



COTSWOLD

District Council

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE DECISION MEETING
Subject	CRISIS AND RESILIENCE FUND
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Patrick Coleman Cabinet Member for Finance Email: patrick.coleman@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Joseph Walker, Head of Economic Development and Communities Email: joseph.walker@Cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Clare Jobling, Community Wellbeing Manager Email: clare.jobling@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To update on the implementation of the Crisis and Resilience Fund
Annexes	Annex A – Summary of CRF Delivery Plan Exempt Annex B – Project Summaries
Recommendation(s)	That the Cabinet Member for Finance resolves to: 1. Note the activity enabled by the Crisis and Resilience Fund 2. Agree to the proposed distribution for the 2026 allocation 3. Delegate authority to the Head of Economic Development and Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet member, to agree the distribution of smaller grants to enable the Community Coordination theme. 4. Delegate authority to the Head of Economic Development and Communities, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, to finalise grant terms
Corporate priorities	• Delivering Housing • Supporting Communities • Supporting the Economy



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Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Gloucestershire County Council, as the authority locally responsible for CRF Local Voluntary and Community Sector organisations



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** This report provides an overview of the Crisis and Resilience Fund and seeks Cabinet member endorsement for the proposed programme of activity.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Since 2021, central government has provided hardship funding to local authorities, first to support on the impact of Covid, and then the cost of living crisis. From April 2026, the initial mechanism, the Household Support Fund has been superseded by the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF). Beyond the name change, there are a few technical differences, and more of an emphasis on prevention.
- 2.2** Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) is the managing body for the funding within Gloucestershire. They enlist district councils as key partners in this approach, to lever local knowledge and relationships with on-the-ground voluntary and community sector partners.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1** Each district has been given a CRF allocation for the 2026-27 year. Cotswold has been awarded £170,450.
- 3.2** To expedite spend, the Council was asked to provide an indicative delivery plan to illustrate how local activity would complement centrally commissioned projects. Officers invited local voluntary and community partners to share their thoughts, to inform this exercise. The draft delivery plan, summarised at Annex A, was submitted to GCC, and has been endorsed by GCC, subject to local agreement on the project specifics.
- 3.3** Local partners have updated their proposals to reflect the resource available, which are presented today for Cabinet member endorsement.
- 3.4** Annex B contains the project summary sheets. These summarise the proposed activity, state the proposed project allocation, and present partners' proposals around spend and outputs. Subject to endorsement from the Cabinet member that individually and collectively these represent an appropriate and robust local package of activity to deliver the CRF, the Council will contract with each partner to deliver against the described projects.



3.5 It is proposed that £40,000 of the allocation is committed to supporting smaller 'settlement level' partners. One of the themes of the CRF is 'Community Coordination', which reflects a CRF programme ambition to improve the network of resident support, and maps well geographically distributed web of support in Cotswold District: there are a small number of larger charities which provide support, backed up by settlement level organisations. Our intention is to simplify the process for these local partners, and work with them to develop the referral mechanisms that take advantage of both their local reach and partner expertise – e.g. local partners providing referrals to Citizens Advice for benefits and debt advice. This report proposes a delegation for the allocation of these smaller grants, of up to £10,000 to the Head of Economic development and Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet member.

3.6 The Council will then report an aggregated picture of spend and project activity to Gloucestershire County Council, quarterly through 26/27, noting that due to the delays launching this programme, there will be nothing to report for quarter 1.

4. NEXT STEPS

4.1 Subject to this decision, the Council will contract with partners, and transfer funds in accordance with the contract, and the ongoing monitoring of activity and outputs.

4.2 At this point, we do not know in detail how the County Council will manage this programme into year 2 – and year 3, which it should be noted commences with the expected vesting day of the future Gloucestershire unitary structure(s). Officers will continue to work closely with both the County Council's CRF team and local partners to 'bridge' the conversation to ensure CRF addresses local needs.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

5.1 Our CRF allocation needs to be spend by 31 March 2027, and on activity that fits with CRF criteria. Within the parameters agreed with GCC, the district council retains some discretion over the local spend and could seek agreement from GCC to vary their terms. Thus, an alternative distribution is possible, albeit challenging in timeframe. However, the options suggested above represent a coherent set of



proposals that complement centrally funded activity, and indeed the broader picture of community provision in the district.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1** The proposals appended to this report will support an effective local partnership to support local people through hardship and crisis in 2026 and should sustain and build inter-organisational referral routes to roll forward into future years' delivery.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** CRF is external funding, conditioned to be spend on agreed activities to alleviate financial hardship. It cannot be redirected to other activities. As such, the proposed expenditure does not affect the Council's financial position beyond the staff resource necessary to manage arrangements with partners and to process payments, which can be managed currently within establishment budget.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** This funding is provided to CDC on standardised GCC grant conditions. The reporting and monitoring expectations will be taken on by funded partners, who will sign up to these in contracting with CDC.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1** In the event that CRF funds are not allocated, they will be returned, via the County Council, to the Department for Work and Pensions. Thus, there is a risk without decision on the funds that this resource will be lost to the district and not spent to the advantage of local residents.
- 9.2** Without due consideration and supervision, there is a risk that funds could be spent to limited positive impact locally. This risk has been mitigated through early engagement with local partners and a focus on critical activity.

10. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 10.1** CRF is not directed at specific protected characteristics. However, protected characteristics can play a role in social and economic opportunity. More households where a householder has a disability, or single parent households, for example, are more likely to be in economic hardship. CRF partners have a strong commitment to equalities, which will be enforced through the contracting process. Overall, the



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delivery of CRF supported activity will support residents in need, and support people with protected characteristics towards economic and social inclusion.

11. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1** There are unlikely to be significant climate and ecological emergency implications. By supporting residents in economic hardship, including fuel poverty, CRF may encourage additional use of home heating, but in all likelihood only to a level most households might take for granted. Conversely, supporting residents with utility costs may discourage them from using alternative heat sources such as open fires or gas heaters, which may be cheaper to run, but which present climate change and safety concerns.
- 11.2** Within the county CRF programme, GCC have supported Severn and Wye Energy Agency to provide household advice on energy efficiency, insulation and lowering bills, so within the wider CRF provision, we expect to see a net climate positive.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1** None

(END

Annex A

Crisis & Resilience Fund 1		
C&R Pillar	Delivery	Annual budget
Resilience/	North Cotswold Foodbank	£ 20,000.00
Resilience/	South Cotswold Foodbank	£ 25,000.00
Community Coordination	Rural Hub partnership - smaller local partners to make warm referrals, host expert services etc	£ 40,000.00
Prevention	Cotswold Friends	£ 16,000.00
Prevention	The Churn	£ 18,000.00
Resilience	p3	£ 21,351.00
Community Coordination	CFN - Strategic Support	£ 15,000.00
Admin		£ 15,099.00
Total		£170,450.00