of Living Working Group that will report to November Council.

36 Matters exempt from publication

To consider and if so agree to resolve that under section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in schedule 12A of the said Act

RESOLVED: Council agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting on the grounds that consideration of the following items would likely disclose information that is exempt as defined in schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

Voting Record - For 28, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 6,

37 Employment Matter

The purpose of the report was to consider and approve Cotswold District Council entering into a Settlement Agreement with an employee.

RESOLVED: That Council approved the entering into of a Settlement Agreement on the terms set out within the exempt report.

Voting Record – For 26, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 8

38 Next meeting

The next meeting of Full Council will be on 5 October 2022 at 6pm.

The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 10.00 pm

Chair

(END)

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Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Wednesday, 5 October 2022.

Councillors present:

Dilys Neill – Chair

Stephen Andrews

Tony Berry

Claire Bloomer

Ray Brassington

Patrick Coleman

Tony Dale

Mike Evemy

Joe Harris

Mark Harris

Robin Hughes

Roly Hughes

Sue Jepson

Juliet Layton

Nick Maunder

Richard Morgan

Gary Selwyn

Lisa Spivey

Tom Stowe

Steve Trotter

Clive Webster

Officers present:

Rob Weaver – Chief Executive

Angela Claridge – Director For Governance

Andrew Brown – Business Manager For Democratic Services

Caleb Harris – Democratic Services

Wayne Smith – Democratic Services

39 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Gina Bloomfield, Rachel Coxcoon, David Cunningham, Andrew Doherty, Jenny Forde, Stephen Hirst, Nikki Ind, Julia Judd, Richard Keeling, Andrew Maclean, Richard Norris, Nigel Robins and Ray Theodoulou.

Councillor Spivey had advised that she would be arriving late.

40 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest from Members

There were no Declarations of Interest from Officers

41 Constitution of the Council

The purpose of the report and Extraordinary Council Meeting was to review the Constitution of the Council and the table of changes to the Constitution since May 2019 in Annex A.

The Chair suggested that the usual rules of debate, limiting Members to speak only once, would be relaxed to enable Members to speak on any item. This was welcomed by Members. The Chair drew Council's attention to an addendum to the report listing formatting and

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spelling corrections that had already been identified and corrected, and a list of items that had already been referred to the Constitution Working Group for consideration.

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and thanked Members for their time spent reviewing the Constitution and attending the meeting to consider the proposed updates. The Constitution was considered the foundation and bedrock of the Council, and it was important that it was up to date and accurately reflected the fundamental principles and precedents by which the Council was governed.

The Director for Governance provided an overview of the Constitution and explained that Members would be reminded of the changes that had been recommended, followed by a comprehensive section by section review.

Part A – Summary and Explanation of the Constitution

No comments from Council

Part B – Articles of the Constitution

3.1c Councillor Call For Action

Council requested link/reference to be added to enable readers to refer to related information elsewhere in the document, and it is referred to the Constitution Working Group for consideration

6.1 The Council currently has a leader and eight Councillors in its Cabinet.

Council requested this sentence was removed and ‘The Cabinet has a minimum of three and a maximum of ten Members.’ was added.

7.8 Whipping (paragraph)

Council requested this paragraph was considered by Constitution Working Group along with other ‘Whipping’ paragraphs within the Constitution

9.2 The Planning and Licensing Committee shall comprise of fifteen Members...

Council requested this is corrected to, ‘The Planning and Licensing Committee shall comprise of eleven Members...’, or this is removed as part of a wider removal of time limiting entries

Part C – Responsibility of Functions, Scheme of Delegation, Key Decisions and Forward Plan

2.10 Council Functions

The functions which may only be exercisable by Council... e.g. Promote or oppose local or personal bills.

Council requested that the statutory act that empowers this and all similar functions is referenced (e.g. Local Government Act 2000)

3.0 Licensing Sub Committee (Licensing Act 2003) and Licensing Sub Committee (Taxi Private Hire and Street Trading)

Council requested the addition of minimum and maximum numbers of members that enable meetings to be quorate

5.10.1 Decisions By Individual Cabinet Members

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Council requested the Constitution Working Group should consider the addition of clear details indicating when decisions should be referred to Cabinet Members, Chief Executives or Council Officers that could be understood by lay people.

7.0 Roles and Responsibilities of Councillors

Council requested the addition of a reference to the Code of Conduct.

7.3 Functions relating to Housing, Public Health, Environmental Health and Health and Safety (Statutory Instrument)

Council requested 'Section 284 of the Public Health Act 284' to be replaced by 'Section 284 of the Public Health Act 1936'

Part D – Procedure Rules

1.0 In Addition to its Annual Meeting a minimum of four ordinary meetings of the council will be scheduled.

Council requested this is changed to 'In Addition to its Annual Meeting, six ordinary meetings of the council will be scheduled.

2.6.2 Call-In Decisions Outside the Budget or Policy Framework

The reasons why it is not practical to convene a meeting of the Council, and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's consent, to the decision being taken as a matter or urgency, must be noted on the record of the decision. In the absence of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee then the consent of the Chair of the Council and in their absence the Vice Chair of the Council will be sufficient

Council requested that the legal order of decision making referrals to the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Council and Overview and Scrutiny is determined, and that this paragraph correctly reflects the law.

1.25.2c Limit on Rights – the advice of a political advisor

Council requested this item is referred to the Constitution Working Group to clarify 'c) the advice of a political advisor'

3.1.6c Supply of Documents

Any other documents supplied to Councillors in connection with an item, if the Proper officer thinks fit to any person on payment of a charge for postage photocopying and other reasonable costs

Council requested the wording "...if the Proper Officer thinks fit..." is checked to determine if it is correct, and "...postage and photocopying..." are changed to '...communication charges...'

Part E – Codes and Protocols

No comments from Council.

Part F – Local Petition Scheme

15 Cotswold District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee consists of seven Members of the Council who are tasked with scrutinising the work of Cabinet and holding Members of the Cabinet to account.

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Council requested ‘...consists of seven Members of the Council who....’ is replaced with ‘consists of Members of the Council who are not members of Cabinet or the Chair of Council that...’ or match other references to the composition of Overview and Scrutiny.

Part G – Appendices

E “A Councillor is able to seek reimbursement of actual, but reasonable expenditure incurred in respect of meals/subsistence...”

Council requested the term “...reasonable...” is more clearly defined or a maximum amount is stated

Council requested that, for clarity, the ratios of allowances e.g. Chair to Vice chair were shown in the list of allowance

RESOLVED: Council noted the Constitution and authorised the Monitoring Officer: to publish a final clean version of the Constitution (correct any numbering, editing or formatting errors).

Voting Record – For 20, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 14,

The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 7.03 pm

Chair

(END)

Agenda Item 7



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 7 NOVEMBER 2022 COUNCIL – 16 NOVEMBER 2022
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 7
Subject	RESPONSE TO WARM PLACES MOTION AND FUNDING TO SUPPORT COST OF LIVING CRISIS
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Cllr Jenny Forde - Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing Email: jenny.forde@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Claire Locke Group Manager Tel: 01285 623427 Email: claire.locke@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	To set out how the Council is responding to the Cost of Living and Warm Places Motions and to make recommendations for funding allocations for specific initiatives.
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: (a) Note the response to the Cost of Living and Warm Places Motion detailed in this report and, (b) Recommendation to Council to agree to allocate match funding of £20,000 for the Council Tax Hardship Fund from the balance of the Covid-19 Hardship Fund earmarked reserve, and, (c) Recommendation to Council to agree to allocate £40,000 from the Council Priorities Fund towards establishing a Food Network.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Delivering our services to the highest standards● Responding to the challenges presented by the climate crisis● Helping residents and communities access the support they need for good health and wellbeing



Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Chief Finance Officer Monitoring Officer Leader (Chair of Cost of Living Steering Group) Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. At its meeting in July Council agreed a Motion relating to the Cost of Living Crisis, agreeing to lobby Government for action and to determine how additional support should be provided to those in need, and where the funds could be found to enable it to be delivered. The Council also agreed to "... set up a cross party working group in response to the motion which would report back, in advance of the budget setting process, with recommendations that Council could take to help address the cost of living crisis."
- 1.2. In September Council agreed a Motion, part of which required a cross party group be set up urgently to implement 'public warm places' and also to look at other ways to help our Cotswold residents most negatively impacted by unaffordable heating and living costs.
- 1.3. A Member led cross party Cost of Living Crisis steering group has been formed and held its first meeting on 3rd October. The Group is meeting every 2 - 3 weeks to oversee progress on assessing what additional support the Council could offer to residents in relation to coping with the Cost of Living Crisis.
- 1.4. The Council already assists many residents with advice and support on matters like housing and homelessness, benefits and Council Tax. The Communities team also engages with many voluntary sector and community groups, working together to provide valuable support tailored to local needs.

2. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

2.1 Communications

With a large amount of advice and support already available from both statutory bodies, charitable organisations and community groups, a key focus has been on ensuring these offers are communicated clearly to residents, so they know what support is available and where and



how to access it. The Council started a campaign in July to highlight support available to residents and this has been developed over recent months.

As part of the campaign the Council has initiated a number of things:

- A website has been set up which provides a series of links to the support available covering everything from benefits advice, food and energy costs, through to help with childcare costs. The webpage also suggests ways people can help support others. <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/council-tax-and-benefits/help-if-you-re-struggling-with-the-cost-of-living/>
- A leaflet has also been produced and is being distributed via Council officers and Voluntary Sector partners.
- Town and Parish Councils were briefed at a recent Town and Parish Forum on the support being offered and where to signpost residents for assistance.
- The council is posting via all its digital channels including social media and the e-newsletter which now includes a specific cost of living section
- Working with local media to highlight support available
- A double page spread has been included in the next edition of Cotswold News due to go to all households in early November to reach those not able to access digital channels, setting out what services and support the Council is offering and how to access them. (if this is what has been done)
- All Councillors have been informed of the campaign and have been encouraged to support it

There is a Warm and Welcome network which supports organisations to open their doors and provide a warm welcome to those struggling to heat their homes this winter. Organisations can receive guidance and register their space and residents can find spaces near them via the website www.warmwelcome.uk The Council will be promoting this network as well as promoting other community based support, highlighted later in this report.

2.2 Housing and Homelessness prevention

The Council's Housing and Revenues and Benefits teams continue to offer support to residents who may be struggling to pay their rent. It is likely that there will be an increase in the number of people at risk of becoming homeless, as people struggle to afford housing and other living expenses. Advice is provided on issues including suitability and affordability of accommodation including applying for affordable housing via HomeseekerPlus, liaising with landlords, resolving family breakdown issues and domestic abuse. In some circumstances financial support can be offered through the Homeless Prevention Fund or Discretionary Housing payments to reduce rent arrears. Whilst support is offered to those who are struggling to pay their Council Tax, the Council does not currently have a Hardship Fund,



which could be used to provide one-off support in specific financial circumstances. This has been identified by the Member Steering Group as a specific area of need and it is therefore recommended that £20,000 be allocated (from the Covid-19 Hardship fund earmarked reserve) to create a 'Council Tax Hardship fund'. The County Council have agreed to match fund any allocation, creating a bigger funding pool for Cotswold residents.

2.3 Community Support

The Council continues to work with its Voluntary Sector partners and the many community groups that provide essential support at a local level. This support includes facilitating access to services for people who may be struggling financially, have physical or mental health conditions or feel isolated. There are a wide range of activities delivered at a local level which help address some of these issues such as coffee mornings, activity based events like Knit and Natter and Family Fun days.

However, there is an opportunity to further increase community resilience during the current cost of living crisis and beyond through seedcorn funding. A one-off '**Cotswold Connected Community and Food Programme**' has therefore been developed which complements the Council's 'Crowdfund Cotswold' initiative and forms part of our asset based community development approach. It aims to flexibly support initiatives that can be realised in the near future to increase community resilience during the current cost of living crisis and beyond. The intention of the programme is that the work and funding builds on the assets that are found in the community and mobilises individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to realise and develop their strengths.

Funding will be allocated to projects which are community-led, self-sustaining by the communities themselves and reflect a true partnership approach.

Examples for projects include:

- Community Food projects such as Community Fridges/larders/pantries
- Community Hubs
- Friendship/Talking Café's
- Intergenerational projects
- Community activities aiming to connect people
- Community transport
- Development of Community Partnerships

Hence, the 'Cotswold Connected Community and Food Programme' aims to create 'welcoming spaces' that provide holistic and community minded activities without the stigma of addressing the 'most vulnerable' and solely providing a warm space. It is hoped that this approach leads to community projects that leave a meaningful legacy and that will increase



community resilience in the longer term, whilst also providing warm places for those that need it.

This programme is open to not-for-profit Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and Social Enterprises. The Council would also like to hear from individuals or a small non-constituted group with a great idea, although cannot be awarded directly to them. Private businesses, sole traders or statutory organisations are not eligible.

Existing external funding of £75,000 which the Council receives for community based activity has been identified and the Steering Group has agreed to ringfence the funding for this project.

Food Network

Residents can receive free food and other essential household supplies from the several Food Banks located within the district. However, there are other forms of provision that can complement food bank services and add a great deal of value to communities.

Community larders/pantries and fridges provide access to food at low or no cost through access to surplus groceries and therefore have the added benefit of tackling the growing issue of food waste. They differ from food banks which offer emergency food to people in crisis through a referral system. Community fridges and larders offer fresh or frozen food that may be locally grown, shop produce nearing its sell by date or home cooked meals that people have prepared. Larders enable people to choose what they would like and make a donation for what they take, based on what they can afford. This is a sustainable way to provide good quality food to people at hyperlocal level.

Community kitchens or cooking initiatives bring people together to cook and eat. These initiatives not only offer a healthy cooked meal but company and conversation. The Community Interest Company, the Long Table in Stroud (thelongtableonline.com) is a very successful example of a community kitchen which aimed to tackle food waste and isolation. The Council is already working with the Long Table to encourage communities to host cheerful and good quality 'community feasts' during Christmas time.

There are already some community groups keen to increase the food based activities in their area. The Council is keen to support the establishment of a food Network, offering a range of opportunities such as Larders, Community Fridges and Community kitchens to support local people. Some funding would help the creation of this network and is likely to help lever in additional Crowdfund Cotswold or charity funding.

2.4 Tackling Financial Hardship

The Member Steering Group is liaising with the Citizens Advice Bureau and there is a shared concern regarding those residents who may sit just outside the benefits system and are



therefore not eligible for additional payments such as the £650 cost of living payment. Further work is needed to understand the income band this may cover, the number of households affected and the potential cost involved in providing some discretionary assistance. As this is a recently identified issue the financial implications are not included in this report but may be the subject of a future report.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The suggested allocation for the Council Tax Hardship fund is £20,000. This will be funded from the balance of the Covid19 - Hardship Fund earmarked reserve. With match funding from the County Council this would provide £40,000 to help support those that meet certain criteria and cannot afford to pay their Council Tax.
- 4.2 It is recommended that funding of £40,000 is allocated to support the establishment of a Food Network. There is no budget available for this funding and the allocation will need to be funded from the Council Priorities Fund.
- 4.3 Existing external funding of £75,000 which the Council receives for community based activity has been identified and earmarked for the 'Cotswold Connected Community and Food Programme' project.
- 4.4 Funding for the above initiatives would be included as part of the budget setting process for 2023/24 with a report to Council in February 2023.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council undertakes a number of statutory services which will support people through the Cost of Living Crisis, these include benefit payments and advice on homelessness prevention. However, the additional support being offered, which is set out within this report is discretionary.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 There is a risk the funding allocated for the Hardship fund is insufficient to meet demand or that households continue to need support, as the fund does not resolve financial issues, it provides a one-off relief to households struggling to pay their bills.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 7.1 The support offered through the cost of living crisis is targeted at any one in need. The Hardship fund would assist those in financial difficulty who could be anyone of any age, if they are liable for Council Tax payments and are in receipt of Council Tax Support. The Cotswold Connected Community and Food Programme would benefit a wide range of residents, across



different ages and to meet different needs. The programme is focussed on promoting equality and diversity with people caring for each other and sharing resources, regardless of background. The Food Network would not only assist those who may struggle to afford food but would also bring communities together and reduce food waste. Anyone irrespective of age or financial standing, could play a part in this and benefit from the inclusivity it creates.

8. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Community based activity advocated in this report delivers support at a local level. This reduces the need for people to travel outside the immediate area in which they live. This is particularly important as many of the Cotswolds rural communities have limited access to public transport and would therefore be reliant on car use.
- 8.2 The Food Network would reduce food waste, promoting locally grown food, use of shop produce nearing its sell by date and donation of excess meals cooked at home.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 9.1 The Council could decide not to allocate funding for the initiatives described in this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 None

(END)

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Agenda Item 8



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	COUNCIL – 16 NOVEMBER 2022
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 8
Subject	COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Mike Evely – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Email: mike.evely@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Mandy Fathers – Business Manager for Operations and Enabling Email: mandy.fathers@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	To present the results of the public consultation on proposals for revising the current Council Tax Support scheme with effect from 1 April 2023
Annexes	Annex A – Consultation Responses Annex B - Remodelling following consultation responses
Recommendation(s)	That Council resolves to: a) Agree the increase to income bands as detailed within paragraph 2.8 and Annex B of this report from 1 April 2023. b) Agree that officers may consider backdating Council Tax Support for a period beyond four weeks, but for no longer than six months, if there are exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances (or good cause) would apply in situations such as: (i) The claimant was seriously ill (physically or mentally) (ii) Someone the claimant should have been able to rely on for support did not give the support required (such as the Council, Advice Agency, DWP or a support worker) and therefore the claimant was not aware they were able to claim for Council Tax Support (iii) Some external factor that prevented a claim being made (such as imprisoned, detained under the Mental Health Act)
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivering our services to the highest standards



Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Leader and Deputy Leader, Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer, Head of Legal Services, Finance Business Partner, Group Manager, Director of Finance (Publica), Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucestershire Police Commissioner, Parish and Town Councils, Bromford Housing, Citizens Advice and Residents of the District



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Councils are required to review their Council Tax Support (CTS) schemes each year for those people of working age, and decide if they want to make any changes. Before any changes can be implemented, they must be subject to public consultation. In August 2022, officers proposed changes to the scheme, which The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and the Chief Finance Officer agreed should be consulted upon.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1 On 1 April 2013, the Council implemented its own CTS scheme of support to help those people on low incomes pay their Council Tax.
- 2.2 On 1 April 2020 this was changed to an income banded scheme and the percentage of CTS paid was based on the following income bands:

Income Band	Single Person	Couple	Lone Parent with 1 child	Lone Parent 2 children	Lone Parent 3 children	Lone Parent 4+ children	Couple with 1 child	Couple with 2 children	Couple with 3 children	Couple with 4+ children	Maximum % entitlement
Income £											
Band 1	0.00 to 125.	0.00 to 140	0.00 to 175	0.00 to 195	0.00 to 215	000 to 255	0.00 to 225	0.00 - 245	0.00 - 265	0.00 - 305	100.0%
Band 2	125.01 to 175	140.01 to 190	175.01 to 200	195.01 to 220	215.01 to 240	255.01 - 280	225.01 to 275	245.01 - 295	265.01 - 315	305.01 - 355	80.0%
Band 3	175.01 to 225	190.01 to 240	200.01 to 250	220.01 to 270	240.01 - 290	280.01 - 330	275.01 to 325	295.01 - 345	315.01 - 365	355.01 - 405	60.0%
Band 4	225.01 to 275	240.01 to 290	250.01 to 300	270.01 - 320	290.01 - 340	330.01 - 380	325.01 to 375	345.01 - 395	365.01 - 415	405.01 - 455	30.0%
Band 5	275.01 to 325	290.01 to 340	300.01 to 350	320.01 - 370	340.01 - 390	380.01 - 430	375.01 to 425	395.00 - 445	415.01 - 465	455.01 - 505	10.0%

- 2.3 Since 2019 household income has increased which has resulted in some households being moved into a higher income band, and therefore receiving a lesser percentage of support.
- 2.4 With inflation at 10.1% in September, it is anticipated that national benefit payments will increase by this amount from April 2023. Without changes to the CTS scheme, this would result in more households being moved into a higher income band and therefore having to pay a higher share of the full Council Tax for their property.
- 2.5 To give support to households through the cost of living crisis, proposals were made to increase income bands 2 to 6 for single people and couples by £10.00 a week, and by £20.00 a week for those with children as follows:



Income Band	Single	Couple	Lone Parent 1 Child	Lone Parent 2 Children	Lone Parent 3 Children	Lone Parent 4+ Children	Couple with 1 Child	Couple with 2 Children	Couple with 3 Children	Couple with 4+ Children	Maximum % Entitlement
Net Income £ per week											
1	0 - 125	0 - 140	0 - 175	0 - 195	0 - 215	0 - 255	0 - 225	0 - 245	0 - 265	0 - 305	100
2	125.01 - 185	140.01 - 200	175.01 - 220	195.01 - 240	215.01 - 260	255.01 - 300	225.01 - 295	245.01 - 315	265.01 - 335	305.01 - 375	80
3	185.01 - 235	200.01 - 250	220.01 - 270	240.01 - 290	260.01 - 310	300.01 - 350	295.01 - 345	315.01 - 365	335.01 - 385	375.01 - 425	60
4	235.01 - 285	250.01 - 300	270.01 - 320	290.01 - 340	310.01 - 360	350.01 - 400	345.01 - 395	365.01 - 415	385.01 - 435	425.01 - 475	30
5	285.01 - 335	300.01 - 350	320.01 - 370	340.01 - 390	360.01 - 410	400.01 - 450	395.01 - 445	415.01 - 465	435.01 - 485	475.01 - 525	10
6	335.01 +	350.01 +	370.01 +	390.01 +	410.01 +	450.01 +	445.01 +	465.01 +	485.01 +	525.01 +	0

- 2.6** A consultation took place initially for a six-week period from 15 August 2022 to 25 September 2022, but it was extended to 2 October 2022 due to the national period of mourning.
- 2.7** A summary of responses to the consultation can be found in Annex A, attached to this report.
- 2.8** Following the feedback from response '10' in Annex A, further remodelling of the scheme has been undertaken based on the suggestions and can be found in Annex B of this report. This remodelling includes a £10 increase in income band I for single and lone parents and a £20 increase in band I for couples and couples with children.
- 2.9** Based on the current CTS caseload used for remodelling the scheme that the Council consulted on and then remodelling based on feedback given during consultation, there is no impact, either negative or positive, on CTS claimants as all retain their initial modelling bands. However, new claimants may benefit from this change.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** The Council administers a Council Tax Support scheme with an annual expenditure of £4.5 million. For 2013/2014, the Government reduced the level of funding for the local scheme effectively creating a grant reduction of 10% a year across all of the precepting authorities.
- 5.2** With effect from 2013/2014, the scheme was funded through Formula Grant rather than direct subsidy and consequently the Government has transferred the risk (and therefore the cost) of increased take up within the scheme to local taxpayers. Any increase in take-up of CTS will lead to a reduced tax-base and therefore reduced income to the precepting bodies.
- 5.3** The proposed changes increase the estimated cost of the CTS scheme by approximately £58,000. This will be reflected in a decrease in the Council Tax base and Council Tax income recognised in the Collection Fund. The decrease in income will be spread proportionately



across the major precepting authorities (Gloucestershire County Council, The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Cotswold District Council as well as the Town and Parish Councils). Making these proposed changes will decrease the total tax base by the equivalent of 29 band D properties and a loss of income as follows:

Financial Year	GCC	Police	Town/Parish	Cotswold	Total
2023/2024	£43,106.62	£8,318.62	2,717.92	£4,274.84	£58,418

- 5.5 The reduction in Council Tax income retained by the Council of £4,275 will be taken into account as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit and instead required each authority to design a scheme specifying the reductions, which are to apply to amounts of Council Tax.
- 6.2 The CTS scheme is required under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (“the Act”), as amended. The Act states that for each financial year, billing authorities must consider whether to revise their CTS scheme or replace it with another scheme. The prescribed regulations set out the matters that must be included in such a scheme. Before making any changes, under Section 40 of the Act, the Council must:
- Consult with any major precepting authorities
 - Publish the draft scheme
 - Consult other parties likely to have an interest in the scheme.
- 6.3 The deadline for making decisions is 11 March in the financial year preceding that for which the revision or replacement scheme is to take effect (under paragraph 5, schedule 1A of the Act). If the Council does not make/revise a CTS scheme by 11 March 2023, a default scheme will be imposed on the Council, which will be effective from April 2023.



7. RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 There are two risks to consider:

- That the benefit caseload increases significantly, resulting in expenditure exceeding the levels estimated within this report
- That the administration, collection and recovery costs (including the costs for write-offs) could increase as a result of creating additional and relatively small liabilities

7.2 Although neither risk can be mitigated, the scheme will be closely monitored during 2023 with any concerns being addressed to the Chief Finance Officer.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.1 To ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 an Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out which concludes there is no negative impact on any of the protected characteristics.

9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None

10. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

10.1 The criteria for the CTS scheme are at the Council's discretion, and therefore, various alternatives and options are open to the Council.

(END)

Annex A

No	Date & Time	Do you agree with the proposed changes to the income-based banded discount scheme as described?	If you disagree please explain why and what alternative would you propose?
1	15/08/2022 10:11:40	NO	I have applied multiple times for help with the council tax but apparently we are over the amount JUST to get any help..we struggle to pay rent and eat as well.as clothe the kids and with the cost of everything now skyrocketing once again we are being taken to court for non payment and another attachment of earnings will be added to my husbands wages so that you get the money. Our bill is 2 months wages worth and we are penalised because of the area we live... as long as you get your money you don't care if we are able to survive on the measly amount we are left with..you should be holding your heads in shame for the lack of care or empathy and the amount of stress you cause. As I said I have asked for help but NO..so once again we are either getting another attachment of earnings or one of us will end up in prison for not being able to pay... I could go on and on but it all falls on deaf ears again..and no one will see or care
<p>Response to comments: For any household who is experiencing financial hardship the Council does offer to S13A Discretionary Scheme, which is available for any person who is liable for Council Tax. The criteria and application is available on the Council's website. The Council also has in place a Client Support officer to support residents with their finances and to become financially resilient in the future and less reliant on welfare benefits</p>			
2	15/08/2022 13:07:32	YES	
3	17/08/2022 07:40:59	NO	Higher percentage reductions
<p>Response to comments: The Council already offers a 100% reduction to those on the lowest income.</p>			
4	29/08/2022 08:08:38	YES	

5	29/08/2022 09:05:35	NO	Unless you can clearly identify a suitable way of funding this without borrowing yet more money, you will only create yet more debt and exposure for everyone in the future
Response to comments: <i>This is funded through council tax income.</i>			
6	29/08/2022 09:20:16	NO	A working couple have not really got any support AT ALL This cost of living affects all , not just those on low incomes and benefits , when will this concept be grasped. My wife and I earn 721 a week Nett.... before we pay £350 a month on utilities, £1300 on a mortgage, with £400 on food , £300 on fuel to work and £40 on road tax, leaving £170 nett income minus the other bills wifi, mobiles,TV licence, house insurance , hair cuts , toiletries , dental care etc. What help do we get here ? None ?
Response to comments: <i>It is inevitable that there will always be some households that are not eligible for support. Households could review their own spending to make the necessary changes to reduce their outgoings.</i>			
7	29/08/2022 09:36:31	YES	also double tax on second homes (like they have in Wales) increasing number of bands bands for larger homes to pay more this would increase revenue for council
Response to comments: <i>If the Government amend the legislation for Local Authorities in England to raise the tax on second homes, the Council could consider this option. The Council has no authority in respect of the Council Tax Bands and therefore are not in a position to increase the number. This would be Central Government and the Valuation Office Agency</i>			
8	29/08/2022 19:57:17	DON'T KNOW	We live on the A435 Road and our Council tax bands E but none of your rebates cover thus band please explain what your going to do about this
Response to comments: <i>Council Tax Support is restricted to Bands A to E. This means that is a person in a Band F property applies for council tax support, their support would be restricted to a Band E.</i>			
9	05/09/2022 14:38:01	NO	I do not agree with any allowance or support being given to a single parent family where there is an identifiable father who should be made to support his 'family' rather than tax payers funding such support.
Response to comments: <i>This is a personal opinion and one that officers are unable to respond to</i>			
10	05/09/2022 15:23:37	NO	I do not agree that the band 1 of the Proposed scheme does not give the £10/£20 uplift. Inflation effects the poorest residents the most, as they spend a larger proportion of their income on essential items such as food and energy yet are not being given any increase at all. Band 1, (those on the lowest incomes), has stayed at the same level since 2019/20. There does not seem to be any logic to suggesting this group of residents have been unaffected by inflation, increased costs of food and energy in a

			<p>different way to those with higher earning more who are all uplifted by £10/£20.</p> <p>I also do not agree with the sharp drop off of Council Tax Support between bands particularly between band 3 & 4 where the difference of a wage increase of £5 a week(to £240 a week) on a Cirencester band A property assuming single person discount would mean they would have to pay £5.90 a week more in CT making them worse off.</p> <p>I would propose increasing Band 1 of the proposed scheme by an uplift of £10 for single people and £20 a week for couples.</p> <p>I would also ask that in future there is consideration of a 'smoothing' of the bands so that residents do not find a 2% wage increase does not mean there is a real drop in net income as a result of losing CTS.</p>
<p>Response to comments: A further remodelling of the scheme based on these comments is available in Annex B. During the early part of the financial year 2023 further remodelling will be undertaken in partnership with Citizens Advice to consider proposals for the 2024 scheme. This meeting has already been arranged and in diaries.</p>			
11	05/09/2022 16:41:28	YES	
12	05/09/2022 18:48:28	YES	
13	06/09/2022 00:35:13	YES	
14	20/09/2022 10:37:38	YES	
15	20/09/2022 15:20:13	NO	<p>You say you are “amending current scheme to take effect from 1 April 2023 which we think will help support those who most need it”. How have you determined “those who will most need it”?</p> <p>Although any decrease in bill payments or increase in council tax benefit are welcomed by our clients, was any consideration given to increasing the number of people who are entitled to 100% CT support (increasing Band 1 levels) as they are the ones on the lowest incomes who are affected most by any changes in costs of living.?</p> <p>People on low wages will still struggle to pay the required 20% contribution.</p>

			<p>It will only benefit those people who are on the edge of the income boundaries.</p> <p>We have looked at the percentage increase gain for those in households with and without children. With children 2.967%, without children 1.205%. Would it not have been more equal to propose a % reduction to all with incomes under a certain level?</p> <p>We have looked at 2 case studies to research these comments</p>
<p>Response to comments: Modelling has been undertaken on the current Council Tax Support caseload. We are only able to determine the need by the information we hold. The current caseload is 3943. Through this modelling exercise we have determined that all those in the lower income bands will be better off but a small handful in Bands 5 & 6 could be negatively impacted. Officers are always on hand to support any resident struggling to pay their council tax and will work with residents to ensure affordable repayment schemes are implemented</p>			
16	29/09/2022 20:48:59	NO	<p>When has a change like this benefited the lower earning general public? This is a thinly veiled attempt to elicit more money from us under the guise of restructuring. The alternative would be to spend what you already receive wisely (not wastefully) and without bias towards the towns and villages further south.</p>
<p>Response to comments: This is a personal opinion and one that officers are unable to respond to</p>			

Annex B

Suggested £10 increase to Band 1 upper limit for single & lone parents; £20 increase to Band 1 upper limit for couple & couple with children; no other changes to original

Income Band	Single	Couple	Lone Parent 1 Child	Lone Parent 2 Children	Lone Parent 3 Children	Lone Parent 4+ Children	Couple with 1 Child	Couple with 2 Children	Couple with 3 Children	Couple with 4+ Children	Maximum % Entitlement
Net Income £ per week											
1	0 - 135	0 - 160	0 - 185	0 - 205	0 - 225	0 - 265	0 - 245	0 - 265	0 - 285	0 - 325	100
2	135.01 - 185	160.01 - 200	185.01 - 220	205.01 - 240	225.01 - 260	265.01 - 300	245.01 - 295	265.01 - 315	285.01 - 335	325.01 - 375	80
3	185.01 - 235	200.01 - 250	220.01 - 270	240.01 - 290	260.01 - 310	300.01 - 350	295.01 - 345	315.01 - 365	335.01 - 385	375.01 - 425	60
4	235.01 - 285	250.01 - 300	270.01 - 320	290.01 - 340	310.01 - 360	350.01 - 400	345.01 - 395	365.01 - 415	385.01 - 435	425.01 - 475	30
5	285.01 - 335	300.01 - 350	320.01 - 370	340.01 - 390	360.01 - 410	400.01 - 450	395.01 - 445	415.01 - 465	435.01 - 485	475.01 - 525	10
6	335.01 +	350.01 +	370.01 +	390.01 +	410.01 +	450.01 +	445.01 +	465.01 +	485.01 +	525.01 +	0

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Agenda Item 9



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and Date of Committee	COUNCIL – 16 NOVEMBER 2022
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 9
Subject	FUNDING FOR CHANGING PLACES TOILETS
Wards Affected	All
Accountable Member	Councillor Mike Evely, Cabinet Member for Finance Email: mike.evely@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable Officer	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive Email: robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider a recommendation from Cabinet on 3 October 2022 relating to funding for “Changing Places” toilets.
Annexes	Annexes to the QI report can found within the document pack for Cabinet on 3 October 2022
Recommendation(s)	That Council resolves to allocate a capital budget of £162,500 in 2022/23 to install four accessible ‘Changing Places’ toilets across the district for people with severe disabilities following a successful bid for funding from the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities.
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; and ● Supporting businesses to grow in a green, sustainable manner, and to provide high value jobs
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	None



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Cabinet on 21 September considered the Finance and Performance Report for 2022/23 Quarter 1 which included a recommendation to Council to allocate a capital budget of £162,500 in 2022/23 to install four accessible 'Changing Places' toilets across the district for people with severe disabilities following a successful bid for funding from the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities.
- 1.2. The following paragraph is the relevant extract from the Finance and Performance Report.

2. CHANGING PLACES FUNDING

- 2.1 The Council was awarded £162,500 by the Government to assist with installing 'Changing Places' Toilets in locations across the District. The toilets are larger and more accessible to people who cannot use standard accessible toilets. Toilets are to be installed at Cirencester Abbey Grounds, Birdland at Bourton on the Water, Cotswold Country Park and Beach and Cotswold Farm Park. Delivery for all four venues is expected in 2022/23 and officers are currently liaising with each venue to progress the project. This report includes a recommendation to Council that the 2022/23 Capital budget is adjusted to include a budget of £162,500 for this scheme.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 As stated earlier in the report, the Council was awarded a capital grant in relation to the Changing Places Fund. The Grant Determination Letter (2022-23) No 31/6222 sets out the purpose and conditions of the grant in terms of how it may be used, eligible expenditure, and monitoring and compliance arrangements. The funding is available over a three financial years (2021/22 through to 2023/24) and can only be used to install Changing Places Toilets at the shown in paragraph 2.1
- 3.2 The grant is capped at the allocation level (£162,500). No further grant would be made available should the cost of providing the Changing Places Toilets exceed the allocation.
- 3.3 As with many grants provided by Government, should the authority fail to comply with the conditions, the Secretary of State may require the repayment of the whole or any part of the grant monies paid.
- 3.4 There is a risk that if costs exceed the available funding the project may be delayed beyond the delivery terms set out in the grant conditions. Given the limited capital resources available, it is expected that officers monitor the financial performance of the scheme and mitigate any potential cost overrun to stay within the grant allocation. Members will be kept informed of the financial performance of the scheme through the regular Finance and Performance reports to Cabinet.



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** All local authorities must, in exercising their functions, have due regard to their statutory obligations under the Public Section Equality Duty (Section 149, Equality Act 2010).
- 4.2** Cotswold District Council is responsible for ensuring that this expenditure is spent in accordance with all applicable legal requirements such as procurement legislation. Where the grant is passed to other organisations, that are not contracting organisations, we should ensure that value for money is achieved.

(END)

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Agenda Item 10



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	COUNCIL – 16 NOVEMBER 2022
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 10
Subject	RECOVERY INVESTMENT STRATEGY
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for the Economy and Council Transformation Email: tony.dale@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer Email: david.stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To rescind the Recovery Investment Strategy
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	That Council rescinds the Recovery Investment Strategy for the reasons as set out in this report.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Respond to the Climate Crisis● Provide Socially Rented Homes● Enable a Vibrant Economy
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	N/A



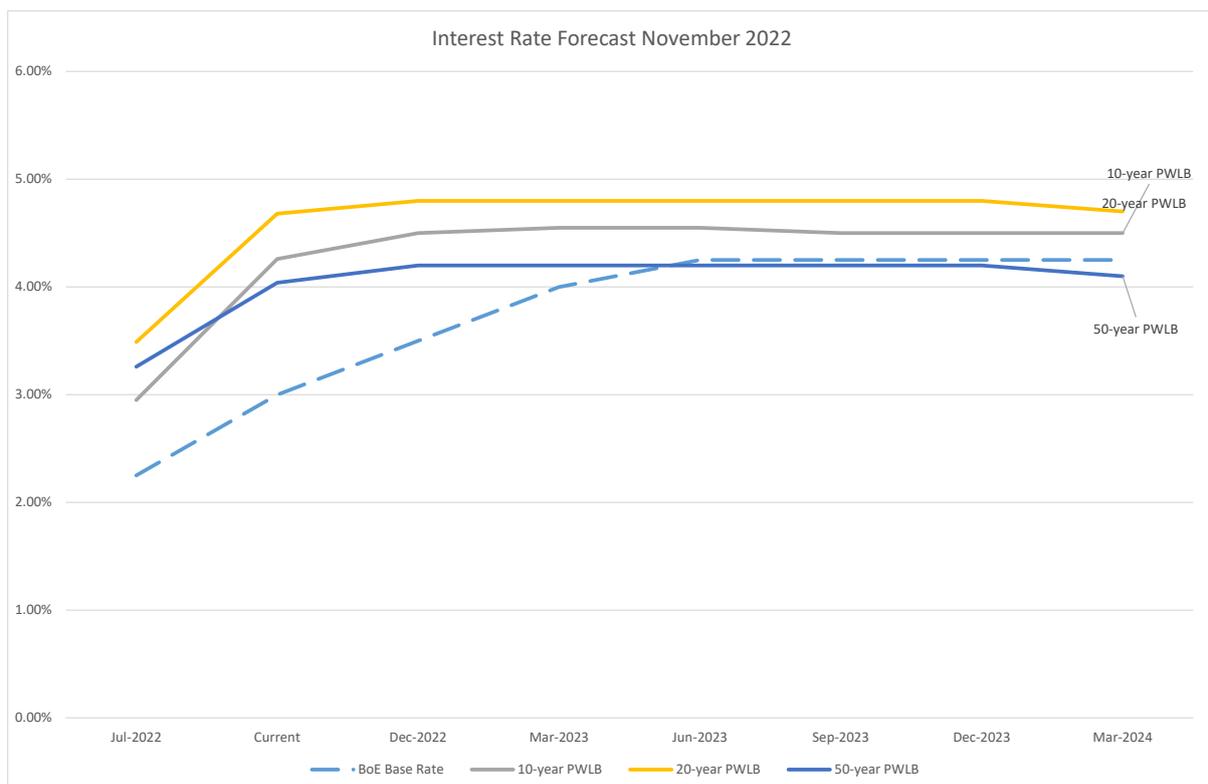
1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Cabinet considered this report on the Recovery Investment Strategy on 07 November 2022.
- 1.2 In September 2020 the Council approved its first Recovery Investment Strategy (“the 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.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 Council approved the refresh of the Strategy on 20 July 2022.



2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1** Since the Council approved the refreshed Strategy in July 2022 a number of external, economic factors have made borrowing and investment decisions more complex given both the level of uncertainty and the impact of both higher inflation and interest rates. The mini-budget of 23 September 2022 was poorly received by the markets, with a significant impact on gilts with a huge spike in yields and a further fall in sterling. Whilst the fiscal statement from the new Chancellor on 17 October 2022 has calmed markets, there remains a significant degree of economic and political uncertainty.
- 2.2** The Bank of England increased the Base Rate from 1.25% to 3.00% with a forecast of further rate rises in the short-term. The most recent interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose, the Council's Treasury Management advisors, indicates that the base rate may reach 3.50% by the end of 2022 and remain at around 4.00% until late 2024
- 2.3** The uncertainty and instability in the financial markets since July has seen upward pressure on UK Gilt prices which inform the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) borrowing rates. At the time of writing longer-term borrowing rates are in the range of 4.46% (10-year maturity) to 4.78% (20-year maturity) with 50-year maturity borrowing being 4.26%. Short-term borrowing rates (for periods up to 1 year) range from 2.29% to 3.97%. The chart below shows the current and forecast interest rates (as at 07 November 2022).





2.4 The table below provides members with an overview of the financial impact of increased borrowing costs.

	July 2022 RIS Refresh	21 October 2022 (am)	07 November 2022 (pm)
PWLB-30 year (Certainty rate)	2.50%	4.88%	4.60%
PWLB-50 year (Certainty rate)	2.40%	4.52%	4.26%
Interest Cost per annum (per £10m)			
PWLB-30 year (Certainty rate)	250,000	488,000	460,000
PWLB-50 year (Certainty rate)	240,000	452,000	426,000
Change since July 2022			
PWLB-30 year (Certainty rate)		238,000	210,000
PWLB-50 year (Certainty rate)		212,000	186,000

2.5 It is also worth noting the Government position regarding capital expenditure and financing in Local Authorities. The external environment can be viewed as more prescriptive following a series of guidance updates and consultations:

- Revised *Lending Arrangements for PWLB Loans* from November 2020 (updated in August 2021)
- Government position as stated in *the Local Authority Capital Finance Framework: planned improvements* document published in July 2021
- Revised CIPFA *Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities* (Prudential Code) and *Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes* (the Treasury Management Code).
- Consultation on *Changes to the capital framework: Minimum Revenue Provision* (closed February 2022)
- Provisions set out in the *Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill* (Section 71, Capital Finance risk management) which would require a Local Authority to operate within a broad set of capital risk metrics and gives the Secretary of State power to give risk-mitigation directions.

2.6 Under the revised CIPFA Codes, the Council should have due regard to the risks associated with service and commercial investments should be proportionate to their financial capacity (i.e. that plausible losses could be absorbed in budgets or reserves without unmanageable detriment to local services.)



2.7 In addition, there has been a tightening of the renewable energy exemption to the investment for yield rules. This clearly has an impact on the level of investment returns the Council would realise and reduces the viability of this element of the strategy.

2.8 In light of the level of economic uncertainty, the increased cost of short-term and long-term borrowing, and the tightening of the capital finance environment, it is appropriate to rescind the Strategy.

3. NEXT STEPS

3.1 Subject to the decision outlined above, the Capital Programme will be amended to remove planned activity and associated capital financing. Therefore, the Council will remove £75m of associated planned capital expenditure and prudential borrowing of the MTFS period.

3.2 Cabinet and Council will consider the final budget position in February 2023 and will include a review of the funding position set out in Section 4 below and how that can be addressed over the medium-term.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Council faces a significant financial challenge over the Medium-Term Plan period with the *Draft Budget Proposals 2023-24 and Refreshed MTFS Forecasts* report being considered alongside this report.

4.2 Whilst the report should be seen as an indicative view of the Council's financial position given the uncertainty around Government funding and policy, the emerging position is a potential funding gap of £1.5m in 2023/24.

4.3 When Cabinet and Council considered the refresh of the strategy it was stated that there was a risk to the Council's financial stability if it was not adopted (i.e. do nothing). These risks remain and require an alternate approach to balancing the budget over the medium-term such as significant Council Tax rises or service cuts.

4.4 With this in mind and in light of the indicative funding gap and the wider the challenges faced by the Council to remain financially sustainable over the medium-term, there is a need to develop a balanced and proportionate savings and transformation programme that mitigates the risk to the Council's financial resilience. The Council will need to consider the contribution future capital investment can make to the delivery of additional income streams and/or cost reduction and efficiencies.



- 4.5** Rescinding the Strategy will allow the Council to consider the broader financial position and develop revenue and capital savings and transformation proposals that address the indicative funding gap.
- 4.6** As stated in the *Draft Budget Proposals 2023-24 and Refreshed MTFS Forecasts* report, there may still be opportunities that arise from time-to-time but these will be considered strictly on a business case basis taking into account any refresh of the budget and MTFS proposals and the affordability of any borrowing at the time. If approved, any such initiatives will be added to the capital programme.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1** The Refresh of the Strategy approved by Council in July 2022 sets out the key risk is deliverability. The key risk to the Council now is the continuation of the Strategy in light of the issues outlined in this report. If the Council was to deliver the Strategy as approved it is likely that the Council's financial position would not be enhanced and that elements of the current Strategy are outside of the current rules and guidance.

7. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** None

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 8.1** With the economic factors and capital finance framework issues set out in the report, there are no viable alternative options regarding the continuation of the Strategy. As set out in the *Draft Budget Proposals 2023-24 and Refreshed MTFS Forecasts* report, there may still be opportunities that arise from time to time but these will be considered strictly on a business case basis taking into account any refresh of the budget and MTFS proposals and the affordability of any borrowing at the time. If approved, any such initiatives will be added to the capital programme.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1** None

Agenda Item 11



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	COUNCIL - 16 NOVEMBER 2022
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 11
Subject	IMPLICATIONS OF ELECTIONS ACT 2022
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Joe Harris, Leader of the Council Email: joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive Officer and Returning Officer robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Sarah Dalby, Electoral Services Manager sarah.dalby@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To provide an update on the key elements of the Elections Act 2022 and its implications for the Council's Returning Officer and Electoral Services team.
Annexes	None
Recommendation(s)	<i>That Council resolves to:</i> <i>1. Note the report and the allocation of £23,910 from the Council's Priorities Fund to provide additional staff resource to enable the Council to meet the requirements for Voter ID at elections taking place on or after 4 May 2023.</i>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivering our services to the highest standards
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	None



1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The Elections Act 2022 (“the Act”) came into effect in April 2022 and will introduce a number of changes to the way in which elections are conducted.
- 1.2** This report sets out the main implications of the Act and the changes required to ensure the Electoral Services Team is prepared for the implementation.

2.1 MAIN POINTS

- 2.0** The changes will be introduced by means of Secondary Legislation over the next year. Draft Secondary Legislation for Voter ID has now been laid and is expected to come into effect from the May 2023 elections.
- 2.1** The Statutory Instrument enacting Voter ID was laid in Parliament on 3 November and will be debated in both Houses of Parliament. If approved, it will come into force from mid-January 2023 with Voter ID being required from all elections on or after 4 May 2023.
- 2.2** Changes prescribed by the Act include the requirement for electors voting at a Polling Station to provide photographic identification (Voter ID), the requirement for electors to provide their date of birth and National Insurance Number when applying for a postal or proxy vote, changes to the franchise for overseas electors and changes to the franchise for European Union citizens. In addition, changes to Regulations require the Returning Officer to provide accessibility equipment as needed at Polling Stations.
- 2.3** Alongside these changes, the Parliamentary Boundary Review proposals currently indicate that the Cotswold District will split into two Parliamentary Constituencies from the next Parliamentary election after September 2023. This means that the Returning Officer for Cotswold District Council will become the Acting Returning Officer for the two new Constituencies.
- 2.4** The final proposals of the Review will be published in early November 2022 with final recommendations and a report laid in Parliament in the Summer of 2023. All new Constituencies will come into effect from the next Parliamentary Election after Autumn 2023.

IMPLICATIONS FOR COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

- 2.5** Electoral Registration Officers will be required to supply a Voter Authority Certificate to anyone who does not have the appropriate ID.
- 2.6** These can be applied for up to 6 working days before the election. This is an extra task for Electoral Services which will run alongside voter registration with the need to check/review each application.
- 2.7** Government research suggests that between 2% and 4% of electors will need a Voter Authority Certificate. For Cotswold District Council 4% is around 3000 applications. The new ID system will go live in mid-January 2023 – around 13/14 weeks before the election on 4 May.



- 2.8** Whilst the exact process that will be followed has not been finalised, it is likely that anyone needing to apply for Voter ID will need to do so via a Government portal. This will require uploading a photograph and completing the necessary forms and then submitting. However, the process is not completely centralised. Instead applications will be provided via a secure login to the Electoral Services teams in whose area they reside. It will then be the responsibility locally, to check an uploaded application for accuracy, and advise the Government, who will then provide the requisite Voter ID.
- 2.9** Based on the percentages above, rough calculations have indicated that it could take 10 weeks of an officer's time to check all applications received. The Returning Officer has raised with the local MP whether fail-safes can be built into the process (which could be more akin to the process of applying for a Passport) that would prevent poor quality images being uploaded, for example, and hence reduce the amount of time needed for the checking process, but it's not clear if this will be possible. As such, it must be assumed that the checking process will fall to the Elections Team and be quite time consuming.
- 2.10** A paper version of the application will be available for those without internet access and they will need to supply a photograph for Electoral Services to upload. We will also be asking Customer Services to assist electors to make an online application and by taking a photograph of them. This will be provided in all Council offices. In summary, whilst officers can prepare for lengthy checking processes, there is considerable uncertainty about this part of the process in terms of additional officer time required.
- 2.11** There will be additional emergency proxy regulations, allowing anyone who loses their Voter ID up to 5pm on election day, to appoint a proxy with ID to vote on their behalf.
- 2.12** Temporary Voter Certificates may also be issued to anyone who applied by the deadline but whose certificate does not arrive. These will be signed by the Electoral Registration Officer's staff and collected by the elector.
- 2.13** It is likely that the number of postal vote applications received will rise as people realise they do not need to provide ID as part of the postal vote process.
- 2.14** The introduction of Voter ID will require significant training for all core staff and Polling Station staff. The new burden funding process allows for one day of training for the core team and up to half an hour extra for Polling Station staff. It is unclear at this stage whether this will be sufficient or whether extra training will be required. In addition, extra training will be required for Customer Services teams working for the Council.
- 2.15** The Act also adds extra responsibility on the Returning Officer to provide equipment to assist voters with disabilities voting at stations. This may require a review of stations and potentially a visit to each one of the Polling Station locations to check their suitability and ensure accessibility and privacy needs are met.
- 2.16** Following the May 2023 elections, new regulations will change the postal and proxy voting application process. Electors will need to verify their identity to obtain a postal vote and will have to renew it every 3 years (currently postal and proxy votes are refreshed every 5 years).



- 2.17** In addition, any British citizen living overseas will be able to register to vote at national elections from summer 2023. This removes the 15-year time limit currently in place.
- 2.18** The registration and voting rights of EU citizens will also be changed in 2023 and the Electoral Registration Officer will be required to contact electors with details of whether or not they retain their voting rights. Voting rights will be dependent on which countries have reciprocal agreements with the UK - currently Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal and Spain.
- 2.19** As these are new regulations, the Council will receive new burdens funding from the Government to cover the extra tasks. At the time of writing, a “letter of comfort” has been received which explains the calculation method for the funding, but no detail as to how much will be received. It is hoped that the first funds will be received by the end of November 2022.
- 2.20** The current Parliamentary Boundary Review proposal splits the Cotswold District between two constituencies. As Cotswold District has the majority of electors in each new area, the Returning Officer will become the Acting Returning Officer for both. If this proposal remains unchanged, it will take effect from the next General Election after the Order has been made. On current timescales, this will be any Election from the Autumn of 2023.
- 2.21** This is a significant change for the team with the two constituencies covering four Local Authority areas - Cotswold District, Tewkesbury District, Stroud District and Wiltshire.

3.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 3.0** The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is the department responsible for implementing these changes and the Department has been working closely with the electoral community, providing information as it becomes available.
- 3.1** As part of their implementation work, the team at DLUHC have surveyed EROs and Electoral Officers to ascertain their readiness and understanding of the new regulations.
- 3.2** The first survey was in July 2022 and showed that 89% of EROs felt unprepared for the implementation of the Voter Authority Certificate process. Following a national seminar in September, a second survey was conducted in October and we await the results. However, there are still considerable number of details required and guidance to be issued and there is concern about when this will be made available.
- 3.3** The Act will increase the workload of the Electoral Services Team with changes being introduced in the run-up to the 4 May 2023 elections.
- 3.4** The Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA) has called for the introduction of Voter ID to be delayed. In their letter to the Under Secretary of State in September, the AEA expressed concern that the lateness of the Secondary Legislation will increase the pressure on Electoral Services Teams in the run up to the May elections, with limited time for training on the new processes. This, along with limited funding for local communication could, in their view, result in electors being unable to vote due to a lack of understanding of the new requirements.



- 3.5** In preparation for the impending changes, the Returning Officer and Electoral Services Manager have determined that it will be necessary for a new post to be created in the core Electoral Services Team to assist with the processing of Voter Authority Certificates and it is hoped that this will be filled by January 2023. This extra post will also give some extra resilience within the Team when the Parliamentary Boundary changes come into effect.
- 3.6** The Parliamentary Boundary Commission published its final proposals on 8 November. The proposals for two constituencies remain, but with some changes. The Electoral Services Teams can now begin to plan for the next Parliamentary election should that occur after Autumn 2023.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** The full cost implications of the Elections Act are not yet known. Further work is required to obtain estimates for the introduction of the new processes required by the act and any resources, equipment, software or licences that may be required to support these processes.
- 4.2** With reference to the additional workload pressures as detailed in the report, an additional Elections Assistant post is being sought to help manage the additional workload. This post will be a 2 year fixed term contract at a cost of £23,910 per annum.
- 4.3** Any costs associated with the Elections Act are expected to be fully funded from DLUHC New Burdens. The funding will be provided through a hybrid approach comprising of grant payments and Justification Led Bids. An initial grant payment is expected during November 2022 with further grants provided in April 2023 and April 2024. Justification Led Bids will release funding retrospectively on the basis of evidence of spend. The claim window for this process will be Summer/Autumn 2023 and 2024.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** The Act has been enacted to make provision about the administration and conduct of elections. In particular it includes provision designed to strengthen the integrity of the electoral process. The Act and the secondary legislation which will be enacted set out clearly the legal duties with which the Council will have to comply. Some of these are set out in the body of this Report.
- 5.2** Save from the above there are no further legal implications arising directly from this Report.



6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1** The Returning Officer and Electoral Services Manager have started making preparations and assessing risks associated with the new demands of the Elections Act, including initiating recruitment for the additional resource required and enhancing training plans for key elections staff. A meeting has taken place between the Returning Officer and the Gloucestershire Constabulary Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to plan and prepare for any Elections Act or Voter ID issues that could arise on polling day.
- 6.2** There is a risk to the effective conduct of Elections if the regulations and guidance are not received in time for core team training before the system goes live to electors.
- 6.3** There is also a risk that the electorate will not be fully conversant with the new regulations in time for the May 2023 elections, resulting in electors being unable to vote on the day.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 7.1** The Elections Act 2022 adds additional responsibility on the Returning Officer to ensure that all polling stations are accessible for everyone. They are also required to ensure that all Polling Stations have equipment to assist electors with disabilities to vote. This includes, but is not limited to large print ballot papers, chairs for those unable to stand for any length of time and magnifiers to assist in reading ballot papers.

(END)

Agenda Item 12



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	FULL COUNCIL 16 NOVEMBER 2022
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 12
Subject	DRAFT EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY PROTOCOL
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Joe Harris - Leader of the Council Email: joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Angela Claridge, Director of Governance & Development Tel: 01282 623219 Email: angela.claridge@cotswold.gov.uk Andrew Brown, Business Manager, Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861634 Email: Andrew.brown@publicagroup.uk
Report author	Angela Claridge, Director of Governance & Development Tel: 01282 623219 Email: angela.claridge@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	Modernising the Constitution.
Annexes	Annex A – Draft Executive Scrutiny Protocol
Recommendation(s)	That Council resolves to approve the addition of an Executive Scrutiny Protocol into the Constitution.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivering our services to the highest standards
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Elected Members of the Constitution Working Group; Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Committee; Local Management Team; Head of Legal Services and Business Manager – Democratic Services.



1. 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.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 The Protocol is not a mandatory part of the Constitution, but is considered good practice. It sets out the basis for a positive relationship between the Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.2 The Protocol, if approved, will form part of the Constitution and therefore requires Council approval. Consultation with the Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Committee has been undertaken.
- 2.3 The Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee requested that the Constitution Working Group endorse the introduction of a new part to the Constitution – an Executive/Scrutiny Protocol (“the Protocol”). The Constitution Working Group at its meeting on 10 February 2022 endorsed the draft protocol for further consultation with the Cabinet, and Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.4 Cabinet, at their meetings on 9 May, 2022, considered the draft Protocol and requested some amendments. They subsequently considered an updated Protocol on 3 October 2022, and are recommending the Protocol shown in Annex A for adoption by the Council.
- 2.5 Overview & Scrutiny Committee have considered the draft Protocol on 24 May, and an updated version on 18 October, and similarly are recommending to Full Council for approval.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None specific or arising from this report.



4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There is no legal requirement for the Council to have a Protocol although it is considered best practice in the 'Overview and Scrutiny: Statutory Guidance for Councils and Combined Authorities (MHCLG)' document published in May 2019.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 5.1 As a Protocol is not a mandatory requirement, Members could choose not to adopt it. However, there is a risk that the contribution that Overview & Scrutiny can make to the Council's improvement processes isn't maximised.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- Minutes of Cabinet held on 9 May and 3 October 2022.
- Minutes of Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 24 May and 18 October 2022.
- Overview and Scrutiny: Statutory Guidance for Councils and Combined Authorities (MHCLG) document published in May 2019 available on the Centre for Governance & Scrutiny website

These documents will be available for inspection online at www.cotswold.gov.uk or by contacting democratic services democratic@cotswold.gov.uk for a period of up to 4 years from the date of the meeting.

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DRAFT EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY PROTOCOL FOR COUNCILLORS OF COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL V5

November 2022

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview & Scrutiny must be located at the strategic heart of the authority and is a key element of the decision making process acting as a 'critical friend'.

1.2 This Protocol applies to Scrutiny (all members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, including substitutes and any Member who sits on an Overview & Scrutiny Task & Finish Group), and the Executive (all Members of Cabinet and executive officers with delegated authority to undertake executive functions).

2. Trust

2.1 All Members should promote an atmosphere of openness at Overview & Scrutiny meetings and should strive to ensure that questioning and debate takes place within a climate of mutual respect and trust.

2.2 Overview & Scrutiny Members need to trust that Members of the Executive are being open and honest.

2.3 Executive Members need to trust Overview & Scrutiny Members with information and to trust in their views.

3. Policy Development and Pre-Decision Scrutiny

3.1 “Policy Development” refers to the development of the Budget and Policy Framework, which is defined in Article 4 of the Constitution as comprising the following plans and strategies (as agreed by Full Council 14 July 2021):

- Corporate Strategy/Corporate Plan
- Community Strategy
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy
- Plans and strategies which together comprise the Development Plan (the Cotswold District Local Plan and the Council’s input into the Gloucestershire County Structure Plan)
- Housing Strategy
- Pay Policy
- Licensing Policy Statements (Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005)

3.2 The Budget and Policy Framework also includes a number of budgetary policies which may be more appropriately developed in conjunction with Audit Committee - The Medium-Term Financial Strategy; Capital Programme; Setting the Council Tax; Decisions relating to the control of the Council’s borrowing requirements, the control of its capital expenditure

and the setting of virement limits, and The Capital, Treasury Management and Investment Strategies.

3.3 The importance of early input from Overview & Scrutiny into policy development is recognised. Scrutiny can act as a sounding board and a think tank in investigating issues coming up on the horizon, bringing in added value. Cabinet Members and Executive Officers should draw to the attention of Overview & Scrutiny Committee any key policy in addition to those in the Budget and Policy Framework that is being developed or is due for review to ensure timely input.

3.4 The development of the Budget and Policy Framework needs to be an inclusive process involving both Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Cabinet and relevant lead Officer will consider the views of Scrutiny in the development of the policy and provide a response to the recommendations of Scrutiny within 28 days or earlier should the report of the Cabinet require publication. The detail of Scrutiny's involvement shall also be included within the body of the Cabinet report. The Cabinet/Full Council will continue to be responsible for approving and adopting policy.

3.5 Cabinet Members may wish to request views from Scrutiny on a decision before it is taken. The Cabinet Member will be responsible for circulating the details to the relevant Scrutiny Committee Members, through Democratic Services. Utilising this as an option does not exclude the decision from being subject to call-in. However, it will give the Cabinet Member the ability to consider different views and perspectives of a decision to be taken before it is taken.

3.6 Scrutiny may review the Forward Plan and select upcoming decisions for pre-decision scrutiny.

4. Holding Decision Makers to Account

4.1 A key role of Scrutiny is in holding the Cabinet to account for decisions taken and performance of services. In holding the Cabinet to account Scrutiny Members will:

- Consider decisions taken by the Cabinet, individually and collectively and items on the Forward Plan through formal Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings;
- Review service performance and performance against policy and targets;
- Be prepared to ask searching questions that provide a constructive challenge;
- Be positive and respectful in their interactions with Cabinet Members and Executive Officers;
- Represent the voice of the public;
- Listen to the responses provided and assist the Cabinet in identifying areas for further consideration and improvement.

4.2 In return, Cabinet Members will:

- Be willing to be open, honest and engaged in providing a response to constructive challenge;
- Value the importance of Scrutiny;
- Be supportive of the scrutiny process and invite and seek opinion from Scrutiny on decisions to be taken, where appropriate;
- Provide a positive contribution to Scrutiny meetings;
- Attend meetings when invited to do so to answer questions and present information:

- By way of a direct answer
- By reference to published publications
- By referring a matter to an Officer in attendance, if they are not able to respond
- If an answer cannot immediately be given, by providing a written answer within five working days unless it is not reasonable to do so. If considered unreasonable, an explanation as to why will be given.
- A combination of the above four options.

4.3 The Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee has a legal role in respect of any key executive decision that has not been notified on the Council's Forward Plan for 28 clear days prior to the date of decision. In exceptional circumstances the Council may need to operate alternative decision making arrangements for a period of time e.g. in response to an emergency. In any such situation it is expected that the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee would be consulted on any urgent key decisions in the normal way.

5. Scrutiny Work Planning

5.1 Prior to the start of each Municipal Year, Scrutiny will hold a Work Planning Workshop. As part of this Workshop the views of the relevant Cabinet Member(s) will be inputted, as will the views of Overview & Scrutiny Members, Officers, any external guests who are invited to contribute, and any members of the public who submit suggestions to the Council. The advice of the Cabinet Member(s) may be sought regarding the priorities of the Council, areas of planned policy development and they will be asked to highlight any areas of conflict and instances where Scrutiny may be invited to assist in work. The Workshop will inform the development of a draft Scrutiny Work Programme. At the beginning of the Municipal Year the views of any new Overview & Scrutiny Committee Members and Cabinet Members will be sought before the draft work plan is presented to the first meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for their endorsement.

5.2 The Chair & Vice-Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will informally meet periodically with the Leader and Cabinet Members in order to:

- Discuss upcoming issues and provide for ongoing Cabinet input into Scrutiny work plans;
- Ensure liaison between Scrutiny and the Cabinet over Council priorities, targets and performance;
- Continue to build on the positive working relationship between the two functions.

5.4 In setting and reviewing its work plan, Scrutiny will be mindful of the constraints of the organisation and will take advice from officers on prioritisation, which may be informed by the following considerations (TOPIC criteria):

Timeliness: Is it timely to consider this issue?

Organisational priority: Is it a Council priority?

Public Interest: Is it of significant public interest?

Influence: Can Scrutiny have meaningful influence?

Cost: Does it involve a high level of expenditure, income or savings?

6. Overview & Scrutiny Recommendations to Cabinet

6.1 Scrutiny may make recommendations to the Cabinet about functions for which the Council is responsible or about issues that affect the district and its people through a report

arising from a formal Committee meeting or by way of an Overview & Scrutiny Committee Task & Finish Group report.

6.2 Once Scrutiny has agreed a recommendation, the views of the relevant Cabinet Member(s) will be sought within 10 working days (if not already provided at a meeting) and will be included within the report. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will have the opportunity to meet with the relevant Cabinet Member(s) to discuss the recommendation and the response before the final report is submitted to the Cabinet for consideration. Upon formal receipt of a recommendation from Scrutiny, Cabinet will:

- Give due consideration to any recommendations or views expressed and respond to recommendations in writing within 2 months of receipt of the recommendations;
- Provide an explanation for the reasons why recommendations made by Scrutiny have not been pursued (where applicable).

7. What Scrutiny Can Expect From Senior Officers.

7.1 Whilst Scrutiny undertakes to deliver effective outcomes for local people, it will only be able to do this if senior officers make a commitment to work with and respond to Scrutiny in a constructive manner. The following are proposed as the roles and responsibilities that will govern the Council and Publica's relationship with Scrutiny. Senior Officers will:

- Provide professional advice to Scrutiny;
- respect the independence of Scrutiny;
- recognise the value that Scrutiny can add to service improvement;
- co-operate positively with Scrutiny in developing and undertaking its work programme;
- participate in the monitoring of the implementation of recommendations made by Scrutiny that are agreed by Cabinet;
- Contribute to a positive culture that values constructive scrutiny.

8. Call-in

8.1 Decisions may be called in in accordance with the procedure rules set out in Part 4.13 of the Constitution. Cabinet Members will be expected to attend any meetings of Scrutiny at which a call-in request in relation to their area of responsibility is being considered. If the relevant Cabinet Member cannot attend, the Leader or a Deputy Leader should attend in their absence. The purpose of their attendance will be to answer questions of fact not to present the item. The following procedure will take place where call-ins are being considered:

- i. The Member who called in the decision will speak first;
- ii. The Chair will invite the Cabinet Member (decision maker) to respond;
- iii. The Committee will then ask questions of the decision maker, who may ask a relevant Officer to supply further information if necessary;
- iv. Scrutiny debates the issue and votes on the outcome. The Committee will either agree with the decision, in which case it can be implemented immediately, or agree to refer the decision back to the decision maker with comments. Alternatively the Committee could refer the call in to Full Council.

9. Scrutiny Consideration of Confidential or Exempt Decisions

9.1 Scrutiny Members have a right to access exempt information pertaining to their engagement with policy development or decisions that have been taken or are yet to be taken in order to allow effective scrutiny. Should a Scrutiny Member wish to ask questions pertaining to exempt information at a public Committee meeting, the press and public will be excluded from the meeting in accordance with the Council's Constitution and the Cabinet Member will be expected to answer in an open and transparent manner. The exempt information will remain confidential and all elected Members and Officers who receive that information shall maintain that confidentiality in line with the Codes of Conduct for Elected Members and Officers.

10. Ensuring Compliance with the Protocol

10.1 The Monitoring Officer and the Business Manager (Democratic Services) will be responsible for overseeing compliance with the Cabinet/Scrutiny Protocol which should be used by Members to support the wider aim of supporting and promoting a culture of scrutiny. The success of the Protocol will be determined by:

- Recognition of the value of scrutiny;
- A clear record of constructive challenge;
- Valuable scrutiny reviews that achieve impactful outcomes;
- An open and accountable decision making process.

10.2 An Annual Report may be submitted to Full Council each year with the aim of demonstrating the impact of Scrutiny and the effectiveness of the Protocol. The report may also include the draft Scrutiny Work Programme for the following year.

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Agenda Item 13



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	COUNCIL - 16 NOVEMBER 2022
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 13
Subject	DRAFT PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2023-24
Wards affected	N/A
Accountable member	Cllr Joe Harris – Leader of the Council Email: joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver – Chief Executive Email: rob.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Andrew Brown – Democratic Services Business Manager Email: andrew.brown@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	To set a programme of Council and committee meetings for 2023-24.
Annexes	Annex A – Programme of meetings for January 2023 to May 2023 with changes Annex B – Draft programme of meetings for June 2023 to May 2024
Recommendation(s)	That Council resolves to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approve the programme of meetings for May 2023 and the inclusion of a Licensing Sub-Committee meeting on 26 April 2023 as set out in part 2 of the report and shown in Annex A; b) Note that the Leader of the Council has agreed to move the Cabinet meeting originally scheduled for 6 March 2023 to 13 March 2023 and to cancel the Cabinet meeting that was scheduled for 3 April 2023; c) Approve the programme of meetings for June 2023 to May 2024 (Annex B); d) Delegate authority to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer), in consultation with Group Leaders, to make changes to the programme of meetings in the event that there is any future decision of Council to change the committee structure or committee remits that impacts the programme of meetings; e) Delegate authority to the Democratic Services Business Manager to set



	meeting dates for the Performance and Appointments Committee and the Licensing Sub-Committee (Licensing Act 2003 Matters); f) Agree that, subject to any alternative proposals Council considers and agrees, meeting start times will be rolled forwards from 2022/23; g) Delegate Authority to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) to set dates for member training and briefing sessions and any working groups established by the Council.
Corporate priorities	Delivering our services to the highest standards
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Licensing Team Leader Planning Services Business Manager Local Management Team

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Constitution requires that the Chief Executive will produce a schedule of meetings for each municipal year, based on operational requirements.
- 1.2 This report proposes meetings dates for May 2023, which have not previously been set by Council, and a recommended programme of Council and Committee meetings for June 2023 to May 2024. Meeting dates for Cabinet are a matter for the Leader of the Council and are included in the programme for completeness.
- 1.3 Setting meeting dates in advance allows for good governance, open and efficient decision making and helps members and officers to plan their workloads and availability.

2. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR MAY 2023

- 2.1 Council on 19 January 2022 agreed a programme of meetings for the (current) 2022-23 municipal year up to the end of April 2023 and noted that the May 2023 meeting dates would be submitted for consideration at the November 2022 meeting of Council.
- 2.2 The Council is due to hold all out elections on 4 May 2023 and the pre-election period for those elections is expected to start on 17 March 2023. Saturday 6 May 2023 will be the



Coronation of King Charles and it is possible that either Friday 5 May or Monday 8 May will become a public holiday

- 2.3 It is proposed that the Annual meeting of Council is scheduled for 24 May 2022. This date is within the required date-range following the local elections and will provide sufficient time for the formation of political groups and for those groups to hold meetings prior to Annual Council. No committee meetings are scheduled for May 2022.
- 2.4 Members elected on 4 May 2023 will commence their term of office on Monday 8 May 2023, or if that date is a public holiday, Tuesday 9 May 2023. It is proposed that member induction sessions are earmarked for Tuesday 9 May 2023 and Wednesday 10 May 2023. The intention is to hold two induction sessions; one daytime and one evening session. The timing of any public holiday would not affect the timing of the induction sessions.
- 2.5 To avoid having a very long gap between Licensing Sub-Committee meetings and to provide for continuity of decision making it is proposed that a sub-committee meeting on Wednesday 26 April 2023 is added to the programme of meetings.
- 2.6 To avoid executive meetings being held during the pre-election period the Leader of the Council has agreed to cancel the Cabinet meeting originally scheduled for 3 April 2023. The Cabinet meeting originally scheduled for 6 March 2023 has been moved back one week to 13 March 2023, the last Monday prior to the expected start of the pre-election period.

3. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR JUNE 2023 TO MAY 2024

- 3.1 The draft programme of meetings for 2023-24 has been formulated on a similar basis to recent years and is based on the current committee structure. Council is recommended to approve the programme of meetings as set out in Annex B. Should Council decide to make changes to its committee structure in future, a revised programme may need to be prepared and circulated. It is recommended that authority is delegated to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer), in consultation with Group Leaders, to make changes to the programme as required following any such decision.
- 3.2 The principle used in timetabling meetings is that business needs to take place in a timely manner but that the broader needs of members will be taken into account. Gloucestershire school holiday dates (shown as grey in Annex B) have been avoided where this does not adversely affect the overall meetings programme however the following meeting dates do fall within Gloucestershire school holidays:
 - Licensing Sub-Committee meetings on 26 July and 23 August 2023
 - Planning and Licensing Committee on 9 August 2023
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 31 October 2023



- Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 2 April 2024

- 3.3 District councillors may also serve as county councillors and / or parish councillors. Meetings of Gloucestershire County Council have been set up to the end of the 2023 calendar year, with most meetings of that authority starting at 10.00am. Clashes with County Council meetings are few but where they do occur any members affected would be able to arrange a substitute for one meeting or the other.
- 3.4 Given that many of the officers who deliver the work of the Council and attend meetings are employed by Publica Group and work across at least two other local authorities, care has been taken to avoid Council and committee meetings at Cotswold District Council clashing with major meetings of Forest of Dean District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council. The avoidance of clashes means that some committees (e.g. Audit Committee) do not always meet on the same day of the week. The programme of meetings across the three councils is very busy meaning there is limited scope to move or add meetings without creating potential clashes for officers. It is likely that the Budget Council meeting will be held on the same date as West Oxfordshire District Council's Budget Council meeting; 21 February 2024. This has been difficult to avoid due to the school holidays the previous week. However, the two meetings are likely to start four hours apart and this shouldn't cause difficulties for many officers.
- 3.5 The Performance and Appointments Committee is responsible for matters relating to the Council's statutory officers and meets on an ad hoc basis when there is business to consider. This report doesn't propose setting meeting dates for this committee and instead seeks a delegation to the Democratic Services Business Manager (who is not one of the Council's statutory officers) to set meeting dates for this committee as required. This delegation also includes meetings of the Licensing Sub-Committee (Licensing Act 2003 Matters), which also meets on an ad hoc basis.

4. CABINET AND SCRUTINY CYCLE

- 4.1 One change to the cycle of meetings from previous years is that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is scheduled to meet on the Tuesday prior to (most) Cabinet meetings. This is intended to allow for pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet reports and will provide the opportunity for Scrutiny to submit recommendations to Cabinet on those decisions.
- 4.2 Cabinet will meet on the first Monday of each Month where this fits with the cycle of decision making and the overall programme. The exceptions are as follows:
- June 2023 – the first and second Mondays of the month is too close to the annual Council meeting to allow for Cabinet member input into reports before they are published in the Cabinet agenda, so the third Monday (19th) is proposed.



- July 2023 – to allow a reasonable gap between the June and July meetings the third Monday (17th) is proposed.
- January 2024 – the first Monday is New Years' Day so the second Monday (8th) is proposed.
- April 2024 – the first Monday is Easter and the second Monday is during the school holiday period so the third Monday (15th) is proposed.
- May 2024 – the first Monday is a public holiday so the second Monday (13th) is proposed.

5. MEETING START TIMES

- 5.1 No changes are proposed in this report to the start times of meetings but Members may wish to propose alternative start times. Current start times are as follows:
- Council meetings are held at 6.00pm during the summer months (BST) and at 2.00pm during winter months (GMT), with the exception being the February Budget Council meeting which is held at 6.00pm.
 - Planning and Licensing Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee alternate the start time of meetings so that they commence at 10.00am one month and 2.00pm the next.
 - Overview and Scrutiny and Audit Committee meetings start at 4.00pm.
 - Cabinet starts at 6.00pm but that is a matter for the Leader rather than Council.
- 5.2 In proposing any alternative start times Members are asked to be mindful of the impact on members and officers who attend meetings and should first consult with the Democratic Services Business Manager to ensure that meetings held at different times could be suitably resourced and supported by officers.

6. TRAINING AND BRIEFING DATES

- 6.1 It is intended that a member training scheme will be produced and approved prior to the May 2023 local elections which will articulate a member induction and training programme. The content of the scheme will be informed by a survey which will be circulated to all members seeking views on the priorities for training and members' availability to attend training sessions. It will also be based around the Local Government Association Member Development Charter. It is also intended that a programme of regular member briefings will be produced following input from members. This report seeks a delegation to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) to set training and briefing dates following that exercise, with oversight by the Chief Executive.

7. MEMBER WORKING GROUPS

- 7.1 The Council may establish informal working groups to perform particular tasks. Recent examples include the Constitution Working Group and the Cost of Living Working Group.



This report seeks a delegation to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) to set meeting dates for working groups.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The number of meetings within the recommended meetings programme is similar to in previous years. Members are entitled to claim mileage expenses for attending meetings and such costs can be met from existing budgets. It is anticipated that the majority of training will be delivered internally and will not therefore have a financial impact. An earmarked 'member training' reserve with a current balance of £5,905 is available to fund members' attendance at external courses. There are no further direct financial implications.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The responsibility for setting meeting dates for Council and Committee meetings rests with Council under the Local Government Act 1972 (Schedule 12). In a year of ordinary elections the Annual Council meeting must be held on the eighth day after the retirement of councillors, or such other day within twenty-one days of the date of retirement. In non-election years the Annual Council meeting may be held on any date in March, April or May.

10. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 There are no significant risks in relation to this report.

11. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 11.1 The recommendations are not expected to differentially impact any groups with protected characteristics. Meetings are held in an accessible venue and are webcast live.

12. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 Members are required to attend meetings in person so there will be emissions associated with journeys to and from meetings. Many members choose to have paper copies of agenda packs but alternatively members may prefer to access papers using the Modern.gov app.

13. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 13.1 Should Council wish to consider alternative proposals it could request that a further report is presented to a future meeting.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1 None.

Current programme of meetings for Jan 23-May 23 with changes											
Jan-23					Feb-23						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri		
	2	3	4	5	6			1	2	3	
PH											
	9	10	11	12	13		6	7	8	9	10
Cabinet		Plan & Lic				Cabinet		Plan & Lic			
	16	17	18	19	20		13	14	15	16	17
		Council						Council			
	23	24	25	26	27		20	21	22	23	24
	Scrutiny	Lic Sub	Audit					Lic Sub			
	30	31					27	28			
Mar-23					Apr-23						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri		
		1	2	3		3	4	5	6	7	
									PH		
	6	7	8	9	10		10	11	12	13	14
		Plan & Lic				PH					
	13	14	15	16	17		17	18	19	20	21
Cabinet		Council									
	20	21	22	23	24		24	25	26	27	28
	Scrutiny	Lic Sub						Lic Sub	Audit		
	27	28	29	30	31						
May-23					Key for Annex A and Annex B						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri							
	1	2	3	4	5	Add					
PH			ELECTION			Audit					
	8	9	10	11	12	Scrutiny					
	Induction	Induction				Plan & Lic					
	15	16	17	18	19	Lic Sub					
	22	23	24	25	26						
		Council									
	29	30	31								
PH											

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Draft programme of meetings 2023/24

Jun-23				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
	Scrutiny	Plan & Lic		
19	20	21	22	23
Cabinet				
26	27	28	29	30
			Lic Sub	

Jul-23				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
3	4	5	6	7
		Council		
10	11	12	13	14
	Scrutiny	Plan & Lic		
17	18	19	20	21
Cabinet				
24	25	26	27	28
	Audit	Lic Sub		
31				

Aug-23				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
		Plan & Lic		
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
		Lic Sub		
28	29	30	31	
PH				

Sep-23				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
				1
4	5	6	7	8
Cabinet				
11	12	13	14	15
		Plan & Lic		
18	19	20	21	22
		Council		
25	26	27	28	29
	Scrutiny	Lic Sub		

Oct-23				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
2	3	4	5	6
Cabinet				
9	10	11	12	13
		Plan & Lic		
16	17	18	19	20
		Audit		
23	24	25	26	27
		Lic Sub		
30	31			
	Scrutiny			

Nov-23				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
Cabinet		Plan & Lic		
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
		Council	Lic Sub	
27	28	29	30	
	Scrutiny			

Dec-23				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
				1
4	5	6	7	8
Cabinet				
11	12	13	14	15
		Plan & Lic		
18	19	20	21	22
			Lic Sub	
25	26	27	28	29
PH	PH			

Jan-24				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
1	2	3	4	5
PH				
8	9	10	11	12
Cabinet		Plan & Lic		
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
	Lic Sub	Council	Audit	
29	30	31		
	Scrutiny			

Feb-24				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
				1
				2
5	6	7	8	9
Cabinet		Plan & Lic		
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
	Lic Sub	Council		
26	27	28	29	
	Scrutiny			

Mar-24				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
				1
4	5	6	7	8
Cabinet				
11	12	13	14	15
		Plan & Lic		
18	19	20	21	22
		Council	Lic Sub	
25	26	27	28	29
				PH

Apr-24				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
1	2	3	4	5
PH	Scrutiny			
8	9	10	11	12
Cabinet		Plan & Lic		
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
		Lic Sub	Audit	
29	30			

May-24				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
PH	Scrutiny	Plan & Lic		
13	14	15	16	17
Cabinet	Lic Sub	Council		
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31
PH				

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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