

Public Document Pack



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Monday, 22 January 2024

Tel: (01285) 623553 or 623181
e-mail: Democratic@cotswold.gov.uk

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX on **Tuesday, 30 January 2024 at 4.00 pm.**

Rob Weaver
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
(Councillors Gina Blomefield, Gary Selwyn, David Cunningham, Roly Hughes, Angus Jenkinson, Dilys Neill, Michael Vann, Tony Slater, Clare Turner and Jon Wareing)

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

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

AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
To receive any apologies for absence. The Quorum for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is 3 Members.
2. **Substitute Members**
To note details of any substitution arrangements in place for the Meeting.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive any declarations of interest from Members and Officers, relating to items to be considered at the meeting.
4. **Minutes (Pages 5 - 12)**
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2024
5. **Actions Arising from the Minutes**
To review actions from previous meetings.
6. **Chair's Announcements**
To receive any announcements from the Chair
7. **Public Questions**
Members of the public may ask up to two oral spoken questions at Ordinary Meetings of the Council, Cabinet and Committees. A maximum period of fifteen minutes shall be allowed at any such meeting for open forum questions. Prior notice of oral questions is not required. The time limit for an oral questions is one minute.
8. **Member Questions**
To deal with written questions by Members, relating to issues under the Committee's remit, with the maximum length of oral supplementary questions at Committee being no longer than one minute. Responses to any supplementary questions will be dealt with in writing if they cannot be dealt with at the meeting.
9. **Review of Leisure and Cultural Services provision (Pages 13 - 58) – 30 minutes**
Summary/Purpose
This report considers the Council's role in contributing to healthy communities through its leisure and cultural services.
It provides updates on the delivery of the Active Cotswold leisure strategy, mobilisation of the new leisure and cultural contracts, and the Council's work with other health and wellbeing partners.
The recently adopted playing pitch strategy is referenced and future plans and initiatives are described.

Recommendations

That the Committee resolves to:

1. Consider and note the report's content;
2. Make recommendations to the Cabinet that could further improve the district's leisure and cultural services offer.

Invited

Councillor Paul Hodgkinson, Cabinet Member for Health, Leisure and Culture
Andy Barge, Assistant Director for Communities
Jacqueline Wright, Business Manager for Leisure and Wellbeing

10. **24/25 Ubico Business Plan Engagement (Pages 59 - 74)- 20 minutes**

Purpose

For the Committee to receive a verbal presentation of the Ubico 2024/25 Business Plan.

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinises the plan and agrees any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Cabinet meeting on 1 February.

Invited

Beth Boughton, Managing Director, UBICO
Rob Heath, Operations Director, UBICO

11. **2024/25 Budget – Fees and Charges Report – 30 minutes**

Report to follow

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinises the report and agrees any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Cabinet meeting on 1 February.

Invited

Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer

12. **Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25- 30 minutes**

Report to follow

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinises the report and agrees any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Cabinet meeting on 1 February.

Invited

Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer

13. **Agile working and future tenancies at Trinity Road Council Offices (Pages 75 - 82)- 20 minutes**

Purpose

To update Cabinet on the work that has been completed to make changes to the Trinity Road offices to facilitate agile working and free up space for tenants and to make recommendations on a future tenant for the space created

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinises the report and agrees any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Cabinet meeting on 1 February.

Invited

Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer

14. **Report of the Public Conveniences Review Group (Pages 83 - 96)- 20 minutes**

Summary/Purpose

To present to Cabinet the recommendations of the Public Conveniences Review Group

Recommendation(s)

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Approve the report for submission to Cabinet.

15. **Updates from Gloucestershire County Council Scrutiny Committees – 10 minutes**

Purpose

For the appointed representatives to update the Committee on the work of:

- Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny (HOSC) – Cllr Dilys Neill
- Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (GEGSC) – Cllr Angus Jenkinson

16. **Work Plan (Pages 97 - 118) – 5 minutes**

For the Committee to note and review its work plan and to select Cabinet decisions for pre-decision scrutiny at future committee meetings.

17. **Matters Exempt from Publication**

If the Committee 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 the Committee 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 paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Committee 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.

18. **Exempt Annex A- Agenda item 13 (Pages 119 - 120)**

19. **Exempt Annex B - Agenda Item 14 (Pages 121 - 124)**

(END)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
08/January2024



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Monday, 8 January 2024

Councillors present:

Gina Blomefield – Chair
David Cunningham
Roly Hughes
Angus Jenkinson

Gary Selwyn –Vice-Chair
Dilys Neill
Michael Vann
Tony Slater

Clare Turner
Jon Wareing

Officers present:

David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and
Chief Finance Officer
Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business
Manager
Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services
Officer

Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and
Monitoring Officer
James Brain, Forward Planning Manager
Kira Thompson, Election and Democratic
Services Support Assistant

Observers:

Councillors

Joe Harris, Leader of the Council
Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services
Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

OS.15 Apologies

There were no apologies received.

OS.16 Substitute Members

There were no substitute members.

OS.17 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

OS.18 Minutes

Members made the following amendments to the minutes;

Meeting held on 28 November 2023;

- On Page 5, under the final bullet point of the Q2 performance report it should read “That this policy was still being carried out”
- Page 4, “The Leader stated that the form of affordable housing that the Council was aiming to deliver was tenure blind affordable housing should state “The Leader stated that the council aimed to provide tenure blind **social rented** housing”
- The word ‘to’ on page 9 should be delayed

Meeting held on 16 November 2023;

- Page 3, “and that bringing most services back in house would provide greater control, as well as improve recruiting practices.” Should read “and that bringing most services back in house would provide greater control, as well as improving the Council’s ability to recruit staff.”

RESOLVED: To APPROVE the minutes of the meetings held on 28 November and 16 November.

OS.19 Chair's Announcements

There were no Chair’ announcements.

OS.20 Matters Arising From the Minutes

The matters arising document was discussed, and the Senior Democratic Services stated that a response to the OS.294 from 31 October would be distributed to members.

OS.21 Public Questions

Eileen Viviani, from Moreton-in-Marsh asked a public question. The public speaker asked whether the Committee would be scrutinising climate change implications of development.

The Chair thanked the public speaker for their question and stated that this would be addressed later as part of the item on the Local Plan.

OS.22 Member Questions

Councillor Daryl Corps asked a member question.

“As the member for Moreton West, I felt compelled to ask the Chair of the O&S Committee the following regarding the local plan update and potential new plan on behalf of the residents in Moreton in Marsh that takes up a considerable amount of the local plan update document you will be discussing.

Chair, on behalf of the residents in Moreton in Marsh, a town familiar with extensive, some may say 'badly planned over development' over the past 15 years - can we please have a proper environmental study conducted? And for a master plan, the sheer scale of the number of dwellings right around the town surely warrants this right now, as part of this process? 1500 homes, albeit over time will dramatically change the town, and we need to know what we can actually cope with.

It's what the town deserves considering the scale and extremely high numbers of potential new dwellings the document mentions. Cirencester has a masterplan and such scale warrants one for Moreton to investigate the genuine feasibility. Harm has been done to Moreton in the

past without such a plan. We cannot repeat bad decisions of the past when we have the opportunity to do the right thing for the people of Moreton today.

It's very scary to think that the current 'mega-estate' at Dunstall Farm, currently being built by Spitfire Homes is heading for a condition breach at just 50 homes - just 50! Regarding Thames Water and the inability of the existing pumping station to deal with sewage from the development, we could be facing a potential public health disaster in the middle of our town if the sewage pumping station fails at 51 houses.

The numbers mentioned warrant a full and extremely urgent full environmental study, and development plan that residents, the North Cotswold Hospital, Doctor's surgeries and business owners can have complete visibility over. The Hospital, Doctors Surgeries and Business's will want to know about the infrastructure, but it will be the Residents who will want to know their homes will not be waterlogged.

Can the Residents of Moreton in Marsh rely on The Cotswolds O&S Committee to fully scrutinise any future proposals and ensure that the Council is kept fully up to date as any new information regarding future proposals comes through in the future on behalf of the Residents in Moreton in Marsh.

Thank you to the Chair for hearing my questions and request."

The Chair thanked Councillor Corps for the question and stated that they were aware of the concerns they raised. The Chair suggested that the Committee recommends that Cabinet set up a Working Group to address the issues raised by Councillor Corps and by the member of the public, and that they would discuss this further as part of the item on the Local Plan.

Councillor Corps asked a supplementary question to request a timescale for the group being set up. The Chair agreed with the member stated that this would be discussed as part of the item on the local plan, as it would be for the Committee to decide.

OS.23 Corporate Plan 2024-2028

The Chair of the Committee invited the Leader of the Council to introduce the item;

The purpose of the item was to present the Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2028 to the Committee, ahead of its approval by Cabinet on 11 January.

The Leader of the Council provided an overview of the Corporate Plan, emphasising that changes would be made to it prior to its submission to Council for final approval. The document, subject to changes, focused on key priorities: delivering genuinely affordable housing, supporting the local economy, and addressing the climate emergency. The Leader of the Council acknowledged the financial challenges faced by the Council and stressed the need for efficient service delivery.

The Committee commented on the report and asked questions, discussing definitions of affordable housing, and the Leader stated that the preferred form of affordable housing for the Council was socially rented housing.

The Committee made the following suggestions to amend the plan which were accepted by the Leader;

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
08/January2024

- Greater clarity was required on objectives - to be clear about what tangible things the Council wants to do and what the outcomes will be.
- Focus on key deliverables with a 'less is more' approach as opposed to a focus on the wider aspirations of the Council.
- Tackling the ecological emergency should have greater emphasis in the Corporate Plan.
- A note to explain where/who the photos show would be useful.
- Amend wording to remove 'recreate' in Aim (noting the Leader advised this page was likely to be deleted).
- That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would like to review progress against target dates (item for 2024/25 workplan) and the Leader gave a commitment to update the Committee. Key Performance Indicators to be aligned with Corporate Plan to show what success looks like.
- That the presentation of the document would be updated before the presentation to Full Council on 24 January 2024.
- Note that any changes to staff responsibility would need to be updated periodically and these updates reported to the Committee.

RESOLVED: To NOTE the report

OS.24 2024/25 Budget Consultation Feedback Report

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

The Chair invited the Deputy Leader to introduce the item. The Deputy Leader highlighted the Council's commitment to transparency, and publishing the consultation responses, including critical ones.

Members discussed the report, raising the following points;

- Members raised the need to distil themes from the responses, particularly in the car parking section. The Deputy Leader acknowledged the value of responses, especially in understanding public sentiment amid budgetary pressures.
- Members also expressed a desire for more concrete information on how the feedback would influence decisions.
- Members asked if residents who added comments received acknowledgment, and the Deputy Leader confirmed that an automatic response had been generated.
- It was stated that it was difficult for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to exercise its 'critical friend' function at this stage in the process, and wished to feed into the design of the survey at an earlier stage.

The Committee made the following suggestions;

- That Further communications to be provided by the Council to help residents understand the context of the questions e.g. note which statutory services are provided by the Council and highlight in the introduction which services the District Council do not provide but are commonly raised i.e. potholes.
- That future draft surveys are brought before the Committee for consideration before the survey is launched.

RESOLVED: To NOTE the report

OS.25 Cotswold District Local Plan - Partial Update

OS.25 Cotswold District Local Plan Update and Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan

The Committee took a ten-minute break, reconvening before proceeding onto this item.

The Chair introduced the item, and recommended that due to the size and scope of the Local Plan Partial Update, the Committee focused on:

- Whether the Council should start preparing the Development Strategy and Site Allocation Plan now;
- The development strategy options;
- Moreton-in-Marsh as highlighted by the Members Question and Public Question.

The Chair invited the Cabinet Member to introduce the report. The purpose of the item was 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; and
- For Cabinet to approve the updated Statement of Community Involvement and the updated Local Development Scheme documents.

The Cabinet Member provided an overview of the report, and explained that the purpose of updating the Local Plan was to address Climate Change and ensure that communities are given the opportunity to shape how future needs are delivered across the district and in their communities. It was also explained that having an up-to-date Local Plan will help to ensure the council maintains an enduring housing land supply and guard against speculative applications for development. The Cabinet Member further explained that the intention is to join the adopted Local Plan partial update: draft policies (annex x) and a new Local Plan (which would include a new development strategy and site allocations for the plan period 2026-41) together ahead of the Government's Planning Reform deadline of 30 June 2025. However, Council would be updated on whether this is possible by the end of the year. It was stated that if it is deemed not possible, then the Local Plan partial update (i.e. a finalised version of Annex C) would be submitted separately and the new local Plan 2026-41 would transition in to the government's new planning system in 2025.

Members discussed the report and raised the following points, which were answered by the Cabinet Member and Officers;

- The Forward Planning Manager assured members that although the deadlines were tight, the consultation would be delivered to the necessary deadlines.
- Members stated that it would be necessary to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure, including flood mitigation and the appropriate environmental studies were in place before building more housing in Moreton-in-Marsh. The Forward Planning Manager stated that they would continue to engage with stakeholders such as

Gloucestershire County Council. He also explained the importance of ensuring the Public identify infrastructure issues in their communities as this will aid how the plan progresses and the type and scale of new infrastructure required.

- Members asked about the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment document (SHELAA), which the Forward Planning Manager stated would be updated later in the year. He explained that at the consultation would include a 'call for sites' that will aid the SHELAA update.
- The Forward Planning Manager stated that the online consultation would be launched on 1 February at your.cotswold.gov.uk a note to all members will notify them of this.
- Members commented on the Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan and whether pedestrianisation was still in scope. The Forward Planning Manager stated that the document set out a broad vision and several principles to guide future development of which active travel / pedestrianisation is a feature.

RESOLVED: To agree that Cabinet 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;

Voting Record

For 10, Against 0, Abstentions 0, 0 Absent/Did not vote

RESOLVED: That the Committee makes a recommendation to Cabinet that a working group is set up to consider the development of a Strategic plan for Moreton in Marsh.

Voting record

For 10, Against 0, Abstentions 0, 0 Absent/Did not vote

Recommendation: That the Council establishes and defines the terms of reference for a cross-party working group to consider the development of a strategic plan for Moreton in Marsh.

A timeline for the set-up of the working group to form part of the recommendation to Cabinet

That the Committee support twin tracking the Local Plan development as set out in the recommendations.

Voting Record

For 10, Against 0, Abstentions 0, 0 Absent/Did not vote

OS.26 Work Plan and Forward Plan

The Chair reminded members that the next Meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee was to take place on 30 January.

The Deputy Chief Executive stated that the Publica Transition plan would be deferred to the meeting afterward as this was going to be considered by Cabinet on 7 March 2024

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
08/January2024

The Meeting commenced at 4:00pm and closed at 6:46pm

Chair

(END)

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 9



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 30 JANUARY 2024
Subject	REVIEW OF LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES PROVISION
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson - Cabinet Member for Health, Leisure and Culture Email: paul.hodgkinson@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Andy Barge, Assistant Director - Communities Email: Democratic@cotswold.gov.uk
Report authors	Andy Barge, Assistant Director - Communities Jacqueline Wright, Business Manager - Leisure and Wellbeing Rachel Biles, Strategic Projects Lead (Leisure) Stuart Wilson, Leisure Contract Specialist Email: Democratic@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	<p>This report considers the Council's role in contributing to healthy communities through its leisure and cultural services.</p> <p>It provides updates on the delivery of the Active Cotswold leisure strategy, mobilisation of the new leisure and cultural contracts, and the Council's work with other health and wellbeing partners.</p> <p>The recently adopted playing pitch strategy is referenced and future plans and initiatives are described.</p>
Annexes	Annex A: Summary of Strategic Outcomes Planning Model - Active Cotswold Leisure Strategy Annex B: Active Cotswold Programme Organisation Annex C: Active Cotswold Key Achievements - Jan 2024
Recommendation(s)	<p>That the Committee resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Consider and note the report's content;2. Make recommendations to the Cabinet that could further improve the district's leisure and cultural services offer.



Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver the highest standard of service• Support health and wellbeing• Respond to the climate crisis
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>The Active Cotswold Leisure Strategy was informed by and developed after extensive consultation with key stakeholders such as Active Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner, Bromford Housing, Cotswold National Landscape and the then Clinical Commissioning Group.</p> <p>In addition, an online community survey elicited 1,066 responses from our residents and virtual focus groups were held with Tetbury residents, Fairford residents, young people, older people and families.</p> <p>The Leisure and Culture Management Contract award report went to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Council and was supported by a cross party Leisure and Cultural Provision Working Group during its development.</p>



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The key role district councils have to play in driving better health outcomes as part of a wider system with other health partners is described, along with the purpose and approach of the Council's community wellbeing team, with a particular focus on asset based community development. Alongside other council services, it is noted that targeted leisure and cultural services are likely to have the most significant impact on community health and wellbeing. The report goes on to consider how the Council is delivering and enabling such targeted services, starting with its adopted leisure and wellbeing strategy - the Active Cotswold Programme.
- 1.2 The Active Cotswold Programme was informed by and developed after extensive consultation with key stakeholders, a residents survey and virtual focus groups, which included young people, older people and families. Sport England's Strategic Outcomes Planning Model was used to produce the strategy and three key themes were identified - Healthier District, Connected Community and Active Environment. The intended outcomes for each of these themes, along with the planned approaches to achieve them, are summarised in Annex A. Part of this report considers progress to date and the key achievements for each theme (Annex C).
- 1.3 At the same time as the strategy was adopted in March 2021, Cabinet granted authority to undertake a leisure management options appraisal to determine the most suitable delivery model, contract scope and contract terms for the Council's leisure and cultural facilities from August 2023. This options appraisal concluded the optimum management option for both the leisure and culture contracts was to appoint an external contractor to operate the services on behalf of the Council. A full and competitive procurement process led to both the leisure and cultural management contracts being awarded to Freedom Leisure, which commenced on 1st August 2023 for a contract term of 10 years with the option to extend for up to 5 years. The contract mobilisation period is considered in this report, along with the learning from transitioning from one provider to another, how the programme attracts and utilises external investment and partnerships and the next steps to consolidate the Council's leisure offer and customer experience.
- 1.4 This report also outlines how the council works in partnership with health partners to build relationships, trust and to support a whole systems approach and how the Active Cotswold programme benefits from funding that the council has secured from health partners to lead on the prevention agenda locally.
- 1.5 The report finishes by outlining proposals for an enhanced contract monitoring capability and considers the next steps to further improve the district's leisure and cultural provision, with a particular focus on a new cultural strategy and a joint community outreach programme to complement the leisure facilities offer.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In March 2021, the Council's Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (SOPM) - Active Cotswold Leisure Strategy was adopted and authority granted to undertake a leisure and culture management options appraisal, to determine the most suitable delivery model, contract scope



and contract terms for the Council's leisure and culture facilities - [Cabinet report from meeting of Cabinet held on Monday, 1 March 2021](#)

- 2.2 The SOPM identified three key themes - Healthier District, Connected Community and Active Environment - which were established through the review of local and national strategies, and extensive community consultation with stakeholders and residents. Each theme area has a linked action plan which is sectioned into service and facility interventions. See Annex A for a summary of the SOPM.
- 2.3 As mentioned above, authority was also given to undertake a leisure and culture management options appraisal. To support this process a cross party Leisure and Cultural Provision Working Group was established. The purpose of the working group was to help determine the best delivery model for the provision of sustainable leisure and cultural activities, provided in Council owned and operated facilities. The working group was involved in identifying the key drivers for the new contracts via a paired comparison exercise and also supported the review of the options appraisal findings and potential bidders soft market testing.
- 2.4 The appraisal concluded that the optimum management option for both the leisure and culture contracts was to appoint an external contractor to operate the services on behalf of the Council.
- 2.5 In May 2022, the Cabinet granted authority for officers to commence procurement exercises for the appointment of a Leisure Management Contractor, and a Cultural Services Management Contractor for the operation of the Council's leisure and cultural facilities - [Cabinet Report from meeting of Cabinet held on Monday, 9 May 2022](#).
- 2.6 As part of the procurement exercise, a commitment was given to provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with key updates on the procurement process and timeline, which happened at key milestones throughout the process.
- 2.7 The procurements followed a competitive procedure with negotiation process, which commenced in September 2022, with the publication of the notice within the Official Journal of European Union (OJEU) and utilised the standard Sport England Leisure Operating Contract and guidance.
- 2.8 In March 2023, Council agreed to award both the Leisure and Cultural Management Contracts to Freedom Leisure, which commenced on 1st August 2023 for a contract term of 10 years with the option to extend for up to 5 years - [Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Monday, 15 March 2023](#).

3. THE IMPACT OF DISTRICT COUNCILS ON COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLBEING

- 3.1 The latest Kings Fund report, [Driving better health outcomes through integrated care systems - The role of district councils](#), clearly sets out that “District council services – across housing, planning, economic development, welfare, leisure and environmental health – influence some of the most significant determinants of health. Around 80 per cent of the variation observed in population health outcomes is attributable to wider factors such as these, rather than to the quality of health care services. This makes district councils indispensable strategic partners in integrated care systems (ICSs), whose involvement is essential if systems are to deliver population health improvements.” Figure 1 on the next page illustrates how district council services can support the health and care system.



Figure 1: How District Council services can support the health and care system (Source: The Kings Fund 2023 - “Driving better health outcomes through integrated care systems - The role of district councils”)

- 3.2 Acknowledging the other services that bring about improved health, it is targeted leisure and cultural services that are likely to have the most significant impact on community health and wellbeing (alongside other wellbeing specific initiatives the council's communities services area is delivering) and this report is confined to leisure and cultural services.
- 3.3 In order to develop more focus for these targeted leisure and cultural services, and to foster inspiration and creative leadership, the communities team has developed a shared purpose.
- 3.4 It was important to identify WHY we are doing what we are doing, apart from earning money. Equally important is to know HOW we aim to achieve the WHY, and WHAT the relevant actions and interventions are:

Why are we here? We want to help improve people's quality of life.

How do we do that? We empower communities, increase community resilience and improve health and wellbeing.

What are we doing to achieve that? We engage, listen and build community capacity. We proactively bring ideas, people, organisations and resources together to enable a rich diversity of sustainable projects, innovative responses to local social challenges and new life-enhancing opportunities for the benefit of everyone.

It is worthy of note that Freedom Leisure's purpose is 'Improving lives through leisure' (and culture) and therefore closely aligned.

- 3.5 The HOW and WHAT are underpinned by specific principles of working. In particular since the COVID19 pandemic, the Council increasingly applies a strength-based and place-based approach as well as increased facilitation of partnership work.
- 3.6 Asset-based community development (ABCD)¹ has been developing in Gloucestershire over the last 10 years, and is at the heart of our Communities directorate's ambitions. The Social Care Institute for Excellence describes the potential and benefits of ABCD as helping to:
- enhance health, wellbeing and resilience
 - reduce long-term pressures on higher-cost health, care and support services
 - enable people to participate in and benefit from community resources and activities.
 - reframe the narrative from needs to assets
 - build a dynamic picture of personal and community assets
 - to connect people to each other and to wider community assets
 - grow and mobilise community assets
 - monitor impact and learn from evidence

¹ Asset Based Community Development 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. This makes it different to a Deficit Based approach that focuses on identifying and servicing needs. From the start an Asset Based approach spends time identifying the assets of individuals, associations and institutions that form the community. The identified assets from an individual are matched with people or groups who have an interest in or need for those strengths. The key is beginning to use what is already in the community. Then to work together to build on the identified assets of all involved. (Source: [Nurture Development](#))

- 3.7 The Active Cotswold programme, which has emerged as a result of the SOPM, is applying the principles and approaches mentioned above and therefore aims to achieve outcomes by delivering services holistically and beyond the more traditional facility-based leisure offer.

4. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE ACTIVE COTSWOLD PROGRAMME TO DATE

- 4.1 The Active Cotswold Programme was established in 2021 and is the Council's adopted leisure and wellbeing strategy, which is delivered as a long term programme (10 years). The programme's vision statement is "*to improve the health and lives of Cotswolds residents by connecting communities and fostering an active environment*".
- 4.2 As mentioned in 2.2 SOPM has identified the three core workstreams, objectives and approach that sport and physical activity can have a positive impact on. These are summarised in the tables on the next two pages.
- 4.3 Annex B shows how the programme is organised and delivered. The delivery of the programme is sponsored by the Assistant Director for Communities and overseen by a Programme Manager. Regular Board meetings, as well as workstream lead meetings, ensure the smooth delivery and progress of the programme. In addition, there are many interconnecting activities and projects that are carried out jointly and are contributing to this complex programme.
- 4.4 Currently, there is no identified workstream lead for the 'Active Environment' workstream following the leadership team's decision not to recruit to the vacant (non establishment) Sustainable Transport Officer post. This results in progress against most objectives for this workstream being on hold for the time being.

Healthier District
Objectives
I. Promote mental and physical health equally by increasing participation in sport and physical activity for all



2. Support the 'We can Move' campaign to get more people enjoying an active life
3. Aim to help 30,000 people become active across Gloucestershire
4. Promote healthy lifestyles and self-care across all ages
5. Reduce health inequalities

Approach

- Achieving permanent behaviour changes through increasing opportunities for residents to build physical activity into their everyday lives
- Facilitating the enhancement of referrals into physical activity and fitness based programmes
- Increasing emphasis and resources into targeted outreach services for those with long-term health conditions

Connected Community

Objectives

1. Encourage well connected, resilient and active communities to help social isolation and prevent anti-social behaviour
2. Improved and equal access to quality services
3. Create more healthy, sustainable, mixed communities
4. Improve digital inclusion
5. Enable people to build and nurture strong social networks and vibrant communities
6. Ensure that physical activity has a place based approach and is right for each local community
7. Reduce the life expectancy discrepancy for the most deprived Cotswold wards

Approach

- Using and asset based community development approach to increase participation in physical activity
- Maximise opportunities with local groups, developing new local activity programmes encouraging people to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle, particularly in rural isolated communities
- Identify resources and support to develop local solutions, which address barriers to physical activity
- Work in partnership with the Council's leisure contractor to raise customer satisfaction, accessibility and a positive customer experience
- Utilise the power of physical activity to improve community cohesion and tackle local issues
- Use 'Crowdfund Cotswold' to leverage investment from residents and businesses to deliver sustainable local projects aiming to reduce inactivity

Active Environment

Objectives

1. Enable residents to live healthy lives through active places and active travel
2. Encourage active travel through cycling and walking, to increase physical activity and reduce carbon footprints
3. Improve housing and the built environment to enable our residents to live healthy lives
4. Support health and wellbeing projects that are focused on outdoor activities and recreation



Approach

- Work in partnership with local groups and stakeholders to provide, improve and promote sustainable transport options, including cycling and walking
- Facilitating partnership work to promote the benefits of active travel, encouraging people to engage in active travel - e.g. to leisure centres, to work and to town centres
- Protecting access to open spaces

4.5 Key achievements to date against the three programme workstreams are set out in Annex C and include:

- Development and adoption of a district wide Playing Pitch Strategy and action plan - see section 8 for further details.
- Fitness equipment replacement and refurbishment at Cirencester and Bourton Leisure Centres.
- Capital programme of works to support the implementation of the new Leisure Management Contract, which include improvements to Cirencester and Bourton Leisure Centres.
- Leisure Contract Procurement completed - the new contract with Freedom Leisure commenced in August 2023 and the contract service specification aligns to the outcomes of Active Cotswold.
- Encouraging Active Travel in and around the Cotswold Water Park by producing a video showing a snapshot of what it is like to cycle one of the 6 circular cycle routes in the Water Park.
- Walking and cycling improvements have been made around Cotswold Water Park ensuring it is sustainable and more accessible for everyone. New cycle parking has been installed at 6 locations in the Water Park. There is also a new section of cycle path linking NCN45 (Railway Path) with Cerney Wick bridge to make cycling and walking more accessible. New wayfinding boards have also been installed in 5 of the key destinations to guide visitors to new and interesting places.
- Partnered with Cirencester College to run a Dementia Chair exercise class.
- Trained 8 Walk leaders from different organisations to lead Wellbeing Walks.
- Active Cotswold LIVE event reached over 100 people
- developed and distributed 'Fit Kits' enabling residents to start exercise where they live or as part of a group at no cost.
- Collaboration with Mr Motivator to promote his free Motivation Club amongst residents
- Crowdfund Cotswold supported 14 projects so far that are contributing to helping residents to become more active, with a collective value of £366,810, towards which the council contributed £81,554.



5. CONTRACT MOBILISATION & TRANSITION

Leisure Management Contract

- 5.1 The transition from one leisure operator to another at the end of a contract term is a complex process, with a range of items and matters that need to be put into place. The overarching aim is to ensure that the customer experience remains seamless whilst 'behind the scenes' all of the staff transfer (under the TUPE regulations) and all systems, processes, data, information, and communication software and hardware etc. are migrated.
- 5.2 There have been some administrative and logistical issues that have occurred during this transition period. These included initial difficulties with the switching of the telephone and IT platforms from one operator to another, a mismatch between the outgoing contractor membership architecture and the new membership schemes, and the need for new equipment to be delivered to sites including a full catering package to be installed to allow the opening of the cafe at Cirencester Leisure Centre - a service enhancement. In future contracts, where possible, it would be worthwhile arranging for earlier transition meetings between operators, with the council acting in a mediation role, so that more information can be shared in advance of the actual handover.
- 5.3 At Cirencester and Bourton leisure centres there were also swimming pool plant equipment failures in the initial weeks of the contract mobilisation that led to unexpected pool closures. The condition of some of the pool plant equipment was found to be poor on handover, and these items tend to have a lead in time for repair and replacement. Cirencester pool also experienced a case where a member of staff inadvertently missed a final check after completing pool filter works which led to a large volume of swimming pool water being discharged.
- 5.4 Typically, with swimming pool issues these took a number of hours or days to resolve as the balancing and management of pool water takes time. Regrettably, these issues did directly affect the customers. To prevent recurrence of these matters Freedom Leisure is now actively looking at solutions for the affected plant items and will work with Council officers to make recommendations for replacements where possible. Regimes have also been changed to prevent accidental loss of pool water overnight by undertaking plant conditioning works in the mornings instead of the evenings.
- 5.5 Where customers have been affected by any issue Freedom Leisure has tried to make sure communication is clear and proactive to help to minimise disruption. The Council's communications team has supported such endeavours.
- 5.6 A few customer groups were identified who felt that the transition to Freedom Leisure was not delivered as they would have expected, as they would have liked more personalised or specific information about the contract change. In the majority of these cases the customers were promptly identified and have since been updated, and where possible, encouraged to continue with their visits. The use of all customer feedback channels has been important in this respect and the latest inclusion of regular 'Meet the Manager' sessions has proven popular and will continue.



- 5.7 Part of the challenge in transitioning between leisure contractors is that, whilst they have broadly similar ambitions, each organisation has their own nuances and styles. Therefore we have seen occasions where a change in culture has been necessary. Freedom Leisure has a more localised approach to the operation of Council facilities and empower local managers and staff to adapt the delivery structures to best fit their local requirements, whilst staying within the corporate protection of key matters such as health and Safety and operational best practice. Overall this leads to an element of responsibility being placed on the local teams to react to local issues, instead of a 'not company policy' approach which can lead to frustration for users. Freedom Leisure has ensured that their senior support team were closely on hand to help the transferred staff team through this change in delivery approach.
- 5.8 Some of the administrative, booking, and membership structures have also undergone changes which led to a need to update and advise customers with new information that had only recently been delivered to the staff teams. To aid this Freedom Leisure delivered comprehensive induction training to all staff and were also on hand to offer guidance for clubs, hirers, and regular users who may have felt this change more keenly.
- 5.9 The following is an example of the 'real time' processes being delivered during the mobilisation. Prior to the contract award it had been identified that the showers in the swimming pool changing room were reaching their end of life. As part of the tender process Contractors were asked to show improvements to this area as part of their proposal for the Capital fund which the Council had secured. The replacement of these showers would now, therefore, be included in the Capital works due to take place in April/May 2024. After the Contract award officers had also worked on putting together a bid for the Swimming Pool Support Fund (SPSF) and this bid included for an upgrade of the shower units to also make them more energy efficient and water saving. However, the condition of the showers has proven to be so unreliable that this item of work had to be brought forward - which led to the SPSF bid option being compromised as the works need completing before an award has been made. The Council will still engage Freedom Leisure to complete the works using the Capital fund, but the timeframe needed to be shorter to minimise complaints. Freedom Leisure and the Council were able to react dynamically to this challenge and have agreed that the works will take place in January 2024. It has also been agreed that the best option is still to install the energy saving showers due to their enhanced environmental benefits.

Culture Management Contract

- 5.10 Overall there has been a seamless transition from the previous operator to the service now being delivered by Freedom Leisure.
- 5.11 The Museum team were recognised for the delivery of their learning programmes by being awarded the Sandford Award for Heritage Education.
- 5.12 The Museum team took custody of some key archeological finds (two Roman Swords found by detectorists) which will be returned to the Museum for display after they have been examined and surveyed by archeologists.



Summary

- 5.13 Whilst the original intended mobilisation phase was to last 3 months (August – November 2023) this has taken slightly longer in being delivered. We are nearing the end of this mobilisation phase now with a target for full mobilisation by January 2024. Although mobilisation is not fully complete the final stages are largely back office requirements and reporting/planning pieces of work. Customer facing elements or ‘business as usual’ items are now all complete – with the exception of leisure facility upgrades, which will form part of the capital works programme currently on target to be delivered in 2024.
- 5.14 A demonstration of Freedom Leisure’s commitment to making improvements where possible in the facilities prior to the capital works can be seen as they have invested approximately £24,000 on building maintenance since 1st August 2023. An element of this was necessary to rectify legacy issues from prior to the start of the new contract.
- 5.15 Plans are now also in place to continue to monitor and review the services on an ongoing basis. Freedom Leisure has also introduced ‘Meet the Manager’ sessions for sites. Feedback from these sessions will be used to inform each Centres planning/improvement actions. The following measures will be implemented in 2024 to assist with this:
- Quest (a nationally recognised Quality Assurance Scheme for the Leisure sector) will be introduced in 2024. This will include ‘Mystery Visits’ and face to face interviews and site management reviews from industry qualified assessors
 - An Net Promoter Score survey (which measures leisure customer experience and loyalty) will be undertaken early in 2024 to ascertain the current performance and to form a benchmark through the rest of the contract
 - Freedom Leisure conducts internal audits from experts within their own estate to continually monitor service performance in fields such as Health & Safety, Technical Operations, Energy Management, etc.
- 5.16 Regular meetings are now being scheduled (Monthly, Quarterly, Annually) between the various stakeholder representatives and the Freedom Leisure teams at the Leisure Centres and the Museum to ensure continued dialogue and monitoring takes place for each of the service areas.
- 5.17 The following are a snapshot of some of the positive steps made since contract award:
- Leisure Management Contract
 - Learn to Swim programme has seen a net gain of 158 new attendees raising the maximum number on scheme to 1,897 children
 - Gym memberships have seen a net gain of 346 raising the current membership level to 3,436 members.
 - Cirencester cafe has re-opened and attained a 5 star hygiene rating

- Culture Management Contract
 - 17% Year on year increase in Museum footfall since August 2023.
 - 59% Year on year increase in school visits since September 2023.
 - Sandford Award for Excellence in Heritage Education attained.

5.18 In financial terms, the start of the mobilisation period has been slightly behind the target set in Freedom Leisure's bid. This has been influenced by a number of factors including:

- Starting numbers were lower than anticipated because of the exit approach from the previous contractor. There is always a risk when an incumbent contractor knows they will not be the future contract provider, that they reduce their proactive efforts to boost memberships and maintain or improve service levels.
- Memberships are close to expectations but there is a slightly lower yield, which causes a small shortfall in the income.

5.19 Freedom Leisure has subsequently reviewed the fees and charges, and membership architecture to bring them in line with the requirements and the restrictions in the contract. A suite of 'Core prices' are listed in the specification which the Council agree with Freedom Leisure, these are linked to the annual CPI change. The specification also contains a requirement for the provision of concessionary prices and benefits which accord with specific user groups. Other prices can be changed at the discretion of Freedom Leisure in the understanding that they will better know the affordability levels for activities, and that it will be in their best interest to keep all activities affordable. If a group of users are identified as being unable to afford the services there is also a step in procedure that the Council can take to negotiate a better outcome with the operator. As an example, countywide discussions are taking place to improve access to leisure by care leavers.

5.20 New pricing has been implemented from January 2024 and a new membership arrangement removed a previous 'privilege' hierarchy that was in place. The new scheme intends that all members will receive the same benefits without an option to pay an enhanced member privilege fee.

5.21 **Key learning points for the Council from the mobilisation phase are:**

- Allow access for the incoming contractor to survey sites as soon as possible after contract award
- Act in a mediation role between operators to ensure that information and technical detail is shared in a useful and constructive process
- Determine the preferred route for legal support and make appointments early in the process
- Set aside sufficient officer time from the associated disciplines within the council (Estates, Finance, Legal, etc.) to allow continued interaction and input during the pre-mobilisation, and mobilisation phases

5.22 Key learning points for Freedom Leisure from the mobilisation phase are:

- **Clear Communication Channels:** Ensure effective communication channels are established from the outset, fostering transparent and regular updates between all involved parties. This can help in addressing concerns promptly and avoiding misunderstandings.
- **Performance Metrics and Monitoring:** Define clear performance metrics and establish a robust monitoring system. This will enable both parties to track progress, identify any deviations from the agreed-upon standards, and take corrective actions as needed.
- **Risk management:** Develop a comprehensive risk management plan, anticipating potential challenges and outlining mitigation strategies. This proactive approach can help in minimising disruptions during the contract mobilisation process.
- **Stakeholder & customer engagement:** Engage relevant stakeholders early in the process to gather input and address concerns. This could involve not only internal departments but also community representatives or other external entities affected by the contract mobilisation.
- **Training and transition support:** Provide adequate training and transition support for staff affected by the contract mobilisation. This includes ensuring that employees are well-equipped to adapt to changes and new processes.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Foster a culture of continuous improvement by regularly reviewing and evaluating the contract mobilisation process. Encourage feedback from all parties involved to identify areas for enhancement and implement necessary adjustments.

5.23 The next stages of the contract development work are highlighted below and these are either currently in progress or will be scheduled over the coming months:

- **Service Delivery** - Officers will work with Freedom Leisure to ensure that all opportunities to maximise the delivery of the services are achieved, that new options are explored, and that the outcomes detailed within the contract are delivered.
- **Partnership forming** - Through the various meetings and group working arrangements being planned and delivered we will ensure that Freedom Leisure are well connected to all relevant stakeholder groups within the District (i.e. Portfolio Holder, Active Cotswold project group, Health & Well-being team, Properties/Estates team etc.)
- **Monitoring** - An initial component for monitoring progress and achievement will be the creation of the portfolio of data/reports/feedback/information that Freedom Leisure is required to provide under the contract. This information will be shared with relevant

departments in the Council and will allow them to track, monitor, challenge, and review the operators outcomes on an ongoing basis.

6. EXTERNAL INVESTMENT & PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- 6.1 The Communities Service area and Active Cotswold Programme Team apply a [Whole Systems Approach](#) and therefore recognises the value of partnership working with other statutory organisations, as well as the rich and valued local voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE) sector. This includes seeking opportunities to pool resources, in particular in times of significant financial pressures, as well as creating time and space to build and nurture strong relationships and infrastructure for partnerships.
- 6.2 It also recognises the importance of the various assets (physical, people and skills) the district has to offer, in particular our local communities and residents. We are therefore focussing on how we can co-produce services, enable, empower and support residents to help themselves. This has in particular been a focus since the COVID19 pandemic where our communities have shown how resilient they are and what they can achieve without any or limited public sector input.
- 6.3 To enable an improved strength-based way of working, the Community Wellbeing team has undergone a significant restructure in 2021 to create more capacity and capability for community based and asset based working, to support county-wide system priorities around prevention and community enablement. In addition to that, we have secured external funding, in particular through the Strengthening Local Communities programme to further enable us to co-produce, develop and deliver community-based interventions, focussing on wellbeing, equity and access to services.
- 6.4 In 2021/22, the Community Wellbeing Team secured £149,000 Strengthening Local Communities Funding from the then Clinical Commissioning Group. The funding, which aims to support asset-based community development and tackle health inequalities was ring-fenced to support the Active Cotswold Programme. How the funding has been utilised to date is set out in the above point 4.2.
- 6.5 The following years, 2022/23 and 2023/24 the team has secured a further £149,000 per year to support the council's work in achieving improved food equality across the district as well as supporting young people and tackling isolation & loneliness. The continued support from health partners is grounded in strong relations which we have built over recent years, trust and the assurance that the council is delivering on the priorities of the Gloucestershire health system and in particular on its role in prevention and community enablement. Further funding for 2024/25 has not yet been announced.
- 6.6 The council's partnership work within the health system also includes an influential role in the Cotswold [Integrated Locality Partnership](#), which is increasingly adopting a strength-based way of working by making use of what is already available and working well in the district, as well as much improved partnership working across the whole system to change local health care provision and preventative initiatives to the better now and in the longer term.



6.7 As set out above, the Community Wellbeing Team at CDC is playing a key role in facilitating partnership work and enabling communities to build capacity and increase resilience. To achieve that, we are working in partnership with a wide range of local and county-wide organisations. Reflecting on our work, it is fair to say that there is hardly anything that we do on our own.

Partners include:

- Town and Parish Councils
 - Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC)
 - Police
 - Community Payback Team
 - Gloucestershire County Council - various different departments
 - Integrated Care Board
 - County-wide and local VCSE (Feeding Gloucestershire, Long Table, Gloucestershire Rural Community Council, Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service, The Churn, Cotswold Friends, Chipping Campden Support Hub, Foodbank, Citizens Advice, Working for Wellbeing Lechlade & Fairford etc.)
 - Youth organisations
 - Other District Councils
 - Housing Associations
 - Schools and other educational institutions such as the Royal Agricultural University and Cirencester College
 - Individuals and businesses
- 6.8 These principles align with Pillar 2 of the Gloucestershire Integrated Care Strategy - 'Transforming what we do'.
- 6.9 This report clearly sets out that the new contract with Freedom Leisure and the Active Cotswold programme are taking a much more holistic and sustainable approach to leisure and wellbeing, by moving away from solely focussing on the leisure facilities and contract management activities. The joint work of the leisure and community wellbeing team, alongside other internal services as well as many external partners, highlights the improved focus on partnership work, a whole systems approach and applying the principles of place based/hyper local engagement, as well as a focus on enabling and motivating local communities. The benefits that this shift has already delivered are demonstrated in the key achievements to date (Annex C) as well as the complex and holistic Active Cotswold programme itself.
- 6.10 This change has been reinforced and strengthened through the recent internal restructure in September 2023, when the leisure service areas was brought into the Communities directorate led by Assistant Director Andy Barge and the creation of the new role of Business Manager - Leisure and Wellbeing.
- 6.11 In 2024, the CDC Community Wellbeing team will work in close partnership with Freedom Leisure to deliver joint community outreach activities in particular in areas with limited access

to leisure facilities and with a focus on getting those that are currently inactive more active in an inclusive and accessible way.

7. AN ENHANCED CONTRACT MONITORING CAPABILITY

- 7.1 To improve effective on the ground contract monitoring capabilities, it is suggested to appoint a part-time contract monitoring officer in spring 2024 (1 day per week on each Council area). It is further proposed that selected Public/Council staff who are existing members of the leisure facilities perform 'mystery shopper' type activity in return for a subsidised monthly membership fee. In addition, the Community Wellbeing Team will be undertaking site visits too. All site visits will be supported by a digital, easy to use feedback system. We are confident that these changes would improve all aspects of the contract and customer experience by creating a timely and effective feedback loop resulting in less complaints being raised. This will be funded from the existing budget.
- 7.2 Contract management for the cultural contract has been light touch in recent years and needs more attention going forward to maximise potential. Therefore, the contract management responsibility will be taken on by the Tourism Team as this provides a much better fit with the remit of the team, their expertise, skills and relations. The handover is planned for Q4 of 2023/24, with a start date for the new arrangements of 1st April 2024.

8. PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

- 8.1 One of the actions that emerged from the Active Cotswold Connected Communities theme was the refresh of a districtwide Playing Pitch Strategy, which was last completed in 2017.
- 8.2 In November 2023, the Playing Pitch Strategy was adopted and authority granted to officers to work in partnership with other organisations to establish the feasibility and funding sources for the projects identified within the strategy and to prepare business cases, where opportunities arise, and bring them forward for consideration - [Cabinet Report from Cabinet meeting held on Monday, 2 November 2023](#).

9. 'CREATIVE COTSWOLD' - AN EMERGING CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR THE COTSWOLD DISTRICT

- 9.1 The council is coordinating and facilitating the co-production of a district-wide cultural strategy, which is planned to go live in spring/summer 2024 - Figure 3 on the next page shows a summary of the draft strategy.
- 9.2 The strategy aims:
- To celebrate the amazing and nationally and internationally renowned cultural and creative offerings in the Cotswold District.
 - To provide leadership and facilitation to join up the varied and geographically disparate initiatives, organisations, people and events.

- To better promote the culture available to Cotswold residents, tourists and to people across the UK and the World to stimulate the local economy.
- To promote easy access to cultural events for all and to reach out to people who would not normally find them relevant, appealing or affordable.
- To promote mental wellbeing via access to culture and the arts in the Cotswolds.
- To find and launch a permanent art gallery in the Cotswold district to showcase Cotswold artists and art depicting the area.

9.3 The cultural strategy will further complement the council's work on health and wellbeing, tourism and the economy to improve resident's quality of life.



Figure 3: Summary of draft Culture Strategy.

10. CONCLUSIONS

- 10.1 This report highlights the Council's proactive shift from mainly managing a leisure facilities contract to a much more holistic approach to leisure and wellbeing through the procurement and mobilisation of an outcomes focussed new contract, which is supported by a complex and holistic programme of work (Active Cotswold).
- 10.2 Both, the Council and Freedom Leisure are united in their purpose of improving people's quality of life through leisure, culture and wellbeing and will strengthen their partnership to not just develop the leisure centres into wellbeing hubs, but to also reach out to those communities that have limited access to leisure facilities and other barriers to becoming more active and /or connecting with others.
- 10.3 The Council recognises its role in supporting health partners to help people live healthier lives through its range of services – across housing, planning, economic development, welfare, leisure and environmental health. These influence some of the most significant determinants of health. The Council takes this role very seriously and works provocatively with partners and local communities by taking a place-based and strengths-based approach for increased sustainability in times of significant financial pressures.
- 10.4 The report showcases the dedication and great work of Council staff, Freedom Leisure as well as our partners and local communities to improve health and wellbeing and connectedness across the district. Some key learning points have been taken from the contract mobilisation phase, which will help improve future service delivery. It is clear that our leisure facilities and the services we deliver in partnership will see significant improvements over the coming months and years, from which residents will benefit within and outside the leisure facilities. These benefits will be delivered through:
- an improved facilities and leisure offer at the centres
 - improved relationships and contract monitoring strategies & capabilities
 - an increased accessible and inclusive outreach programme and
 - a more joined up, visible and accessible culture offer
 - a continued success in securing external funding, based on our position as a valued and trusted system partner, who delivers long-term, sustainable outcomes for our communities.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any activities under the Active Cotswold programme that require additional financial resources will be funded from external sources as set out in section 6.

- 11.2 The combined impact of the Leisure and Cultural Contract awards, when averaged over the contract term, is a net positive position which overall results in payments being made to the Council from the delivery of the services through Freedom Leisure.

12. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

13. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 13.1 The Active Cotswold Programme is reliant on the workstream areas/ themes being adequately resourced. If resources aren't available the benefits of the programme won't be realised. At present there is no identified workstream lead for 'Active Environment', which has impacted the progress and delivery of this theme.
- 13.2 A large proportion of the projects within the Active Cotswold programme are dependent on external funding to guarantee their sustainability. In order to ensure projects continue beyond their proposed lifespan, officers ensure a good level of community engagement is present through the development and delivery of schemes, with the hope that the community will take them on once established.
- 13.3 As with any programme a risk register exists for the Active Cotswold programme, to identify and mitigate any risks that may arise during the course of the programme.
- 13.4 There is a risk that Freedom Leisure fails to achieve the level of surplus/deficit predicted in their tender returns or fails to meet their contractual obligations. In mitigation to this, the contracts were signed under seal which will commit Freedom Leisure to the financial terms and conditions of their tender regardless of the marketplace fluctuations. The residual risk in these circumstances will therefore be mitigated by the ability to hold Freedom Leisure to deliver the full life of the 10 year contract.
- 13.5 During contract mobilisation a risk register was developed to cover all areas of the transition to Freedom Leisure. Examples are included in Table 1 overleaf.

Table 1: Contract Mobilisation Risk Register examples.

Risk	Control
Lack of communication between Operator and Council	Early contact made between mobilisation/demobilisation teams. Responsible people identified and initial meetings planned
Delays in Capital developments	Separate project plan and risk matrix to be completed by FL. Project Board to be



	established with CDC involvement
Contract documentation is not ready to be signed in time (1st August)	Issues meetings to be held early/ T&H to support on legal engrossments. Contract signing event to be scheduled

14. EQUALITIES IMPACT

14.1 Under equality legislation, the Council has a legal duty to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in relation to:

- Race
- Disability
- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief

14.2 The Council also has a duty to foster good relations, and to consider the impact of its decisions on human rights. The law requires that this duty to pay 'due regard' is demonstrated in the decision making process. Therefore your report should contain a statement as to whether the recommendation has a particular impact on any of the above groups

14.3 As this report does not relate to new policies, procedures or services; or changes to existing policies, procedures or services an equalities impact assessment (EIA) is not required.

15. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

15.1 During the leisure contract mobilisation period officers were able to complete a bid for the Government's Swimming Pool Support Fund (SPSF) with the support of Freedom Leisure's facilities management and the climate teams. The bid is for approximately £280,000 capital and we will be notified by Sport England, who are administering the scheme, if we are successful at the end of January 2024. The funding provides a support package for public leisure facilities with swimming pools and reflects the cost pressures these facilities face and the need to improve their energy efficiency. The timeframe for this grant scheme was a significant challenge and good partnership working was demonstrated to meet the deadline.

15.2 In March 2021, prior to the contract procurement project, the Council gave approval for projects to take place at Cirencester Leisure Centre and Bourton Leisure Centre with the aim of reducing the carbon production associated with the energy use at the Centres. This followed a successful grant application from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS). Initial plans had to be scaled back at Cirencester Leisure Centre to fit within the available



project fund, but it was identified that further solar panels could be fitted to the building which would help to offset the financial impact of the carbon reduction works. As part of the SPSF bid further solar panels have been applied for, and if this bid is unsuccessful the Council and Freedom Leisure will continue to investigate funding sources in an effort to install the additional solar panels.

- 15.3 The cabinet report for the original PSDS project can be found here [PSDS Cabinet Report, 1st March 2021](#)

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 Any relevant background papers have been referenced in the report.

(END)

This page is intentionally left blank



Cotswold Leisure Strategy

Summary

February 2021



CONTENTS

I.	3
1.	4
2.	5
3.	10
4.	15

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- II. Cotswold District Council (CDC) is committed to helping residents to access the support they need to ensure a high level of health and wellbeing.
- III. The Council identified the requirement to develop a Leisure Strategy (supporting the Cotswold Local Plan 2011-2031) which incorporates both service interventions and built facilities, based on a cross sectional perspective and local strategic outcomes.
- IV. These outcomes were determined by using appropriate information sources and following the Sport England Strategic Outcomes Planning Model to develop a clear strategic approach to providing effective and sustainable physical activity and sport opportunities for local communities.
- V. It is worth noting that this strategy work commenced before and during the COVID-19 pandemic which has had a huge impact on all aspects of UK life and economy, including the unprecedented closure of leisure centres and health clubs across the country. The next stage is after lockdown 3 when centres and clubs reopen in the new 'normal' adjusting to people's consumer confidence, change in behaviour, new habits and attitude to sport and physical activity post lockdown. We don't necessarily know yet what the effect on leisure services will be under this new 'normal', but it is clear that going forward the benefits of being physically active will need to be aligned with local priorities to show how physical activity can be a really effective means of helping the recovery.
- VI. The strategic priorities of this Leisure Strategy should be reviewed annually in context of COVID-19 implications to ensure priority themes remain relevant.
- VII. The Strategic Outcomes Planning Model is based on Sport England guidance as set out below. The guidance is structured around 4 stages:

Stage 1 – Outcomes – Developing shared local outcomes for your place;

Stage 2 – Insight – Understand your community and your place;

Stage 3 – Interventions – Identify how the outcomes can be delivered sustainably;

Stage 4 – Commitment – Secure investment and commitment to outcome delivery.



1. Stage 1 – Outcomes

Key Stakeholders Consultation

Cotswold District Council identified key stakeholders they considered important to work together with to fully develop shared local outcomes for the area, that sport and physical activity can impact. An initial stakeholder workshop took place in March 2020 with further stakeholder calls June-July 2020.

Common themes from the stakeholder consultations were:

Healthier & Greener District Enhance Physical & Mental Wellbeing Create Connected Communities Encourage Active Travel

The outcomes that sport and physical activity can impact have been split across three core themes which emerged from reviewing strategies and the stakeholder consultation.





2. Stage 2 - Insight

Community Consultation

The objective of the wider public consultation was to find out **who** is currently using the community facilities, the **barriers they face** and **what facilities or improvements** should be included to **encourage residents** to be more physically active.

The findings from this community consultation along with the feedback from local sports clubs and the data available from public health collectively informed the local need for facility and service interventions relating to sport and physical activity. The consultation comprised of an online community survey and in depth focus groups.

What did the community consultation tell us?

1,066 people responded to the online survey in June-July 2020 which included questions on active travel and physical activity habits in relation to lockdown. Some interesting feedback revealed that the main barrier to participation is down to not having enough time but improved and clean facilities would encourage people to be more physically active.

Community Online Survey	
Barriers to Participation	Encouragement Factors
Not enough time (work) (39%)	Improved facilities (70%)
Not enough time (home) (9%)	Cleanliness of facilities (71%)
No convenient and accessible facilities (9%)	Ability to maintain social distancing (69%)
No motivation (9%)	Better range of facilities or equipment (67%)
Not enough time (childcare) (8%)	Better programming e.g. classes (62%)
Costs Involved (7%)	Lower costs/prices



The majority of people (51%) travelled to their main exercise location by car due to ease of use. Followed by walking (23%). Just over half (53%) of the sample stated they travelled 10 or less minutes to their main place of activity.



Dedicated cycle lanes was the number one factor (79%) that would encourage people to use their bike more, followed by having **separation from traffic** for reasons of air quality (59%)

Better footpaths (68%) would encourage people to walk more followed by **improved lighting** (48%)

The fact that 78% of respondents said they would like to do more physical activity and 98% think regular exercise is important or very important is encouraging.

Community Online Survey

Key Findings

18% did no/minimal physical activity at all in a typical 4-week period (prior to lockdown)

78% said they would like to do more physical activity (compared to national benchmark 51%)

53% would like to do more exercise to help maintain / improve their physical health

98% think regular exercise/activity was important or very important

Perceived lack of time, especially related to work commitments, is the number one reason that people state for not being more active. One of the ways this could be addressed is by building physical activity opportunities into the community's everyday routine of work, home, shopping and other daily trips.

Many leisure facility users are keen to return when lockdown eases, older age groups and women are the most concerned about the safety implications of revisiting leisure centres, these should be addressed in an empathetic and targeted way.

What did the focus groups tell us?

The focus groups took place between December 2020 - January 2021 and provided more in depth consultation from Tetbury residents, Fairford residents, young people and families.

Similarly to the online survey not enough time was cited as a barrier to being physically active aswell as lack of nearby facilities. Encouragement factors included improved facilities, better access to open spaces e.g. footpaths and cheaper activities suitable particularly for elderly and young people.

Focus Group Findings	
Barriers to Participation	Encouragement Factors
Not enough time	Improved facilities
Lack of facilities nearby / facility closure	Better and more local facilities / activities
Seasonal factors (dark evenings making it difficult to walk/cycle outdoors, lack of lighting)	Changes and improvements to local paths, roads and open spaces
Cost	Lower costs
Limited opportunities in area to be active particularly elderly / young people	Better programming for elderly and for younger age group e.g. children who are not interested in traditional sport

Both Tetford and Fairford focus groups were very engaged and interested in providing comments and feedback on leisure provision in their respective areas. There is scope and contacts in place to keep this rapport and engagement going forward.

“Outdoor independent activity needs to be promoted – lots of good footpaths in the area”

“I would prefer to use a more modern and accessible facility”

“I think start-ups and volunteers should be encouraged, and where possible provide premises where volunteer activity can flourish, given some encouragement and initial funding”

“Make it cheaper and more welcoming for all abilities”

What are the deductions and considerations from Stage 2?

Health

Cotswold district has good health indicators overall with higher life expectancy and low levels of deprivation. However, still **16.2% of Cotswold adults and 45.2% of children are not meeting the national guidelines for physical activity** and **23% of adults and 14.4% of year 6 children are obese**. Being physically active will benefit those who have excess weight and signposting with partners to encourage healthy eating would also be beneficial.

Catchment Area

A 20-minute drive time catchment area from the three main leisure centres **does not cover** the whole Cotswold area but **does cover** the whole district when all leisure provision including community spaces is assessed. This emphasises the importance of the community spaces in overall leisure provision for the district.

Future Opportunities

- Focus further on the over 65-year olds, as this population has the largest predicted increase in age groups with 70-74 years the most prevalent age group in Cotswolds by 2040. It is also important to provide the right leisure activities and provision across all age groups to ensure a younger demographic remains or is attracted to work and live in the area.
- Focus on the people within the '**Rural Reality**' and '**Vintage Value**' mosaic groups, as these people will benefit most from increased levels of sport and physical activity and were shown to be under-represented in using leisure centres.
- With '**Rural Reality**' there is potential to provide activity within the community or at community centres.
- For '**Vintage Values**' consider specific programmes for this group to improve their representation. Vintage Values mainly live in towns, option of walk to park, gardening activities, tai chi, yoga, 60+ swimming, older people networks etc.
- As shown in the consultation work common themes to encourage people to be more physically active are;
 - better programming for all ages and fitness abilities;
 - staff to be welcoming and receptive to all ages, referrals and fitness abilities;
 - cleanliness of facilities;
 - lower costs / prices; and,
 - accessible, well maintained and signposted footpaths and cycle routes

Following the insight gathered in this section combined with the outcomes identified from the stakeholder workshops these have been expanded in the tables below which set out where Cotswold is now and the future direction of travel.

Healthier District

Outcome

- Promote mental and physical health equally by increasing participation in sport and physical activity for all
- Support the 'we can move' campaign aiming to get more people enjoying an active life and where it's normal and easy to be active
- Aim to help 30,000 people become active, to make physical activity the norm across Gloucestershire
- Promote healthy lifestyles and self-care across all ages
- Reduce health inequalities

Where we are now

- 16.2% of adults are inactive
- 73.6% active
- 10.3% fairly active (SE Active Lives Survey)
- 17.9% children less active
- 54.8% children active everyday
- 24.2% children are fairly active
- 23% of adults are obese in Cotswold compared to England 24.1%
- Life expectancy is 2.7 years lower for men and -0.1 years higher for women in the most deprived areas of Cotswold than in least deprived
- In Year 6, 14.4% (118) of children are classified as obese, better than the average for England
- Less than three quarters (69.2%) of children in Gloucestershire have achieved a good level of development by the end of reception. This is worse than the national average.
- Less than half (48.9%) of children who receive free school meals achieve this standard locally.
- 16% of people in Cotswold have a limiting long-term illness
- Estimated diabetes diagnosis rate is worse (67.4%) than (England 78%)
- Estimated dementia diagnosis rate is worse (58.5%) than (England 68.7%)
- The national mental wellbeing survey measures people's outlook on life satisfaction, feeling worthwhile, happy and anxious. For Gloucestershire, approximately one in five people have high self-reported anxiety scores

Where do we want to be?

- Achieving permanent behaviour changes through increasing opportunities for residents to build physical activity into their everyday lives
- Facilitating the enhancement of referrals into physical activity and fitness based programmes
- Increasing emphasis and resources into targeted outreach services for those with long term health conditions

Connected Community

Outcome

- Encourage well-connected, resilient and active communities to help improve social isolation and anti-social behaviour
- Improved and equal access to quality services
- Create more healthy, sustainable, mixed communities
- Improve digital inclusion
- Enable local people to build and nurture strong social networks and vibrant communities
- Ensure that the physical activity offer has a place-based approach and is right for each local community
- Reduce the life expectancy discrepancy for the most deprived Cotswold wards

Where we are now

- Risk of loneliness (65+ years) in parts of the Cotswolds are among the highest in the country. There is a clear link between loneliness and poor mental and physical health
- The Community Wellbeing Survey carried out in July 2017 reported '38% of all respondents feel lonely at times, and loneliness is highest in those with a mental health issue, a long term illness and/or a learning disability. Those with a car as their main form of transport considered themselves less lonely'.

Where do we want to be?

- Using an asset-based community development approach which is increasing participation in physical activity through the development of accessible and suitable opportunities in the community by the community
- Maximising opportunities with local groups and stakeholders, developing new sustainable local community programmes encouraging people to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle, particularly in rural isolated communities
- Identifying resources and support in local communities developing local solutions which address barriers to physical activity
- Working in partnership with the Council's leisure contractor raising customer satisfaction, maximising accessibility and ensuring delivery of a positive customer experience
- Utilising the power of physical activity which is improving community cohesion and tackling local issues
- 'Crowdfund Cotswold' is leveraging investment from residents and businesses delivering sustainable local projects aiming to reduce inactivity

Active Environment

Outcome

- Enable residents to live healthy lives through Active Places and Active Travel
- Encourage Active Travel through cycling and walking
- Encourage Active Travel to help increase physical activity and reduce carbon footprint
- Housing and the built environment to enable our residents to live healthy lives
- Support health and well-being projects that are focused on outdoor recreation and activities

Where we are now

- 13% of households have no car in Cotswold (26% across England)
- 17 of the District's wards are ranked in the bottom 25% for public transport in Gloucestershire
- 34% of the District's wards have poor access thresholds to fitness facilities and GPs, if traveling by bus or foot
- Cotswold Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) issues and priorities included shortfalls for both rugby union and 3G pitches for football use.
- There are 32 registered historic parks and gardens in Cotswold District;
- There are established park runs in Cirencester, Tetbury and at Fire Station College Moreton in Marsh
- Cotswold District is in an area of ANOB with wide access to national walk and cycle ways
- In the online public consultation respondents used the following transport to visit leisure centres;
 - 51% small / medium car
 - 23% walking
 - 14% large car
 - 8% cycling
 - 1% public transport
- 46% stated that they would definitely like to cycle/run/walk to their location if it was easier

Where do we want to be?

- Working in partnership with local groups and stakeholders providing, improving and promoting sustainable transport options, including walking and cycling
- Facilitating partnership work promoting the benefits of active travel encouraging people to engage in active travel (to leisure centres, work, volunteering, villages and town centres)
- Protecting access to open spaces



3. Stage 3 – Interventions

Facility and Service Intervention Recommendations

Following the Sport England strategic outcomes planning guidance; information, comments and evidence from stakeholders workshops, public consultation, local insight and the Indoor Built Facility Strategy has been analysed to inform relevant facility and service interventions.

The interventions align with the new **Sport England 'Uniting the Movement' Strategy 2021-2031** and three of the strategies 'five big issue' themes; Connecting with Health & Wellbeing, Connecting Communities and Active Environments.

The following facility and service interventions are recommended for future leisure provision aimed at increasing physical activity to meet wider strategic outcomes across Cotswold District. This will help enable the Council to focus activity and resources in the areas of greatest need.

Healthier District

Within the new Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 the 'Health and Wellbeing' priority aims to **'Promote healthy lifestyles, fun and self-care for all ages.'** Access to good quality leisure

provision and opportunities to be physically active plays a part in this aim to help reduce health inequalities and encourage people to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Connected Communities

Healthier District

Where do we want to be?

- Achieving permanent behaviour changes through increasing opportunities for residents to build physical activity into their everyday lives
- Facilitating the enhancement of referrals into physical activity and fitness based programmes
- Increasing emphasis and resources into targeted outreach services for those with long term health conditions

Facility Interventions

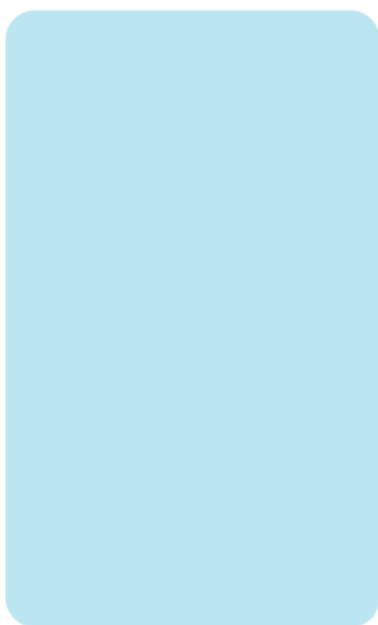
- Provide equipment for all ages: Cotswold has an ageing population which is under-represented in leisure centres - offer toning tables and assisted gym equipment also suitable for post op recovery
- Ensure places for physical activity are clean and inviting
- Facilities to consider social distancing measures if required
- Provide good disability access
- CDC to work with funding and delivery partners, to identify short and medium to longer term investment opportunities for the refurbishment of Cotswold Leisure Cirencester Sports Hall
- Protect all indoor sports facilities within the new local plan

Service Interventions

- Staff training: ensure staff provide an inclusive, encouraging experience for everyone e.g. GP referrals, all ages and fitness levels. Recognise when people with more challenging health needs may require extra support or new and different ways to take part.
- Programming: provide suitable activities for all e.g. gentle exercise classes for older residents, women only sessions and activities for young people not keen on traditional sport
- Make it fun: encourage providers of physical activity to promote fun and enjoyment, helping people build it into their everyday lives
- Be flexible in messaging: different people may need different advice about adapting their activity e.g. people living with long term health conditions

Healthier District

Where do we want to be?



Facility Interventions

- CDC and partners to plan now for the refurbishment of its existing swimming pool facilities at all three key Council owned sites
- Cotswolds Leisure Centre, Cirencester swimming pool will be close to its comfort factor by 2030. A feasibility study should be undertaken to identify if moveable floors can be installed to assist in the provision of an improved varied programme that could meet future increased usage
- Retain existing levels of community accessible and affordable fitness suite provision
- CDC should consider entering into discussions with Cotswold Gymnastics Club with a view to assisting the club in finding its own premises

Service Interventions

- Put even stronger spotlight on safeguarding, so children and young people feel and are safe when being active, and parents are confident it's a safe choice with the welfare of their children paramount
- Improving physical literacy, so residents have a great experience which builds their understanding and knowledge of how to be active, their confidence and competence, but above all their enjoyment
- Embrace technology and the digital world so being active is easier, more attractive and more relevant to the digitally savvy, while being mindful of potential negatives

A priority in the Corporate Strategy is to **'encourage resilient, well-connected and active communities that take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing goals.'**

The pandemic has highlighted the value of voluntary and community connections, and the trust they have with people within their community - often the most vulnerable and inactive. Continuing to invest in asset-based/place-based community development working together with local clubs, networks and volunteers will help provide physical activity opportunities for local residents and a sense of community.

Connected Community

Where do we want to be?

- Using an asset-based community development approach which is increasing participation in physical activity through the development of accessible and suitable opportunities in the community by the community
- Maximising opportunities with local groups and stakeholders, developing new sustainable local community programmes encouraging people to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle, particularly in rurally isolated communities
- Identifying resources and support in local communities developing local solutions which address barriers to physical activity

Facility Interventions

- Ensure community space facilities providing sport and physical activity are protected and maintained to continue with activities they provide
- Identified need for informal community space / centres to provide sports and physical activity, particularly in the rural areas of the District
- CDC to work in partnership with schools where sports facilities are provided for community or club use. There is a requirement for formal community use agreements to be in place at existing sites or future school development sites
- Consider consultation with England Indoor Bowls Association and local bowls clubs on provision of increased indoor bowls rink provision at Fairford Bowls Club

Service Interventions

- Connect people with physical activity: ensure physical activity opportunities are available and promoted for all ages
- Connect with a new generation of community leaders and volunteers to help communities become and stay active
- Support local organisations to think of ways they can use physical activity to address local challenges
- Use local messaging as most effective when delivered by 'people like me' and locally trusted organisations
- Outreach work: leisure providers to consider bigger role in the community to provide support, deliver activities and help develop local initiatives

Connected Community

Where do we want to be?

- Utilising the power of physical activity which is improving community cohesion and tackling local issues
- Working in partnership with the Council's leisure contractor raising customer satisfaction, maximising accessibility and ensuring delivery of a positive customer experience
- 'Crowdfund Cotswold' is leveraging investment from residents and businesses delivering sustainable local projects aiming to reduce inactivity

Facility Interventions

- Consider existing community facilities that could be upgraded or improved through developer contributions for new housing
- Fairford has community space but consultation identified the need for a community gym fitness facility to replace the one at Farmor's school.
- Tetbury Community focus group identified similar issues with the need for more community space and or improved partnership to open up planned community space for physical activity use. Tetbury rugby clubhouse has offered potential space
- Retain the existing levels of community accessible (including pay and play) sports hall, swimming pool and fitness provision in the District

Service Interventions

- Provide activity within the community at community centres or spaces for the 'Rural Reality' group
- Investing in the people and capacity of community organisations such as clubs and charities, who know their area and its needs best

Active Environment

The environment around us is one of the most important factors in enabling people to be active in their everyday life. The places we live, work and visit often act as a daily barrier to people

taking part in physical activity and sport, whether that be due to safety, accessibility, awareness or the practicalities of using spaces in the built and natural environment.

During the pandemic, many people in the district have been using local open spaces and parks to keep active. These green spaces are important to the collective recovery from Covid-19 and to create active environments where physical activity and active travel is an easy choice.

Active Environment

Where do we want to be?

- Working in partnership with local groups and stakeholders providing, improving and promoting sustainable transport options, including walking and cycling
- Facilitating partnership work promoting the benefits of active travel encouraging people to engage in active travel (to leisure centres, work, volunteering, villages and town centres)
- Protecting access to open spaces

Facility Interventions

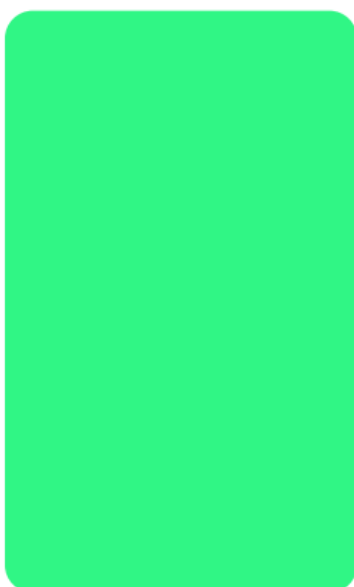
- Provide better connected footpaths and cycle routes that are clearly sign-posted and promote these routes
- Increase number of easily accessible footpaths for walkers, pushchair and wheelchair users
- Ensure well lit and maintained footpaths and cycle lanes
- Provide dedicated cycle lanes
- Offer secure bike parking and electric charge points at leisure centres
- Introduce measures that encourage safe cycling, scooting and walking in parks and gardens. This could be widening paths or segregation from pedestrians

Service Interventions

- Provide outdoor organised walks starting from the leisure centres / community halls
- Think creatively about the messaging, graphics and instructions in parks and open spaces, make them physically active friendly (such as hide and seek, frisbee)
- Encourage local community groups to take ownership of their green spaces, footpaths and cycle routes to keep them litter free, welcoming and attract resources for improved/new assets and activities

Active Environment

Where do we want to be?



Facility Interventions

- Create and protect quality and safe places and spaces for children to play and enjoy being active outdoors
- Where appropriate, CDC and its partners seek to secure developer contributions from strategic developments that could contribute towards additional safe walking, running and cycling routes, and where possible to open up other informal, multipurpose places and spaces where people can be active
- CDC should develop a detailed approach to securing developer contributions to support the emerging local plan e.g. through a Planning Obligations SPD

Service Interventions

- Help create more choice and better access to inclusive opportunities to get active in the community



4. Stage 4 - Commitment

Management Options Appraisal

A further piece of work to inform management options at the end of the existing contract term will be undertaken in 2021. This management options appraisal will explore various types of delivery model, contract scope, contract term etc. for Cotswold District Council's leisure facilities.

The purpose of the management options appraisal is to help to determine what the most suitable management option is to achieve financial sustainability in the short to medium term, and consequently what form of leisure contract should be established when the current leisure contract expires.

Delivery Models

A review of the existing leisure contract will take place in 2021

A working group is to be established May – June 2021

Management Options Appraisal work is to be carried out July – September 2021

Various types of delivery model will be explored for Cotswold District Council's leisure facilities including, but not limited to;

- Continue with the existing Contractor through Contract variation/extension;
- Change the operation to in-house service provision;
- Re-tender the operation to appoint another, or the same contractor under different contract terms;
- Operate through a self-supported local trust; and,
- Modify the contract scope to support more than one of the various options available

The leisure contract review will include future facility requirements such as the potential refurbishment of Cotswold Leisure, Cirencester.

The commitment section is to be completed following executive sign off and budgets to proceed are agreed.

Disclaimer

Although the information in this report has been prepared in good faith, with the best intentions, on the basis of professional research and information made available to us at the time of the study, it is not possible to guarantee the financial estimates or forecasts contained within this report.

Max Associates cannot be held liable to any party for any direct or indirect losses, financial or otherwise, associated with any information provided within this report. We have relied in a number of areas on information provided by the client and have not undertaken additional independent verification of this data.

Active Cotswold - Programme Organisation

Portfolio Board

Programme Board

Thematic leads and business change managers

Project Team A Project Team B Project Team C

- Portfolio Lead -

Programme Sponsor -

Programme Manager -

CDC Exec Lead -

Senior Supplier - Healthier District & Connected Community

Senior Supplier - Active Environment -

Senior User / Workstream lead - Healthy District -

Senior User / Workstream lead - Connected Community -

Senior User / workstream lead - Active Environment -

Programme Assurance -
- Cllr Paul Hodgkinson

Andy Barge

Mark Stedman

Angela Claridge

Jacqui Wright

Claire Locke

Rachel Biles

Clare Jobling

vacant

Lucy Cater
- Senior User / Workstream lead - Healthy District -

Senior User / Workstream lead - Connected Community -

Senior User / workstream lead - Active Environment -
- Rachel Biles

Clare Jobling

vacant
- Project Manager , Leisure, Environment, Tourism, Local Plan, Estates, Communities,

Communications, Finance, Customer Services, HR, ICT

This page is intentionally left blank

ANNEX C

Active Cotswold -Key Achievements (January 2024)

Workstream 1- Healthier District
<p>1. Development and adoption of a district wide Playing Pitch Strategy and action plan. The strategy identifies the current and future demand for playing pitches (Football, Rugby Union, Cricket, Hockey and Polo) across the District.</p>
<p>2. In September 2022, the Council recruited a Community Support Officer - Physical Activity through external funding (Strengthening Local Communities Grant) to support the Active Cotswold programme. This enabled the delivery of a range of new initiatives based on the feedback that was received and is being received through continuous community engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Fit Kits (made available for free to community groups, housing associations etc.) • New Outdoor Movement Class in Fairford (potential to roll out to other areas) • Chair exercise sessions in partnership with Cirencester College • Active Cotswold Live Event on 1st October in Cirencester with Mr Motivator • Mr Motivator Motivation Club district subscription, which enables free access for people on low income, with long term health conditions including mental health problems as well as for exercise referral participants. • Walking for Wellbeing Scheme (free training for volunteers to become walk leaders)
<p>3. All activities undertaken by the programme are aiming to reduce inequalities by making activities available, accessible and affordable by all. At the same time, a non-stigmatising approach is applied.</p> <p>Examples of specific activities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 targeted community events in areas of higher deprivation in 2023 • working with Bromford and Foodbanks to make physical activity opportunities accessible to disadvantaged groups (e.g., Fit Kits, promoting existing low/no cost activities, engage with cohort to better understand what is wanted, free access to Mr Motivator online classes)
<p>4. Crowdfund Cotswold supported 14 projects so far that are contributing to helping residents to become more active, with a collective value of £366,810, towards which the council contributed £81,554.</p>

Workstream 2 - Connected Community
<p>5. We have been working with Cotswold Lakes Trust on their Enjoy and Respect campaign, aiming to raise awareness of the environmental impacts anti-social behaviour can have on this natural area of beauty. It is so important to protect natural areas of beauty so that people are encouraged to come out and enjoy them as well as preserving them for future generations. Read more.</p>
<p>6. Fitness equipment replacement and refurbishment at Cirencester and Bourton Leisure Centre.</p>
<p>7. Capital programme of works to support the implementation of the new Leisure Management Contract, which include improvements to Cirencester and Bourton Leisure Centres.</p>
<p>8. Leisure Contract Procurement complete - the new contract with Freedom Leisure commenced in August 2023, contract service specification aligns to the outcomes of Active Cotswold.</p>
<p>9. Established Cotswold Food Network and activities/projects of the network so far include cost of living community events, strategic work with advice and support agencies around financial inclusion/debt advice, grow your own scheme and courses for the community, setting up food projects e/g. pantries. To support the networks' aim of improving food equity across the Cotswold district, a Community Support Officer – Food Sustainability has been recruited in December 2023 (part-time, fixed term until November 2026). This post is funded through the 'Strengthening Local Communities Grant'.</p>
<p>10. Supported/established Bourton and Tetbury Digital Inclusion courses for residents</p>
<p>11. Held a number of local community engagement events to enable community-led action</p>
<p>12. The Community Wellbeing Team focuses on enabling enhanced, inclusive and sustainable community based physical activity opportunities. To better understand barriers to physical activity and what people would like to engage in, the team has undertaken extensive door knocking and engagement sessions with existing groups in key areas across the district as well as an online survey.</p> <p>Targeted engagement with local communities is an ongoing activity. 16 engagement visits carried out plus 3 NHS Bus engagements.</p> <p>Groups visited-</p> <p>Tetbury Friendship café, The Churn Memory Café Cirencester, Stow Dementia café, W4W Fairford and Lechlade, The Barton Club Cirencester, Parkinsons UK Cirencester, The Churn Job Club Morton in Marsh, Monday Club Tetbury.</p>

Also visited-

Bromford Housing at Chesterton, Southmede, The Beeches, South Cerney, Moreton In Marsh, Bourton on the Water, Lechlade.

NHS Bus with Strong & Steady in Cirencester and Glos Carers Hub in Lechlade and Fairford.

Other engagements with organisations-

Talked to GRCC Social Prescribers and at Know Your Patch Meeting. Partnered with Cirencester College to run a Dementia Chair exercise class. Trained 8 Walk leaders from different organisations to lead Wellbeing Walks. Active Cotswold LIVE event reached over 100 people.

Workstream 3 - Active Environment

13. To encourage Active Travel in and around the Cotswold Water Park we have produced a video showing a snapshot of what it is like to cycle one of the 6 circular cycle routes in the Water Park. [Watch the video](#).

14. New cycle park installations - 19 new cycle stands have now been installed as part of round 1 of provision. Locations are at the Memorial Hall in Lechlade; Hilary Cottage Surgery & the Football Club in Fairford; the One Stop Shop, Village Hall and Upper Up Playing Field in South Cerney.

15. Walking and cycling improvements have been made around Cotswold Water Park ensuring it is sustainable and more accessible for everyone. New cycle parking has been installed at 6 locations in the Water Park. There is also a new section of cycle path linking NCN45 (Railway Path) with Cerney Wick bridge to make cycling and walking more accessible. New wayfinding boards have also been installed in 5 of the key destinations to guide visitors to new and interesting places. [Read more](#)

16. Development of Sustainable Transport Strategy

17. Development of Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan

18. Development of Transport decarbonisation study

This page is intentionally left blank



Business Plan 24/25

Business Plan Governance



- Approval of Ubico's Business Plan is a reserved matter for our eight shareholders
- Approval of the Business Plan by shareholders demonstrates control over Ubico as part of retaining our Teckal exemption
- All shareholders have an equal vote
- Majority decision, but consensus is sought among all shareholders

Business Plan Timeline

Page 61

June – November

- Develop proposed business plan themes, including board strategy evaluation

December - January

- Shareholder engagement

February

- Final draft shared with shareholder representatives and Ubico's board for final comment

March-April

- Formal Shareholder approval sought via written resolution



Evaluation



Ubico's board routinely evaluate validity of our 5-year vision and plan

- They evaluate:
 - Key risks
 - Opportunities

Outcome:

- Pillars are sound
- Right plan
- Evaluate value proposition
- Focus on People pillar
- Drive value

Vision and Pillars

Page 63



Our Five-Year Vision

Recognised by our customers and employees as a quality provider of sustainable services for our local communities, delivering best value and reliability

People



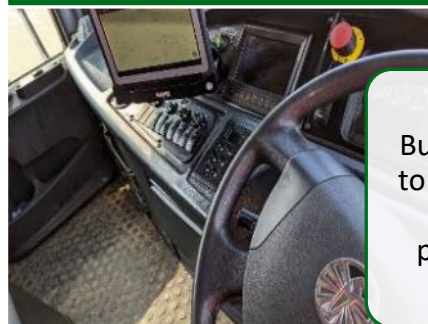
Engaged colleagues in the right roles with the right skills

Operational Excellence



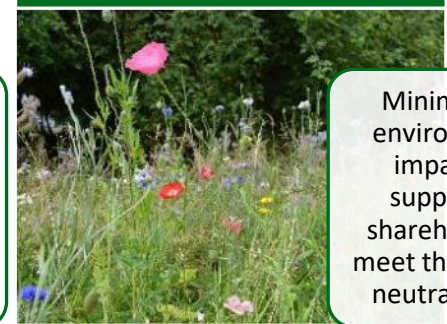
Deliver quality, add value, maintain high standards

Business Development



Build capability to deliver value to our partnerships

Climate



Minimise our environmental impact and support our shareholders to meet their carbon neutral targets





Attract, Retain, Recognise

- Complete terms and conditions review and deliver agreed changes
- Promote the company to attract strong candidates
- Broaden recruitment routes for new employees, providing local employment opportunities
- Investment in, and in-housing of, HR leadership team



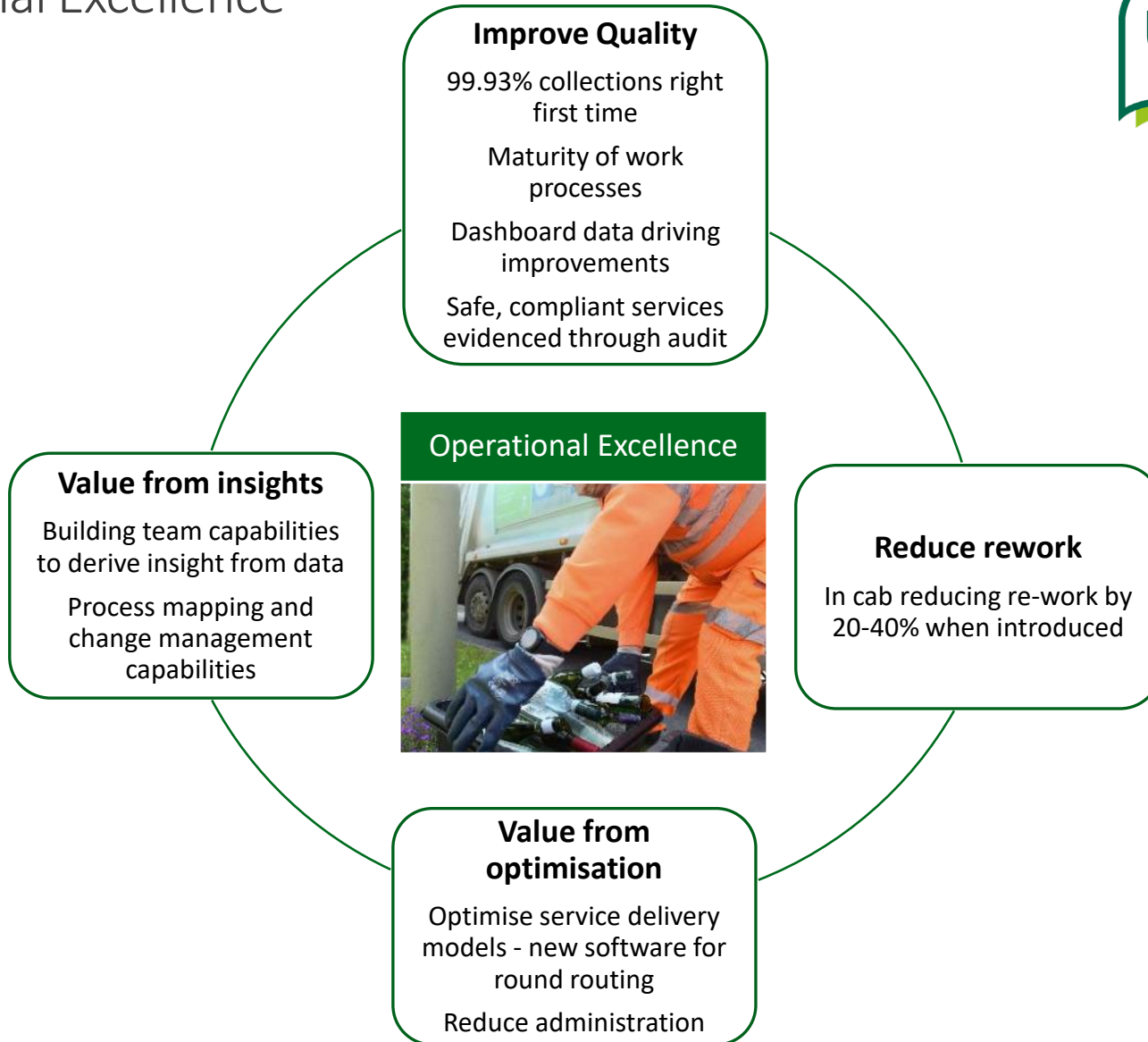
Upskill

- Extend skills assessment pilot to include management roles
- Assess requirement for learning management system



Employee Satisfaction

- “You said, we did” evaluation from employee engagement
- Repeat employee engagement





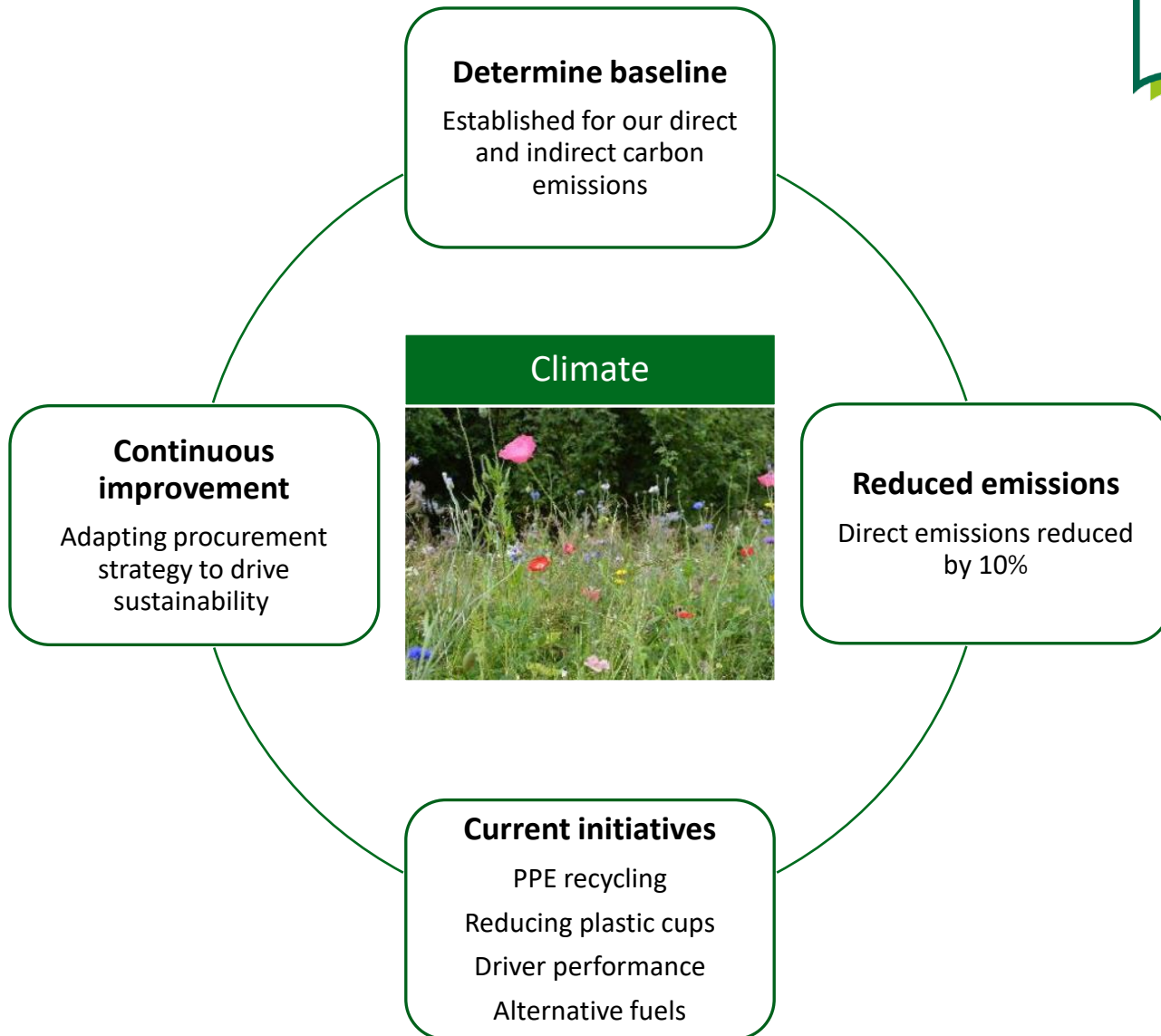
Performance

- Extend 'in cab' technology system into street cleaning and grounds maintenance services
- Further digitise our fleet workshop processes
- Mobilise and deliver waste, recycling and street cleaning services for Forest of Dean
- Ensure procurement plan is delivered to support service delivery



Safety, compliance and quality

- Safety remains a key focus. Particular focus this year on reducing vehicle accidents
- Continue to develop our in-house training offer to best support our people
- Continue development of longer-term strategic cost projections for each partner, aligning them across partners where possible
- Build on our strategic plans and monitor their delivery, consider next five to ten years





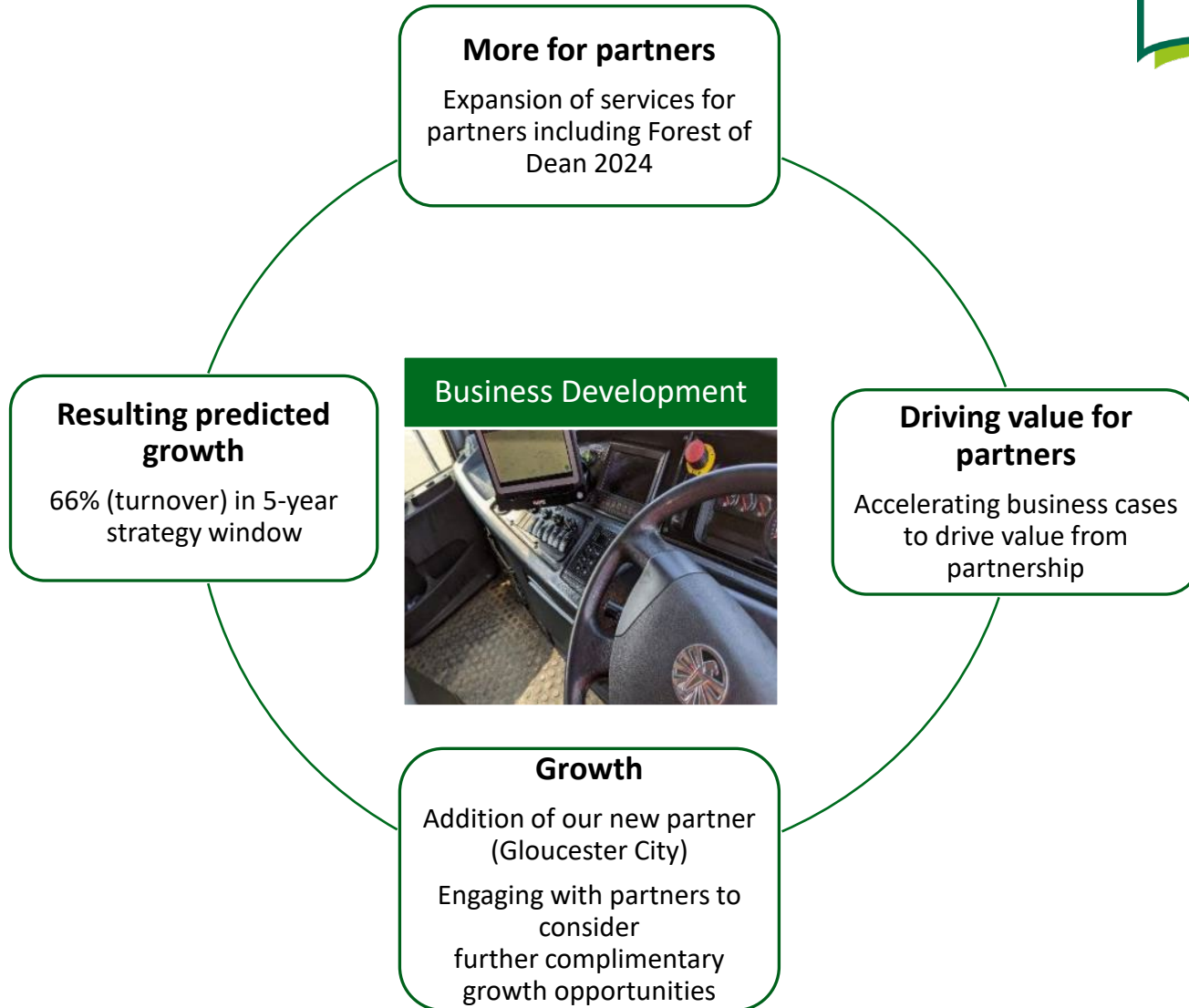
Our Environmental Impact

- Design a programme of activity to continue to reduce our carbon impacts
- Work closely with our suppliers to support us in achieving more detailed scope 3 emissions data
- Ensure that climate implications are built into our project initiation processes



Supporting Partners with their Impact

- Work closely with our partners to identify and action joint carbon reduction schemes
- Evaluate alternative fuel options for fleet and reviewing infrastructure requirements they may bring





Innovation & Evolution, Build

- Continue centralised fleet ownership project
- Evaluate further cross-boundary opportunities
- Begin discussions around contract renewal in 2027 with relevant partners
- Support partners on service design and innovation projects
- Explore opportunities for expansion of services for our existing partners
- Evaluate tactical opportunities for innovation or growth

People



- Continue to support and develop our excellent people
- Remain an attractive employer

Operational Excellence



- Continue developing and innovating our business processes

Climate



- Putting a focus on the environment
- Working closely with partners

Business Development



- Building capability
- Growing at a strong rate
- Evaluating opportunities



Any Questions?

This page is intentionally left blank



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 1 FEBRUARY 2023
Subject	Agile working update and tenancy proposals for Trinity Road Council Offices in Cirencester
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Mike Every, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Email: mike.every@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Claire Locke, Assistant Director - Property & Regeneration Email: claire.locke@Cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Claire Locke, Assistant Director - Property & Regeneration Email: claire.locke@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To update Cabinet on the work that has been completed to make changes to the Trinity Road offices to facilitate agile working and free up space for tenants and to make recommendations on a future tenant for the space created.
Annexes	EXEMPT Annex A – Business case comparing modelled costs and income for both Serviced Office Providers who expressed an interest in the building.
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enter into a legal agreement with the Serviced Office Provider shown in Annex A as the Preferred Tenant. 2. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive and S.151 Officer in consultation with the Head of Legal Services to agree the appropriate form and terms of a legal agreement.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the highest standard of service • Respond to the climate crisis • Enable a vibrant economy
Key Decision	YES



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Exempt	YES – Annexes Only
Consultees/ Consultation	Chief Finance Officer Asset Manager Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** The Council has undertaken work to consolidate office space required for staff and members, to enable additional space to be released for tenants. Office accommodation has been refurbished ensuring lettable space is attractive and income can be maximised.
- 1.2** Changes and improvements at Trinity Road have included refurbishment and lighting upgrade of the east atrium and side offices, refurbishment of side offices off the west atrium and first floor offices on the north side of the west atrium; new security doors to demarcate new tenant areas, including swipe card access to all meeting rooms; newly created accessible/unisex WC and refurbished WCs adjacent to the bistro; re-opening and refurbishment of two offices in the south wing.
- 1.3** Once the roof replacement has been carried out, remaining refurbishment works can be completed, including lighting upgrade, decorating and carpeting in the west atrium and refurbishment of the bistro. The total capital spend to date is £495,000 from an allocation of £675,000. A proportion of remaining capital spend is scalable, e.g. furniture for staff 'break out' areas; as such, the Agile project is due to complete within budget.
- 1.4** The original business case assumed that one or two larger tenants would be found that would lease all of the office accommodation. This Direct Letting approach where the Council acts directly as landlord to tenants would generate the best income. As the lettings market has changed significantly in the last 18 months, no tenants could be found who wanted to lease all of the space available. Alternative options have therefore been reviewed with two offers from Services Office Providers considered. It is recommended based on the business case set out in Annex A that the Council enters into a Legal Agreement with the Preferred Tenant.
- 1.5** In the interest of transparency and to reflect the degree of risk around voids and income this decision is being taken by Cabinet rather than as a standard Delegated Decision for a Lease.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** In December 2021 Cabinet received a report on the Options for the Future Use of the Trinity Road Offices and agreed to reduce its occupation of the Offices and actively market the estimated 30 - 40% spare space generated for commercial tenants, providing both revenue savings and a revenue return for the Council.
- 2.2** In March 2022 a more detailed report considered the investment required and the potential revenue return to deliver this option. Cabinet agreed to allocate funding of up to £975,000 from the Recovery Investment Strategy budget in the Capital Programme to facilitate the changes to the Trinity Road offices (£673,000) and fund structural repairs identified in the

building condition survey. It was noted that gross revenue savings of £202,000 (income and a reduction in utilities and Business rates) would contribute towards the savings from the Recovery Investment Strategy. A sum of £151,000 annual savings (utilities and Business Rates) and income (tenants) was included in the MTFS in February 2023.

- 2.3** The Project to reallocate space within the building, moving staff, carrying out building improvements and freeing up space for tenants is now nearing completion and a decision therefore needs to be made on prospective tenants.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1** The original business case included income from the Council letting space directly to tenants, as this presents the best return. However, a number of options have been explored to secure tenants.
- 3.2** Direct approaches have been made to a number of public sector partners, as a public sector hub would be an attractive option. The Police initially expressed some interest but then concluded the location was not right for them. Discussions with the County Council have elicited some initial interest but this has not developed further. One public sector partner has indicated some interest in the medium term but is not in a position to take a tenancy in the next couple of years.
- 3.3** A proactive approach has been made to Bromford Housing Association to enquire if they are interested but they have not indicated any interest. Cirencester Town Council have expressed an interest in taking a relatively small amount of space but this would still leave the majority of the lettable space available and potentially restrict other options. The option for serviced office accommodation in this paper would still enable the Town Council to lease some space, should they wish to.
- 3.4** Local agents were contacted and asked to quote for marketing the space. Only one expressed an interest and their fees meant they would take a fee of 10% of the annual rents agreed plus VAT which had a detrimental effect on the business case.
- 3.5** The Council has used its contacts through the Assets team and Economic lead to stimulate interest locally but the only interest to date has been from organisations seeking small areas of space.
- 3.6** The current trend is for businesses to reduce their own office footprints in the same way the Council is doing, so only interest for small areas of space has been identified. There has been no interest from companies that would take all or at least a substantial proportion of the office space.
- 3.7** Whilst the Council could in theory let out individual offices or desks to multiple small businesses there is a significant workload involved in this. There is likely to be a lot of turnover with businesses seeking space for a few months at a time. Whilst the Council is the landlord for a number of properties these are usually let on full repairing leases for a number of years. The leasing of serviced office accommodation would be a very different

model and require additional staff capacity and different skills to provide tenant support, individual billing, lease agreements and marketing.

- 3.8** The Council has therefore invited interest from Companies who already offer serviced office accommodation, as they will have the economies of scale for services like marketing the office space and managing tenants. Two companies have submitted offers, set out in Annex A.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1** The Council could wait to see if a single larger tenant can be found. However, a number of direct approaches have already been made and no tenant has been found to date who wishes to take the space within the next couple of years. Post Pandemic a lot of companies are downsizing so the likelihood of finding a suitable tenant is considered low.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1** Entering into a Legal Agreement with the Preferred Provider provides the best option available to the Council at this time and provides a good return against its original investment in building changes. This option is flexible allowing the Council to further explore the interest expressed by one Public Sector partner and potentially enter into a lease with them or any other interested party in the medium term (3 years or more).

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** The business case attached as Annex A shows the projected income and expenditure for both Serviced Office Providers. This includes costs for workstations and the separation between Council and tenant spaces and the related security measures. A comparison is also provided for the Council providing a similar service and increasing its staff resource to do so.
- 6.2** The Preferred Tenant has indicated that there is latent demand in the market and the individual offices should be fully occupied quite quickly (circa 6 months). However, the open plan atrium area will be harder to let. If there are difficulties in letting this space the Council could consider purchasing some large movable screens which could be used to sub-divide the space. These tall screens would act as walls and create demarcated office space, allowing increased privacy. The advantage of this approach is the screens provide the flexibility to change the size of allocated office space to meet current demands.
- 6.3** Whilst the best financial option is Direct Letting, no suitable tenants have been identified and therefore this option is not currently viable. The Council providing individual leases to

multiple smaller tenants and effectively delivering serviced office accommodation directly is not financially viable due to the additional management, marketing and legal costs involved. The best financial option is therefore to enter into a legal agreement with the Preferred Provider identified in Annex A.

- 6.4** The projected income is lower than that originally estimated when the business case for releasing office space was prepared. This is due to the broader economic picture, the changing rental market over the last 18 months and the fact attempts to secure one or two larger tenants to enable direct letting of all available space, has not been successful. The MTFS includes income/savings of £151,000/year. Whereas service office accommodation is projected to deliver in the region of £114,882/year.
- 6.5** Break clauses are not typically included within management agreements but the Preferred Provider has proposed a 3 year agreement initially. This limited duration would also limit the financial risk to the Council and enable options to be reviewed if the minimum financial outturn projected is not achieved. It also enables the Council to continue to explore Direct Letting with a Public Sector partner or other party.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** The Council will enter into a Legal Agreement which sets out the terms under which the Preferred Provider will occupy the building. This includes liability for costs as set out in the Business Case and Risks section below. The agreement is likely to be a Management Agreement with the Preferred Tenant sub-letting to individual tenants or a Lease. The terms of these options are being explored to ensure the Agreement would not present any unacceptable risks to the Council.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1** The principal risk with either provider is under occupation. Both serviced office providers work off a percentage fee of gross revenue. If take up of space is slow, if there is ongoing under occupation or if long void periods occur between tenants, income will be reduced but the Council will still carry cost liabilities for the running and management of the accommodation. This risk is mitigated by the 3 year initial agreement. It is understood that the greatest risk for under occupation is for the open plan atrium area. There would be scope to install large moveable screens, which could create allocated office space, greater privacy and noise screening. However, the cost is circa £70,000 so should be considered only if letting this space becomes problematic and would be the subject of a business case.

The risk of under occupation should also be considered against the risk of not proceeding and continuing to fail to find a tenant who will let the space. In this scenario the Council will continue to bear utility and business rate costs and receive no income against its capital investment.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 9.1** The office moves and changes to the building have considered the individual needs of staff with consultation of all staff and discussion with all Team Leaders and in some cases individual staff members to ensure their specific needs are met. This has enabled changes which reflect that not all staff can work from home safely and some staff have specific needs in terms of workspace.

10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1** The Cabinet and Council reports in March 2022 set out the Climate benefits of Agile working and reducing the Councils Office Footprint. In addition, Cabinet agreed in July 2023 to install Solar PV on the roof at Trinity Road which will reduce the Council's carbon impact and enable green energy to be used by tenants. The Management Agreement means the Council retains responsibility for utility costs so the installation of Solar PV will have a financial benefit.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1** None

(END)

This page is intentionally left blank



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 30 JANUARY 2024 CABINET – 1 FEBRUARY 2024
Subject	REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S PUBLIC CONVENIENCES REVIEW GROUP
Wards affected	All Cirencester wards; Bourton Village; Stow; Camden and Vale; Coln Valley; Moreton East; Moreton West; Fairford North; Lechlade, Kempton and Fairford South; Northleach; Tetbury Town; Tetbury East and Rural;
Accountable member	Councillor Tony Slater, Chair of the Public Conveniences Review Group Email: Tony.Slater@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Claire Locke, Assistant Director – Property and Regeneration Email: Claire.Locke@Cotswold.gov.uk
Report authors	Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager Email: Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk ; Claire Locke, Assistant Director – Property and Regeneration Email: Claire.Locke@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To present to Cabinet the recommendations of the Public Conveniences Review Group
Annexes	Annex A – Public Conveniences Review Group Terms of Reference Exempt Annex B – Public Conveniences Proposal
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to agree its response to the 11 recommendations set out in the body of this report.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliver the highest standard of service ● Support health and wellbeing ● Enable a vibrant economy
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	YES – Annex B is exempt from publication
Consultees/	Overview and Scrutiny Committee



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Consultation	
--------------	--

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Public Conveniences Review Group to review the future provision of public conveniences and make recommendations to Cabinet. The review was set in the context of a service which provides 15 sets of facilities district-wide and requires a high level of subsidy. The Group reviewed options to close, transfer or alter charges for public conveniences, whilst considering the needs of users, other local provision and affordability.
- 1.2 The recommendations put forward provide a balance between continued provision of good quality facilities and reducing the financial burden on the Council.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Public Conveniences Review Group (“the Review Group”) on 26 September 2023 and agreed the Review Group’s terms of reference at that meeting, subject to final amendments made by the Review Group at their first meeting. The final terms of reference were reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 31 October 2023 and are attached as Annex A.
- 2.2 The Group held a total of four meetings from October to December 2023. Members of the Review Group also undertook a number of site visits in order to see the public conveniences facilities first hand and report back to the Review Group on their findings.
- 2.3 Cotswold District Council operates fifteen public toilet sites across the district, in 10 towns and villages. During 2007 and 2008, ten of the sites were refurbished, introducing up to date systems and charging (currently 40p per use). The Council has more recently invested in card readers at the ten sites that were refurbished to enable cashless payments. The remaining five sites are still free to use.
- 2.4 Reactive maintenance is dealt with as and when necessary, however no further refurbishments or improvements have taken place. The cleaning and responsive maintenance is contracted to Danfo UK Ltd. At the meeting of Cabinet on 17 July 2023, the decision was made to extend the contract to 31 September 2024. The contract cost is the main expenditure for each site, which has significantly increased over the last year due to wages, fuel, consumables, and cleaning products.

3. APPROACH AND EVIDENCE GATHERING

- 3.1 To inform their evidence gathering and deliberations members of the Review Group visited public conveniences facilities across the district. Photographs were taken and Members fed back their views on condition and access. Most of the facilities visited were considered to be in good condition, though the condition of some of the facilities required improvement.

- 3.2 Data on service costs, usage and (where relevant) income was reviewed on an individual site by site basis. This included a summary which showed the net cost to the Council of each use of the facilities and the overall net losses the service incurs annually. For 2022/23 the total net cost to the Council was £166,184 and total usage across all 15 sites was 280,877 (range: 3,863 to 64,587). This equates to a net cost to the Council of 59p per use on average across all sites (range: 22p to £2.31).
- 3.3 The Review Group wrote to the Town and Parish Councils with Council-provided public conveniences in their areas seeking their input. Written representations were received from Bibury Parish Council and Northleach Town Council alongside verbal representations from Moreton-in-Marsh Town Council and Bourton on the Water Parish Council.
- 3.4 The Review Group spoke to a representative of the current contractor, Danfo who attended a meeting to discuss options for change, service challenges and costs.
- 3.5 The Group wrote to a number of national and Gloucestershire based disability groups seeking input. A written submission was received from Crohns and Colitis UK, detailing their position on access to public toilets, which the group considered.
- 3.6 The Chair of the Group spoke to a Cabinet Member at East Devon District Council, where a similar public toilet review had been undertaken.
- 3.7 The Group would like to thank all of those who gave evidence or otherwise contributed to the review.

4. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 At the conclusion of their evidence gathering the Group agreed a series of recommendations to Cabinet. The recommendations are aimed at ensuring the Council can continue to provide good quality public convenience facilities across the district in a way that will be more affordable to the Council going forward into what will be a very challenging financial environment for all local councils.

Cleaning and Maintenance

- 4.2 The Review Group considered whether responsibility for the cleaning and maintenance should be brought in-house. It was noted that the Council would either need to enter into a procurement exercise in early 2024 or make arrangements for the transfer of the service from the current contractor to the Council when the current contract ends on 1 October 2024.
- 4.3 The Review Group concluded that the current contract has provided good value for money for the Council and a good standard of service. It is anticipated that the cost to the Council will increase under a new contract. However, it is considered unlikely that an in-house service would generate any savings to mitigate the expected cost increases.

- 4.4 The Review Group understands that the main service costs are staff pay, fuel, consumables (soap, toilet paper and cleaning products) and utilities. The Council has limited ability to reduce any of these costs whereas a contractor has the benefit of bulk buying supplies, cross-contract management and access to a wider workforce. If the Council took on these services it would carry both the cost risk and staffing risk around sickness absence and recruitment. There is also a reputational risk if the Council were to bring the service in-house and fail to deliver an equally good or better service.

Recommendation 1 – That the Council seeks to re-tender the cleaning and maintenance contract rather than bring the service in house.

Reducing the annual revenue cost to the Council

- 4.5 Whilst provision of public conveniences is a discretionary service, the Review Group recognised the importance of easy access to facilities for shoppers and tourists. However, the existing level of subsidy (which is likely to increase under a future contract) is unsustainable for the Council. The Review Group therefore considered options for protecting service provision whilst reducing the net level of subsidy.
- 4.6 The Review Group concluded that it would be unrealistic for the Council to seek to fully recover the cost of the service through charging, so the Council's aim should be to reduce the annual subsidy to a sustainable level. In this context the Group felt that the Council can no longer provide facilities that are free to use.

Recommendation 2 – That the Council seeks to reduce the annual revenue cost of providing public conveniences facilities, given that it would not be realistic to seek full cost recovery through charging, or to provide facilities that are free to use.

District-wide provision of public conveniences

- 4.7 There are 15 sets of facilities across 10 Towns and villages. Cirencester has 3 sites operated by Cotswold District Council and there are 2 sites provided by Cirencester Town Council. Bourton on the Water, Stow on the Wold and Tetbury each have two sets of facilities operated by the District Council.
- 4.8 Where there are multiple facilities provided they are located relatively close together. It was also noted that town and village centres have multiple cafes, restaurants, public houses and tourist attractions which have toilets available for customers.

- 4.9 Whilst there is considered to be a need for continued service provision, there could be a reduction in the number of facilities provided which would substantially reduce costs. The Review Group has put forward site specific proposals in Exempt Annex B. The Review Group suggests that, as a point of principle, the Council should continue to provide at least one District Council operated set of facilities in each of the 10 towns and villages that currently have them.

Recommendation 3 – That the Council commits to retaining at least one District Council provided public conveniences facility in each town and village within the district that currently has one.

- 4.10 The Review Group considered the option of transferring responsibility for facilities to town and parish councils. It was considered that town and parish councils were unlikely to be willing to take on sites given that they require an ongoing subsidy.
- 4.11 Whilst there has been limited interest to-date from Town and Parish Councils in taking on the facilities, the recommendation is that three town councils in are offered the opportunity to take on the facilities identified in Exempt Annex B.
- 4.12 Should the Town Councils not wish to take the facilities on and assume responsibility for all costs and income, the Review Group recommends that the facilities be closed and the buildings repurposed for other commercial opportunities.

Recommendation 4 – That the Council opens discussions with the relevant Town Councils about the transfer of responsibility for four sites in towns that have more than one district council provided facility, or where town councils are not willing, the Council seeks to close the facilities and repurpose the buildings to generate a commercial opportunity, as set out in Exempt Annex B. This approach is expected to result in a maximum annual revenue saving of £39,061.

Charging for usage

- 4.14 There are currently 5 sites which do not have charging in place. Under recommendation 4, one of these (in Tetbury) would close. The Review Group recommends that the Council invests in the remaining sites to install charging mechanisms so that income can help part-fund service provision. This investment would have a short payback period of c. 1 year and would also ensure a more equitable service provision across the district.

- 4.15 The Council has previously allocated capital funding for enabling cashless payments and there is funding already in the capital programme which could be used for this specific purpose at the 4 sites.

Recommendation 5 – That the Council allocates £47,200 in the capital programme to introduce charging at the four retained sites that are currently free to use, utilising the existing capital budget (of c. £34,000) for purchasing and installing card readers. This investment will ensure that the Council can charge for usage, with card payment as an option, at all district council run facilities and will have a payback period of c. 1 year.

Investing in public conveniences assets

- 4.16 The Review Group identified that a number of facilities will, over time, require work to maintain condition, such as replacement doors and frames.
- 4.17 Bourton on the Water is the only location with more than one set of facilities where the Review Group suggests that both sets of facilities are retained, due to the high intensity of usage during peak tourism periods. There are paddle gates at the entrances to these facilities which require payment for users to pass through. The existing gates are very worn and damaged and no longer capable of repair. Investment is therefore needed to protect income at these high usage locations.

Recommendation 6 – That the Council allocates capital funding of £27,650 in priority works to remedy condition (the replacement of paddle gates) at the two sites in Bourton on the Water in order to protect future income, as set out in Annex B of the Review Group's report.

- 4.18 Whilst the Review Group noted that the overall the condition of facilities is good, they identified that some investment would be needed over time to maintain standards, particularly as there has been no specific investment in the facilities for 16 years.
- 4.19 It is therefore recommended that some funding is identified within the capital programme as part of the Building Maintenance Fund to enable prioritised and phased repairs and improvements.

Recommendation 7 – That the Council seeks to maintain the condition of its public convenience facilities through the Council's Asset Management Strategy.

Charging rates

- 4.20 Current charges, where they apply, are 40p per use. However, based on costs and usage, the net cost to the Council (subsidy) of each use ranges from 22p (Bourton on the Water, Church Rooms) to £2.31 (Fairford High Street).
- 4.21 The Review Group agreed that charges should be increased to reduce the gap between costs and income. Having discussed a range of charges from £0.50 to £1 it was agreed that 70p would be an appropriate charge. It was noted that charging 70p per use would not enable the service to break-even, but it would be expected to reduce the annual cost to the Council of providing the facilities. The Review Group assumes that a higher charge would not adversely impact usage rates, on the basis that users are already prepared to pay for using the facilities and will have the option to pay by card. Based on current usage a charge of 70p at all retained sites could potentially reduce the cost of the service by a maximum of £62,425 per annum.

Recommendation 8 – That usage charges are set at 70p at all retained district council public conveniences facilities. Based on current usage levels this could reduce the cost of the service by a maximum of £62,425 per annum.

- 4.22 The Review Group believes it is important that the Council explains to users why it is necessary to increase usage charges. A clear and transparent explanation of service costs, usage and income will increase understanding. The Review Group suggests that this is done by using signage at public convenience facilities.

Recommendation 9 – That the Council uses signage at public convenience facilities to explain to users that public conveniences are not a statutory service and the usage charge does not cover the full cost to the Council of running the service.

- 4.23 The Review Group recognises that quick and easy access to public conveniences is particularly important for certain groups such as disabled people, who may have specific medical needs and require more space and time to use facilities. The Review Group recommends that the Council continues to make a disabled access unit available at each site which can be accessed free of charge with a RADAR key.

Recommendation 10 – That the Council continues to provide one disabled access unit at each retained site which can be accessed free of charge with a RADAR key (Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation).

- 4.24 The Review Group noted the need to ensure that people can access up to date information about what public convenience facilities are available and where. The Review Group believes there is an opportunity to extend the number of facilities available to the public. Whilst a Community Toilet Scheme does not require users to purchase anything in the shops or hospitality venues that offer access, many businesses that offer their facilities do find that their business benefits as a result. There are also a number of public toilet apps that people can use and the Review Group suggests that key partner organisations and local businesses are encouraged to register their facilities on popular apps.

Recommendation 11 – That the Council encourages key partners such as town and parish councils and local businesses to make their toilets available for public use and to register their toilets on popular public toilet apps.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 5.1 Cabinet is asked to agree its response to the recommendations and can choose to agree or disagree with each recommendation. Where the Review Group's recommendations have financial implications the Review Group have sought to be clear about this.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The provision of public conveniences currently has an annual revenue cost to the Council of £166,184.
- 6.2 The Group's proposals, set out in Exempt Annex B, would result in capital expenditure on priority works to remedy condition of £27,650. These works will help to protect future income. Capital expenditure of £47,200 is also recommended to install charging mechanisms at sites that are currently free to use (c. £34,000 has already been set aside for cashless payments). This capital expenditure is expected to have a payback period of 1 year.
- 6.3 Taken together the Review Group's recommendations would result in a net reduction in the annual cost of the service to the Council of up to £152,000 per annum from 2025/26 (subject to no reduction in service use as a result of the increase in the fee and additional capital expenditure to improve the remaining facilities).

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Public conveniences are a discretionary service and therefore the Council could cease to provide the service.
- 7.2 The Council is the freeholder of all its public convenience buildings, except one which is leased. The Council can therefore choose to sell or repurpose buildings that it owns, subject to relevant permissions.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 There is a risk that increased charges deters users and income therefore drops below the levels predicted. This could mean the net revenue position is worse than predicted.
- 8.2 The Council may suffer reputational damage from the closure of facilities and increasing charges. However, offering facilities to town councils in the first instance and providing signage to explain costs and charges will help mitigate this risk.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 9.1 The Review Group has considered the impacts of its recommendations on groups with protected characteristics, in particular disability and pregnancy and maternity. The Review Group recommends that the Council continues to provide at least one set of facilities in each town or village that currently has them, including at least one disabled access unit.

10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no notable climate or ecology implications identified. There may be a very small reduction in fuel usage from servicing and maintaining all existing facilities. However, as the proposals include retention of at least one set of facilities in each Town or Village, there will be limited reduction in travel for the contractor.
- 10.2 There will be a small reduction in utilities used as a result of any closures but as demand will transfer to the facilities being retained, it is likely the utility and consumable usage will also transfer.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 None.

(END)

Terms of Reference – Public Conveniences Review Group

Membership

The Review Group will have cross-party membership of 5 members:

Councillor Tony Slater (Chair)

Councillor Gary Selwyn (Vice-Chair)

Councillor David Cunningham

Councillor Roly Hughes

Councillor Dilys Neill

Officer Support

Democratic Services will organise and support the meetings of the Review Group and produce any report/recommendations arising from the review.

Resident Services will provide information and advice to inform the Review Group's deliberations.

Background and rationale

Cotswold District Council operates fifteen public toilet sites across the district. During 2007 and 2008, ten of the sites were refurbished, introducing up to date systems and charging. The remaining five sites are still free. Reactive maintenance is dealt with as and when necessary, however no further refurbishments or improvements have taken place. The provision of public toilets is not a statutory duty.

The cleaning and responsive maintenance is contracted to Danfo UK Ltd. At the meeting of Cabinet on 17 July 2023, the decision was made to extend the contract to 31 September 2024. The contract cost is the main expenditure for each site, which has significantly increased over the last year due to wages, fuel, consumables, and cleaning products. Research into alternative service provision has shown there are no significant savings to be made by changing the service provider at this time. The contract extension was negotiated with reduced visits to several sites to enable moderate savings. All sites have one unit which is accessed free of charge with a RADAR key (Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation), this is a national scheme sometimes referred to as the NKS (National Key Scheme).

In order to inform the future of Public Conveniences provision, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance asked that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to establish a task and finish group to review the work and inform a future Cabinet decision.

Purpose of the Review

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee have been asked to review the current service provision and consider options for the future of service provision. Preliminary research carried out by Officers has identified the following potential options for the assets;

1. Close all sites - Close all sites, followed by sell or re-purpose the assets- where there are viable alternatives in the town/village.
2. Transfer the assets to Town/Parish Councils. – Some of the sites are located in car parks, which should be carefully considered for any future plans.
3. Keep all sites owned and charge for usage.
4. A combination of two or more of the above options.

There are also the following options for service delivery:

1. Retender the contract.
2. Bring the service in house.

The Review Group will produce a report with recommendations to inform a Cabinet decision prior to the expiry of the contract (target: 5 February 2024 Cabinet meeting).

Out of scope

Public Toilets that the Council does not own are outside the scope of the review.

In August 2023, the Government announced a new building requirement to separate all toilets in new buildings by male and female. As the Review Group will be looking the provision of existing toilets, this is also outside the scope of the work.

Method / Approach

The Review Group will hold a series of meetings to consider and interrogate different options for the future of public conveniences in the district. In doing so the Review Group will consider benchmarking data and data on the usage and costs of different sites. The Review Group may also wish to undertake site visits and to understand the future capital costs of maintaining the assets.

Guest speakers

Review Group to consider whether to speak to external organisations or groups as part of this review, which could include representatives of:

- town and parish councils,
- the current contractor,
- external groups e.g. parent groups, disability groups (Crohn's and Colitis).

Timescales

26 Sept 2023 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee to establish the review group.

w/c 9 Oct or w/c 16 Oct 2023 – Initial Review Group meeting to consider the terms of reference.

23 October 2023 – terms of reference published in Overview and Scrutiny agenda.

31 October 2023 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider terms of reference.

November to December 2023 – Review Group meetings to be held every c. 3 weeks.

Early January 2024 – final Review Group meeting to consider draft report/recommendations.

22 January 2024 – report/recommendations published in Overview and Scrutiny Committee agenda.

30 January 2024 – report/recommendations considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5 February 2024 – report/recommendations considered by Cabinet.

Background documents

East Devon District Council Public Toilet Review, 2021 – Undertook a similar review where a Task and Finish Group categorised toilets to refurbish and continue to provide, and those that they would no longer seek to provide, leasing some these, and selling some to Town and Parish Councils below Market rate. East Devon Council then consulted with Members of the Public on this work.

<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/community-engagement/public-toilet-review/>

This page is intentionally left blank



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN
1 FEBRUARY 2024 – 31 MAY 2024

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Council currently operates the Strong Leader and Cabinet form of governance. The Council has appointed one Overview and Scrutiny Committee which has the power to investigate Cabinet decisions and any other matters relevant to the district and its people, making recommendations to the Council, Cabinet or any other Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council. Scrutiny has an important role in holding the Cabinet to account and in contributing to policy development. The Council has agreed an Executive Scrutiny Protocol to guide how Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will interact with each other.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee operates a work plan which is agreed annually but provides for flexibility to enable the Committee to respond to emerging issues or priorities. The work plan will include a mix of Cabinet reports that have been selected for pre-decision scrutiny, and reports on other Council services, topics or issues which have been specifically commissioned by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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?

Call in

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider any “call-in” of a decision that has been made but not yet implemented. This enables the Committee to consider whether the decision made is appropriate given all relevant information (but not because it would have made a different decision). It may recommend that the Cabinet, a Portfolio Holder or the Council should reconsider the decision. (It should be noted that Cabinet does not have to change its decision following the recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

Item	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Tuesday 27 February 2024		
Climate and Ecological Emergency To evaluate the achievement of Net-Zero goals where the Council has direct responsibility and the delivery of measurable contributions in other areas.	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability - Cllr Mike McKeown	Chris Crookall-Fallon, Head of Climate Action chris.crookall-fallon@cotswold.gov.uk
River Quality/Sewage To be scoped.	Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety - Cllr Lisa Spivey	Phil Shaw, Business Manager - Development Management phil.shaw@publicagroup.uk
Q3 Financial Performance Report 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Q3 Performance Report 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Publica Transition Plan To consider the proposed transition plan for services moving from Publica back to the council.	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Tuesday 2 April 2024		
Community Safety Partnership To exercise the function of the Crime & Disorder Committee through review of Cotswold Community Safety Partnership strategy and delivery.	Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety - Cllr Lisa Spivey	Jacqueline Wright, Community Wellbeing Manager Jacqueline.Wright@Cotswold.gov.uk
Housing To consider the actions and responsibilities of Housing Associations and to assess progress in meeting the Council's aim of moving towards a greater emphasis on	Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety - Cllr Lisa Spivey	Assistant Director - Planning and Sustainability

Social affordable housing.		
Publica Business Plan To update the Committee on the Publica Business Plan and to identify any areas that may need more detailed study.	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Jan Britton, Managing Director - Publica jan.britton@publicagroup.uk
Tuesday 7 May 2024		

This page is intentionally left blank



**COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN
INCORPORATING NOTICE OF DECISIONS PROPOSED TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE
SESSION AND NOTICE OF INTENTION TO MAKE A KEY DECISION**

Forward Plan – January 2024 to May 2024

The Forward Plan

By virtue of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, local authorities are required to publish a notice setting out the key executive decisions that will be taken at least 28 days before such decisions are to be taken. The Regulations also require notice to be given of any matter where it is proposed that the public will be excluded during consideration of the matter.

This Forward Plan incorporates both of these requirements. In the interests of transparency, it also aims to include details of those items to be debated by the Cabinet that relate to either policy/budget formulation, matters which will be subject to a recommendation to the Council, and other matters due to be considered by the Cabinet. This programme covers a period of four months, and will be updated on a monthly basis. The timings of items may be subject to change.

It should be noted that although a date not less than 28 clear days after the date of the notice is given in each case, it is possible that matters may be rescheduled to a date which is different from that given provided, in the cases of key decisions and matters to be considered in private, that the 28 day notice has been given. In this regard, please note that agendas and reports for Meetings of the Cabinet are made available on the [Council's Web Site](#) – five working days in advance of the Meeting in question. Please also note that the agendas for Meetings of the Cabinet will also incorporate a necessary further notice which is required to be given in relation to matters likely to be considered with the public excluded.

There are circumstances where a key decision can be taken, or a matter may be considered in private, even though the 28 clear days'

notice has not been given. If that happens, notice of the matter and the reasons will be published on the Council's Web Site, and available from the Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Glos. GL7 1PX.

Key Decisions

Key Decisions

The Regulations define a key decision as an executive decision which is likely –

- (a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the authority.

In financial terms, the Council has decided that a key decision is any executive decision which requires a budget expenditure of £150,000 or more, or one which generates savings of £150,000 or more.

A key decision may only be made in accordance with the Cabinet Procedure Rules contained within the Council's Constitution.

Matters To Be Considered in Private

The great majority of matters considered by the Council's Cabinet are considered in 'open session' when the public have the right to attend.

However, some matters are considered with the public excluded. The public may only be excluded if a resolution is passed to exclude them. The grounds for exclusion are limited to situations where confidential or exempt information may be disclosed to the public if present and, in most cases involving exempt information, where in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. The definitions of these are set out in the Council's

Constitution.

Documents and Queries

Formal reports presented relating to any executive decision will be available on the Council's Web Site at least five working days in advance of the Meeting at which the decision is to be made (except insofar as they contain confidential and/or exempt information).

The Decision Notice for each key decision will be published as soon as reasonably practicable after it has been made. We will seek to do this within five working days of the date of the decision. The Decision Notice will be available for public inspection on the Council's Web Site, and at the Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Glos. GL7 1PX.

If you have any questions about the Forward Plan, or if you wish to make representations about any of the matters contained within it, please contact the Council's Democratic Services Team. The Democratic Services Team can also, on request, provide copies of, or extracts from, documents listed in the Plan and any which subsequently become available (subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure).

Contact Details:

Democratic Services, Cotswold District Council, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 1PX

E-mail: democratic@cotswold.gov.uk Telephone: 01285 623000 Website: www.cotswold.gov.uk

Telephone: 01285 623000; Fax: 01285 623907

The Council's Executive Arrangements

The Council currently operates the Strong Leader and Cabinet form of governance.

By law, the Cabinet can comprise a Leader of the Council, together with up to nine other Members to be appointed by the Leader (one of whom has to be appointed as Deputy Leader). The Leader will be elected by the Council, for a four-year term; and the Deputy Leader appointment is also for a four-year term.

The Cabinet at Cotswold District Council currently comprises a Leader, a Deputy Leader, and six other Cabinet Members. The structure is as set out in the table below.

Executive decisions are taken either collectively by the Cabinet or individually by Cabinet Members.

The Cabinet generally meets monthly; whereas decision-making by individual Cabinet Members occurs on an 'as and when needed' basis.

Decisions of the Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members are subject to scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Joe Harris	Leader	Coordination of executive functions, Policy framework including the corporate plan, Publica, Council communications, Democratic services, Housing and homelessness, Clean and green campaign and street cleaning, Town and parish council liaison
Mike Every (Deputy Leader)	Finance	Financial strategy and management, Property and assets, Waste and recycling, Revenues and benefits, Grants, Public toilets, UBICO
Mike McKeown	Climate Change and Sustainability	Climate and biodiversity emergency response, Community energy, Sustainable transport, Retrofit, Council sustainability
Tony Dale	Economy and Council Transformation	Business transformation, Local Enterprise Partnership and county-wide partnerships, Economic development, Car parking operations and strategy, Tourism and visitor information centres, Chamber of Commerce liaison, Customer experience and channel shift
Juliet Layton	Planning and Regulatory Services	Development management, Forward planning and the local plan, Heritage and design management, Environmental and regulatory services, Cotswold Water Park
Paul Hodgkinson	Health, Leisure and Culture	Public health, Mental health, Leisure centres, Museums, Culture , Young people
Lisa Spivey	Communities and Public Safety	Improving social mobility and social isolation, Flooding and sewage, Safeguarding, Domestic abuse, Police liaison and crime, Refugees, Crowdfund Cotswold, Member Development
Claire Bloomer	Cost of Living and	Cost of living support, Liaison with 3 rd sector, Diversity and inclusion, Supporting

	Inclusion	women and minorities
--	-----------	----------------------

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
7 December 2023 - Cabinet						
Q2 Financial Performance Report	No	Open	Cabinet	7 Dec 2023	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Q2 Performance Report	No	Open	Cabinet	7 Dec 2023	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publica group.uk
Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/2025	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	7 Dec 2023 24 Jan 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Enviromental, Welfare and Revenue Service Mandy.Fathers@public a.group.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Draft Cotswold Housing Strategy	Yes	Open	Cabinet	7 Dec 2023	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	James Brain, Forward Planning Manager james.brain@cotswold.gov.uk
Increase in Fixed Penalty Notice fines for fly-tipping, duty of care, littering and graffiti.	No	Open	Cabinet	7 Dec 2023	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Philip Measures philip.measures@publicagroup.uk
Proactive Delivery of Affordable Housing	No	Open	Cabinet	7 Dec 2023	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Charlie Jackson, Assistant Director - Planning and Sustainability charlie.jackson@publicagroup.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
11 January 2024 - Cabinet						
Corporate Plan 2024-2028	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	11 Jan 2024 24 Jan 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Penalty and Prosecution Policy	No	Open	Cabinet	11 Jan 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	Emma Cathcart, Head of Service, Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit emma.cathcart@cotswold.gov.uk
Review of Parking Charges	Yes	Open	Cabinet	11 Jan 2024	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	Maria Wheatley, Shared Parking Manager maria.wheatley@cotswold.gov.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
2024/25 Budget Consultation Feedback Report	No	Open	Cabinet	11 Jan 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
The Green Infrastructure Strategy	Yes	Open	Cabinet	11 Jan 2024	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Lesley Davies, Planning Policy Officer lesley.davies@cotswold.gov.uk
Cotswold District Local Plan Update	Yes	Open	Cabinet	11 Jan 2024	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	James Brain, Forward Planning Manager james.brain@cotswold.gov.uk
UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity	Yes	Open	Cabinet	11 Jan 2024	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation - Cllr	Paul James, Economic Development Lead paul.james@cotswold.g

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Fund update					Tony Dale	ov.uk
24 January 2024 - Full Council						
Polling District and Places Review	No	Open	Council	24 Jan 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Sarah Dalby, Elections Manager sarah.dalby@cotswold.gov.uk
Community Governance Review - Upper Rissington	No	Open !NotSet!	Council	24 Jan 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Sarah Dalby, Elections Manager sarah.dalby@cotswold.gov.uk
Amendments to the Constitution	No	Open	Council	24 Jan 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer)

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
						Angela.Claridge@Cotswold.gov.uk
1 February 2024 - Cabinet						
Discretionary Rate Relief in excess of £10,000	No	Open	Cabinet	1 Feb 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Enviromental, Welfare and Revenue Service Mandy.Fathers@publica.group.uk
Asset Management Plan	No	Open	Cabinet	1 Feb 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Recommendations of the Public Conveniences	No	Open !NotSet!	Cabinet	1 Feb 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike	Claire Locke, Assistant Director for Property and Regeneration

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Working Group					Everymy	Claire.Locke@publicagroup.uk
2024/25 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Report	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	1 Feb 2024 21 Feb 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Everymy	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
2024/25 Budget – Fees and Charges Report	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	1 Feb 2024 21 Feb 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Everymy	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Channel Choice and Telephone Access	Yes	Open	Cabinet	1 Feb 2024	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council	Jon Dearing, Assistant Director for Resident

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Update					Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	Services jon.dearing@cotswold.gov.uk
Lechlade Air Quality Management Area Revocation	No	Open	Cabinet	1 Feb 2024	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Susan McPherson, Senior Officer - ERS susan.mcpherson@publicagroup.uk
Agile working and future tenancies at Trinity Road Council Offices	No	Part exempt Annexes will include commercially sensitive information relating to the business	Cabinet	1 Feb 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evemy	Claire Locke, Assistant Director for Property and Regeneration Claire.Locke@publicagroup.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
		model, income and costs for specific tenants				
The Old Station and Memorial Cottages - Investment Decision	Yes	Part exempt Containing commercially sensitive information	Cabinet Council	1 Feb 2024 20 Mar 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Evemy	Mark Stedman, Senior Project Manager Mark.Stedman@publica group.uk
21 February 2024 - Full Council						
7 March 2024 - Cabinet						
Q3 Performance Report 2024	No	Open	Cabinet	7 Mar 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publica

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
						group.uk
Q3 Financial Performance Report 2024	No	Open	Cabinet	7 Mar 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer David.Stanley@cotswold.gov.uk
Fixed Penalty Notice Policy	No	Open	Cabinet	7 Mar 2024	Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services - Cllr Juliet Layton	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service Mandy.Fathers@publica.group.uk
Retail Relief 2024 - Business Rates	No	Open	Cabinet	7 Mar 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service Mandy.Fathers@publica.group.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
Council Tax Reduction for Care Leavers	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	7 Mar 2024 20 Mar 2024	Deputy Leader - Cabinet Member for Finance - Cllr Mike Every Mike Every, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Enviromental, Welfare and Revenue Service Mandy.Fathers@publica.group.uk
Publica Transition Plan	Yes	Open	Cabinet Council	7 Mar 2024 20 Mar 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Joe Harris	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Gloucestershire City Regions Board	Yes	Open	Cabinet	7 Mar 2024	Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation - Cllr Tony Dale	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Exemption Class	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
20 March 2024 - Full Council						
4 April 2024 - Cabinet						
9 May 2024 - Cabinet						
15 May 2024 - Full Council						
Key decisions delegated to officers						

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank