

Council
25/September2024



COTSWOLD
District Council

Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Wednesday, 25 September 2024

Members present:

Nikki Ind	Mark Harris	
Dilys Neill	Gary Selwyn	Jeremy Theyer
Tristan Wilkinson	Lisa Spivey	Clare Turner
Mike Evey	Patrick Coleman	Michael Vann
Joe Harris	Ray Brassington	Jon Wareing
Julia Judd	Tom Stowe	Ian Watson
Juliet Layton	Tony Slater	Daryl Corps
Andrew Maclean	Helene Mansilla	Len Wilkins
Gina Blomefield	Mike McKeown	Paul Hodgkinson
Nigel Robbins	David Fowles	Angus Jenkinson

Officers present:

Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive
Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer)	Caleb Harris, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Ana Prelici, Governance Officer	Richard McEllistrum, Interim Development Management Manager
David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer	Phil Martin, Assistant Director for Business Services

28 Apologies

There were apologies received from Councillors Claire Bloomer, David Cunningham, Chris Twells, Roly Hughes and Tony Dale.

29 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Ray Brassington declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 11 – Sewage Summit Update. However it was confirmed that following discussions of this with the Monitoring Officer, he would be able to take part in the debate and vote.

There were no further declarations of interest made.

The minutes of the last Full Council meeting on 31 July 2024 were considered as part of the document pack.

Councillor Gina Blomefield raised a query regarding confusing wording on Page 22 of the document pack – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2023/24 - 5th bullet point, which read:

- *The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had also made a positive contribution through the recommendations to Cabinet. Many of these recommendations had been accepted as part of the recommendations.*

The Senior Democratic Services Officer indicated that this was a grammatical error and the latter wording would be changed to say that 'Many of these recommendations had been accepted by Cabinet as part of its resolutions.'

Council took the exempt minutes as read.

Minutes of last meeting 31 July 2024 (Resolution)		
RESOLVED: That subject to the amendments noted, the Full Council minutes of 31 July 2024 be APPROVED as a correct record.		
For	Gina Blomefield, Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Every, David Fowles, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Nigel Robbins, Gary Selwyn, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	27
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Nikki Ind and Helene Mansilla	2
Carried		

31 Unsung Heroes Awards

The purpose of this item was to present the Unsung Heroes Awards.

The Chair opened this item as the first award ceremony for residents within the Cotswold District who make a difference in their communities.

It was highlighted they had been overwhelmed by the number of nominations and that it was difficult for those judging to decide.

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The following runners up were announced: Brian McTear, Kelly Foreshew and Daphne Walton. The Chair noted their contributions to the communities within Cotswold District which included helping with the organisation of local communities, and supporting vulnerable residents and children.

The Chair then announced the winner Janne Bishop who had helped to organise Mindsong – a signing group for those residents suffering with dementia and other debilitating conditions. As Janne was not able to be present to collect her award, Councillor Andrew Maclean as the local member indicated that he would present the certificate on behalf of the Council.

32 Announcements from the Chair, Leader or Chief Executive (if any)

The purpose of this item was to receive announcements from the Chair of Council, Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive Officer.

The Chair made the following announcements:

- The Chair wished to congratulate the achievements of all of the Olympians from the District at the Paris Olympics.
- It was noted that the next Town and Parish Council Forum at the Council Offices on 10 October 2024 was on the topic of cost of living. Agencies such as Citizens Advice Bureau would be in attendance and it was important that Members encouraged all Town and Parish Councils to attend.
- The Chair reminded Members to complete their cybersecurity training by 18 October 2024 following the recent cybersecurity incident at Tewkesbury Borough Council.
- Congratulations were given to North Cotswolds MP Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown following his election to the position of Chair of the Public Accounts Committee by his peers cross-party.
- The Chair noted the events she had attended as the Council's representative: Phoenix Festival Reception, Stones in their Pockets Gala Performance at the Barn Theatre, and RAF Fairford's civic leadership day followed by the 77th Air Force Ball.
- Thanks were given for the support for the Chair's Cotswold Way Challenge marking the 50th Anniversary of Cotswold District Council.

The Leader was then invited to make his announcements. The following announcements were given:

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- Congratulations was presented to the Chair on the money raised through the Cotswold Way Challenge and also to the Unsung Heroes that Council had recognised. It was noted that it was a true example of public service.
- Members were notified of Councillor Tony Dale's serious car accident in Italy whilst on holiday. It was noted that Councillor Dale was in the early stages of recovery in hospital following the incident. Whilst Councillor Dale would be away from his duties for a time, it was hoped he could return to Councillor duties soon. The Leader stated he would pass on the best wishes of all Members and keep them updated on progress.

The Chief Executive was then invited to make any announcements:

- Congratulations were given to the Chair on her Cotswold Way Challenge.
- Congratulations were also given to the Unsung Heroes as part of an initiative to recognise those who make a difference in their communities.
- Best wishes were also provided on behalf of all Council officers to Councillor Tony Dale for his recovery.

33 Public Questions

There were no public questions.

34 Member Questions

Member Questions and the responses can be found in the attached Annex A at the end of the minutes.

35 Petition: Retain the public toilets in the High Street/Market Square, Stow-on-the-Wold

The purpose of this item was for Council to consider a petition submitted under the Local Petition Scheme (Part F of the Constitution).

The Chair invited the representative for the petition, Councillor Ben Eddolls, Chair of Stow Town Council, to present the petition. The following points were made:

- Whilst there was a recognition of the financial challenges affecting the Council's decision to close the toilets, it was highlighted how the facilities were important for tourists visiting the area. Particularly those who come by coach.
- The area has two toilets in the Market Square and at Maugsbury Road car park and it was recognised that one of these facilities needed to be closed.
- Stow Town Council had been in negotiations with the Council to keep these open, but the financial burden to the Town Council would not be sustainable given the funding for facilities only coming from the precept levied on homeowners.
- The closure of the town centre facilities would have an impact on the town centre, particularly for those with accessibility needs if the facilities would close.

The Chair then reminded Members of the recommendations which were as on the report

That Council resolves to either:

1. Make recommendations to Cabinet as the decision-maker for the request to be considered.
2. Refer the petition to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review.
3. Note the petition and take no further action.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Mike Every, then responded to the petition, and made the following points:

- Councillor Ben Eddolls was thanked for bringing forward the petition for Council to consider.
- A formal response was then circulated to all Members in the room which read as follows:

This Council notes the petition signed by 1,198 people requesting the Council to retain the public toilets in High Street/Market Square, Stow-on-the-Wold.

This Council resolves to refer consideration of the petition to Cabinet, as it is the relevant decision-making body, for discussion and decision at its meeting on 3 October 2024

- Councillor Every and the Deputy Chief Executive had visited Stow on 11 September 2024 to discuss the future of the facilities, in addition to previous discussions with officers and the Town Council.
- Residents had been in touch with the Council about their concerns if the facilities were closed.
- Due to the financial challenges facing the Council, the Public Conveniences Review Group had looked at the operation of the non-statutory services.
- Based on the recommendations of the Working Group, Cabinet took a decision in February 2024 to retain one facility in all of the main localities where there were multiple facilities with exception of Bourton-on-the-Water where two higher usage facilities would be retained.
- Whilst Cabinet needed to make the determination, Councillor Every was minded to recommend to Cabinet to retain the Market Square toilets and close the facilities at Maugersbury Road following the representations made.

It was highlighted that Stow Town Council had worked hard to investigate whether they could take over the running of the toilets but had concluded that this was not possible for the Market Square toilets.

It was asked whether Stow Town Council or any businesses could take over the running of Maugersbury Road toilets and therefore retain both facilities. Councillor Neill as the Ward Member responded that the Town Council would need to consider any new proposal carefully to ensure they could financially support it.

Councillor Joe Harris formally seconded the resolution and made the following points:

- It was regrettable that some of the non-statutory services that councils used to provide could no longer be provided.
- The medium-term financial challenge meant that public conveniences had to be able to generate most of their own funding or the Council would have to see if there were any alternative delivery models.
- For communities across the District, it was highlighted that the Council would need to have an honest discussion about the future of services like public conveniences.

It was highlighted that many of these non-statutory services help to provide for the important tourism economy in the Cotswolds.

Councillor Every then summed up:

- The facilities in Maugersbury Road were largely the same to run in terms of costs as the facilities in the Market Square. Therefore, there was no additional budget pressure.
- Fees and charges were being examined to see how the facilities are financed in the future.

Petition: Retain the public toilets in the High Street/Market Square, Stow-on-the-Wold (Resolution)		
RESOLVED: That Full Council		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NOTE the petition signed by 1,198 people requesting the Council to retain the public toilets in High Street/Market Square, Stow-on-the-Wold. 2. AGREE to refer consideration of the petition to Cabinet, as it is the relevant decision-making body, for discussion and decision at its meeting on 3 October 2024 		
For	Gina Blomefield, Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Every, David Fowles, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Nigel Robbins, Gary Selwyn, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	29
Against	None	0
Conflict Of	None	0

Interests		
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

36 District Boundary Review - Council Size Proposal

The purpose of the report was for Full Council to consider the draft Council Size Proposal for submission to The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).

The Deputy Leader, Councillor Evely as Chair of the Boundary Review Working Group, was then invited to introduce the report and made the following points:

- The Council agreed in 2023 to set up a Boundary Review Working Group to make recommendations on the size of the Council, the number of wards, the number of Councillors per ward and the ward names.
- Thanks were given to the Members of the group and the officers involved. Particularly the Business Manager for Democratic Services for the work done to formulate the submission document to the LGBCE.
- The proposals from officers regarding the Council Size were discussed during meetings of the group alongside the Member Survey which contributed to the final recommendations.
- An increase from 34 to 37 Councillors was recommended to maintain a consistent number of electors per councillor and to help councillors manage an increase in workload. This workload derived from the increase in the number of meetings and casework from residents.
- The preference for the Council would be to only have single member wards but it would be up to the LGBCE to determine the final warding.
- The report's recommendations based on cross-party discussions were welcomed.

Councillor David Fowles seconded the proposal and made the following points:

- Thanks were given to Councillor Evely as the Chair of the Boundary Review Working Group for his leadership on the group.
- Whilst the proposal was only a modest increase it represented a positive step for those Councillors whose workload had expanded.
- Thanks were given to the Electoral Services Manager for her work on the review of polling stations.

It was noted that the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee was replaced by the Gloucestershire Economic Strategy Scrutiny Committee. This was noted for correction in the document.

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It was highlighted by many Members that the report was comprehensive in its assessment of the current circumstances and thanks were given to the officers for this.

Councillor Every in summing up thanked Members for their comments and noted that recommendation 2 provided appropriate delegations for any final changes needed. The document was highlighted as part of an evidence-based exercise to summarise the needs of the Council.

District Boundary Review - Council Size Proposal (Resolution)		
RESOLVED: That Full Council		
1. APPROVE the draft Council Size Proposal (Annex A) for submission to The Local Government Boundary Commission for England.		
2. AGREE TO DELEGATE AUTHORITY to the Business Manager for Democratic Services, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer and the Chair of the Boundary Review Working Group, to finalise the Council Size Proposal document to reflect the discussion at full Council (if required) and to make other minor amendments to improve the document prior to submission.		
For	Gina Blomefield, Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Every, David Fowles, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Nigel Robbins, Gary Selwyn, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	29
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

37 Treasury Management Outturn 2023/24

The purpose of the report was to receive and discuss details of the Council's treasury management performance for the period 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Every, moved the recommendations and made the following points:

- The Audit and Governance Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 23 July 2024.
- £967,000 more than projected had been received in treasury management income.
- The Council has no borrowing other than the Council's Climate Municipal Investment Bonds.

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- The Council's investments performance was dependent on the baseline interest rate which had been higher in recent years. It was highlighted that the investment performance of the Council was in a similar range of Arlingclose's other clients.
- On pooled funds, it was highlighted that these were reviewed with Arlingclose and Council Officers but were held for a longer term to ensure a balance of risk.
- An arithmetic error raised at the Audit and Governance Committee in Table 1 had been corrected in this report.

A question was asked about Section 4.5 on the Community Municipal Investment was fully funded, and the workings of the £0.357M loan through Abundance Investments Limited for the purpose of the investments. The Deputy Chief Executive noted that the repayment would be for investors of the principal investments made and any interest owed. The bond covered the costs of the installation of Solar PV Panels at the Council Offices and the installation of some of the Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs) operated by the Council.

A question was asked regarding the financial advice providers Arlingclose and the optimum timeline to conduct a review of the arrangements and the criteria to do so. The Deputy Chief Executive stated that the selection of financial advisors was subject to a robust procurement process. It was also highlighted that advice from third parties was also sought, but ultimately the S.151 officer would be responsible for the final decision.

It was noted that the Council had a £1 million windfall from the investments but also a future requirement to borrow money in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). It was asked if the windfall could be held in a reserve to negate the requirement to borrow within the MTFS. There was also a question regarding the recommendations and whether the Council was approving the report or just noting it. The Deputy Chief Executive noted that the Council was required to receive the Treasury Management Strategy, the mid-year report and the outturn report from officers through the course of the year. Council was recommended to agree to endorse the report and its findings. The Deputy Leader then responded to the earlier question by highlighting that the higher-than-expected return was largely down to prudent budgeting. Whilst it was welcome that a larger return had been received, the Council was required to look at the return at the end of the year to see what funds were required to balance the Council's budget. The Deputy Chief Executive also clarified that the Council had set aside monies in an earmarked reserve for Treasury Management purposes due to the current statutory override in place on unrealised gains and losses on pooled fund investments. On future borrowing, this was set out in the 2024/25 MTFS which Council approved but that this was being kept under review to ensure the Council did not expend its resources on capital financing.

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It was noted that the Council did not have any external borrowing for capital investments but instead was using internal borrowing against its own investments to avoid higher interest rates.

Councillor Evemy summed up and made the following points:

- Members were reassured regarding Arlingclose's ability to advise the Council's on treasury matters.
- The Council was using its own resources to avoid the higher interest rates for external borrowing, but the future of higher interest rates was not certain.

Treasury Management Outturn Report 2023/24 (Resolution)		
RESOLVED: That Full Council		
1. NOTE the Treasury Management performance for the period 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024;		
2. APPROVE the Treasury Management Outturn Report for 2023/24.		
For	Gina Blomefield, Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Evemy, David Fowles, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Nigel Robbins, Gary Selwyn, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	29
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

38 Sewage Summit Update

The purpose of the report was to provide an update to all Councillors on the Sewage Summit event that took place on the 8 July 2024, the meetings held with the 3 water companies and 2 workshops that took place leading up to the event, along with outlining a series of recommendations associated with these.

Councillor Lisa Spivey, Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Safety introduced the report and made the following points:

- Thanks were given to all those involved including Council Officers, West Oxfordshire District Councillor Charlie Maynard and Councillor Angus Jenkinson for their work in this area. It was also noted that there were many voluntary organisations such as Windrush Against River Pollution (WASP) who had taken part in the work on sewage in rivers.

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- The report was a comprehensive overview of the problem following the Sewage Summit in July 2024.
- It was highlighted that this was a national problem which damages all waterways in the United Kingdom.
- The Council was only a small part of those organisations who could make a difference. However, the Environment Agency was one of the key government bodies to manage these issues and help oversee the operation of water companies.
- There were many risks involved with the issue of sewage, and the lack of upgrades to the sewage infrastructure that were needed.
- It was important that the Council used what powers it could to make a difference with new developments and urging for water companies to be made statutory consultees for planning applications.

Councillor Joe Harris formally seconded and reserved his right to speak.

A question was asked regarding the new MPs for the North and South Cotswolds constituencies and what dialogue would take place. Councillor Spivey stated that regular meetings would take place and she was confident that they would use their influence in Parliament to ensure action on this issue.

There was clarification sought on the definition of a 'matrix of Grampian conditions'. Councillor Spivey responded that these were planning conditions based on the size of developments proposed and what actions are needed. These were important to ensure the appropriate infrastructure was put in place where required.

There was a question on the current flood management team and how the new officer post would work. In response, Councillor Spivey highlighted that the Flood Risk Management Team would be key to assessing the risks from developments. However, there was a need for all stakeholders to come together to tackle these issues and for the Council to have a link with water companies.

A question was raised regarding the Grey Water Motion that was passed by Council and how work around grey water linked to the issue of flooding from sewage. Councillor Spivey noted the Council's online resources on grey water and reaffirmed the important work to reuse natural water where possible.

There was a question regarding the issue of run-off of agricultural chemicals from farmland and how this will be tackled. It was noted by Councillor Spivey that the issue of sewage in rivers was the primary focus given the Council's ability to have some influence but that the issue raised was important as part of improving water quality overall.

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It was asked if the use of the Council's resources was effective given that the issue could become part of a national cross-party campaign to improve water quality. Whilst taking the point onboard, Councillor Spivey noted that this was a very important issue where the Council needed to use its influence.

Councillor Harris seconded the report and made the following points:

- Congratulations were given on the strong report from officers.
- The Council was restrained by a statutory framework but had a leadership role to lobby government.
- The financial concerns of Thames Water was a problem for future housing and the infrastructure needed to make them habitable.
- There was a lack of confidence in the water companies' ability to provide a solution to the issue.
- Examples were provided across the District of multiple instances of hours of sewage dumping which were unacceptable.
- The Council would support the North Cotswolds MP Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown and South Cotswolds MP Dr Roz Savage MBE in their efforts to tackle this issue.

There were many comments regarding the lack of leadership from the water companies due to their setup as private companies.

Whilst the powers of the Council were limited, it was seen by many Members as important to utilise any leverage available.

The Grampian Conditions and the power of the regulator the Office for Water Services Regulation Authority were noted as important but needing to be strengthened to ensure they could use their powers effectively.

It was highlighted that the fines on water companies should be ring-fenced by the UK Government to ensure they are spent to tackle on pollution.

Several points were made regarding the anxiety felt by homeowners and businesses when they had been flooded repeatedly, which showed the much wider scope of problems caused by flooding.

Councillor Spivey then summed up the debate and made the following points:

- It was noted waterways should be protected for future.
- The issue of data capturing was difficult as the water companies were being relied on to provide accurate data.
- The development of the new Local Plan would have an important part to play in tackling this issue.

The Council then took a short break in proceedings.

Sewage Summit Update (Resolution)		
That Council resolves to:		
I. Note the report and approve the following recommendations; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Chief Executive writes to Government requesting they: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Make Water Companies Statutory Consultees for both Development Control and in preparing Local and Strategic Plans; ii. Introduce clear mandatory controls on storm water drainage for all development. b. Introduce a validation checklist and matrix of Grampian conditions. c. Incorporate policies within the new Local Plan to optimise water efficiency for new houses. d. Consider, subject to a business case and affordability including in the 2025-26 budget process funding for a specialist Officer to work with the Flood Risk Management Team and Planning service to liaise between Developers and the Water Companies along with related bodies. e. Continue to develop an effective Communication Strategy to outline to residents the statutory obligations and powers of each local government body and other relevant organisations such as the Environment Agency. 		
For	Gina Blomefield, Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Evey, David Fowles, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Nigel Robbins, Gary Selwyn, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	29
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

39 Report of the Constitution Working Group - Planning Protocol and Scheme of Delegation

The purpose of the report was to consider updates to the planning scheme of delegation and the planning protocol following a review in practice of the updated format of those parts adopted from 1 April 2024, for the benefit of all stakeholders.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services, Councillor Juliet Layton, introduced the report and the amended Annex A.

The amendment read as follows:

Add text to right and column of section 3.A (page 151 of the Agenda) to add:
Types of applications NOT to be determined under delegated powers...

(d) Planning applications, Permission in Principle and Technical Details Consent applications involving either (i) the provision of 10 or more dwellinghouses, (ii) where the number of new dwellinghouses is unknown, the residential development is proposed to land comprising 0.5 hectares or greater area, (iii) 1,000m² non-residential building floorspace or the development of 1 hectare or more land

(excluding any such applications where amendments of, or variations to, existing permissions are sought, as defined by Sections 73A and 73B of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990)

The following points were made:

- The Council in January 2024 approved a revised Scheme of Delegation and Planning Protocol for adoption within the Constitution.
- Following a review by the Constitution Working Group, the report from Planning officers was designed to correct irregularities that arose from a recent review of it. This included speaking rights for Ward Members within the Planning Protocol to ensure they only spoke before the debate. This was a change that had been made previously but had come out of the approved version in January in error.
- The updated Planning Protocol would help to provide consistency for the ways Members could refer applications to the Planning and Licensing Committee.
- The Scheme of Delegation included updates to provide clarity and wording updates within delegations to ensure officers using the scheme were sure of the rules under which they were operating.
- The changes built on the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) work which reviewed the scheme.
- The amendment proposed would ensure that large development applications would come to Planning and Licensing Committee automatically.

There was a question raised regarding if this was a procedure to refine the protocol rather than being a substantive change. Councillor Layton confirmed that this was simply a case of clarifying and correcting wording in the documents.

Following a question for clarity, it was confirmed that the amendment would be inserted at page 146 of the papers and not page 150 as stated.

A question was asked around whether relatives of Councillors would come under the restrictions of delegated authority use. This was confirmed by Councillor Layton as being correct.

There was also a question regarding Listed Building matters and declining to entertain an application. The Interim Development Management Manager noted that whilst rarely used, the authority can decline to hear an application if the application was being

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dealt with on appeal or was not substantially different from one previously rejected by the authority.

The rules of debate at Planning and Licensing Committee were then discussed as being different from those of Full Council or other Committees. The Interim Development Management Manager noted that all authorities were different but there was no set process for the determination of applications. Councillor Layton noted that the Constitution Working Group could look at that as part of its work programme.

Councillor Len Wilkins in seconding the recommendations noted that the Constitution Working Group had looked at the changes in great detail and was pleased to second them for agreement.

Councillor Layton then summed up the debate:

- Thanks were given for the questions raised.
- It was hoped that these changes should put the Scheme of Delegation and the Protocol on a firm footing.

Report of the Constitution Working Group - Planning Protocol and Scheme of Delegation (Resolution)		
RESOLVED: That Council		
1. APPROVE the changes and corrections to the Scheme of Delegation (as amended) in respect of the Planning & Licensing Committee.		
2. APPROVE the changes and corrections to Planning Protocol in respect of the Planning & Licensing Committee		
For	Gina Blomefield, Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Evey, David Fowles, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Nigel Robbins, Gary Selwyn, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	27
Against	Andrew Maclean	1
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Jeremy Theyer	1
Carried		

40 Review of Standards Arrangements

The purpose of the report was to consider the adoption of procedure rules for the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee and a review of the Council's arrangements for dealing with complaints under the Code of Conduct.

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The Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, Councillor Nigel Robbins, introduced the report and made the following points:

- The Localism Act 2011 put responsibility on Member standards on to local authorities.
- In 2023, the Gloucestershire-wide Code of Conduct was adopted by the Council.
- The Audit and Governance Committee reviewed the procedures in July 2024 before they came to Full Council which also included the creation of the procedure of the Standards Sub-Committee.
- The number of conduct cases from Town and Parish Councils was on the rise which was putting more burden on officers.
- It was important to have strong procedures to deal with these matters.

Councillor Helene Mansilla then seconded the recommendations and made the following points:

- Thanks were given to the officers for drafting the new processes to ensure the remain current and effective.
- The requirement for complaints in writing and timelines for investigations would provide clarity for all parties.
- It was crucial to keep procedures updated if a standards hearing should arise in the near future.
- The new procedure rules document had been informed by external legal advice and would help to ensure that the highest level of standards was achieved.

It was noted by Council that the documents were timely given the number of complaints relating to Town and Parish Councillors.

It was asked whether the information could be shared with the public to ensure they were aware of the processes. The Director of Governance confirmed that this information would be available on the website.

There was a question regarding page 179 on stage 1 of the complaints process regarding complaints being ruled out if they were not about Members acting in their role as a Councillor. The Director of Governance noted that the public would see Councillors as being their role all the time, so it was often difficult to distinguish between when a Councillor was and was not acting in their capacity as a Councillor. It was highlighted that the Monitoring Officer consulted with the Independent Persons when assessing complaints and would sometimes progress complaints to the investigation stage if there was any doubt.

The Council noted that the Sub-Committee terms of reference required 3 Members to attend to be quorate, and had a membership of 3 Members all drawn from the Audit and Governance Committee. It was therefore suggested that the use of deputies

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should be required to make sure that all Audit and Governance Committee members could step into the position if required.

There was a query regarding whether complaints should be in a written form, how this would affect current complaints and how different councils were managed if they had adopted different code of conducts. The Director of Governance replied firstly by stating that the form was a preference because it required complainants to provide all of the required information including what resolution or they were seeking in making a complaint. A hard copy form could also be provided to those not able to access digital services. It was clarified that not all Councillors within the District were covered by the Gloucestershire-wide Code of Conduct which was agreed by Full Council in 2023. Town and Parish Councils were encouraged to adopt the Gloucestershire-wide Code of Conduct. In regard to current complaints, if they were received before the meeting, these would be assessed under the old complaint handling arrangements but any hearing would be under the proposed document.

It was highlighted that the District Council had a leadership role with Town and Parish Councils to ensure good behaviour was encouraged, and to help manage the high number of complaints.

Councillor Robbins was then invited to sum up:

- It was highlighted that there needed to be a standard set of expectations for behaviour in public life.
- The procedures did allow for reconciliation measures, which should be explored wherever possible before going to a formal hearing.
- The Council may need to look at the threshold for the number of members of the Sub-Committee to ensure meetings could proceed.

As the meeting had been in session for 3 hours, a vote was taken as to whether the meeting should be extended for the final hour.

Review of Standards Arrangements (Resolution)		
RESOLVED: That Council		
1. APPROVE the updated arrangements for dealing with code of conduct complaints;		
2. APPROVE the procedure for the Standards Hearing Sub-Committee and to delegate authority to the Director of Governance & Development to make minor amendments to the procedure.		
For	Gina Blomefield, Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Evemy, David Fowles, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Nigel Robbins, Gary Selwyn, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon	29

	Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

Extension of the meeting (Resolution)		
RESOLVED: That Full Council continues the meeting for the final hour.		
For	Gina Blomefield, Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Evey, David Fowles, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Nigel Robbins, Gary Selwyn, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	29
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

41 Notice of Motions

42 Motion A: Safety of lithium batteries in e-scooters and e-bikes & their disposal

The Chair Councillor Nikki Ind introduced the motion as the proposer, and made the following points:

- There has been an increase in e-scooters and e-bikes and safety standards for their batteries needed to keep pace.
- The fires that had taken place from these batteries had the potential to cause significant damage to property and potentially cause a loss of life.
- The request of the motion was to ask that the Council publicly supported the Support the Safety of Electric-Powered Micromobility Vehicles and Lithium Batteries Bill, and asked both of the District's MPs to support it in Parliament.

Council noted that e-scooters and e-bikes were also a danger due their higher speed which may cause more accidents.

Council noted that the fires from lithium batteries were much more difficult to extinguish than normal fires.

It was highlighted that e-scooters were generally illegal and the police had a responsibility to enforce the current legislation around these motorised vehicles.

Councillor Mike McKeown then spoke as the seconder of the motion and made the following points:

- Transport in the Cotswolds was one the biggest sources of emissions of carbon dioxide and these vehicles had an important role in expanding active travel options.
- Many of the issues around e-bikes and e-scooter batteries were from the regulations around standards of batteries available compared to those of electric cars.
- This motion was regarding supporting the efforts to fill the gap in the regulations that currently exist for e-scooter and e-bikes specifically.

Motion A: Safety of lithium batteries in e-scooters and e-bikes & their disposal (Motion)

RESOLVED: That Full Council

1. AGREE to support the Safety of Electric-Powered Micromobility Vehicles and Lithium Batteries Bill;
2. AGREE to request that the Leader of the Council writes to MP's Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown and Roz Savage to provide notice that the motion has been passed - request that the Safety of Electric-Powered Micromobility Vehicles and Lithium Batteries Bill is supported in Parliament;
3. AGREE that the Leader of the Council writes to the organisers of the cross-party campaign for the Bill, expressing our support (electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk).

For	Gina Blomefield, Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Evemy, Joe Harris, Mark Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Nigel Robbins, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	26
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

43 Motion B: Ambulance motion

The Chair called the proposer of the motion Councillor Paul Hodgkinson to introduce the motion. The following points were made in doing so:

- There had been sustained campaign efforts over 10 years regarding the poor ambulance response times across the Cotswold District and wider Gloucestershire area.

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- It was stated that the most urgent emergency calls that should arrive within 8 minutes and urgent calls arrive within 18 minutes, but these targets were not being achieved.
- The issues with ambulance response times was particularly a problem in rural parts of the area which were higher than those of more urban areas of Gloucestershire.
- The latest statistics for the District showed the severe issues with rural response times. Category 1 cases that should get to patients within 8 minutes were not being met with several examples highlighted of average response times in specific locations being over 20 minutes. Category 2 cases were also serious and should be responded to on average in 18 minutes. However, there were several places within the District where the average was around 60 minutes.
- The work of first responders and ambulances was commended for their dedication and care, but the service needed to improve for those patients waiting.
- The motion would ensure that there was a clear oversight of the work of the ambulance service and how it should improve.

Council noted the delay to ambulance response times because of the problems with the lack of available beds to take patients, and it was asked whether that work needed to be done to help the issue of response times. Councillor Hodgkinson responded by agreeing with the need for these bottlenecks to be cleared, but there needed to be further resources for the ambulance service.

Council asked how the motion could help get clarity of the local issues amidst the wider issues with the National Health Service. Councillor Hodgkinson noted that it was important for Councillors to hear from the management of the service to see what the issues were, and for the management to see how Members took these issues seriously.

There were various comments regarding the longstanding multi-faceted issues in the National Health Service and the social services sector which would have an impact on ambulance response performance.

Council commended the work of emergency response services in sometimes dangerous circumstances.

It was highlighted that there were issues with the real terms funding position of the National Health Service over various years.

Councillor Blomefield seconded the motion and made the following points:

- It was welcomed that the motion had a cross-party support and also the aim to have the relevant bodies engage with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- An example of a resident in Chipping Campden who had died following a very long wait for an ambulance was highlighted to show the problems within the service.
- Community First Responders would be a key part of helping the ambulance service and former Councillor Stephen Andrews was one of these responders.
- It was hoped that the South West Ambulance Service would attend Overview and Scrutiny Committee at a future meeting.

Motion B: Ambulance Motion (Motion)

RESOLVED: That Council

1. AGREED to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the CEO of SWASFT asking him for a full report on what steps he will be taking to improve ambulance response times in the Cotswold District as well as providing more support to grow the Community First Responder teams whose assistance is invaluable and thereafter invite him to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discuss his report and the actions resulting from it.
2. AGREED to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Chair of the county's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee asking that committee to express this Council's concerns at its next meeting and to regularly scrutinise ambulance performance as a standard agenda item.
3. AGREED to instruct the CEO to write to our two MPs asking them to raise this issue in Parliament and to lobby SWASFT on our behalf.

For	Gina Blomefield, Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Evemy, Joe Harris, Mark Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Nigel Robbins, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	26
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

44 Next meeting

The next meeting of Full Council was noted to be on 27 November 2024.

45 Matters exempt from publication

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Council did not enter private session.

The Meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and closed at 5.37 pm

Chair

(END)