

Cabinet
11/January2024



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet held on Thursday, 11 January 2024

Councillors present:

Joe Harris - Leader
Tony Dale
Paul Hodgkinson

Mike Evemy – Deputy Leader
Juliet Layton
Mike McKeown

Officers present:

Robert Weaver, Chief Executive
David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and
Chief Finance Officer
Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and
Development (Monitoring Officer)
Claire Locke, Assistant Director for Property
and Regeneration
Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services
Officer
James Brain, Forward Planning Manager

Lesley Davies, Planning Policy Officer
Maria Wheatley, Shared Parking Manager
Sophia Price, Heritage and Design Manager
Emma Cathcart, Head of Service, Counter
Fraud and Enforcement Unit
Paul James, Economic Development Lead

Observers:

Councillors David Cunningham and Nikki Ind

208 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Bloomer and Councillor Spivey due to illness.

209 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

There were no declarations of interest from Officers.

210 Minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting on 7 December 2023 were considered as presented in the pack.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7 December 2023 be approved as a correct record.

Voting Record – For: 6, Against 0, Abstention 0, Absent: 2

For	Against	Abstentions	Absent/Did not vote
Joe Harris			Claire Bloomer
Juliet Layton			Lisa Spivey
Mike Every			
Mike McKeown			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Tony Dale			

211 Leader's Announcements

The Leader announced that the Corporate Plan item on the agenda was being withdrawn as further consideration was required before it could be considered by Members.

The Leader also wished to offer condolences to those affected by the recent storms and to the family of the man who had died after a tree fell near Kemble.

212 Public Questions

There was a public question from Eileen Vivani from Moreton-in-Marsh who asked about whether the Cabinet would accept the recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to set up a Working Group to look at a strategic plan for Moreton-in-Marsh.

Councillor Layton responded as the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services. It was confirmed that the Cabinet would accept the recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to set up a Working Group with Members and Officers to look at options for a Moreton-in-Marsh masterplan.

Eileen Vivani asked a second question around concerns around proposed development within the Local Plan update and the infrastructure required to serve the area. It was confirmed by Councillor Layton that the concerns raised would be considered as part of the required consultation for the Local Plan update, and it was noted that all residents were encouraged to take part and give their views.

213 Member Questions

Councillor Cunningham asked a question to Councillor Spivey which had been submitted in advance of the meeting. The question was as follows:

In your role as the Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety, would you agree that the threat of flooding is a constant concern for some residents of the District?

In my Ward, Fosseridge, villages like Evenlode, Broadwell and especially Bledington, have suffered the terrible consequences of flooding in recent years. This is in part a consequence of their proximity to the Evenlode river, which has a long history of catastrophic impact on communities such as Moreton in Marsh and downstream settlements.

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With that in mind, would you please confirm that you will be supporting the initiative to set up a CDC-coordinated working group that will, amongst other things, fully investigate the potential impact of large-scale development in places such as the Moreton Fire Service College. Developments that are being considered in the current Local Plan update, prior to thorough investigations into the possible impacts of the increased pressures on the Evenlode River and its surrounding communities.

Councillor Harris provided the following response of behalf of Councillor Spivey:

The Council is alive to the threats posed by flooding and increasingly so in a warming world where the threat of storm events is increasing.

Development proposed by the Council in its Local Plan is subject to flood risk assessments. The government provides useful [guidance](#) on what these should include and examine.

To date the Council has prepared a district wide (level 1) assessment and once sites become known and the emerging local plan advances to the next stage and the Council will prepare site (level 2) assessments.

Furthermore, the Council has invested in a Water Cycle Study. The study will assess the planned scale, location and timing of planned development within the district to ensure new development does not negatively affect existing water and wastewater services and to identify measures to avoid the deterioration of water quality in receiving waters. The study will also help to identify where infrastructure upgrades are required to accommodate planned growth.

The Council has updated its flood and water management Local Plan policies to ensure flooding issues are duly addressed through the planning application process too. See policies CC5 - Managing Flood Risk (formerly EN14) and CC6 - Water Infrastructure Management (formerly INF8) contained within Annex C of the Cabinet papers.

From 1 February 2024 at your.cotswold.gov.uk, local communities are encouraged to review and comment on these updated policies and to highlight areas in the district that requires additional / upgraded infrastructure.

The Council welcomes the proposal to establish a working group to consider strategic growth at Moreton-in-Marsh. It would seem completely reasonable for this group to examine the impact of growth on its environs.

Councillor Cunningham in a supplementary question asked about the proposals within the Local Plan Update consultation and whether there was any scope for amendments due to concerns over water management.

Councillor Harris said that officers would note the concerns, and reiterated the importance of getting people to feed into the consultation so that the policies could be scrutinised. However, it was highlighted that the Forward Planning Manager would be happy to hear any concerns from Members.

214 Issue(s) Arising from Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit and Governance

The purpose of this item to receive any recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any issues arising from the Audit and Governance Committee.

The Leader invited Councillor Blomefield as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to comment on the recommendation presented to Cabinet.

Councillor Blomefield highlighted that the Committee supported unanimously the proposed cross-party recommendations, and that it was welcomed that the Cabinet had indicated its support. It was hoped that other organisations such as Gloucestershire County Council, Thames Water and the Town Council to be involved.

The Leader noted the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and confirmed that Cabinet accepted the recommendation that a Working Group be created to consider strategic growth for Moreton-in-Marsh.

215 2024/25 Budget Consultation Feedback Report

The purpose of the report was to provide feedback to Cabinet from the recent consultation on the Administration's budget proposals.

Councillor Evemy as the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and outlined the following points:

- 542 people responded and this was the largest number of responses for a Budget Consultation, and the Deputy Leader wished to thank them for their input.
- It was noted that the format had 4 questions and a freeform box to add any comments which were published verbatim for openness and transparency.
- The response outcomes were broadly consistent to those in the previous 5 years. Specifically, questions 1 (regarding approach to the budget) saw 45% of people strongly agreeing/agreed and 33% disagreeing and question 3 (on Council Tax increase proposals) 55% agreeing/agreed and 32% disagreeing.
- It was also highlighted that the response to proposals for rezoning waste collection showed two thirds agreeing to the change.
- There was also a question in the consultation around changes to parking fees and the proposed introduction of Sunday charging which showed a split response.
- It was highlighted that a debrief would be conducted to look at changes for the next budget consultation in 2025/26.

Cabinet commended the consultation as a good exercise for allowing residents to engage with the proposals despite the pre-election period restrictions for the Lechlade, Kempsford and Fairford South By-Election on 14 December.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. NOTED the feedback received and would consider it as part of the formulation of the 2024/25 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

216 UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund update

The purpose of this report was to update Cabinet on the progress of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund projects and to approve the recommendations of the UKSPF Assessment Panel for 2024-25 projects and to seek delegated authority for the use of the remainder of the funding.

Councillor Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation, introduced the report and outlined the following points:

- The funds were designed to promote the business communities in the Cotswold area which were obtained against competition from other councils.
- It was noted that the recommendations included recognising progress to date, approving the recommendations of the UKSPF panel for 2024/25 and delegating authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with Councillor Dale to approve the use of remaining UKSPF funding.
- The funding for the UKSPF was around £1 million over 3 years and £750,000 for the REPF which would be rolled over when it hadn't been used.
- There were a number of recommendations from the panel for using capital funding to promote green investments and improving rural productivity.

There was a question around how much money had been committed and how this would work. It was confirmed that all of the money received from the Government had now been committed and the projects outlined were deemed to have a positive impact on the local economy.

There was also a question on table 4.2 for the allocation to 'Active Travel' and whether an update could be given. The Economic Development Lead informed Cabinet that £100,000 had been allocated under the REPF and £60,000 from the UKSPF with 4 applications received which were being assessed for deliverability.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

1. NOTED the progress of UKSPF projects and the current position with REPF;
2. APPROVED the recommendations of the UKSPF Assessment Panel for 2024-25 projects;
3. DELEGATED AUTHORITY to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transformation to approve the use of the remaining UKSPF funding.

Voting Record

6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 2 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstentions	Absent/Did not vote
Joe Harris			Claire Bloomer
Juliet Layton			Lisa Spivey
Mike Every			
Mike McKeown			

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Paul Hodgkinson			
Tony Dale			

217 Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Penalty and Prosecution Policy

The purpose of the report was to present Cabinet with an updated Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Penalty and Prosecution Policy for approval.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and outlined that the updated policy presented would be agreed across other councils in the area for efficient enforcement of the penalties outlined.

Councillor Evely proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Joe Harris

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

1. **AGREED** to adopt the Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Penalty and Prosecution Policy.
2. **DELEGATED AUTHORITY** to the Deputy Chief Executive to approve future minor amendments to the Policy in consultation with the Business Manager Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service and the Head of Service Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit.

Voting Record

6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 2 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstentions	Absent/Did not vote
Joe Harris			Claire Bloomer
Juliet Layton			Lisa Spivey
Mike Evely			
Mike McKeown			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Tony Dale			

218 Review of Parking Charges and Season Tickets

The report proposed changes to pay and stay parking charges and season ticket charges. The report also proposed the introduction of charges for Sunday parking based on the tariff for Monday to Saturday pay and stay charges.

Councillor Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation, introduced the report and outlined the following points:

- Parking charges were last examined 2 years ago and then frozen in 2022. However, the financial challenges faced by all councils meant that an increase would be required.
- The increase to charges were not as high relative to other areas which were in-line with inflation and the timing for charges would be aligned for all car parks.

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- It was highlighted that the introduction of Sunday charging had been consulted upon and that the Council would delay charging until 12 midday to allow worshippers of religious groups to park free of charge for certain car parks.
- It was noted that season ticket membership for the Whiteway car park would remain discounted to encourage its use but other car parks would go up in line with inflation.

It was noted that the decision taken by Cabinet was part of the objective to achieve a balanced budget and to cover the costs of services.

It was also commented that the Budget Consultation Feedback had also been included as part of consideration of the formulation of the proposal.

It was highlighted by Cabinet that the Sunday charging proposals recognised the change of people's habits when it comes to the economy, and it was important to protect the revenue provided as any surplus goes towards providing important services such as public conveniences.

It was noted that the change to car parking fees would also be part of the budget fees and charges in February but that the decision would allow for the required consultation process to be completed.

It was recognised that whilst raising charges was not an easy decision, it was important to avoid severe financial challenges that other councils such as Thurrock had faced.

Councillor Dale proposed the report's recommendations and Councillor Every seconded.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet considered and **APPROVED:**

1. The revised pay and stay parking charges set out in Annex B of the report effective from 1 April 2024.
2. The revised season ticket parking charges set out in Annex C of the report effective from 1 April 2024.
3. That the differential applied to season ticket charges for the Whiteway Car Park is increased from 71.3% to 75.3% as set out at paragraph 3.3.
4. The introduction of charges for Sunday parking based on the tariff for Monday to Saturday pay and stay charges effective from 1 April 2024.
5. That the charging period for Sunday parking is as set out in the table at paragraph 3.5.
6. That chargeable times on Sunday at Mangersbury Road are changed from 10am - 4pm to 10am - 6pm to align with the wider proposals for Sunday charging set out in this report.
7. An update to the Parking Order to consult on the implementation of recommendations a to f set out above.
8. Delegating authority to consider the Parking Order consultation responses to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

Voting Record

6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 2 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstentions	Absent/Did not vote
Joe Harris			Claire Bloomer
Juliet Layton			Lisa Spivey
Mike Every			
Mike McKeown			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Tony Dale			

219 The Green Infrastructure Strategy

The purpose of the report was to propose to update the 2017 version of the Green Infrastructure, Open Space and Play Space Strategy.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services, Councillor Juliet Layton introduced the report and outlined the following points:

- The Green Infrastructure Strategy was identified as one that supports the Local Plan and the Council's declaration of a Climate Change Emergency in 2019 and an ecology emergency in 2020.
- Green Infrastructure describes environmental networks which includes as parks, green spaces, and waterways.
- There were a variety of benefits of the strategy such as increasing biodiversity and improving health and wellbeing for residents.
- The updated strategy worked with the Building with Nature standards benchmark and other standards such as the Cotswold Design Code.
- A draft strategy went out for consultation in 2021 with the public and other organisations such as Town and Parish Councils.

Cabinet welcomed the number of key benefits from the strategy for health and wellbeing.

Councillor Layton proposed the recommendations and Councillor Joe Harris seconded them.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

- I. APPROVED the Green Infrastructure Strategy for adoption.

Voting Record

6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions, 2 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstentions	Absent/Did not vote
Joe Harris			Claire Bloomer
Juliet Layton			Lisa Spivey
Mike Every			
Mike McKeown			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Tony Dale			

220 Corporate Plan 2024 - 2028

This item was withdrawn from the agenda and not considered by Cabinet.

221 Cotswold District Local Plan Update and the Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan

The purpose of the report was for Cabinet to:

- consider the recommendation to Council to start preparing a new local plan for the period 2026 to 2041 and to consult on a document that includes development strategy options.
- To consider the recommendation to consult the public on a set of draft policies that update the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-31 (the adopted Local Plan).
- To consider the recommendation to consult the public on an 'initial ideas' Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan consultation document.
- To approve the updated Statement of Community Involvement and the updated Local Development Scheme documents.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services, Councillor Juliet Layton introduced the report and outlined the following points:

- The active Local Plan was in force up to 2031 and a new Local Plan would then take the Council up to 2041.
- The twin-track approach for updating the existing Local Plan and preparing a new Local Plan was identified as the best way forward for the Council ahead of the UK Government Local Planning Reform deadline 30 June 2025.
- There around 60 existing/new policy changes with key changes being a new Climate Change chapter with a suite of new policies.
- The development strategy included was outlined as a way to begin discussions around suitable housing for communities whilst taking into account the need for infrastructure to support it
- There would be a public consultation in February which would help begin the process to ensure the Council meets its statutory requirements. However, further evidence would be required before site allocations could be made, with the exception of the Fire Service College in Moreton.
- The consultation would go out on 1 February and run to 14 February to gather the views of residents on the plan as presented alongside the Cirencester Masterplan consultation.
- There was need for 7,400 homes in the new Local Plan period 2026-2041 but this would be reduced to 6,330 if past over delivery was deducted.

Cabinet welcomed the update and the need to move ahead with this to ensure sustainable development within the district.

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Cabinet noted the extensive work from officers and the resources that were required to ensure that the Council maintains a robust Local Plan into the future. It was highlighted that without this, it could risk the loss of local control over development within the district.

The Leader then invited observer Members to add any comments. Councillor Cunningham noted that it was important to ensure developments did not go ahead before there was suitable infrastructure in place, and there was a need to engage with all partners to ensure development is sustainable.

Councillor Ind as an observer Member also commented that it was important to have infrastructure first and highlighted how past developments had gone ahead without this. It was also important to ensure that the Local Plan could insist on certain measures like Solar PV energy.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Layton and seconded by Councillor Joe Harris.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet **AGREED** to:

1. **RECOMMEND** to Council that Cotswold District Council begin the preparation of a new Local Plan that would extend the plan period from 31 March 2031 to 31 March 2041 and approves the Vision, Objectives and Development Strategy consultation document, as presented at Annex B, to be published for a six week public consultation;
2. **APPROVE** the draft policies consultation document at Annex C for a six week public consultation;
3. **APPROVE** the updated Local Development Scheme as presented at Annex D is approved;
4. **APPROVE** changes to the Statement of Community Involvement as presented at Annex E;
5. **APPROVE** the emerging Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan 'initial ideas' consultation document for a six week public consultation as presented at Annex F;
6. **NOTE** upcoming national policy changes and the impact this may have on the preparation of the Local Plan at Annex G; and
7. **DELEGATE AUTHORITY** to the Forward Planning Manager, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, to agree questionnaires and make minor and typographical corrections to the consultation documents prior to being published for public engagement.

Voting Record

6 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 2 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstentions	Absent/Did not vote
Joe Harris			Claire Bloomer
Juliet Layton			Lisa Spivey
Mike Every			
Mike McKeown			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Tony Dale			

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222 Schedule of Decisions taken by the Leader of the Council and/or Individual Cabinet Members

The Schedule of Decisions were presented in the document pack.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet NOTED the schedule of decisions taken.

The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 7.22 pm

Chair

(END)