



Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet held on Thursday, 4 September 2025

Members present:

Mike Evemy	Juliet Layton	
Claire Bloomer	Paul Hodgkinson	Andrea Pellegram
Patrick Coleman	Mike McKeown	Tristan Wilkinson

Officers present:

Matt Abbott, Head of Communications	Gemma Moreing, Business Information Lead
Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer)	Jane Portman, Interim CEO
Caroline Clissold, Business Manager for Housing and Resident Services	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer
Nickie Mackenzie-Daste, Senior Democratic Services Officer	Kira Thompson, Election and Democratic Services Support Assistant
Helen Martin, Director of Communities and Place	Joseph Walker, Head of Economic Development and Communities
Philip Measures, Service Lead Environmental Health - Food Safety & Licensing	

Observers:

Councillor Gina Blomefield

118 Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

119 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Andrea Pellegram declared an interest in respect of Agenda item 10 and agreed to leave the Chamber for the duration of the item and the vote on that item.

120 Minutes

The purpose of this item was to consider the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 10 July 2025. There were no amendments to the minutes

Approval of the minutes was proposed by Councillor Paul Hodgkinson, Cabinet Member for Health, Culture and Visitor Experience, and seconded by Councillor Layton, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning.
The proposal was put to the vote and agreed by Cabinet.

Voting record:

6 For, 0 Against, 2 Abstentions.

To approve the minutes of Cabinet 10 July 2025 (Resolution)		
RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 July 2025 be approved as a correct record.		
For	Patrick Coleman, Mike Evemy, Paul Hodgkinson, Juliet Layton, Andrea Pellegram and Tristan Wilkinson	6
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Claire Bloomer and Mike McKeown	2
Carried		

121 Leader's Announcements

The Leader congratulated all involved in the Phoenix Festival, noting it had been well supported by the Town Council and Crowdfund Cotswolds, and was a successful and well-attended community event.

122 Public Questions

No public questions were received.

123 Member Questions

No member questions were received.

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

No decisions had been taken by the Leader or Cabinet Members since the previous Cabinet meeting; therefore, there were no items to report.

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

The Chair welcomed Councillor Gina Blomefield, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, who introduced the recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 September 2025 which asked that consideration be given to putting local social and /or archaeological artefacts on public display at the Council's offices, including artefacts related to the history of local government in the area.

Cabinet discussed the recommendation and Councillor Paul Hodgkinson, Cabinet Member for Health, Culture and Visitor Experience, advised that the Council's Leisure and Culture Manager would explore with the Museum operator, Freedom Leisure, opportunities to improve public access to the Museum's extensive collection.

126 Preventing Homelessness Strategy 2025-2030

Councillor Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning introduced the report and presented the new Preventing Homelessness Strategy 2025 -2030 produced to comply with requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

The strategy set out key priorities focused on shifting from reactive to preventative approaches.

It was noted that homelessness in the Cotswolds had risen by 30% since 2020, despite progress in maintaining low levels of rough sleeping, delivering 458 affordable homes, and preventing homelessness for over 200 households in the past year.

The report highlighted pressures from high housing costs (average £440,000 for a home; around £1,000 per month for a two-bed rental) and increasing demand. The Council received £369,227 in Homelessness Prevention Grant funding for 2025–26, with 49% ring-fenced for prevention, relief and staffing.

Members noted that the annual ring-fenced Homelessness Prevention Grant supported this duty, with key outcomes to prevent single homelessness and rough sleeping, reduce family use of unsuitable temporary accommodation, and eliminate B&B placements beyond six weeks.

The strategy and action plan had been reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in May and no formal recommendations had been raised. The Committee had indicated broad support for the strategy.

Councillor Paul Hodgkinson, Cabinet Member for Health, Culture and Visitor Experience, noted the strategy's mention of vulnerable groups, including those experiencing domestic abuse and veterans, the report author reported that very few veterans presented as homeless in the Cotswold District Council area and currently none were recorded, though some occasionally appear on the waiting list.

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Cabinet Members expressed their thanks to all the officers involved for their excellent work.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Juliet Layton and seconded by Councillor Claire Bloomer.

The proposal was put to the vote and agreed by Cabinet.

Voting Record:

8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

To Approve the implementation of the Preventing Homelessness Strategy 2025-2030 with immediate effect (Resolution)		
RESOLVED that Cabinet Approved the implementation of the Preventing Homelessness Strategy 2025-2030 with immediate effect.		
For	Claire Bloomer, Patrick Coleman, Mike Evemy, Paul Hodgkinson, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown, Andrea Pellegram and Tristan Wilkinson	8
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

127 Private Sector Housing Civil Penalties Policy and HMO Amenity Standards

Councillor Andrea Pellegram, Cabinet Member for Environment and Regulatory Services left the Chamber having declared an interest at the start of the meeting.

Councillor Mike Evemy, Leader of the Council, introduced the report which covered a review and update of both the Civil Penalties Enforcement Policy and the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Amenity Standards policy taking into account legislative changes and new guidance from tribunal decisions.

Civil Penalties Policy

This policy was required to be in place in order to retain the option of serving a civil penalty for a housing offence, as an alternative to prosecution. Officers would continue to conduct their work in accordance with the Corporate Enforcement Policy, with the informal approach to resolution usually being the starting point. Proposed fines ranged from £500 to £30,000, depending on the seriousness of the offence(s). The forthcoming Renters Rights Bill was expected to require councils to use Civil Penalties, and their scope was being broadened to include harassment and illegal eviction. It was therefore considered important to have a robust and up-to-date policy in place.

The Policy had been developed nationally by Justice for Tenants, and a methodology had been provided for the calculation of fines together with a step-by-step procedure. This would ensure that good decisions were made and that they could be properly defended if appealed at Tribunal. The final decisions on fines would be made by the Head of Legal Services in consultation with the Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Services. The policy would be updated from time to time, although any significant changes to the Policy would be referred to the portfolio holder and brought to Cabinet.

HMO Amenity Standards

It was noted that this policy applied to the inspection of all HMOs, not only those that were licensed. The policy was designed to provide guidance to officers, landlords and tenants and had been updated to reflect the change in definition of a licensable HMO.

It was noted that landlords were always given an opportunity to remedy issues before penalties or prosecution, with mitigating and aggravating factors taken into account. Complaints were mainly tenant-led, though proactive inspections were carried out on licensable HMOs.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Mike Evemy and seconded by Councillor Tristan Wilkinson.

The proposal was put to the vote and agreed by Cabinet.

Voting Record:

7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

Councillor Andrea Pellegram did not vote having declared an interest.

To approve the Policy for Civil Penalties and the HMO Amenity Standards Policies and delegate authority for revisions to the Civil Penalties Policy (Resolution)

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

1. Approved the Policy for Civil Penalties under the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020.
2. Approved the HMO Amenity Standards Policy
3. Delegated authority for revisions to the Civil Penalties Policy and the issuing of Civil Penalties to the Business Manager, Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services.

For	Claire Bloomer, Patrick Coleman, Mike Evemy, Paul Hodgkinson, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown and Tristan Wilkinson	7
Against	None	0
Conflict Of	Andrea Pellegram	1

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Interests		
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

128 Corporate Plan 2025-2028 refresh

The purpose of the report was to seek Cabinet's endorsement of a refreshed Corporate Plan for the period 2025 through to 2028. The refreshed Corporate Plan reflected significant national and local changes since last year's agreement on the extant Corporate Plan. The previous update had been agreed in January 2024, but a further refresh was required following the Government's announcement on local government reorganisation and the potential abolition of the authority on 1 April 2028. Cabinet emphasised the importance of producing a more succinct plan, removing actions already achieved, and focusing on priorities to be delivered before reorganisation.

Councillor Mike Every, Leader of the Council, introduced the item.

Cabinet considered the refreshed Corporate Plan, introduced by the Leader and presented by the report author. It was noted that the report had been subject to scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 September 2025.

Key changes to the extant plan included the introduction of a new priority, preparing for the future, which was linked to LGR, and the embedding of the Local Plan across all six existing priorities. It was confirmed that the final plan would combine the text and action plan into a single designed document, with photographs and member contributions to make it more accessible and engaging. Members would be consulted individually on attributed quotes before publication.

During discussion, members commended the clarity and accessibility of the document and welcomed the incorporation of Cabinet Members' top three priorities. Minor drafting amendments were suggested. Members highlighted the importance of climate action, including fleet renewal, and the need to hand over a "clean council" to the successor unitary authority. The aspiration to prepare for the future and to build a lasting legacy for the Cotswolds was strongly supported. Members also noted that financial sustainability had been taken into account in preparing the plan.

Cabinet resolved to recommend the Corporate Plan 2025–2028 to Council on 24 September 2025, subject to modifications to member quotes and minor drafting amendments, and delegated authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to finalise the design.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Mike Every and seconded by Councillor Patrick Coleman.

The proposal was put to the vote and agreed by Cabinet.

Voting Record:
8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

To approve recommendations - Corporate Plan 2025-2028 (Resolution)		
RESOLVED that Cabinet : 1. Agreed to recommend to Full Council to adopt the Plan, subject to modifications of Councillors attributed quotes. 2. Delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with Leader, to finalise the design.		
For	Claire Bloomer, Patrick Coleman, Mike Evemy, Paul Hodgkinson, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown, Andrea Pellegram and Tristan Wilkinson	8
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

129 Service Performance Report 2025-26 Quarter 1

The purpose of the report was to provide an update on progress on the Council's priorities and service performance Q1 (April to June 2025).

Councillor Mike Evemy, Leader of the Council, introduced the item, which was for noting.

Cabinet considered the Service Performance Report for Quarter 1 (April–June 2025), which had also been reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report highlighted key achievements, including the successful transition of staff back from Publica on 1 July 2025, delivery of the Parish and Town Council Summit in June with over 100 attendees, and continued success of the Crowdfund Cotswold initiative.

Performance data showed strong results in several areas, including non-domestic rates collection ahead of target, planning applications determined within timescales, and a reduction in missed bin collections to below target for the first time in over a year. Leisure centre visits had increased significantly, and gym memberships were broadly on target. Areas for improvement included planning appeals, where outcomes varied depending on committee and officer recommendations, and affordable housing delivery, which had achieved two completions in the quarter.

Officers confirmed minor amendments to the report, including updated information on biodiversity work at Cotswold Lakes and a correction to a chart legend.

Positive comments were made on the clarity of the report, the importance of improving affordable housing delivery, and the need to monitor planning appeals and

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enforcement more closely. Members also noted the value of cross-team working, improvements in climate action, waste management, food premises inspections, and the successful media campaign on fly-tipping. Metrics for planning enforcement were agreed to be included in future reporting.

Thanks and congratulations were extended to officers for their work across a wide range of service areas, with particular recognition of progress on climate change, waste management, planning performance, and the support provided to residents through initiatives such as the Low-Income Family Tracker.

Councillor Blomefield, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, was invited to make any comments around the report resulting from the Committee meeting on 1 September 2025. There were no formal recommendations, however key points highlighted included:

- Planning enforcement, which would be considered at the November meeting.
- The value of the retrofit officer was emphasised, with concern that her contract was due to end in September; continuation of the role was encouraged if funding allowed.
- Improvements in the Council's relationship with Ubico were welcomed.
- The importance of promoting wider awareness of the Low-Income Family Tracker was highlighted.
- Adequacy of electric vehicle charging points was to be reviewed.
- Monitoring of planning applications, including solar installations, was suggested and a greater uptake of renewable energy was encouraged

Members noted that the first meeting of the Moreton-in-Marsh Working Group was scheduled for the following week, with a wider meeting planned for later in September or early October, in line with the Local Plan timetable.

Cabinet noted that solar installations generally did not require planning permission except for listed buildings, and that monitoring could be explored using digital tools to identify trends and improve data collection.

Waste management pressures from increased takeaway outlets in Bourton-on-the-Water were discussed, including overflowing bins, and Cabinet recognised the need to review wider tourism and litter management outside the peak season.

Members noted that waste vehicles were under detailed review, with replacement options to be considered, requiring robust decisions balancing climate commitments, finances, in the context of upcoming Local Government Reorganisation. It was also noted that any proposals would need full Council approval.

RESOLVED that Cabinet

- Noted overall progress on the Council priorities and service performance for 2025-26 Q1 (April-June 2025).

130 People and Culture Strategy

The purpose of the reports was to seek Cabinet's approval of the People & Culture Strategy (Annex A) and the accompanying Year 1 implementation plan (Annex B).

Councillor Mike Every. Leader of the Council, introduced the People and Culture Strategy 2025–28 report, which had been developed following the first phase of staff returning from Publica in November 2024. The strategy groundwork had been carried out by Innovation Central, aimed to align and develop the workforce alongside organisational priorities, establish workforce values, and provide a behavioural framework to support positive and productive work environments. Staff engagement and consultation had informed the strategy and its associated year one implementation plan. Now, additional consideration was also being given to forthcoming Local Government Reorganisation.

The strategy incorporated four core workforce values which were also key to the Corporate Plan:

- putting communities first,
- working as one team,
- being business-focused, and
- being set up for success to deliver corporate priorities.

The internal communications and engagement strategy was also noted as being an important part of the strategy..

Members raised the following points:

- The importance of supporting and retaining staff during the period of uncertainty and ensuring high performance and accountability.
- The creation of psychological safety to maintain engagement and motivation.
- Recognition of the Council's menopause policy and the promotion of staff wellbeing initiatives.
- The success of recent local job fairs and the importance of inclusive recruitment criteria.
- Positive changes in workplace culture, with emphasis on collaboration, staff value, and resilience.
- Consideration of KPIs and objectives to monitor progress, and potential for sharing aspects of the strategy with other councils.
- The role of internal communications in supporting the strategy and engagement across the workforce.

Cabinet welcomed the strategy, noting its timeliness and importance in preparing the workforce for future organisational changes.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Mike Every and seconded by Councillor Andrea Pellegram.

The proposal was put to the vote and agreed by Cabinet.

Voting Record:

8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

To approve the People and Culture Strategy 2025-2028 and the implementation and engagement strategies. (Resolution)

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

1. Approved the People & Culture Strategy as detailed in Annex A
2. Approved the four core workforce values:
 - a. We put our communities first:
 - b. We are one team: working for our residents and businesses
 - c. We are business focussed: ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and good value for money
 - d. We are set up for success: to deliver against our corporate priorities
3. Approved the year 1 implementation plan as detailed in Annex B (September 2025 – August 2026)
4. Noted the Internal Communications & Engagement Strategy as detailed in Annex C.

For	Claire Bloomer, Patrick Coleman, Mike Evemy, Paul Hodgkinson, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown, Andrea Pellegram and Tristan Wilkinson	8
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

131 Financial Performance Report 2025-26 Quarter 1

The purpose of the report was to present the first 2025/26 budget monitoring position to Cabinet and seek Cabinet's endorsement of the proposed financial management approach and related reserve transfers.

Councillor Patrick Coleman, Cabinet Member for Finance, introduced the report and highlighted the early agreement of the July pay award, which provided certainty for staff and finance teams, the implementation of a vacancy management process, the creation of earmarked reserves for transformation and capacity building, and the establishment of a planning appeals reserve to manage financial risks from increased housing targets and speculative development applications.

Members raised the following points:

- Vacancy management was recognised as an efficient process to ensure the right staff were in the right roles, while allowing for the appropriate use of agency staff where necessary, and to balance staffing requirements with budgetary savings.
- A shortfall in cemetery income was noted and was under review to understand its causes.
- Interest rates for funds were requested in percentage terms to improve clarity on financial performance and support effective budget management.
- Income from public conveniences, following the introduction of charging at all but one site, was expected to reach the annual target of £100,000 in quarter two, with members noting previous underachievement of approximately £40,000 per year.
- Surpluses above budget were to be held in earmarked reserves to support transformation initiatives, capacity building, and strategic planning.
- Planning fee income and the anticipated increase in planning appeals were highlighted as requiring careful monitoring to ensure appropriate financial provision.
- Replacement and upgrade of car park payment machines was noted, with installation expected in the next financial year; members highlighted the importance of modernising payment systems to improve efficiency.
- Expanding parking payment options to include multiple apps was suggested to enhance visitor convenience.

The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny, Gina Blomefield, welcomed the vacancy management process, emphasising its potential to improve efficiency and ensure the right staff were deployed. She also highlighted the need for clarification of cemetery income shortfalls and requested that interest rates be reported in percentages to aid understanding.

Action Deputy Chief Executive to ensure that percentage interest rates were made available.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Patrick Coleman and seconded by Councillor Mike Every.

The proposal was put to the vote and agreed by Cabinet

Voting Record:

8 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

To endorse the proposed financial management approach and related reserve transfers (Resolution)

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

1. Noted the financial position set out in the report.
2. Endorsed the approach to financial management for 2025/26 as set out in paragraph 4.8 of the report.
3. Endorsed the principle to transfer any additional year-end surplus to the Transformation and Capacity Building earmarked reserves, as set out in paragraphs 4.10 to 4.11 of the report.
4. Endorsed the principle of the transfer of 50% of any year-end Planning Fee income (over and above the budgeted level) to the Planning Appeals earmarked reserve, as set out in paragraph 4.22 of the report.

For	Claire Bloomer, Patrick Coleman, Mike Every, Paul Hodgkinson, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown, Andrea Pellegram and Tristan Wilkinson	8
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

132 Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of Cabinet is on 16 October 2025, and will start at 6.00pm.

The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 7.42 pm

(END)