

# Public Document Pack



**COTSWOLD**  
District Council

Tuesday, 10 March 2026

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## **COUNCIL**

A meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX on **Wednesday, 18 March 2026 at 2.00 pm.**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jane Portman'.

Jane Portman  
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Council

(Councillors Mark Harris, Ray Brassington, Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, David Cunningham, Tony Dale, Mike Evemy, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Nigel Robbins, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Len Wilkins and Tristan Wilkinson)

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.

Cotswold District Council, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1PX  
Tel: 01285 623000 [www.cotswold.gov.uk](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk)

# AGENDA

1. **Apologies**  
To receive any apologies for absence. The quorum for Council is 9 members.
2. **Declarations of Interest**  
To receive any declarations of interest from Members relating to items to be considered at the meeting.
3. **Minutes**  
To confirm the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 23 February 2026.
4. **Announcements from the Chair, Leader or Chief Executive**  
To receive any announcements from the Chair of the Council, the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.
5. **Unsung Heroes Awards**  
Purpose:  
To announce the Unsung Heroes awards for this quarter.
6. **Public Questions**  
To deal with questions from the public within the open forum question and answer session of fifteen minutes in total. Questions from each member of the public should be no longer than one minute each and relate to issues under the Council's remit. At any one meeting no person may submit more than two questions and no more than two such questions may be asked on behalf of one organisation.  
  
The Chair will ask whether any members of the public present at the meeting wish to ask a question and will decide on the order of questioners.  
  
The response may take the form of:
  - a) a direct oral answer;
  - b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
  - c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.
7. **Member Questions**  
A Member of the Council may ask the Chair, the Leader, a Cabinet Member or the Chair of any Committee a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the Cotswold District. A maximum period of

fifteen minutes shall be allowed at any such meeting for Member questions.

A Member may only ask a question if:

- a) the question has been delivered in writing or by electronic mail to the Chief Executive no later than 5.00 p.m. on the working day before the day of the meeting; or
- b) the question relates to an urgent matter, they have the consent of the Chair to whom the question is to be put and the content of the question is given to the Chief Executive by 9.30 a.m. on the day of the meeting.

An answer may take the form of:

- a) a direct oral answer;
- b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

The following Member Questions have been submitted for response:

**Question 1: Cllr Tom Stowe to Cllr Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning.**

Please could you confirm the current number of open Planning Enforcement cases and does the current level of staffing and resources within the Planning Enforcement team allow Cotswold District Council to deliver an effective and timely service?

**Question 2: Cllr Tony Slater to Cllr Mike Evemy, Leader of the Council.**

Following the O&S briefing on the latest LGR position I am concerned that the LGR work is taking too much time from our senior officers, who as a result, cannot dedicate their service to Cotswold District Council. CDC seems to have more of its officers leading workstreams and programmes of work than other district and city councils. While it is pleasing that our officers have the advanced skills to be picked for this important work, it distorts the fair share of costs between the other contributors.

As with the Publica transition, the estimated costs of £1.5m (already equivalent to around 900 band D taxpayers) do not account for the significant officer time, and the taxpayers of the Cotswolds are therefore paying more than their fair share for

the reorganisation, and at the same time losing out on service that should be provided.

Please can you explain how these role allocations are weighted for fairness, and what additional backfill costs are envisaged to fill the void when officers are working on LGR?

**Question 3: Cllr Tom Stowe to Cllr Mike Evely, Leader of the Council.**

Does Cotswold District Council own a camera drone? If so, how much did it cost and what ongoing/recurring costs to the council are there?

**Question 4: Cllr Tony Slater to Cllr Andrea Pellegram, Cabinet Member for Environment and Regulatory Services.**

Litter along our roads and lanes has become intolerable and is particularly visible in the winter months when the vegetation is dormant. Please can the member outline what steps are being taken to rid our beautiful countryside of this menace, as it is a poor advertisement for the Cotswolds?

**Question 5: Cllr Jeremy Theyer to Cllr Andrea Pellegram Cabinet Member for Environment and Regulatory Services.**

There will soon be an order being placed for the new bin truck fleet – what flexibility is there with these new vehicles once they are in operation to adapt for changes in recycling and waste collection legislation which may be imposed in the future by government?

**Question 6: Cllr Len Wilkins to Cllr Patrick Coleman, Cabinet Member for Finance.**

Cotswold residents have supported CDC and its predecessors for over 50 years. During this time reserves have accrued, we have a duty to ensure that Cotswold Council Taxpayers get the best return and value for money from these reserves. Could our representatives during the negotiations on LGR ensure our residents assets are protected and not lost to bail out other local councils involved in the transition?

**Question 7: Cllr Laura Hall-Wilson to Cllr Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Health, Culture and Visitor Experience.**

The report from the Town Centres Initiative has recently been published and for Tetbury one of the key recommendations is parking improvements. I hear from businesses and residents on almost a daily basis how they struggle with parking in Tetbury. Please confirm what measures you will be taking in reaction to this report, to improve the flow of cars and look at how to make parking easier for visitors to our town?

**Question 8: Cllr David Fowles to Cllr Mike Evely, Leader of the Council.**

When the decision was taken to sell the memorial cottages in Cirencester, the Council gave notice to one of the tenants - the Living Memorial Historical Association - who ran their WW2 museum from one of the Cottages.

A promise was made that we would help the Association to store their collection and find a new home. Since when nothing has happened.

Given our armed forces are once again embroiled in another conflict, finding a home for this museum is even more relevant. Please could you update us on the current position?

**Question 9: Cllr David Fowles to Cllr Tristan Wilkinson, Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation.**

Under the last Conservative government, Gloucestershire received considerable Government funding to invest in Growth hubs including the Growth hub at the RAU. This funding has now disappeared and the centre is now known as The Alliston Centre. This site was intended to be the beginning of a £100m investment announced in January 2023 to create an Innovation village' on a 12 acre site at the RAU. Planning was applied for 'phase 1' in October last year.

Please could you update us on when work is going to start on phase 1, the status of the Growth Hub and the overall status in terms of investment funding for the Innovation project?

8. **Constitution Working Group recommendations** (Pages 11 - 40)

Purpose:

To present recommendations from the Constitution Working Group arising from meetings on 7 October 2025 and 13 February 2026 in relation to:

- Disclosable interests
- Standards Hearings Sub-Committee Procedure Rules
- Committee Membership

Recommendations:

That Council resolves to:

1. Agree to amend the Planning Protocol to include the new paragraphs drafted by the Head of Legal Services about the declaration of disclosable pecuniary interests, as shown in Annex A.
2. Agree to amend the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee Procedure Rules following a review, as shown in Annex B.
3. Agree to amend Article 5 to remove the rule that says the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council cannot both serve on the Planning and Licensing Committee.

9. **Review of political proportionalities on committees** (Pages 41 - 44)

Purpose:

To review the political proportionalities on committees following receipt of a notice that a member has joined a group.

Recommendations:

That Council resolves to:

1. Agree the political proportionalities as set out in Annex A.
2. Appoint to any vacant seats on committees in accordance with the wishes of the political group to which the seat has been allocated, as expressed at the meeting

10. **Appointment of Independent Members to the Audit and Governance Committee** (Pages 45 - 50)

Purpose:

To appoint one/extend the other appropriately skilled and experienced members of the public to be "independent members" of the Audit & Governance Committee.

Recommendations:

That Council resolves to:

1. Appoint Nick Craxton to the Council's Audit & Governance Committee commencing immediately, until 31 March 2028.
2. Extend Christopher Bass' appointment to the Council's Audit & Governance Committee until 31 March 2028.

11. **Community Governance Review** (Pages 51 - 64)

Purpose:

To approve the final recommendations of the Community Governance Review.

Recommendations:

That Council resolves to:

1. Approve the final recommendations in relation to the Community Governance Review for Cirencester, Cutsdean, Fairford, Moreton-in-Marsh, Southrop, Tetbury, as set out in the table at para. 5.1.
2. Authorise the Head of Legal Services to make a Reorganisation of Community Governance order to implement the changes agreed by Council.

12. **Change to Full Council meeting date**

Purpose:

To consider a change to the June Extraordinary Full Council meeting date.

Recommendation:

Council is recommended to agree to move the date of the 17 June 2026 Full Council meeting to 12 August 2026, at 6.00pm.

13. **Notice of Motions** (Pages 65 - 66)

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12, the following Motion has been received:

Motion A:

**Climate and Ecological Transformation in Cotswold District and Gloucestershire**

Proposed by: Councillor Angus Jenkinson

Seconded by Councillor Mike McKeown

**Motion:**

The motion addresses the urgent need for local action to support sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices in response to escalating climate and ecological challenges.

Council notes:

- The Council's declared Climate and Ecological Emergencies and its continuing commitment to be green to the core in response to these
- The findings of the UK's national risk assessment identifying critical threats

to ecosystems and biodiversity with international evidence that many natural systems are on trajectories towards failure

- The recent call by the United Nations Secretary-General for a transition beyond GDP towards recognising the value of natural systems and ecosystem services for local and global future outcomes
- The conclusions of successive international UN IPCC scientific reports that agricultural methods have a vital role in mitigating climate and ecological impacts, which also affect food supply
- Both Cotswold District and Gloucestershire have amongst the highest proportions of agricultural land of any local authority areas in England with thousands of farm enterprises that are in or considering transition to regenerative practices
- That Gloucestershire contains the largest National Landscape in England and a National Forest Park
- That climate, ecology and food resilience depend on successful agricultural transition, a goal relevant to the Food and Farming track in local government re-organisation.

Recognising the significant potential of local agriculture to contribute positively to climate and ecological recovery, and the need for coordinated local and regional support to enable this, Council resolves to:

- 1) Request that the Chief Executive and the Leader propose the following when representing the Council on the work to prepare for local government reorganisation:
  - a) That the LGR Programme formally adopts Food and Farming as an active element within its climate planning work - whether as its own strand or as a sub-strand as officers determine as most effective; and
  - b) That the LGR Programme uses Climate Leadership Gloucestershire's Food and Farming track as a convening mechanism.
- 2) Request that the Chief Executive and the Leader report back to the July 2026 meeting of the Council with an update on the development of the Future Operating Model(s) of the new unitary council(s) and how Food and Farming is being considered within them and including the following:
  - a) who will take ownership of it (political and officer leads),

- b) what the early priorities are, and
- c) which partners could be involved (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, catchment partnerships, Environment Agency, National Landscapes, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, National Farmers Union, and others as appropriate).

14. **Next meeting**

The next meeting of Council will be held on 20 May 2026, starting at 6.00 pm.

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## **Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Monday, 23 February 2026**

### Members present:

|                     |                              |                   |
|---------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Mark Harris (Chair) | Ray Brassington (Vice-Chair) |                   |
| Claire Bloomer      | Nikki Ind                    | Tom Stowe         |
| Nick Bridges        | Angus Jenkinson              | Jeremy Theyer     |
| Patrick Coleman     | Julia Judd                   | Craig Thurling    |
| Tony Dale           | Juliet Layton                | Clare Turner      |
| Mike Evemy          | Helene Mansilla              | Michael Vann      |
| David Fowles        | Mike McKeown                 | Ian Watson        |
| Laura Hall-Wilson   | Dilys Neill                  | Len Wilkins       |
| Joe Harris          | Tony Slater                  | Tristan Wilkinson |
| Paul Hodgkinson     | Lisa Spivey                  |                   |

### Officers present:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Jane Portman, Chief Executive Officer  | Nickie Mackenzie-Daste, Senior Democratic Services Officer      |
| Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services                      | Tyler Jardine, Trainee Democratic Services Officer              |
| Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) | David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer |
| Julia Gibson, Democratic Services Officer                                    |   |

## **71 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Gina Blomefield, Councillor Daryl Corps, Councillor David Cunningham, Councillor Andrea Pellegram and Councillor Jon Wareing.

## **72 Declarations of Interest**

The Chair drew members' attention to Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, which provides that any member who is in Council Tax arrears of two months

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or more must declare this and is prohibited from voting on budget or Council Tax matters.

Members' records had been checked and, to the best of the Council's knowledge, no members were in Council Tax arrears. Accordingly, all members were entitled to vote unless they indicated otherwise.

There were no declarations of interest.

### **73 Minutes**

Council considered the minutes of the Council meeting held on 21 January 2026.

Councillor Every proposed the approval of the minutes. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Stowe, put to the vote and agreed by Council.

RESOLVED that the minutes of Full Council 21 January 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record.

Voting record:

27 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention.

| <b>To APPROVE the minutes of Full Council 21 January 2026 (Resolution)</b>                             |  |    |
|--|--|----|
| RESOLVED that the minutes of Full Council 21 January 2026 were approved as a true and accurate record. |  |    |
| For  | Claire Bloomer, Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Tony Dale, Mike Every, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Craig Thurling, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins | 28 |
| Against  | None   | 0  |
| Conflict Of Interests  | None   | 0  |
| Abstain  | None   | 0  |
| <b>Carried</b>   |  |    |

### **74 Announcements from the Chair, Leader or Chief Executive**

Chair's announcements:

The Chair welcomed Councillor Craig Thurling as the new member for The Rissingtons ward, and wished him the best in his new role.

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The Chair advised that the local Phoenix Festival was again seeking volunteers and funding. It was noted that the Council had been one of the largest contributors in previous years and might continue its support. Members were encouraged to promote involvement.

It was noted that the "Unsung Heroes" awards would not be presented at this meeting due to the budget-setting process. Nominations were invited from across the community for the March awards.

Finally, the Chair advised that a job fair would be held at the Council offices on 4 March 2026 and members were encouraged to promote the event.

#### Leader's Announcements:

The Leader welcomed Councillor Craig Thurling to his place in the Chamber.

Tribute was paid to Nigel Robbins, who had stepped down at the end of January 2026, after nearly 11 years' service on the Council. Mr Robbins had served as Chair of the Council for two years, including during the COVID-19 pandemic, and for almost four years as Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee. He had also served eight years on Gloucestershire County Council. The Chair expressed thanks for his significant contribution to the Council and wished him well in his retirement, noting that he remained a member of Cirencester Town Council.

Members were reminded that the Government's consultation on Local Government Reorganisation in Gloucestershire was open until 26 March 2026 and available on the GOV.UK website. Members were encouraged to respond to the consultation and to promote participation within their communities. It was noted that a decision from government was expected before the summer recess.

#### Chief Executive's announcements:

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

## **75 Public Questions**

There were two public questions:

### Question 1

Mrs Sylvia Shepherd, a resident of Mayfield Park drew attention to the difficulties experienced by herself and fellow residents in getting her bins to the waste collection site by the road. Mrs Shepherd asked what support was available to assist herself and other older residents in the same position? She also asked whether a closer collection point could be provided for their use?

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In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Waste and Environment, Councillor Juliet Layton responded. She declared that she knew Mrs Shepherd's daughter and confirmed that she had no pecuniary interest in the waste service.

In response to a question from Mrs Shepherd regarding bin collections, it was reported that Ubico had advised officers that residents should not have individual bins, as waste facilities were provided at a communal collection point. However, it was noted that Mrs Shepherd and other residents on the site had individual waste provisions. Mrs Shepherd had a full set of recycling containers, a grey wheelie bin for residual waste, and a green garden waste wheelie bin, for which an annual licence fee was paid. Other residents had similar arrangements.

It was further noted that on 29 December 2025 Mrs Shepherd was issued with a replacement set of recycling bins, which she had not requested, indicating that individual waste provision was recognised in practice. Officers had previously provided Ubico with verbal and written information regarding Mrs Shepherd's request for the reinstatement of assisted collection, which she had received prior to Covid due to a back condition.

The matter was noted as ongoing. The ward member, Councillor Paul Hodgkinson, was aware of the situation, and it was acknowledged that a resolution had not yet been reached. Further discussions with officers and, if necessary, the site manager would continue.

### Question 2

A second question was raised by Mrs Shepherd regarding decking installed by her neighbour shortly after they had moved in. After a visit from the enforcement team, the neighbour had also erected a wooden fence which was actually attached to Mrs Shepherd's garage and which left no boundary. The effect was to prevent repairs to Mrs Shepherd's garage being carried out. Mrs Shepherd asked how the installation could be considered compliant with planning regulations, given that it obstructed access and affected her property, she reported that she had been advised by LEASE (the Lease Advisory Service) to write to the Council to seek clarification as to why this was not deemed a planning breach?

Mrs Shepherd asked what her options were and sought advice as to what she needed to do to resolve the situation.

Councillor Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning responded that the Council's enforcement team had inspected the site and confirmed that the decking complied with planning regulations, including fire-safety requirements. However, because the decking was so close to the resident's garage and prevented access, it would be considered a civil matter rather than a planning or enforcement issue. Councillor Layton advised that the resident could seek legal guidance.

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Councillor Layton confirmed that the matter appeared to be civil in nature and the Chair suggested that the resident contact the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for advice. Mrs Shepherd was encouraged to keep the Council informed of progress, noting that Councillor Paul Hodgkinson, her ward member, would also be in contact.

## **76 Member Questions**

There were no member questions.

## **77 Appointments to Committees**

The purpose of this report was to consider the following recommendations following the resignation of former councillor Nigel Robbins:

1. The appointment of a member to the vacant Liberal Democrat seat on the Audit and Governance Committee.
2. The appointment of a Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee.

The Leader, Councillor Mike Evely, introduced the item and clarified that former councillor Nigel Robbins had served as Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee and had occupied a seat allocated to the Liberal Democrat Group on that Committee.

It was noted that a by-election was pending and that there would be a subsequent opportunity to review the political balance of the Council and make any necessary appointments. As the next meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee was not scheduled until April, it was confirmed that no nomination would be made at this meeting of Full Council to fill the vacant Liberal Democrat seat on the Committee.

Councillor Mike Evely nominated Councillor Helene Mansilla to serve as Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

Councillor Juliet Layton seconded the recommendation and Councillors were encouraged to support the nomination.

There were no questions for clarity.

The Chair then moved to the vote on the resolution as proposed by Councillor Mike Evely and seconded by Councillor Juliet Layton.

Voting Record:

28 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

| <b>Appointment to Chair of Audit and Governance Committee (Resolution)</b>  |   |    |
|---|---|----|
| Council RESOLVED to:  |   |    |
| 1. Appoint Councillor Helene Mansilla to the role of Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee for the remainder of the municipal year. |   |    |
| For   | Claire Bloomer, Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Tony Dale, Mike Evey, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Craig Thurling, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins | 28 |
| Against   | None  | 0  |
| Conflict Of Interests   | None  | 0  |
| Abstain   | None  | 0  |
| <b>Carried</b>  |   |    |

## **78 Budget Council Protocol**

The Chair introduced the Budget Council Protocol and reminded attendees and the viewing audience that the full protocol was available online.

The Chair made it clear that the Budget Council Protocol, Part G Appendix D of the Council's Constitution, would be followed in debating and setting the Budget for 2026-2027.

## **79 2026-27 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy**

The purpose of this report was to present the Revenue Budget for 2026-27, Capital Programme and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2026-27 to 2029-30.

The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Patrick Coleman, to propose the administration's budget.

Councillor Coleman noted this was the third budget of the Council's second-term Liberal Democrat administration, highlighting the Council's financial remodelling over seven years despite challenges including COVID-19, high inflation, the cost-of-living crisis, and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). He praised staff professionalism and noted significant savings, including £500,000 per annum from waste collection reorganisation.

The proposed £5 annual Band D Council Tax increase was intended to support the 2026 budget. Councillor Coleman reported that the transition of Publica staff to the

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Council had improved retention, recruitment, and efficiency, delivering annual savings of £500,000 alongside restored pension scheme funding. Continued support for low-income residents via the Low-Income Families Tracker (LIFT) had helped 49 households out of fuel poverty, assisted 54 with water bills, and secured 181 new Council Tax Reduction claims.

On the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), Councillor Coleman welcomed the multi-year finance settlement but expressed concern at the late government announcement, which reduced the funding floor by £700,000 for 2027–28 and 2028–29. The waste fleet replacement programme would be funded from existing resources without borrowing and included greener vehicles. The Financial Resilience Reserve was forecast to rise to £4.3 million. Strong public support for the budget during consultation was noted. Councillor Coleman moved recommendations 1–10, thanking officers and scrutiny members and commending the budget for approval.

The Chair invited Councillor Tristan Wilkinson to speak as seconder, who reserved his right.

Councillor Stowe, Leader of the Conservative Group, also reserved his right to respond.

The Chair then invited Councillor Stowe to propose the Conservative Group's amendments in accordance with the Budget Council Protocol.

Councillor Stowe then spoke to the amendment proposal:

### **Amendment Part 1**

*Establish the "Cotswold District Council Legacy Fund Reserve" - £190,000.*

*This is to be funded by reallocating funds from the "Council Priorities: Capacity Building" earmarked reserve.*

*£5,000.00 to be allocated to each Ward Member (£170,000 plus £20,000 administration costs) to support suitable projects in their wards.*

*Projects are to leave a lasting legacy after CDC ceases to exist and are to align with the Council's priorities including "Preparing for the Future."*

*Examples – supporting youth activity, improving the public realm, improving the local environment and biodiversity.*

### **Amendment Part 2**

*Additional funding of £40,000 to be allocated to the Planning Services Budget to be used to strengthen the Planning Enforcement Team.*

*Additional funding of £38,471 to be allocated to the Land Drainage and Flood Defence Budget to create a new Cotswold Flood Team Assistant Role.*

*These are to be funded by capping the Communications Budget at £300,000.*

Councillor Stowe further commented:

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Amendment Part 1 – Cotswold District Council Legacy Fund (£190,000)

- The proposed Legacy Fund Reserve would be funded through reallocation from the Capacity Building Earmarked Reserve with no increase in overall expenditure
- The £5,000 allocated per ward member would be intended for locally determined, community-focused projects and was designed as a lasting legacy aligned with Council priorities and preparations for Local Government Reorganisation.

Amendment Part 2 – Communications Budget Reallocation (£80,000)

- The proposed reduction of the communications budget from £380,000 to £300,000 per annum would be split between two areas: £40,000 reallocated to strengthen the Planning Enforcement team (customer service function and/or recruitment and retention support); with the remainder reallocated to create a Cotswold-specific role within the Land Drainage and Flood Defence team.
- The Conservative Group considered the communications budget disproportionate and stated that additional resources were required to address enforcement pressures, increased flooding, and forthcoming major development.

Councillor Stowe urged members to support the proposed amendments.

Councillor David Fowles seconded the amendments, citing historical community funding precedents, under-resourced planning enforcement, and flood resilience needs.

No amendments were proposed by Green or Independent members.

The Chair then invited Members to ask any questions for clarification on the proposed amendments.

Members raised questions for clarification on the proposed amendments, which Councillor Stowe addressed:

- **Communications Budget Reductions:**  
Councillor Stowe confirmed the budget would decrease from £380,000 to £300,000, with £300,000 allocated to staffing and £80,000 to non-staff costs. He explained that the proposal was that the Service Lead would restructure and operate within the revised allocation.
- **Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Communications:**  
In response to concerns about maintaining communications capacity during LGR, Councillor Stowe noted that the Head of Communications was coordinating work across the county and suggested costs should be shared with partner authorities.
- **Statutory Communications Duties:**

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It was noted that, as a public authority, the Council had a statutory duty to communicate effectively with residents, including on the National Planning Policy Framework, the Local Plan, LGR, and budget matters. Councillors praised the communications team and questioned whether a reduction would affect these responsibilities. Councillor Stowe responded that similar outcomes could be delivered within a £300,000 budget.

- Nature of the £80,000 Saving:  
Councillor Stowe confirmed that the proposed reduction represented an ongoing annual revenue saving.
- Planning Enforcement Recruitment:  
In response to concerns about recruitment difficulties being sector-wide, Councillor Stowe stated that the additional £40,000 could enhance salary offers to improve recruitment and retention.

There were no further questions for clarification.

The Chair invited the Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer, David Stanley to give his views on the proposed amendments.

The Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer, confirmed that the amendments had been submitted in accordance with the budget protocol and had been discussed with him. He advised on the use of earmarked reserves, noted the Section 25 statement regarding the adequacy of reserves, and confirmed that the amendments were fully funded without adversely affecting overall reserve adequacy.

The Chair moved to adjourn the meeting to allow groups to discuss proposal. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mike Evely declined the invitation to adjourn the meeting as the amendment had been considered.

Councillor Coleman, Cabinet Member for Finance was invited to inform Council as to the view of the administration. It was confirmed that neither part of the amendment had been accepted.

The Chair then moved to the debate on the amendment and invited all councillors to speak once, covering both proposed amendments and confirmed that they would each have the opportunity to speak again in the substantive debate.

Members made the following points in debate:

- Some councillors considered the amendments lacked strategic vision and did not address key issues such as the cost of living, health and safety, climate action, or long-term financial sustainability.
- The proposed Legacy Fund and ward allocations were seen as too small to have a lasting impact and raised potential governance concerns. It was noted they could risk undermining the Crowdfund Cotswold programme, which was praised for empowering communities and leveraging additional funding.
- Concerns were raised that staffing shortages, rather than budget, were the main barrier to effective planning enforcement.

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- Flood risk management was identified as requiring capital investment, multi-agency coordination, and long-term planning, rather than additional posts funded from the communications budget.
- Further reductions to the communications budget were opposed due to its essential role in public accountability, resident engagement, and statutory communications duties.
- Alternative funding sources, such as county councillor grants or existing reserves, were suggested to support local community projects.

Overall, the amendments were considered by members of the controlling group to lack strategic value and could put existing programmes and resources at risk.

The Chair invited Councillor Tom Stowe, Conservative Group Leader to sum up the debate on the amendment.

Councillor Stowe summed up the debate on the amendments, acknowledging that although the amendments had not passed, they highlighted under-resourced areas, particularly planning enforcement and flood management. He emphasised the Council's role in coordinating agencies and using enforcement powers for flood mitigation, suggesting a dedicated Cotswold-specific flood officer could have been valuable, and expressed interest in monitoring the operation of the newly restructured flood team over the next 12 months.

The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Finance to respond to the Conservative amendment.

Councillor Coleman responded, noting that public-backed initiatives such as Crowdfund Cotswolds tend to succeed over time. He welcomed the scrutiny and challenge presented by the amendments but emphasised the need for continued cooperative governance and prudent savings to maintain alignment with the medium-term financial strategy.

The Chair moved to the vote on the amendment, proposed by Councillor Stowe and seconded by Councillor Fowles.

Voting Record:

7 For, 21 Against, 0 Abstention

The amendment was lost.

| <b>Budget - to APPROVE the Conservative Group amendments (Amendment)</b> |  |    |
|--|--|----|
| For  | David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Julia Judd, Tony Slater, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer and Len Wilkins   | 7  |
| Against  | Claire Bloomer, Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Tony Dale, Mike Evely, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Juliet Layton, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Lisa Spivey, Craig Thurling, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Ian | 21 |

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|                       |                              |   |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---|
|                       | Watson and Tristan Wilkinson |   |
| Conflict Of Interests | None                         | 0 |
| Abstain               | None                         | 0 |
| <b>Rejected</b>       |                              |   |

The Chair then returned Council to the substantive budget and sought questions of clarification. There were no questions for clarification on the substantive budget.

The Chair then invited Councillor Tom Stowe, Leader of the Conservative Group, who had reserved his right to respond to the budget, to speak.

Councillor Stowe thanked the Deputy Chief Executive Officer and his team for preparing the budget and noted the unusual task of presenting an MTFs beyond the Council's expected existence, while emphasising the importance of handing over finances in good order. He congratulated Councillor Coleman on delivering his first budget and highlighted pressures on residents, including a 27% Council Tax rise since 2020, a 143% increase in green bin charges, and higher discretionary fees and car parking charges. Previous financial uncertainties were referred to, including projected gaps in the MTFs and anticipated costs associated with the waste fleet replacement programme. He noted that government settlements had eased some pressures, although a £700,000 one-off shortfall remained. Councillor Stowe recognised that procuring the new waste collection fleet without borrowing would deliver tangible assets for the Council.

The Conservative Group Leader further highlighted the estimated additional £640,000 annual cost of delivering services in-house following the transition from Publica and expressed concern about resourcing pressures in departments such as planning enforcement and environmental protection. The level of expenditure on communications in comparison with flood defence was questioned. Councillor Stowe concluded that, despite the efforts of officers, the budget relied on increased taxation and charges, which he believed placed additional pressure on residents while not fully resolving underlying financial and operational challenges.

The Chair then returned Council to the general debate on the substantive budget.

Councillor Mike Evely spoke in support of the budget, noting that it was the administration's seventh budget and reflected sound financial management. He highlighted modest Council Tax increases supported by public consultation, the success of the Low-Income Families Tracker (LIFT) programme, the £6 million waste fleet renewal funded without borrowing, the return of staff from Publica to the Council, and the addition of nearly £1 million to reserves. He described the budget as robust, balanced, and aligned with the administration's priorities.

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Councillor Tony Dale emphasised prudent financial management, highlighting the decision to fund the new waste service from reserves, support provided to businesses facing business rate increases, and the achievement of long-term budget stability despite reductions in central government funding. He commended officers, including the Deputy Chief Executive Officer, for delivering a balanced budget without borrowing.

Further support for the administration's approach with praise for financial prudence; the protection of essential services; forward planning; and the maintenance of stability for residents being expressed.

Councillor Tristan Wilkinson, as seconder of the budget, highlighted its role in safeguarding frontline services and supporting key priorities including waste services, planning, climate action, and housing. He noted that the budget provided a sound financial footing as the Council prepared for Local Government Reorganisation and commended both officers and councillors for their work.

The Chair then invited the Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Patrick Coleman, as proposer of the budget, to sum up the debate.

Councillor Coleman reflected on the Council's recent work and noted the positive and respectful engagement between members during the budget process. He commended the finance team for their work in preparing a robust budget and acknowledged the complexity of local government finance and the dedication of both councillors and officers in managing it. He highlighted that the proposed Council Tax increase was significantly below the rate of inflation while remaining within statutory limits and urged all members to support what he described as a prudent and robust budget.

The Chair then moved to the vote on the substantial budget proposed by Councillor Coleman and seconded by Councillor Tristan Wilkinson.

Voting Record:

21 For, 6 Against, 1 Abstention.

**2026/27 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Medium-term Financial Strategy - Approve Recommendations (Resolution)**

RESOLVED that Council APPROVED :

1. the Medium-Term Financial Strategy set out in Annex B
2. the Budget Pressures and Savings for inclusion in the budget, set out in Annex C
3. the Council Tax Requirement of £7,419,716 for this Council
4. the Council Tax level for Cotswold District Council purposes of £163.93 for a Band D property in 2026/27 (an increase of £5)
5. the Capital Programme, set out in Annex D

|  |   |    |
|--|---|----|
| <p>6. the Annual Capital Strategy 2026/27, as set out in Annex E</p> <p>7. the Annual Treasury Management Strategy and Non-Treasury Management Investment Strategy 2026/27, as set out in Annex F</p> <p>8. the Strategy for the Flexible use of Capital Receipts, as set out in Annex H</p> <p>9. that £2m is set aside in a new earmarked reserve Council Priority: LGR Transition through the releasing of £2m of the balance currently held in the Financial Resilience Reserve.</p> <p>10. the balances and reserves forecast for 2026/27 to 2029/30 as set out in Section 7 of the report.</p> |   |    |
| For  | Claire Bloomer, Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Tony Dale, Mike Every, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Juliet Layton, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Lisa Spivey, Craig Thurling, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Ian Watson and Tristan Wilkinson | 21 |
| Against  | David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson and Julia Judd  | 3  |
| Conflict Of Interests  | None  | 0  |
| Abstain  | Tony Slater, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer and Len Wilkins   | 4  |
| <b>Carried</b>   |   |    |

## 80 Council Tax 2026/27

The purpose of the report was to set the Council Tax for 2026-27.

The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and made the following points:

- The formal setting of Council Tax would be completed, following legal requirements.
- The report and resolution were outlined, covering pages 209-213 of the meeting documents.
- Council Tax levels for residents were detailed, including parish precepts and banding calculations.

Councillor Coleman formally moved the resolution and urged all Councillors to support the setting of the precept.

The Chair invited any questions for clarity. There were no questions for clarity.

Councillor Mike Every seconded the report and chose to speak to supplement Councillor Coleman's remarks, particularly for members voting on the council tax for

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the first time. Councillor Evely noted that the council tax amounts for each parish or town council were displayed from Band A to Band H, with the prescribed multiples from six-ninths to eighteen-ninths, in accordance with legislative requirements.

Members were reminded that calculations were referenced to Band D, which had been set at £5 for Cotswold District Council. This resulted in a Band D Council Tax of £163.93, with Band A at £109.29 and Band H at £327.86.

There were no contributions in debate.

The Chair invited Councillor Coleman to sum up; Councillor Coleman indicated that he had no further points to add.

The Chair then moved to the vote on the report recommendations proposed by Councillor Coleman and seconded by Councillor Evely.

Voting record:

28 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

#### **Council Tax 2026-27 to APPROVE Recommendations 1-8 (Resolution)**

Subject to confirmation of Gloucestershire County Council's precept, Council RESOLVED to:

1. Agree for the purposes of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 Section 35(2), that there are no special expenses for the District Council in 2026/27;
2. Note that, using their delegated authority, the Deputy Chief Executive calculated the Council Tax Base for 2026/27:
  - a. for the whole Council area as 45,261.49 [item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and
  - b. for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish Precept relates as in the attached Schedule 1.
3. Agree that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2026/27 (excluding Parish Precepts) is £7,419,716.
4. Agree that the following amounts be calculated for the year 2026/27 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
  - a. £52,952,023 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils and any additional special expenses.
  - b. £39,934,694 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act.
  - c. £13,017,510 being the amount by which the aggregate at 4(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 4(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with

Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).

- d. £287.60 being the amount at 4(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses);
  - e. £5,597,794 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act as per the attached Schedule 2.
  - f. £163.93 being the amount at 4(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 4(e) above by Item T(2(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish Precept or special item relates;
  - g. the amounts shown in Schedule 2 being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 4(f) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area shown in Schedule 2 divided in each case by the amount at 2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate;
  - h. the amounts shown in Schedule 3 being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 4(f) and 4(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;
5. Note that for the year 2026/27 the Gloucestershire County Council and the Police & Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated below:

| Valuation Band | Gloucestershire County Council | Police and Crime Commissioner |
|----------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                | £                              | £                             |
| A              | 1,175.64                       | 227.05                        |
| B              | 1,371.58                       | 264.90                        |
| C              | 1,567.52                       | 302.74                        |
| D              | 1,763.46                       | 340.58                        |

|   |          |        |
|---|----------|--------|
| E | 2,155.34 | 416.26 |
| F | 2,547.22 | 491.95 |
| G | 2,939.10 | 567.63 |
| H | 3,526.92 | 681.16 |

6. Agree, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, to set the aggregate amounts shown in Schedule 4 as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2026/27 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.
7. Agree the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2026/27 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.
8. Authorise the following Council/Public Officers: Deputy Chief Executive, Interim Director – Resident Services, Director of Governance and Development, Legal Executive, Business Manager – Environmental, Welfare and Revenues, Revenues Manager, Revenues Lead and Senior Recovery Officer to:
  - a. collect and recover any National Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax; and
  - b. prosecute or defend on the Council's behalf or to appear on its behalf in proceedings before a magistrate's court in respect of unpaid National Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax.

|                       |  |    |
|-----------------------|--|----|
| For                   | Claire Bloomer, Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Tony Dale, Mike Evely, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Craig Thurling, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins | 28 |
| Against               | None   | 0  |
| Conflict Of Interests | None   | 0  |
| Abstain               | None   | 0  |
| <b>Carried</b>        |  |    |

## 81 Pay Policy Statement 2026

The purpose of the report was to consider the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 and to clarify the Council's strategic stance on pay, to provide direction for members and officers making detailed decisions on pay and to provide the residents of

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the Cotswold district with a clear statement of the principles underpinning decisions on the use of public funds.

The Chair invited the Leader, Councillor Mike Evely, to introduce the report. Councillor Evely presented the Pay Policy Statement for the forthcoming financial year and advised that, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the Council was required to approve and publish the statement annually by 31 March. It was noted that the policy now applied to approximately 120 additional employees who had returned from Publica, significantly increasing its scope.

Councillor Evely explained that the statement promoted transparency, fairness and local accountability, enabling residents to understand senior staff remuneration, pay relationships across the workforce, the basis for determining pay, and compliance with equal pay legislation. The policy was commended to Members for approval.

The Chair invited any questions for clarity; there were no questions for clarity.

Councillor Juliet Layton stood to second the resolution and indicated she had nothing further to add.

The Chair moved to the debate. There being no debate, the Chair declared that there was no requirement to sum up.

The Chair then moved to the vote on the Pay Policy 2026-27 proposed by the Leader Councillor Mike Evely and seconded by Councillor Juliet Layton.

Voting Record:

28 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

| <b>Pay Policy Statement 2026-27 to APPROVE (Resolution)</b> |  |    |
|---|--|----|
| Council RESOLVED to   |  |    |
| 1. APPROVE the Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27.            |  |    |
| For   | Claire Bloomer, Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Tony Dale, Mike Evely, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Craig Thurling, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins | 28 |
| Against   | None   | 0  |
| Conflict Of Interests                                       | None   | 0  |
| Abstain   | None   | 0  |
| <b>Carried</b>  |  |    |

**82 Notice of Motions**

There were no motions.

**83 Next meeting**

The next meeting of Full Council was confirmed as being scheduled for 18 March 2026 at 2.00 pm.

The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 08.05 pm

(END)

# Agenda Item 8



**COTSWOLD**  
District Council

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Council name               | <b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>   |
| Name and date of Committee | <b>COUNCIL – 18 MARCH 2026</b>   |
| Subject                    | <b>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP (DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS, STANDARDS HEARINGS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP)</b>  |
| Wards affected             | None   |
| Accountable member         | Councillor Mike Every, Chair of the Constitution Working Group<br>Email: <a href="mailto:Mike.Every@Cotswold.gov.uk">Mike.Every@Cotswold.gov.uk</a>  |
| Accountable officer        | Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development<br>Email: <a href="mailto:Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk">Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk</a>   |
| Report author              | Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services<br>Email: <a href="mailto:Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk">Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk</a>   |
| Summary/Purpose            | To present recommendations from the Constitution Working Group arising from meetings on 7 October 2025 and 13 February 2026 in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disclosable interests</li> <li>• Standards Hearings Sub-Committee Procedure Rules</li> <li>• Committee Membership</li> </ul>                      |
| Annexes                    | Annex A – Extract of Part 5E: Planning Protocol, with proposed changes shown<br>Annex B – Part D11: Standards Hearings Sub-Committee Procedure Rules, with proposed changes shown<br>Annex C – Article 5, with proposed changes shown  |
| Recommendation(s)          | That Council resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agree to amend the Planning Protocol to include the new paragraphs drafted by the Head of Legal Services about the declaration of disclosable pecuniary interests, as shown in Annex A.</li> <li>2. Agree to amend the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee</li> </ol> |



|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
|                             | <p>Procedure Rules following a review, as shown in Annex B.</p> <p>3. Agree to amend Article 5 to remove the rule that says the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council cannot both serve on the Planning and Licensing Committee.</p> |
| Corporate priorities        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delivering Good Services</li><li>• Supporting Communities</li></ul>  |
| Key Decision                | NO   |
| Exempt                      | NO   |
| Consultees/<br>Consultation | Constitution Working Group<br>Head of Legal Services   |



## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1** Council is recommended by the Constitution Working Group to consider amendments to the Planning Protocol, Standards Hearings Sub-Committee Procedure Rules and the rules on committee membership.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** The Constitution Working Group met on 7 October 2025 and 13 February 2026 to consider a number of items on its work plan. This has resulted in the recommendations contained in this report.

## **3. PLANNING PROTOCOL**

- 3.1** As part of a wider review of the Planning Protocol (Part 5E of the Constitution), it was identified that the wording in relation to the disclosure of interests could be updated and strengthened. The Head of Legal Services was tasked with reviewing the wording and suggested the inclusion of some additional wording, shown in red text in Annex A. The Constitution Working Group agreed to recommend the changes to full Council for inclusion in the Constitution.
- 3.2** The proposed additions seek to address the timing and manner for declaring interests, emphasising that members should review materials prior to meetings and discuss interests with relevant officers. The addition of a "Voting at Committee" section is intended to clarify that members could only vote if they were present for the entire presentation and discussion, without any relevant disclosable interest.

## **4. STANDARDS HEARINGS SUB-COMMITTEE PROCEDURE RULES**

- 4.1** The Council adopted Standards Hearings Sub-Committee Procedure Rules in September 2025. These procedure rules have been reviewed by officers following a standards hearing held on 6 November 2025 (the first such hearing in c. 12 years). Generally, the procedure rules were found to have worked well. Some changes are proposed to strengthen the procedure rules, drawing on the experience of the recent hearing.
- 4.2** The proposed changes are shown in red text in Annex B and in summary are intended to: clarify the neutral role of the Investigating Officer, define exceptional circumstances, clarify that where there are multiple complainants, one representative



should be put forward to speak on behalf of all complainants, and clarify that any pre-hearing training or briefing sessions for member of the Sub-Committee are not formal meetings and are not open to Complainants or Subject Members.

## **5. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

**5.1** The Constitution Working Group considered removing the rule that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council cannot both sit on the Planning and Licensing Committee (Article 5, para 5.4). This rule is not a legal requirement it is something that the Council has historically agreed to include in its Constitution, potentially to prevent members from holding multiple roles.

**5.2** The Working Group agreed that this rule is no longer needed as it serves to unnecessarily reduce the pool of members who can serve on the Planning and Licensing Committee. It is recommended that Council approves its removal from the Constitution.

## **6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

**6.1** Council could choose not to agree recommendations in this report however the recommendations are aimed at strengthening the Council's governance arrangements and have been recommended to Council by the cross-party Constitution Working Group.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**7.1** There are no financial implications arising directly from the information in this report.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**8.1** Full Council, through its responsibilities as set out in the Constitution, recognises the requirement to observe specific requirements of legislation and the general responsibilities placed on the Council by public law, but also accepting responsibility to use its legal powers to the full benefit of the citizens and communities in its area.

**8.2** Section 9P Local Government Act 2000 requires the Council to keep its Constitution up to date.

## **9. RISK ASSESSMENT**



**9.1** The recommendations are intended to reduce risks to the Council, specifically in relation to regulatory decision making and standards hearings.

**10. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

**10.1** There are no differential impacts on groups with protected characteristics.

**11. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS**

**11.1** There are no climate and ecological emergencies implications.

**12. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**12.1** None.

(END)

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## **Annex A: Extract of E5 - Planning Protocol**

### **2. The Planning and Licensing Committee**

#### **2.1 The Development Management role of the Planning and Licensing Committee**

As a quasi-judicial Committee, members of the Committee are required to be non-partisan and to represent the entire district. The practice of political whipping has no place in the decisions of the Planning and Licensing Committee (hereafter, the 'Committee'), because decisions must be made on material Planning considerations.

#### **2.2 Statutory functions of the Committee**

The Committee is responsible for those functions allocated to the Council under the statutory provisions (to include statutory instruments, government policy and guidance) for control over development as defined in section 55(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or any associated, updated or replacement legislation within the administrative district, or that will have an impact on the district, save those matters delegated to officers and included in the Scheme of Delegation.

Members involved in the Planning process shall at all times comply with the requirements of this Protocol, which are in addition to the Code of Conduct for Members.

#### **2.3. Referring an application to Committee**

Members are expected to engage with Planning officers to resolve issues at every stage and may query interpretations of policy and request extra detail.

Members have 28 days from the date of validation of the application to make representations should they consider the application should be heard at Committee (where the scheme of delegation permits such an application to be able to be requested to be determined by the Committee). Should a Member require further time and the Statutory Consultee responses have not been received or published, then the Member may make a request to the case officer via email for an extension of time to make their request to call in.

Should no request be made in line with the timescales outlined above, the application will be able to be determined under delegated authority in line with the Scheme of Delegation.

Where a Member believes, for reasons related to material Planning considerations, that an eligible application should be referred to the Committee, they must request referral by completing the Review Panel pro-forma (available here: <https://forms.office.com/e/DxK0GSYP00>). The form must clearly detail the Planning reasons why the Member believes the matter should be referred to the Committee. When making referrals, Members are reminded that they are expected to attend the Committee meeting to present their reasons for referral.

Any Member can make a request to refer any eligible application to the Committee. However, where a Member seeks to refer an application for a site located outside of their own ward, they should notify the relevant Ward Member(s) of their request at the time of making it,

Applications being considered for referral to Committee will be collated for a meeting before each forthcoming Committee meeting (known as the Review Panel). The Review Panels will be generally held on a bi-weekly basis, and the application, should it be considered to go to the Committee, will go to the next available date.

At this Panel, the Chair, Vice-Chair and Lead Officer will review the referral requests and will consider which applications should proceed to Committee. Referrals which do not contain valid Planning reasons will not be passed to Committee. The final responsibility for the decision will lie with the Senior Officer responsible for Planning.

The Panel should comprise of the Lead Officer, Chair or Vice Chair (ideally both) and where appropriate a member of legal services will attend.

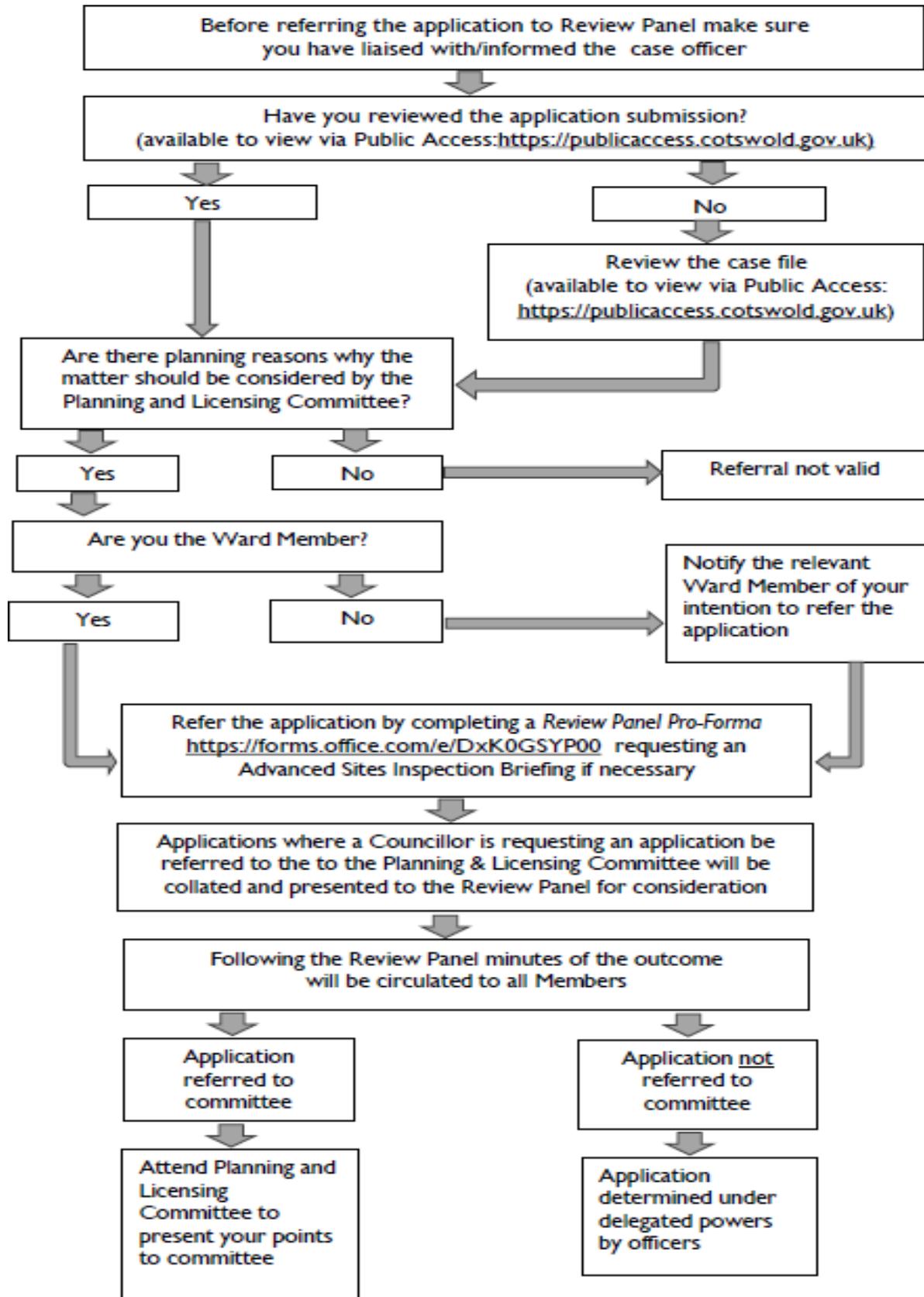
Following this meeting, the minutes of the Review Panel will be circulated to all Members and the relevant subsequent Committee agenda will be distributed to all relevant parties will at the appropriate time.

Prior to hearing any reports, councillors will be asked if they have any interests to declare in relation to any of the applications that are to be presented during the meeting. Councillors should have read the reports beforehand and, as far as possible, should have discussed any possible interest with either the Monitoring Officer, Democratic Services or the lawyer attending the committee, in private, in the days preceding the committee.

In the event that they become aware of a relevant interest during the meeting, they should raise it there and then and the legal adviser to the committee will be able to

confirm whether they will need to leave the room during the debates and votes.

***Referral process flowchart:***



V4.16.05.24

## **2.4. Officers Report**

All applications to go to Committee will be presented in the form of an Officer report which will deal with all relevant documents in connection with an application. Any additional information received after the preparation of that report up to 2.00pm two working days before the day of the Committee meeting will also be brought to the attention of the Committee if it raises new and relevant material planning matters. This is referred to as late material. Papers received after that time, at the discretion of the Chair, will normally be discounted since time will not be available to check their accuracy or to give proper consideration to their implications.

If any Member receives material from or on behalf of an applicant or third party in connection with an application before a Committee, they should establish from the Planning Officers whether the material has been received by them. If it has not, they should make it available as soon as possible to the Planning Department.

## **2.5. Public Speaking at Planning and Licensing Committee**

The purpose of permitting public speaking is to enable those affected by proposed developments to inform the Committee of their viewpoint and to contribute to an open, fair and transparent process in relation to applications in which they have an interest. All public speaking will be carried out in accordance with any guidance issued by the Council.

Guidance will be provided for members of the public who wish to speak at Committee meetings, and practical assistance will be provided for persons undertaking public speaking by Council officers at the meeting. All public speakers should provide a written copy of their speech to Democratic Services ahead of the meeting.

Public speaking is limited to three minutes per speaker. For each application, the applicant/agent and one supporter will be permitted to speak, together with one objector and one representative of the town/parish council. Public speaking will take place in the following order:

- Town/Parish Council;
- Objector;
- Supporter;
- Agent/Applicant.

Upon the conclusion of public speaking, the Ward Member(s) and, where appropriate (at the Chair's discretion), Members representing neighbouring wards directly affected by the proposed development will be invited to speak for up to five minutes each.

Where a Member for a site located outside of their own or a neighbouring ward referred that application to Committee, they will be invited to speak after public speaking and Ward Member speaking has occurred.

Where a Ward Member, or a (non-ward) Member who referred the application to Committee, is unable to attend that Committee, they may provide a written submission of up to 450 words to - and which will be read out by - the Democratic Services officer.

Ward Members who serve on a Town or Parish Council will not present the Town or Parish Council's comments during or following Public Speaking. If there is no other representative available to attend, a written submission on behalf of the Town or Parish Council, of up to 450 words, can be provided to - and will be read out by - the Democratic Services officer.

### Questions and Proposals

Planning debates have two phases - Questions and Proposals. This is required as often expert opinions need to be queried or technical details clarified.

During the Questions section, Committee Members will have the opportunity to ask questions of officers and attending consultees.

The Chair will decide when the Questions section for an application ends.

During the Proposals phase, Committee Members will have an opportunity to make their points known to the Committee.

Any amendments, alternative Proposals or conditions will be made during this phase, following the usual rules of debate.

### **2.6. Site Inspection Briefings (SIBs)**

Site inspections are usually called for by the Case Officer for large developments and held prior to the application coming before the Committee. However, in certain circumstances the Committee can vote on a proposal made by a Committee Member for an SIB. Members need to be aware that this would delay decision-making for another month and such a proposal should not be made lightly.

All SIB requests must be justified on Planning grounds and the strict criteria for holding them are as follows:

- the character or appearance of the development itself is a fundamental planning consideration;
- a judgement is required on visual impact; or
- the setting and surroundings are fundamental to the determination or to the conditions being considered.

They should not be requested when inspection of the site is irrelevant to the material conditions.

SIBs should be used with discretion, must be properly justified and have a significant expected benefit, particularly in light of the cost of SIBs and the increasing availability of visual technology.

SIBs may be either Full Committee, or Panel, with membership of the Panel set on a rota basis. Ward Members will also be invited to attend.

If access to private land is necessary for a SIB, officers will secure the prior agreement of the landowner, explaining that an SIB is a private meeting of the Council, and that third parties must not be present at the Briefing.

The purpose of the SIB is fact finding. Officers have a duty to point out all relevant features of the site and surroundings. The attending officer will describe the proposal and draw attention to relevant features. The officer will not discuss the merits or otherwise of the application ahead of formal publication of the report regarding the application. Members will be able to see the physical features of the site and ask questions, through the Chair, of the officers to seek clarification. The visiting party will stay together as a group.

#### Conduct of Site Inspection Briefings (SIBs)

- Will be conducted in a formal manner.
- Chair or Vice-Chair will open the SIB, and advise Members of purpose and conduct.
- Officers will highlight issues relevant to site inspection. If issues are raised which necessitate consultation with the applicant or his agent, this should be raised after the close of the meeting and the outcome reported to the

subsequent Committee.

- Chair or Vice-Chair to close

SIB. General Matters

- There will be NO debate about the merits of the application and no decision will be made.
- No formal notes will be made; an officer will orally update the Committee on any new findings or further developments when it next meets to consider the application, although a record of attendance will be maintained.
- No hospitality will be accepted.

Members who have a disclosable pecuniary interest in an application are precluded from attending any SIB on that matter. In addition, if an interest becomes apparent during a SIB, the Member should immediately declare it to the Chair and withdraw from the site. Members with another interest in an application subject to a SIB must declare the interest but may continue to attend the site.

## **2.7. Voting at Committee**

It is permissible to vote on an application only if you have **no relevant disclosable interests and you have** been present for the whole of the presentation of, and discussion on, the application.

Note: In the event that there is a lawful requirement for the meeting is being held remotely, the usual rules in relation to quorum will continue to operate. If there is a drop out of connectivity the Chair will pause proceedings until Members are reconnected. Prior to the vote, Democratic Services will check that Members have heard all of the debate.

## **2.8. Decisions Contrary to Officer Recommendations or to Development Plan Policies**

Should the Committee propose to vote against an Officer Recommendation, it will be for the Members to clearly set out their reasons for doing so and these should be clearly specified in the resolution of the Committee and recorded in the Minutes.

## **2.9. Action on Decisions Taken Contrary to Professional Advice**

In cases where an Officer Recommendation for approval has been voted against by Committee and an appeal is lodged:

- officers shall give full support to external witnesses in preparing evidence for any public inquiry, short of giving evidence themselves;
- officers will give evidence themselves only in exceptional circumstances, where their Code of Professional Conduct is not breached (for clarity, not in the case of a Public Inquiry);
- where an Informal Hearing is to be held, with no cross-examination, officers may give evidence themselves where the Code of Professional Conduct is not breached, but this will normally be only if the officer concerned has not been involved in formulating the original recommendation;
- officers must give full support to Member decisions which are appealed using the Written Representations procedures.

## **2.10. Committee unable to determine**

In any case where the Committee have voted both for and against a motion, both votes have been lost, and either no vote for deferral is made, or such a vote has also

been lost, the Committee will be considered to be in 'deadlock' and the application will be referred to Full Council for determination.

### **2.11. Non Members of Planning & Licensing Committee Attending Meetings**

Councillors may attend Committee meetings even if they are not a Member of that Committee unless they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in regard to the application being determined. They may speak on applications in their ward in their capacity as the Ward Member before the questions and proposals stage, but they cannot vote. When they attend Committee, they should not sit in the public gallery, but in the place reserved in the Council Chamber for Members of the Council who are not Members of the Committee.



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## Standards Hearings Sub-Committee Procedure Rules

**These procedure rules apply to meetings of the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee or the Audit and Governance Committee, when sitting to hear and determine a member code of conduct complaint referred to it by the Monitoring Officer.**

### 1.0 DEFINITIONS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Complainant(s)                         | The person/people making the complaint.  |
| Subject Member                         | The Councillor, co-optee or Town or Parish Councillor against whom an allegation has been made.  |
| Appointed representative               | The Subject Member may be represented or accompanied during the meeting by a Solicitor, Counsel or another person.   |
| Standards Hearings Sub-Committee       | A Sub-Committee of the Audit and Governance Committee in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972. A meeting of the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee will consider whether the Subject Member has breached the Code of Conduct. Comprising 3 members of the Audit and Governance Committee, appointed by the Audit and Governance Committee.  |
| Independent Person                     | An Independent Person will be invited by the Monitoring Officer to attend the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee as a Member of the Sub-Committee. Their views are sought and taken into consideration before the Sub-Committee takes any decision on whether the Subject Member's conduct constitutes a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and as to any action to be taken following a finding of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct |
| Town and Parish Council Representative | In the event that the allegations relate to a town or parish councillor, a town and parish council representative from another town or parish council may attend in an advisory capacity.  |

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Investigating Officer            | The person appointed by the Monitoring Officer to undertake a formal investigation on behalf of the Monitoring Officer. This person may be another Officer of the Council, an Officer of another Council or an external third-party investigator appointed for the purpose. <b>The investigating officer operates strictly as a neutral fact-gatherer and presenter of findings.</b> |
| Investigating Officer's report   | The report of the Investigating Officer to the Monitoring Officer, setting out their findings and recommendations in respect of the allegation.  |
| Legal Advisor                    | The Officer responsible for providing legal advice to the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee. This may be the Monitoring Officer, another legally qualified Officer or an external third-party legal advisor appointed for the purpose.  |
| Chair                            | The Chair of the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee elected by that Sub-Committee to chair meetings for the municipal year. If this person is not available, the Sub-Committee will elect a Chair.   |
| Code                             | The Members' Code of Conduct for the relevant Authority formally adopted by it at the relevant time.   |
| The Monitoring Officer           | The Officer designated as such by Cotswold District Council in accordance with section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.   |
| Exempt Information               | As defined in Section 100A and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972   |
| <b>Exceptional circumstances</b> | <b>When 'Exceptional Circumstances' are cited, it is for the Monitoring Officer to decide whether fairness, public interest, or procedural integrity genuinely justify departing from the usual process.</b>   |

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Where the Monitoring Officer considers that it is in the public interest for a complaint to be considered by the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee, a Sub-Committee meeting will be convened, to determine whether the Subject Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct. Where there is more than one Subject Member in relation to a single complaint, the Monitoring Officer may agree that the complaint against each Subject Member can be determined at a single meeting. In such instances the Sub-Committee will stick to the Determination Procedure (Section 5) as closely as possible while

allowing for the complaint against each Subject Member to be heard together.

- 2.2 The Monitoring Officer will seek to convene the Sub-Committee meeting within a maximum of 25 working days of receipt of the final Investigator's report or as soon as practicably possible thereafter. The Standards Hearings Sub-Committee will comprise 3 members appointed to that Sub-Committee by the Audit and Governance Committee, plus an Independent Person allocated to each meeting on a case-by-case basis by the Monitoring Officer, to act as a co-opted member of that Sub-Committee. For a meeting of the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee to be quorate and proceed, three elected members of the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee plus an Independent Person must be present.

### **3.0 PRE-HEARING PROCESS**

- 3.1 The Monitoring Officer shall invite the Subject Member to give a response in writing to the Investigator's report.
- 3.2 If the Subject Member provides a written response to the Investigation Report (which may include written evidence), this should be provided to the Monitoring Officer only, no later than 7 clear days before the meeting to allow for its inclusion in the reports pack. The Subject Member should not otherwise engage with members of the Sub-Committee.
- 3.3 The Subject Member may be represented or accompanied at the meeting, if they so choose. The Subject Member should notify the Monitoring Officer of the name of any person who will represent or accompany them in advance of the meeting. **In the event of multiple complainants, one representative should be put forward to present on behalf of all complainants (the onus is on the complainants to prepare and ensure their representative is fully informed in advance of the hearing).**
- 3.4 **Any pre-hearing training or briefing sessions for the members of the Sub-Committee would not be formal meetings and would not be open to the Complainants or Subject Members.**

### **4.0 DOCUMENTATION**

- 4.1 Standards Hearings Sub-Committee meetings are subject to the normal rules for publication of Council Agendas and Access to Information.
- 4.2 The agenda papers for the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee will include:
  - Complaint form and documentation
  - Subject Member's written response
  - Investigating Officer's report

- Monitoring Officer report
  - For reference: Code of Conduct, Standards Hearings Sub-Committee Procedure Rules
- 4.3 The agenda and documents will be published under the Council's rules for exempt information. Prior to the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee meeting, any documentation issued or exchanged during the process must be treated by all recipients as confidential until the Standards Sub-Committee resolves whether or not the press and public should be excluded from the meeting at which the allegations are going to be heard.
- 4.4 If the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee agrees that the meeting should be held in public, the Investigation Report will be made available to the press and public in attendance at the meeting. The Chair may, at their discretion, allow a short adjournment of the meeting to enable them to read the report.

## **5.0 DETERMINATION HEARING PROCEDURE**

- 5.1 The quorum for a Sub-Committee meeting will be 3 elected Members plus an Independent Person. Substitute Members are allowed only from the membership of the Audit and Governance Committee. Members will only be able to sit on the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee if they have undertaken standards training.
- 5.2 The Sub-Committee will be assisted on matters of law and procedure by the Legal Advisor. The Sub-Committee may take legal advice, in private, if necessary, from the Legal Advisor at any time during the hearing or while they are considering the outcome. The substance of any legal advice given should be shared with the Subject Member and the Investigating Officer.
- 5.3 The hearing will normally be held in public. However, the Sub-Committee will consider, having regard to any representations made by the Investigating Officer and/or by the Subject Member and advice from the Monitoring Officer and/or Legal Advisor as to the public interest, whether to hear the matter, after the passing of a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting. Any such resolution may only be passed on the grounds set out in Section 100A and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.
- 5.4 The Subject Member may be represented or accompanied by Counsel, a Solicitor or any other person.
- 5.5 Normal hearing rules will apply in terms of providing opportunities to test evidence, subject to the principles of natural justice and the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 5.6 The meeting will proceed in the absence of the Subject Member unless this would be unfair. If the Subject Member is unable to attend, they are required

to notify the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting with reasons for their non-attendance.

- 5.7 The Standards Hearings Sub-Committee meeting is not a court of law. Therefore (save as provided for in paragraph 5.13 below) there will be no oral evidence heard at the meeting. The Standards Hearings Sub-Committee may take into account any evidence (including hearsay evidence) which it considers relevant to its determination of the complaint and may attach whatever weight it considers appropriate to that evidence.
- 5.8 In the event that the allegations relate to a town or parish councillor, a town and parish council representative from a different town or parish council from the Subject Member(s) may attend in an advisory capacity at the invitation of the Council's Monitoring Officer. Their role will be limited to explaining the role and duties of a town and parish councillor to the Sub-Committee, if necessary.

#### **Preliminary business**

- 5.9 The first item of business at the first Sub-Committee meeting in each civic year is for the Sub-Committee to elect a Chair for the remainder of that civic year. If a Chair has already been elected but is not present at the meeting, the Sub-Committee will elect a Chair for that particular meeting.
- 5.10 The Standards Hearings Sub-Committee will follow usual committee procedures for apologies and declarations of interests.
- 5.11 The Sub-Committee will consider whether to pass a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting. Any such resolution may only be passed on the grounds set out in Section 100A and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. If the Sub-Committee determines that the hearing can take place in public session, the papers will be made available to any press and public in attendance
- 5.12 The Chair will introduce the Members of the Sub-Committee, the Independent Person, the Legal Advisor, the Investigating Officer, the Subject Member and any other persons present.
- 5.13 The Legal Advisor will give a brief outline of the allegation before the Sub-Committee, namely that the Subject Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and outline the procedure to be followed and confirm that those present understand it.

#### **Investigating Officer's case**

- 5.14 The Investigating Officer will present the report into the allegation against the Subject Member including any findings of fact and make representations to substantiate the conclusion that the Subject Member has failed to comply

with the Code of Conduct. Save for exceptional circumstances, the Sub-Committee will not hear oral evidence from witnesses called by the Investigating Officer, as evidence of such witnesses will have been dealt with in the Investigation Report.

- 5.15 The Subject Member (or their representative) may question the Investigating Officer through the Chair. Questioning of the Investigating Officer should be time bound and procedurally managed.
- 5.16 The Sub-Committee Members may question the Investigating Officer.
- 5.17 The Independent Person may question the Investigating Officer.
- 5.18 The Chair will ensure that any questions are necessary and will assist the Sub-Committee in determining the complaint.

#### **Subject Member's case**

- 5.19 The Subject Member (or their appointed representative) will present the case in relation to the Investigating Officer's findings and make representations about why the Subject Member considers that they did not fail to comply with the Code of Conduct. If the Subject Member admits that they breached the Code of Conduct, the Sub-Committee may move to paragraph 5.32 below. Save for exceptional circumstances, the Sub-Committee will not hear oral evidence (including character evidence) from witnesses called by the Subject Member, as evidence of such witnesses should have been made available to the Investigating Officer and/or dealt with in the Subject Member's written response to the Investigation Report.
- 5.20 The Investigating Officer may question the Subject Member through the Chair.
- 5.21 The Sub-Committee may question the Subject Member.
- 5.22 The Independent Person may question the Subject Member
- 5.23 The Chair will ensure that any questions are necessary and will assist the Sub-Committee in determining the complaint.

#### **Summing up**

- 5.24 The Investigating Officer will sum up the case in relation to the findings in their report.
- 5.25 The Subject Member (or their appointed representative) will sum up the case in relation to the findings in the Investigating Officer's report of whether there has been a breach of the Code.
- 5.26 The Independent Person will give their views to the Sub-Committee as to whether or not the Code of Conduct has been breached and these will be recorded in the Minutes of the meeting.

### **Determination as to whether there has been a breach of the Code**

- 5.27 The Sub-Committee will then retire with the Legal Advisor. If the hearing has been in public, the Committee will need to pass a resolution under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting. The Sub-Committee must take into account the views of the Independent Person before reaching a decision. Decisions will be determined by a simple majority of those Members present and voting; the Independent Person does not have a vote. Where there are equal numbers of votes for and against the Chair will have a second casting vote and there is no restriction on how the Chair chooses to exercise a casting vote.
- 5.28 The Sub-Committee will announce its decision as to whether there has been a breach of the Code in the presence of all parties and if the press and public was excluded earlier in the meeting, this will normally be after passing a resolution that they should no longer be excluded from the meeting. The Sub-Committee will provide summary reasons for the decision and will explain any reasons why any advice from the Independent Person has or has not been followed in giving its decision.
- 5.29 If the Sub-Committee decides that the Subject Member has not breached the Code, it shall dismiss the complaint and take no further action. However, it may still make general recommendations to the Council, its Audit and Governance Committee, the Monitoring Officer or the Town or Parish Council, on any remedial actions, if it considers necessary to address the issues raised.
- 5.30 If the Sub-Committee decides that the Subject Member has breached the Code then the following sub-section on sanctions will apply.

### **Determination as to any sanctions to be applied (if applicable)**

- 5.31 If the Complainant is present at the meeting, the Standards Sub-Committee will invite them to give a statement as to the effect on them of the Subject Member's conduct which has been found to have breached the Code. The Complainant is not obliged to give such a statement. If the Complainant does make a statement, they may only be questioned by the Standards Sub-Committee. Alternatively, the Complainant may provide a written statement to the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting which the Legal Adviser will read out at this stage of the meeting.
- 5.32 The Investigating Officer may make representations as to whether the Sub-Committee should impose a sanction and what form any sanction should take.
- 5.33 The Sub-Committee may question the Investigating Officer in relation to any such representations.
- 5.34 The Subject Member (or their appointed representative) may make representations as to whether the Sub-Committee should impose a sanction

and what form any sanction should take and may make representations as to mitigation.

- 5.35 The Sub-Committee may question the Subject Member in relation to any such representations.
- 5.36 The Legal Advisor will then raise any points that need to be addressed before the matter is determined.
- 5.37 The Independent Person will then give their views on the appropriate sanction, if any, to be imposed and their views will be recorded in the Minutes of the meeting.
- 5.38 The Sub-Committee will then retire with the Legal Advisor. If the hearing has been in public the Sub-Committee will need to pass a resolution under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting.
- 5.39 The Sub-Committee will come to a decision as to sanctions. Any sanction imposed must be reasonable and proportionate to the breach found and the Legal Advisor may advise the Sub-Committee in this regard. The Sub-Committee has no power to suspend or disqualify the member or to withdraw or suspend allowances. The Sub-Committee may:
- Censure or reprimand the Subject Member;
  - Recommend to the Subject Member's Group Leader (or in the case of un-grouped members, recommend to Council or to Committees) that he/she be removed from any or all Committees or Sub-Committees of the Council;
  - Recommend to the Leader of the Council that the Subject Member be removed from the Executive or removed from particular Executive Portfolio responsibilities;
  - Recommend to Council that the Subject Member be replaced as Executive Leader of the Council;
  - Instruct the Monitoring Officer to or recommend that a Town or Parish Council, arrange training for the Subject Member;
  - Publish its findings in respect of the Subject Member's conduct;
  - Report its findings to Council or to a Town or Parish Council, for information.
- 5.40 The Sub-Committee will announce its decision in the presence of all parties and this will normally be after passing a resolution that the public should no longer be excluded from the meeting. The Sub-Committee will give reasons for its decision and will explain the reasons why any advice from the Independent Person has or has not been followed in giving its decision.

### **Decision notice**

- 5.41 The Monitoring Officer will, within 10 working days of the Sub-Committee meeting, prepare a formal Decision Notice and send a copy to the Complainant, to the Investigating Officer and to the Subject Member (and to the Town or Parish Council if appropriate). The Decision Notice will be published as part of the Minutes of the Sub-Committee meeting and will be placed on the Council's website, regardless of whether the Sub-Committee excluded the press and public for the meeting or not, unless the Monitoring Officer determines that it should remain confidential.
- 5.42 The findings and recommendations of the Sub-Committee are final and there is no right of appeal against the decision of the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee.

### **Departing from this procedure**

- 5.43 The Chair of the Sub-Committee has the right to depart from this procedure, having taken advice from the Legal Advisor where it is considered it is sensible to do so, to deal with the case effectively and in the public interest, provided that the principles of fairness are upheld.

(END)

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## Part B – Articles of the Constitution

### Article 5 – Chairing the Council

#### 5.1 Election/Appointment of the Chair/Vice-Chair of the Council

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council will be elected by the Council each year at its Annual Meeting.

#### 5.2 Role and Function of the Chair

The Chair, and in their absence the Vice-Chair, will have the following roles and functions:-

- (a) to uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution, and to interpret the Constitution when necessary. The Chair shall first consult the Monitoring Officer where appropriate;
- (b) to preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of Councillors and the interests of the community;
- (c) to ensure that Council meetings are a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and the place at which Councillors who are not on the Cabinet are able to hold Cabinet to account;
- (d) to promote public involvement in the Council's activities;
- (e) to attend such civic and ceremonial functions as the Council and/or they consider appropriate.

5.2 The Chair of the Council shall not be a Cabinet Member, or a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the Audit and Governance Committee.

5.3 The Vice-Chair of the Council shall not be a Cabinet Member.

~~5.4 The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council cannot both serve on the Planning and Licensing Committee.~~

5.5 The Chair of the Council, by virtue of office, is not eligible to hold office as a Chair of a Committee during their term.

5.6 No member is eligible to be a Chair or Vice-Chair of any Committee within one year of ceasing to hold office as Chair of the Council.



# Agenda Item 9



**COTSWOLD**  
District Council

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Council name                | <b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>  |
| Name and date of Committee  | <b>COUNCIL – 18 MARCH 2026</b>  |
| Subject                     | <b>REVIEW OF POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITIES</b>  |
| Wards affected              | None  |
| Accountable member          | Councillor Mike Evely, Leader of the Council<br>Email: <a href="mailto:Mike.Evely@Cotswold.gov.uk">Mike.Evely@Cotswold.gov.uk</a>   |
| Accountable officer         | Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development<br>Email: <a href="mailto:Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk">Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk</a>  |
| Report author               | Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services<br>Email: <a href="mailto:Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk">Democratic@Cotswold.gov.uk</a>  |
| Summary/Purpose             | To review the political proportionalities on committees following receipt of a notice that a member has joined a group.   |
| Annexes                     | Annex A – Political proportionalities on committees (to follow)   |
| Recommendation(s)           | That Council resolves to:<br><ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Agree the political proportionalities as set out in Annex A.</li><li>2. Appoint to any vacant seats on committees in accordance with the wishes of the political group to which the seat has been allocated, as expressed at the meeting.</li></ol> |
| Corporate priorities        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delivering Good Services</li><li>• Supporting Communities</li></ul>   |
| Key Decision                | NO  |
| Exempt                      | NO  |
| Consultees/<br>Consultation | None  |



## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1** This report invites Council to review the political proportionalities on committees and appoint to any vacant seats following the by-elections held in The Rissingtons and The Beeches wards.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 ("the Act") requires the Council to allocate Committee seats to political groups, in proportion to the size of those groups on the Council. The requirement is for the representation of each group to be proportional on each committee, and on the total number of seats on committees overall.
- 2.2** Under Section 17 of The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the Council has a duty to review the allocation seats on committees as soon as practicable after a notice is received by the Proper Officer confirming that a member has joined a political group and that a review of the allocation of seats is requested, provided the notice is received at least one month after the previous review.

## **3. REVIEW OF POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITIES**

- 3.1** Following the by-election held on 22 January 2026 for The Rissingtons ward, a notice was received by the Proper Officer confirming that Councillor Craig Thurling had joined the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council. A further written notice was received on 4 March 2026 requesting that full Council on 18 March 2026 undertakes a review of the political proportionalities on committees.
- 3.2** A further by-election is taking place to elect a councillor for The Beeches ward on 12 March 2026 (between the publication of the Council papers and the date of the meeting). As such, the updated political proportionalities will be circulated separately once the outcome of the by-election is known and the newly elected councillor has had an opportunity to consider whether or not they wish to join a political group.
- 3.3** Annex A shows the proportionalities on committees with changes since the previous review was undertaken at the 21 May 2025 Annual Council meeting.



**3.4** Where there are changes to be made to the membership of committees, the relevant group leaders are asked to announce the nominated members at the 18 March 2026 Council meeting.

#### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

**4.1.** The Council has a duty to review the allocation of seats on committees when a review is triggered, and to appoint to committees based on political proportionality and the wishes of political groups.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** There are no financial implications arising directly from the information in this report.

#### **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**6.1** The legal issues are set out in the body of the report.

#### **7. RISK ASSESSMENT**

**7.1** There is a risk that if committees are not properly appointed this could result in a delay in decision making for the Council or increase the risk of decisions being successfully challenged.

#### **8. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

**8.1** There are no differential impacts on groups with protected characteristics.

#### **9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS**

**9.1** There are no climate and ecological emergencies implications.

#### **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**10.1** None.

(END)

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|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Council name               | <b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>  |
| Name and date of Committee | <b>FULL COUNCIL – 18 MARCH 2026</b>   |
| Subject                    | <b>APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS TO THE AUDIT &amp; GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE</b>   |
| Wards affected             | All   |
| Accountable member         | Cllr Helene Mansilla – Chair, Audit & Governance Committee<br>Email: Helene.mansilla@cotswold.gov.uk  |
| Accountable officer        | Angela Claridge – Director of Governance & Development (Monitoring Officer)<br>Email: angela.claridge@cotswold.gov.uk   |
| Report author              | Angela Claridge – Director of Governance & Development (Monitoring Officer)<br>Email: angela.claridge@cotswold.gov.uk   |
| Summary/Purpose            | To appoint one/extend the other appropriately skilled and experienced members of the public to be “independent members” of the Audit & Governance Committee.  |
| Annexes                    | None  |
| Recommendation(s)          | That Council resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appoint Nick Craxton to the Council’s Audit &amp; Governance Committee commencing immediately, until 31 March 2028</li> <li>2. Extend Christopher Bass’ appointment to the Council’s Audit &amp; Governance Committee until 31 March 2028.</li> </ol> |
| Corporate priorities       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing for the future</li> <li>• Delivering Good Services</li> <li>• Responding to the Climate Emergency</li> <li>• Delivering Housing</li> <li>• Supporting Communities</li> <li>• Supporting the Economy</li> </ul>   |



**COTSWOLD**

District Council

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Key Decision                | No  |
| Exempt                      | No  |
| Consultees/<br>Consultation | Head of Legal Services, Head of Democratic & Electoral Services,<br>Deputy Chief Executive/S151 Officer and Chief Accountant. |



## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**1.1** Full Council at its meeting on 18 January 2023 approved the action plan in response to recommendations arising from the Corporate Peer Review undertaken in October 2022

**1.2** The Peer Review made recommendations that the Council needs to “reassure itself that its governance arrangements are robust including “Introduce two independent members to the Audit Committee in accordance with ‘CIPFA’s Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022’ good practice guidance”.

**1.3** Suitably qualified and experienced independent member(s) serving on Audit and Governance Committees can bring specialist knowledge and insight to the workings and deliberations of the committee which, when partnered with elected members' knowledge of working practices and procedures, ensure:

- An effective independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework.
- Independent review of the Authority's financial and non-financial performance.
- Independent challenge to and assurance over the Authority's internal control framework and wider governance processes.
- Oversight of the financial reporting process.

**1.4** The Chartered Institute of Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) recommend in their publication, “Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities & Police” (2022) the following:

- “Including co-opted independent members (also known as lay members). A co-opted independent or lay member is a committee member who is not an elected representative but recruited to join the committee. The objective of including such members is to increase the knowledge and experience base of the committee, reinforcing its independence. Inclusion of lay members is a legislative requirement for authorities in Wales and for combined authorities in England.”

Where there is no requirement to (the position for Cotswold District Council), CIPFA recommends the committee includes two co-opted independent members.

**1.5** The reasons for CIPFA’s recommendation are:

- To supplement the knowledge and experience of elected representatives in specific areas, such as audit or financial reporting.



- To provide continuity outside the political cycle. This is of particular importance where membership of the committee changes annually or because of elections.
- To help achieve a non-political focus on governance, risk and control matters.
- Having two co-opted members rather than one will allow recruitment of members with different but complementary knowledge and experience, increase the resilience and continuity of the committee.

Two co-opted members shows a commitment to supporting and investing in the committee.

While including co-opted members can bring real value to the committee, care is needed to ensure that the arrangement works well, both for the co-opted member and for the other committee members. It is essential that the co-opted member receives an adequate induction and ongoing support to provide organisational context and to build working relationships.

- 1.6** At its meeting on 20 September 2023, the Council approved the appointment of two Independent (non-elected) Members to the Audit & Governance Committee, Christopher Bass and John Chesshire, for a four-year term.
- 1.7** Following the recent resignation of John Chesshire, this report recommends the appointment of a new Independent Member, Nick Craxton. It also proposes extending the term of Christopher Bass until the abolition of this authority.

## **2. RECRUITMENT**

- 2.1** The vacancy was advertised across social media channels. Following a robust selection and interview process, Nick Craxton, demonstrated that he meets all the requirements of the person specification for the role, and will bring appropriate expertise to the committee. Therefore, Nick is recommended for appointment.
- 2.2** Nick Craxton works in the telecommunications industry and has a background in reward and more recently risk management and governance. Nick sits on his organisation's Ethics Forum. Nick is currently the chair of CDC's Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) which he'll be resigning from to take up this role. The implications of which are that the IRP remains quorate with three remaining members but will need to select a new chair and may wish to recruit to the IRP for greater resilience.



**2.3** Christopher Bass is a qualified management accountant, lives in Cirencester, and is the Operations Director for a West Oxon based company who manufacture healthcare and medical equipment.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**3.1** Costs associated with the allowance of £1,000 per annum to each independent member and training can be found from within existing revenue service budgets.

**4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1** The Council's Audit and Governance Committee is defined by the Local Government Act 2000 and its purpose is to give assurance to elected members and the public about the governance, financial reporting and performance of the Council. The appointment of independent members on the committee will assist and promote good governance and scrutiny of the committee.

**5. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

**5.1** There are no implications in terms of equality legislation.

**6. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS**

**6.1** There are no climate or ecological emergency implications.

**7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**7.1** None.

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|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Council name               | <b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>  |
| Name and date of Committee | <b>COUNCIL – 18 MARCH 2026</b>  |
| Subject                    | <b>COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REIEW</b>   |
| Wards affected             | All   |
| Accountable member         | Cllr Mike Evely, Leader of the Council<br>Email: <a href="mailto:mike.evely@cotswold.gov.uk">mike.evely@cotswold.gov.uk</a>   |
| Accountable officer        | Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer<br>Email: <a href="mailto:angela.claridge@cotswold.gov.uk">angela.claridge@cotswold.gov.uk</a>   |
| Report author              | Sarah Dalby, Electoral Services Manager<br>Email: <a href="mailto:sarah.dalby@cotswold.gov.uk">sarah.dalby@cotswold.gov.uk</a>  |
| Summary/Purpose            | To approve the final recommendations of the Community Governance Review   |
| Annexes                    | Annex A – Details and consultation responses for each area  |
| Recommendation(s)          | That Council resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approve the final recommendations in relation to the Community Governance Review for Cirencester, Cutsdean, Fairford, Moreton-in-Marsh, Southrop, Tetbury, as set out in the table at para. 5.1.</li> <li>2. Authorise the Head of Legal Services to make a Reorganisation of Community Governance order to implement the changes agreed by Council.</li> </ol> |
| Corporate priorities       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting Communities</li> </ul>  |
| Key Decision               | NO  |
| Exempt                     | NO  |
| Consultees/                | Following Council’s approval of the Community Governance Review   |



**COTSWOLD**

District Council

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Consultation | in November 2025, consultation has taken place with Parish and Town Councils, Ward Councillors, County Councillors and residents in each of the affected areas. |
|--------------|---|



## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1** Following approval by Council in November 2025, consultation on proposed changes to parish and town council boundaries and councillor numbers has been conducted.
- 1.2** This report sets out the responses to the consultation and recommendations to be considered.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** Community Governance Reviews (“CGR”) provide the opportunity for Principal Councils to review and make changes to community governance within their areas.
- 2.2** A CGR enables strong, clearly defined boundaries to be put into place, which reflect local identities and facilitate effective and convenient local government.
- 2.3** Consultation has now taken place on the proposed changes in the areas under review. This includes a meeting with ward members from the areas under review to discuss the consultation responses and agree the recommendations provided here.
- 2.4** Down Ampney Parish Council was included in the initial request for a CGR, however following a change in councillors this request was withdrawn. No consultation has taken place on this.

## **3. WARD MEMBERS’ COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW MEETING**

- 3.1** At the conclusion of the consultation, a meeting of ward members for the areas included took place.
- 3.2** Members were provided with the full responses for each area and their views were sought on the recommendations.
- 3.3** The recommendations included in this report were agreed with those members.
- 3.4** The full responses for each area can be viewed by contacting the Electoral Services Officer.

## **4. PROCESS**

- 4.1** The consultation included letters being sent to all households affected by the proposed changes. Residents were able to respond by completing an online form, emailing or writing to the Council.
- 4.2** Parish councils, district and county councillors and MPs were also included in the consultation and were able to respond in the same way.



**4.3** Responses to the consultation were collated for each area and a discussion was held with the relevant ward member(s) to agree the recommendations as they appear in this report.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**5.1** The recommendations for each area are included in Annex A and can be summarised as follows:

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Cirencester – Preston</b>    | No change  |
| <b>Cirencester – Siddington</b> | No change  |
| <b>Cutsdean</b>                 | Cutsdean Parish Council to be dissolved and a Parish Meeting created for the area. This change to come into effect no later than 1 October 2026 once all legal requirements have been put in place |
| <b>Fairford</b>                 | Increase the number of councillors for Fairford Town Council from 13 to 15 with effect from the May 2027 elections   |
| <b>Moreton-in-Marsh</b>         | No change  |
| <b>Southrop</b>                 | Increase the number of Councillors for Southrop Parish Council from 5 to 7 with effect from the May 2027 elections   |
| <b>Tetbury</b>                  | Create three wards in Tetbury Town Council with effect from the May 2027 election  |

## **6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

**6.1** If the recommendations are not approved, the parish council arrangements will remain as they are.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**7.1.** The changes outlined above can be implemented by the Council within existing resources, any increase in costs for parish elections will be recharged directly to the relevant parish council.



## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1** Any review and decision must be conducted in accordance with relevant legislation, namely the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Local Government Act 1972.
- 8.2** If approved, a Reorganisation Order will be required to be drafted, made and confirmed.

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 9.1** Governance arrangements should reflect the identities and interests of local communities and promote local cohesion.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1** The consultation responses are available to view by contacting the Electoral Services Manager.

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## **Annex A**

### **Community Governance Proposals Summary of responses and recommendations**

#### **1. Cirencester – Preston boundary change**

##### **Wards**

- Cirencester, New Mills – Councillor Claire Bloomer
- Siddington and Cerney Rural – Councillor Mike Evely

##### **Proposal**

The proposal is to change the boundary between Preston parish and Cirencester Town to move 6 properties and land along Kingshill lane from Preston Parish into Cirencester Town, New Mills Ward.

##### **Responses**

Responses have been received from Cirencester Town Council and Preston Parish Council as follows:

##### **Cirencester Town Council - Cirencester New Mills – Preston**

With the development of 280 dwellings on land west of Kingshill Lane being approved by Cotswold District Council, a development which falls within the parish boundary, but disconnected from, Preston, it is appropriate that a community governance review be undertaken for the Cirencester boundary, within the New Mills ward, to be extended.

There is a definitive link with the town and as such this area, should fall within the parish boundary of Cirencester so that governance arrangements are aligned more appropriately.

The Town Council had previously recognised the importance of a green/rural buffer zone being maintained between Cirencester and Preston so that it's rural integrity and village identity could be protected; this is now no longer the case.

An amendment to the boundary would ensure that those living and working in this area are better placed to access local Councillor(s) and provide greater clarity and transparency in terms of governance arrangements.

##### **Preston Parish Council**

Thank you for your email regarding the Town Council's proposals under the current Community Governance Review. These were discussed at the Parish Council meeting last Thursday and Members felt that any change to the boundary now, is premature. You will be aware that several planning applications have been submitted for this site in recent years and whilst the Parish Council does not welcome such development, it is very concerned about the lack of infrastructure and especially the impact that increased traffic will bring.

The Parish Council has lobbied all involved with the planning decision process and employed planning consultants to help put over these concerns. Despite having been approved by CDC's Planning Committee, the most recent planning application, 24/02854/OUT, still has some way to go through the process and if the boundary were to be changed at this stage, the Parish Council would lose its planning consultee status and, therefore, any influence it might have. I am attaching the notes from a recent meeting with Gloucestershire Highways Officers explaining the Parish Council's concerns and improvements needed not only for the benefit of Preston residents but also the future residents of the development and the surrounding area.

In addition, Preston Parish Council have submitted the following comment:

Preston Parish Council would like to reiterate that they believe that any changes to the boundary should always result in the houses at Preston Forty being retained as part of Preston Parish. It is the fundamental understanding of the Council that the existing residents of Preston Forty wish to remain part of the Parish of Preston and part of Preston Village.

The recently permitted application at Kings Hill Meadow, currently in Preston, is yet to submit any reserved matters and so the exact layout is unknown - until there is clarity over the layout of the development, the Parish Council believes that any changes to the boundary should be deferred.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that no changes be made to the boundary at this time.

## **2. Cirencester – Siddington boundary change**

### **Wards affected**

- Cirencester, Watermoor – Councillor Nick Bridges
- Siddington and Cerney Rural – Councillor Mike Every

### **Proposals**

Two proposals were submitted for change to the boundary between Cirencester and Siddington:

Cirencester Town Council submitted a change to bring 253 properties from Siddington into Cirencester.

Siddington Parish Council submitted a change to bring 213 properties from Cirencester into Siddington.

### **Responses**

90 responses were received to the consultation. The majority of respondents wished to remain in Siddington but did not specifically indicate a preference for either proposal. The remaining responses were split between proposal A, proposal B and retaining the status quo.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that no changes be made to the boundary at this time.

### **3. Cutsdean Parish Council**

#### **Ward**

- Bourton Vale – Councillor Len Wilkins

#### **Proposal**

Cutsdean Parish Council submitted a request to change from a Parish Council to a Parish Meeting.

There are currently 55 electors in the parish and therefore maintaining a parish council of 5 councillors is becoming difficult. Changing to a parish meeting will allow residents to be involved in decisions without the legal administration required for a parish council.

#### **Responses**

There were 6 responses to the consultation, including the County Councillor. Of these, 5 were in favour of the change and 1 against.

The district ward councillor has worked with the parish council over a number of months and supports their request.

#### **Recommendation:**

That the District Council dissolve Cutsdean Parish Council and create a Parish Meeting for the area. This change to come into effect no later than 1 October 2026 once all legal requirements have been put in place.

## 4. Fairford

### Wards

- Fairford North – Councillor Michael Vann
- Lechlade, Kempsford and Fairford South - Councillor Helene Mansilla and Councillor Tristan Wilkinson

### Proposal

The town council has requested that the number of councillors be increased from 13 to 15. With an increase in the number of properties in the area both recently and proposed, they feel an increase in councillors will help spread the workload.

### Population

The current population of Fairford is approximately 4,200 and is projected to increase to approximately 4,600 within the next 5 years.

### Number of councillors

The number of councillors each council is dependent on the number of electors but there is no legislative scale. The District Council has previously used the following scale:

| <b>Electorate</b> | <b>Number of Councillors</b> |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| not exceeding 200 | 5                            |
| 201 -500          | 7                            |
| 501 - 1000        | 9                            |
| 1001 - 2000       | 11                           |
| 2001 - 4000       | 13                           |
| over 4000         | 15                           |

Fairford's request therefore falls into this scale for 15 councillors.

### Responses

There were 33 responses of which 23 were in favour.

### Recommendation

That the number of councillors for Fairford Town Council be increased from 13 to 15 with effect from the May 2027 elections.

## **5. Moreton-in-Marsh**

### **Wards**

- Moreton East – Councillor Angus Jenkinson
- Moreton West – Councillor Daryl Corps

### **Proposal**

The Town Council asked for a change in their boundary with Batsford. This was in light of land identified in the SHEELA document which may be developed at a future date and would be better served by the Town Council rather than Batsford parish.

As part of the initial process of considering the proposal, advice was sought from the local plan team. Their advice was that it is a little early to consider this proposal and that the Town Council would be advised to wait before any changes are requested. Additionally, the District Council is undertaking a "feasibility study to understand whether strategic scale development in Moreton-in-Marsh is possible. This may find that strategic scale development is not feasible or viable.

This information was provided to the Town Council as part of the initial discussions for the Community Governance Review. After consideration, the Town Council requested that the proposal be considered as submitted.

### **Consultation**

There were 117 responses of which the majority were against the proposals.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that no changes be made to the boundary at this time.

## 6. Southrop

### Ward

- Coln Valley – Councillor David Fowles

### Proposal

Southrop Parish Council requested an increase from 5 councillors to 7.

### Population

The current population of Southrop is 280 and is not projected to change in the next 5 years.

### Number of councillors

The number of councillors each council is dependent on the number of electors but there is no legislative scale. The District Council has previously used the following scale:

| <b>Electorate</b> | <b>Number of Councillors</b> |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| not exceeding 200 | 5                            |
| 201 -500          | 7                            |
| 501 - 1000        | 9                            |
| 1001 - 2000       | 11                           |
| 2001 - 4000       | 13                           |
| over 4000         | 15                           |

Southrop's request therefore falls into this scale for 7 councillors.

### Responses

There were 6 responses of which 5 were in favour.

### Recommendation

That the number of councillors for Southrop Paish Council be increased from 5 to 7 with effect from the May 2027 elections.

## **7. Tetbury**

### **Wards**

- Tetbury East & Rural – Councillor Nikki Ind
- Tetbury Town – Councillor Ian Watson
- Tetbury with Upton – Councillor Laura Hall-Wilson

### **Proposal**

Tetbury Town Council requested a change to create town council wards in line with the District Council wards.

The Town Council currently has 15 councillors who represent the town. The town council feels that having 3 wards each with 5 councillors will help share the workload more efficiently between the councillors. Each councillor will represent their own ward whilst having an overview of the whole town.

### **Responses**

There were 80 responses of which 41 were in favour, 28 against and 11 gave no clear response either in favour or against.

### **Recommendation**

That Tetbury Town Council be warded as follows with effect from the May 2027 election:

- Tetbury East Ward represented by 5 councillors
- Tetbury Town Ward represented by 6 councillors
- Tetbury West Ward represented by 4 councillors



## COUNCIL MOTION FORM

Title of Motion: **Climate and Ecological Transformation in Cotswold District and Gloucestershire**

Proposer: Councillor Angus Jenkinson

Seconder: Councillor Mike McKeown

The motion addresses the urgent need for local action to support sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices in response to escalating climate and ecological challenges.

Council notes:

- The Council's declared Climate and Ecological Emergencies and its continuing commitment to be green to the core in response to these
- The findings of the UK's national risk assessment identifying critical threats to ecosystems and biodiversity with international evidence that many natural systems are on trajectories towards failure
- The recent call by the United Nations Secretary-General for a transition beyond GDP towards recognising the value of natural systems and ecosystem services for local and global future outcomes
- The conclusions of successive international UN IPCC scientific reports that agricultural methods have a vital role in mitigating climate and ecological impacts, which also affect food supply
- Both Cotswold District and Gloucestershire have amongst the highest proportions of agricultural land of any local authority areas in England with thousands of farm enterprises that are in or considering transition to regenerative practices
- That Gloucestershire contains the largest National Landscape in England and a National Forest Park
- That climate, ecology and food resilience depend on successful agricultural transition, a goal relevant to the Food and Farming track in local government re-organisation.

Recognising the significant potential of local agriculture to contribute positively to climate and ecological recovery, and the need for coordinated local and regional support to enable this, Full Council resolves to:



- 1) Request that the Chief Executive and the Leader propose the following when representing the Council on the work to prepare for local government reorganisation:
  - a) That the LGR Programme formally adopts Food and Farming as an active element within its climate planning work - whether as its own strand or as a sub-strand as officers determine as most effective; and
  - b) That the LGR Programme uses Climate Leadership Gloucestershire's Food and Farming track as a convening mechanism.
  
- 2) Report back to the July 2026 meeting of the Council with an update on the development of the Future Operating Model(s) of the new unitary council(s) and how Food and Farming is being considered within them and including the following:
  - a) who will take ownership of it (political and officer leads),
  - b) what the early priorities are, and
  - c) which partners could be involved (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, catchment partnerships, Environment Agency, National Landscapes, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, National Farmers Union, and others as appropriate).

**NOTES:**

1. Motions must be submitted to [Democratic.Services@Cotswold.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@Cotswold.gov.uk) not later than 7 working days prior to the date of the meeting.
2. Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility, or which affect the Cotswold District.
3. Council cannot instruct the Leader but can makes requests of the Leader.
4. Council motions cannot commit resources or expenditure. Any request for resources would need to be referred to Cabinet for consideration.

Council meeting date: 18 March 2026.