

Public Document Pack

Council
24/January2024



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Wednesday, 24 January 2024

Councillors present:

Nikki Ind - Chair	Mark Harris – Vice Chair	
Gina Blomefield	Angus Jenkinson	Tom Stowe
Claire Bloomer	Julia Judd	Jeremy Theyer
Patrick Coleman	Juliet Layton	Clare Turner
Daryl Corps	Andrew Maclean	Chris Twells
Tony Dale	Helene Mansilla	Michael Vann
Mike Evely	Mike McKeown	Jon Wareing
David Fowles	Nigel Robbins	Ian Watson
Paul Hodgkinson	Tony Slater	Tristan Wilkinson
Roly Hughes	Lisa Spivey	Len Wilkins

Officers present:

James Brain, Forward Planning Manager	David Morren, Interim Development Manager
Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager	Ana Prelici, Democratic Services Officer
Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer)	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer
Sarah Dalby, Elections Manager	Kira Thompson, Election and Democratic Services Support Assistant
Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services Officer	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Dilys Neill, David Cunningham, Joe Harris, Gary Selwyn, and Ray Brassington

2 Declarations of Interest

There were none from the Members or Officers present.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the Full Council meeting on 22 November 2023 were considered as presented in the agenda pack.

Councillor Evely raised a correction on Page 16 of the pack, Minute 77, and the last bullet point regarding the Future Publica proposals which were felt not to be accurate. It was explained that the view being articulated was that savings were necessary but would not be sufficient to meet what the Council required.

Councillor Stowe wished to raise a correction to Page 12 of the pack, Minute 76, that the amendment to the Programme of Meetings was seconded by Cllr Twells and not Councillor Fowles.

Councillor Blomefield noted that it wasn't clear if a written response had been provided to her Member Question (the response was resent to Councillor Blomefield which was originally sent on 29 November 2023).

Councillor Maclean noted that he was absent and the member attendance needed to be updated.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer confirmed that the changes would be made to the minutes.

RESOLVED: That subject to the corrections tabled being made, that Council APPROVED the minutes of 22 November 2023 as a true and correct record.

Voting Record

25 For, 0 Against, 2 Abstentions, 7 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstention	Absent/ Did not vote
Chris Twells		Andrew Maclean	Angus Jenkinson
Claire Bloomer		Tristan Wilkinson	David Cunningham
Clare Turner			Dilys Neill
Daryl Corps			Gary Selwyn
David Fowles			Helene Mansilla
Gina Bloomfield			Joe Harris
Ian Watson			Ray Brassington
Jeremy Theyer			
Jon Wareing			
Julia Judd			
Juliet Layton			
Len Wilkins			
Lisa Spivey			
Mark Harris			
Michael Vann			
Mike Evely			
Mike McKeown			
Nigel Robbins			
Nikki Ind			
Patrick Coleman			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Roly Hughes			
Tom Stowe			
Tony Dale			
Tony Slater			

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

The Chair welcomed all Members to the first session of Full Council of 2024 and welcomed Councillor Tristan Wilkinson following his election to the Lechlade, Kempsford and Fairford South Ward. The following announcements were given:

- There were also congratulations given to Jacqui Wright as the Wellbeing Manager for the several community events organised before Christmas and her award from the Door Youth Project.
- The Chair reminded residents of the live consultations on the Cotswold District Council website relating to the Council's Housing Strategy and Parking Strategy and encouraged residents to give their views. There was also a reminder regarding the Cost-of-Living Support page on the Council's website for residents who are struggling financially.
- Finally, an announcement of the death of former Councillors Cliff Hilditch and Sheila Jeffrey was given. Condolences were given to their families and friends at this difficult time. The Chair then invited Councillor Fowles to open tributes.

Councillor Fowles opened tributes to former Councillor Hilditch and described his early life during the war and service within the Royal Airforce and then his work as a former Councillor for Watermoor Ward in Cirencester between 2007 and 2011.

Councillor Fowles also spoke regarding the passing of Sheila Jeffrey and her work as Chair of Council from 2007-2009 and her work as a Councillor for Bourton-on-the-Water. There were also comments about her close work with.

Councillor Hodgkinson then made tributes to Clifford Hilditch and to Sheila Jeffrey. There were comments around former Councillor Hilditch's work within the community and Councillor Jeffrey's work and the commitment to her residents as a Councillor and as a former Chair of the Council.

Councillor Coleman also spoke to Council about former Councillor Jeffrey's time as Chair of Council.

The Deputy Leader then provided announcements on behalf of the Leader who was carrying out duties as Vice-Chair of the Local Government Association.

- The Deputy Leader wished to add his condolences to the friends and family of former councillors Sheila Jeffrey and Clifford Hilditch.
- The Deputy Leader also announced to Members that David Morren as the Council's Development Manager was moving on to a new position, and wished to note the appreciation for the work done within the Planning team.

The Chief Executive was then invited to give announcements:

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- The Chief Executive gave condolences to the friends and families of former councillors Sheila Jeffrey and Clifford Hilditch.
- The Chief Executive also wished to congratulate the Elections Team for their work with the Lechlade, Kempsford and Fairford South By-Election.
- An update was provided on the Publica Review and the appointment of Andrew Pollard as the Programme Director. It was noted that the transition plan was expected to go to March Cabinet and Council for approval.

5 Public Questions

There were no public questions.

6 Member Questions

The Member Questions and responses provided including any written responses can be found in the attached Annex A.

7 Committee Appointments

The purpose of the report was to confirm the appointments of the Nominations received for the vacancies:

- Councillor Dilys Neill to the Performance and Appointments Committee
- Councillor Michael Vann to the Audit and Governance Committee
- Councillor Lisa Spivey to the Boundary Review Working Group

Any other changes to the membership of Committees and/or Working Groups notified by Group leaders

- Councillor Tristan Wilkinson to replace Councillor Roly Hughes on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Emyv introduced the item and outlined that the political balance of the Council hadn't changed following the recent by-election and the election of Councillor Wilkinson. These nominations would be replacing the vacancies created by the resignation of former Councillor Muir.

Councillor Dale in seconding the item welcomed the appointments and wished to recommend them to Council.

RESOLVED: That Full Council:

I. AGREED to confirm the changes to the membership of the Committees and Working Groups as follows:

- Councillor Dilys Neill to the Performance and Appointments Committee
- Councillor Michael Vann to the Audit and Governance Committee
- Councillor Lisa Spivey to the Boundary Review Working Group

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- Councillor Tristan Wilkinson to replace Councillor Roly Hughes on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Voting Record

27 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention, 6 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstention	Absent/ Did not vote
Andrew Maclean		Chris Twells	Angus Jenkinson
Claire Bloomer			David Cunningham
Clare Turner			Dilys Neill
Daryl Corps			Gary Selwyn
David Fowles			Joe Harris
Gina Bloomfield			Ray Brassington
Helene Mansilla			
Ian Watson			
Jeremy Theyer			
Jon Wareing			
Julia Judd			
Juliet Layton			
Len Wilkins			
Lisa Spivey			
Mark Harris			
Michael Vann			
Mike Evely			
Mike McKeown			
Nigel Robbins			
Nikki Ind			
Patrick Coleman			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Roly Hughes			
Tom Stowe			
Tony Dale			
Tony Slater			
Tristan Wilkinson			

8 Polling District and Places Review

The purpose of the report was to consider the outcome of the review of polling districts and places/stations undertaken within the District.

Councillor Evely in the absence of the Leader and as Chair of the Boundary Review Working Group introduced this item and outlined the following points:

- A polling district and places review was required for Council to complete in consultation with Town and Parish Councils. It was highlighted that the Boundary Review Working Group had considered this as part of its work with the Electoral Services Manager and the Chief Executive.
- It was noted that the responses to the proposed polling district and places in Annex A had prompted some changes to be made.

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- There were a number of changes to polling places and stations outlined at paragraph 5.2 which included Baunton, Quenington, and New Mills Ward in Cirencester.
- It was also outlined that consultation on a relocation of the polling station in Driffield had taken place but no changes were being proposed at this time.

Councillor Hodgkinson seconded the item and welcomed the changes for Baunton within the Ward which were supported.

There were questions around the North and South Parliamentary constituencies which cross the Stratton Ward and the arrangements for voting. The Electoral Services Manager confirmed that the Baunton Lane was now part of the Stratton ward, but this hadn't moved in the new Parliamentary Boundary proposals and will stay in North Cotswolds. It was noted that there were options to manage the anomaly created by the two reviews but that this needed further conversations with members and the Returning Officer.

There were comments around ensuring that voters had appropriate access to a polling station and managing the costs of a polling station.

There were comments around the work of the Electoral Services Team and the large amount of work already undertaken.

There were questions on the proposals for a new polling area for Tetbury and the warding. The Electoral Services Manager confirmed that polling stations were kept under review and any changes could then be brought back to Council as part of the wider proposals.

It was noted in Annex A that a clerical error at column two that parts of Tetbury West noted as Tetbury East. The Electoral Services Manager confirmed this had been updated.

RESOLVED: That Full Council

1. **APPROVED** the scheme of polling districts and polling places/stations set out in the Annex A.
2. **APPROVED** the proposed changes to polling stations as set out in the annexe B and Annex C.
3. **DELEGATED AUTHORITY** to the Returning Officer to make any further changes as necessary to enable the efficient and effective conduct of elections.
4. **AGREED TO AUTHORISE** the Electoral Registration Officer to make any changes as are necessary to the Register of Electors.

Voting Record

For 28, 0 Against, 0 Abstention, 6 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstention	Absent/ Did not vote
Andrew Maclean			Angus Jenkinson
Chris Twells			David Cunningham
Claire Bloomer			Dilys Neill
Clare Turner			Gary Selwyn
Daryl Corps			Joe Harris
David Fowles			Ray Brassington

Gina Bloomfield			
Helene Mansilla			
Ian Watson			
Jeremy Theyer			
Jon Wareing			
Julia Judd			
Juliet Layton			
Len Wilkins			
Lisa Spivey			
Mark Harris			
Michael Vann			
Mike Evey			
Mike McKeown			
Nigel Robbins			
Nikki Ind			
Patrick Coleman			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Roly Hughes			
Tom Stowe			
Tony Dale			
Tony Slater			
Tristan Wilkinson			

9 Amendments to the Constitution - Report of the Constitution Working Group

The purpose of the report was to consider updates to the planning scheme of delegation following recommendations by the Planning Advisory Service for the benefit of all stakeholders.

Councillor Layton as Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services introduced this item and outlined the following points:

- It was highlighted that there were changes to the call-in regime which were proposed. It was noted that the call-in process would now come at the end of the proposed scheme in line with Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Review recommendations.
- It was highlighted that the changes to the scheme were around increasing Member engagement with planning officers and giving applicants more certainty as to how the decisions should be made.
- It was noted that the planning protocol flow diagram on page 99 of the pack would be updated to correct an error.
- It was highlighted that the proposed call-in process to begin from the validation of the planning application would give more certainty to the applicant and would provide more time for any member concerns to be raised.
- It was highlighted that the Planning Review Panel would meet every two weeks to ensure that applications could be dealt with in a timely fashion.
- It was noted that Article 4 Directions to be updated within the scheme delegation to ensure that these directions can be applied as needed.
- It was also highlighted that the procedure for the 'disposal of applications' at paragraph 3.17 would be updated to ensure that applications no longer considered 'live' (no progress within 6 months of a Council request) would not remain on file.

Councillor Fowles seconded and then outlined the following points:

- There was agreement with some of the changes proposed such as Article 4 Directions and the disposal of old applications.
- It was noted that there were some concerns regarding the Scheme of Delegation but in principle the recommendations were supported.

It was noted by some Members that there could be more pressure on Ward Members to examine Planning applications with a 28-day call-in period. This was particularly true for Members representing wards with higher numbers of applications where there was a higher workload.

It was also noted by some Members that communication with planning officers was important to ensure Ward Members were kept informed. There also needed to be consideration as to what would happen if Members were away for a period of time.

There were various comments that Town and Parish Councils would need to be made aware by Ward Members and officers and that some of these meetings were not as frequent.

There were concerns around Planning and Licensing Committees considering a single application and how the time of the Committee needed to be valued.

The updates to Article 4 Directions were welcomed to give the Senior Officer for Planning the power to deal with these important legal documents.

It was important to note that whilst the proposal was a compromise it was hoped that this would improve the application process in-line with best practice.

Councillor Layton in summing up responded to some of the points raised:

- Applications were sent to the Ward Members routinely by email for them to see, and the 28-day period would allow Members to reply.
- Sites Inspection Briefings whilst valuable could slow the process down considerably but any request could be considered prior to Committee.
- Town and Parish Councils were a statutory consultee and not a decision-maker in the process. It was highlighted that this process would be for Members of the Council to consider.

The Interim Development Manager was invited to come forward to support in summing up the following point:

- It was expected that Town and Parish Councils would be listened to within the 28-day call-in process.
- It was noted that an option on the pro-forma would be made following Member concerns for sites inspection briefings and then reviewed by the Planning Review Panel.
- It was highlighted that objections received needed to be checked manually which could be difficult to do quickly, but it was recognised that it was important for these objections to be published.

- In regard to how many applications go to meetings for determination, it was outlined that there is a time pressure for dealing with applications and the number of applications is determined by the Planning Review Panel.

Following requests from Members, it was confirmed that the Constitution Working Group would review the scheme and the changes made in April/May 2025.

RESOLVED: That Full Council

1. APPROVED the changes to the Scheme of Delegation in respect to the Call in of planning applications and notifications to the Planning & Licencing Committee.
2. APPROVED the other changes to the Scheme of Delegation relating to Article 4 Directions and Disposal of Planning applications.
3. APPROVED the change in frequency of the Planning Review Panel and the associated changes to the Planning Protocol in respect to this and the required attendees.

Voting Record

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

For	Against	Abstention	Absent/ Did not vote
Andrew Maclean			Angus Jenkinson
Chris Twells			David Cunningham
Claire Bloomer			Dilys Neill
Clare Turner			Gary Selwyn
Daryl Corps			Joe Harris
David Fowles			Ray Brassington
Gina Bloomfield			
Helene Mansilla			
Ian Watson			
Jeremy Theyer			
Jon Wareing			
Julia Judd			
Juliet Layton			
Len Wilkins			
Lisa Spivey			
Mark Harris			
Michael Vann			
Mike Evely			
Mike McKeown			
Nigel Robbins			
Nikki Ind			
Patrick Coleman			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Roly Hughes			
Tom Stowe			
Tony Dale			
Tony Slater			
Tristan Wilkinson			

The purpose of the report was to present the Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2028, for adoption by Full Council

Councillor Lisa Spivey, in the absence of Councillor Joe Harris, introduced and outlined the following points:

- The new plan was described as building upon the ambitious previous plan agreed after the elections in 2019, following changes in the political and economic landscape which had occurred since its adoption. This included the Covid-19 Pandemic and recent economic circumstances.
- It was highlighted that progress had been made in areas like working to address the climate change emergency locally and delivering the green economic growth strategy whilst delivering core services.
- The new strategy was outlined as a streamlined document based on the pressures faced by local authorities in the UK, but was still an ambitious plan covering statutory and non-statutory services provided.

Councillor McKeown seconded the recommendations and outlined the important aspects of the plan covering the climate change emergency.

Councillor Jenkinson joined the Council meeting at this item and apologised for the lateness.

There were comments around how there was cross-party support for many ideas but it was stated that there needed to be a detailed action plan and updates where required. It was noted that there would be updates on progress with priorities against published key performance indicators.

It was highlighted that the previous corporate plan had largely been delivered against a difficult economic backdrop.

It was highlighted that Cabinet Members would be held accountable to deliver on key priorities within the Corporate Plan.

It was noted that farms should be included within the Local Plan as a specific form of business which requires support within the District.

Councillor Fowles wished for it to be minuted that he would like a briefing from Councillor Dale about how he has encouraged businesses into the District such as ZeroAvia. Councillor Dale responded that he had made many visits to businesses mentioned and continued to engage with them on their work within the District.

Councillor Spivey in summing up made the following points:

- It was agreed that it was a live document and it remained under review based on circumstances arising.
- It was reaffirmed that the document was building upon the priorities in the previous plan rather than rolling over previous commitments.

Voting Record

19 For, 8 Against, 2 Abstentions, 5 Absent/Did not vote

For	Against	Abstention	Absent/ Did not vote
Angus Jenkinson	Chris Twells	Andrew Maclean	David Cunningham
Claire Bloomer	Daryl Corps	Gina Bloomfield	Dilys Neill
Clare Turner	David Fowles		Gary Selwyn
Helene Mansilla	Jeremy Theyer		Joe Harris
Ian Watson	Julia Judd		Ray Brassington
Jon Wareing	Len Wilkins		
Juliet Layton	Tom Stowe		
Lisa Spivey	Tony Slater		
Mark Harris			
Michael Vann			
Mike Evely			
Mike McKeown			
Nigel Robbins			
Nikki Ind			
Patrick Coleman			
Paul Hodgkinson			
Roly Hughes			
Tony Dale			
Tristan Wilkinson			

II Cotswold District Local Plan Update

The purpose of the report was to consider the recommendation to start preparing a new local plan for the period 2026 to 2041 and to consult on a first stage document that includes development strategy options for distributing future growth in the district. It was also to consider the formation of a new cross party working group that would examine strategic growth in Moreton-in-Marsh.

Councillor Layton introduced this item and outlined the following points:

- The strategic development strategy and proposed Local Plan policies would be discussed at a later stage in the consultation on 1 February but this was for Council to approve the approach to developing a new Local Plan.
- The statutory deadline would be 30 June 2025 for the submission of a replacement Local Plan.
- 5,000 of the 6,300 homes required had been identified but the remaining needed to be identified.
- Moreton-in-Marsh needed to be corrected on the terms of reference Working Group which referenced the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan Steering Group in error.

Councillor Coleman seconded the recommendations and reserved his right to speak.

There were many comments regarding the need to control necessary developments and ensure they were in located in the right places.

There was a question regarding the decisions around the contents of the Local Plan and the development plans for Moreton-in-Marsh. It was clarified by the Forward Planning Manager that this decision was the beginning stages of development proposals subject to consultation.

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In regard to Moreton-in-Marsh, it was also explained that Moreton-in-Marsh was identified as one of the sustainable locations for development in the context of the District as parts of the town are not within the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and there were key transport links.

It was noted that this was a key moment which will help to shape the future of the Cotswolds, and it was hoped that there would be a large community engagement.

The creation of a Moreton-in-Marsh working group was welcomed by many members of Council as an opportunity for Members and officers to engage with residents on some of the specific issues that Moreton-in-Marsh was facing.

Councillor Coleman in seconding the recommendations spoke and asked the following questions:

- Whether any extra resources were needed to deliver the plan and mitigate any risks?
- On paragraph 3.6 and whether the use of village clusters could be considered as one of the options for strategic development?
- Whether the design of buildings would be considered to minimise heat loss?
- What measures would be made to avoid the demolition of buildings which would release carbon stored within them?

The Forward Planning Manager answered the questions presented:

- Whilst more resources would be welcomed, the Council had to consider this against the backdrop of difficult financial circumstances.
- In regard to village clusters, it was noted that this would be a useful response for the consultation in order to feed into the formulation of the new Local Plan.
- It was also noted that high-density developments would be considered as part of the formulation of the new Cotswold Design code as part of the aim to promote sustainable settlements.
- There was a new climate change chapter which focussed on avoiding the demolition of buildings which Cabinet had approved for Regulation 18 consultation.

There were various comments around the protection of the District against the consequences of not having a Local Plan in force.

It was highlighted that officers would need to be supported with external support to ensure the new Local Plan was created and brought into force.

There was a question about the local representatives who would serve on the Moreton-in-Marsh Working Group. It was explained that officers would consult with Members to identify the best individuals.

There were various comments about ward councillors encouraging local residents to engage with the public consultation on the future plan for the District.

Councillor Coleman in summing up his comments as a seconder made the following points:

- There was reference to lessons learnt from developments in Cirencester and the Upper Rissingtons to involve Members and local communities.

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- It was noted that the Working Group proposed as cross-party was welcomed.
- There were comments around ensuring affordable housing was developed.

Councillor Layton in summing up then spoke and made the following points:

- There was a focus on engaging with young people in the Cotswolds.
- Some of the sustainable home designs would need to be considered as part of the update to the Cotswold Design Code.

Voting Record

29 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions, 5 Absent/Did not vote

RESOLVED: That Full Council AGREED

1. TO 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 consultation document, as presented at Annex A, to be published for a six week public consultation;
2. DELEGATED AUTHORITY to the Forward Planning Manager, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services, to agree questionnaires and make minor and typographical corrections to the consultation documents prior to being published for public engagement.
3. NOTED upcoming national policy changes and the impact this may have on the preparation of the Local Plan at Annex B;
4. APPROVED the formation of a Moreton-in-Marsh Working Group and approves the Terms of Reference at Annex C; and
5. APPROVED the Local Development Scheme as presented at Annex D.

For	Against	Abstention	Absent/ Did not vote
Andrew Maclean			David Cunningham
Angus Jenkinson			Dilys Neill
Chris Twells			Gary Selwyn
Claire Bloomer			Joe Harris
Clare Turner			Ray Brassington
Daryl Corps			
David Fowles			
Gina Bloomfield			
Helene Mansilla			
Ian Watson			
Jeremy Theyer			
Jon Wareing			
Julia Judd			
Juliet Layton			
Len Wilkins			
Lisa Spivey			
Mark Harris			
Michael Vann			
Mike Evey			
Mike McKeown			
Nigel Robbins			
Nikki Ind			
Patrick Coleman			

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Paul Hodgkinson			
Roly Hughes			
Tom Stowe			
Tony Dale			
Tony Slater			
Tristan Wilkinson			

I2 Notice of Motions

There were no motions for consideration at this meeting.

I3 Next meeting

The next meeting was confirmed to be the Budget Council on 21 February 2024

The Meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and closed at 4.48 pm

Chair

(END)

Member Questions for Council – 24 January 2024

Question	Response
<p>Question 1 from Councillor Len Wilkins to Councillor Mike McKeown, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability</p> <p>How many of the planned EV charging points have Cotswold District Council now installed across the district? What impact have inflationary pressures, energy costs and other economic factors had on the business case, first put to Cabinet in March 2022, for the installation of these EV chargers?</p>	<p>As an EV driver myself this is a subject near and dear to my heart!</p> <p>The first phase of planned EV installations included replacement of old EVCP units at Beeches car park, Cirencester and Old Market Way car park, Moreton in Marsh. These were completed in 2022. New units were also planned for Rissington Road car park, Bourton on the Water and Trinity Road, Cirencester. Each site will have 4 charging units giving the ability to charge 8 vehicles at one time. The below ground civil engineering works to install cabling for the EVCPs at Rissington Road was undertaken last year as part of the wider car park improvement works. The below ground cabling was installed at Trinity Road in December. For both these projects we are now waiting on a connection date from SSEN. Overall, we are disappointed in the delays due to the contractor, Connected Kerb. They are also the contractor for Gloucestershire County Council’s EVCP program and there are ongoing discussions about their performance.</p> <p>We are also progressing grant applications to seek funding for additional car park sites to support our plans to provide a wider charging infrastructure across the Cotswolds and encourage electric vehicle ownership.</p> <p>The replacement units were installed as per quoted prices in 2022. The new units at Rissington Road and Trinity Road have actually reduced in cost since the original Cabinet report was considered as a new supplier was appointed who provided a better price.</p> <p>Energy costs have an impact on the price charged to the customer, as the Council needs to pass on rising electricity costs. A model for the fee calculation was agreed by Cabinet which means the price to the customer can be changed to reflect changes in the costs of providing the service.</p>

<p>Supplementary from Councillor Len Wilkins to Councillor Mike McKeown, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability</p> <p>Councillor Wilkins raised the delays to the installation of the EVCPs in some of the car parks in the District and the concerns of some residents regarding cones blocking the bays from being used. It was asked whether there was any cost from the bays being out of use from the delays, and if these could be recovered from the installer?</p>	<p>Councillor McKeown stated that a written response would be needed from officers regarding specifics on costs.</p> <p>Written response:</p> <p>The bays were coned off just before Christmas as works were planned to the Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs) however there have been some delays. This has not been through a period of high demand for this car park, so it is very unlikely any income has been lost. The cones have now been removed and will be reinstated when a new connection date is confirmed by the installer.</p>
<p>Question 2 from Councillor Tom Stowe to Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council</p> <p>Please could you confirm the current expected lead time for the repair or replacement of street signs?</p>	<p>Pride in Place is really important to this administration and therefore we have been replacing street signs that are in a poor condition. We are planning a further tranche of replacements but need to ensure we balance the benefits these street sign improvements provide with the costs, when we are faced with managing a challenging budget position. We are in the process of agreeing which street signs will be prioritised in the next round of replacements and I will then provide an update on timescales for this work.</p>
<p>Supplementary from Councillor Tom Stowe to Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance</p> <p>As Councillor Joe Harris had given apologies, Councillor Stowe asked a supplementary response to Councillor Mike Evemy as Deputy Leader regarding issues with replacement street signs. It was raised that there had been delays to the installation of a new 'Sheep Street' sign and the addition of no through road signs to The Leasows in Chipping Campden</p>	<p>Councillor Evemy stated that the work done to replace street signs is done when there were resources to do that. However, it was recognised that the delay example given by Councillor Stowe was not acceptable, and that this would be followed up with officers.</p> <p>Written response:</p> <p>Following your supplementary question, we have raised the issue with Ubico. We have been assured that the Sheep Street sign for Chipping Campden was ordered and will be installed no later than Friday 02 February 2024. 'No through road signs' are managed by Highways at Gloucestershire County Council.</p>
<p>Question 3 from Councillor Gina Blomefield to Councillor Mike Evemy,</p>	<p>A project to review holiday homes which are registered for non-domestic</p>

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

There is a great deal of concern across the Cotswold District about the ever-increasing number of second homes and properties which are let out as holiday homes both of which decrease the supply of housing available for would be residents. The ONS states that 8% of properties in the Cotswolds are vacant.

An additional issue is holiday homes which are registered as businesses which do not have to pay council tax and fall below the threshold for paying business rates and yet their domestic bins are collected along with everyone else's.

The popularity of the Cotswolds as a place to have a weekend retreat or its attraction as a tourist destination is mirrored in places such as the Lake District and whilst it brings prosperity, which is valuable to the local economy, it would be good to have greater control of these type of tenures and also capture more financial benefit for the District Council.

As a start, what avenues has this Council explored to advise property owners who rent out properties as holiday homes registered as a business that they should pay a commercial waste charge as happens in Salcombe; doubling council tax on second homes as is proposed in Whitby and Swanage and also a doubling of council tax on properties which have been vacant over a year?

rates and receive a domestic waste collection service has been commissioned as part of the Environmental Services Innovation Programme (ESIP). A discovery to assess the number of business premises and scale will start in April and is scheduled to be completed in June. Options will then be presented to Members for consideration.

The Government reviewed the eligibility criteria for second homes that have been subject to Business Rates rather than Council Tax. From April 2023, second homeowners have to prove holiday lets are being rented out for a minimum of 70 days a year to access small business rates relief, where they meet the criteria. Holiday let owners will have to provide evidence such as the website or brochure used to advertise the property, letting details and receipts. Properties will also have to be available to be rented out for 140 days a year to qualify for this relief.

As far as Council Tax is concerned, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, passed into law in October 2023, would allow Councils to charge a council tax premium on second homes of up to an additional 100%, and also allows a premium to be charged on homes that remain empty after one year (rather than the current minimum two-year period).

The Council would need to provide 12 month's notice of its intention to charge a premium on second homes. A report will come forward to Cabinet and Council in March 2024 outlining the administration's proposals on Council Tax premiums, although we are still waiting for detailed guidance from the Government on exactly which properties would be eligible.

I understand that a number of the Gloucestershire Districts have indicated they intend to charge a premium on second homes from April 2025.

***Question 4 from Councillor Chris Twells to Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance**

It is reported that fraud and the misuse of public money cost taxpayers in the Cotswold District tens of thousands of pounds every year.

Will the Deputy Leader confirm the number of investigations begun by the Counter Fraud & Enforcement Unit since 31 December 2022, broken down in terms of investigations into:

- a) Members of the District Council
- b) Members of Town or Parish Councils
- c) Council employees, including contractors and agency staff
- d) All other investigations.

****Question received after publication of the agenda and for the deadline for a guaranteed written response under Rule 11.10 of the Council Procedure Rules***

This information is all available in the public domain.

The reports to Audit and Governance Committee give a clear breakdown in relation to the number of cases, referrals and outcomes.

For the period in question please refer to reports presented on [27 April 2023](#) and [30 November 2023](#).

Supplementary from Councillor Chris Twells to Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

Councillor Twells stated that the answer he was seeking was not within the papers given in the written response. It was stated that the specific issue was raised at an Audit and Governance Committee meeting and no response was provided in the meeting. However it was confirmed by the Monitoring Officer privately that the issue did not relate to a Tetbury Town Councillor. Councillor Twells asked whether the specific fraud investigation was relating to an employee of the council or a Town/Parish

Councillor Evemy stated he would give a written response.

Written response:

Cllr Twells, thank you for your supplementary question, my apologies for the delay in responding.

Following a discussion with the Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer), I understand that the investigation related to the conduct of an employee and has concluded.

<p>Councillor.</p>	<p>As a reminder, Members do not get involved in employment issues relating to individual Officers other than in relation to the statutory officers.</p>
<p>*Question 5 from Councillor Chris Twells to Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation</p> <p>Residents of West Street and Cottons Lane in Tetbury regularly raise the concern that, despite having purchased annual parking permits, they are often unable to park in West Street car park.</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member accept my invitation to visit Tetbury to speak to residents about how we balance the needs of visitors and residents in car parks such as West Street? Any visit would, of course, have to be after the triple Town Council by-election on Super Thursday (15 February).</p> <p><i>*Question received after publication of the agenda and the deadline for a guaranteed written response under Rule 11.10 of the Council Procedure Rules</i></p>	<p>We note residents' concerns and parking challenges which are raised by Members across the District. We are currently undertaking a review of all Cotswold District Council car parks and the consultation on this is currently live. We would welcome yours and your resident's feedback through this channel in order to help shape the future of parking services.</p> <p>We have planned walkabouts with Town and Parish Councils including Tetbury, scheduled for August and we would welcome Councillors to join us on this to highlight any issues of concern, or potential improvements. The invitation this has been sent to Town and Parish clerks.</p> <p>All Season Tickets are provided with the caveat that this does not guarantee the permit holder a space, however Tetbury does have a free long stay car park at the Rail Yard which residents could also use.</p>
<p>Supplementary from Councillor Chris Twells to Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation</p> <p>Councillor Twells stated he would encourage residents to take part in the review. It was noted that West Street in Tetbury had seen residents cars severely damaged and blocking access along the road. Councillor Twells asked if Councillor Dale would discuss this issue offline?</p>	<p>Councillor Dale thanked Councillor Twells for raising the specific issue and noted that officers were aware of this problem. It was noted that the wider challenges and concerns were being considered by the Council in balancing the visitor economy and the needs of local residents. It was noted that the consultation would take into account all needs and reiterated the importance of participation in the consultation.</p>

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