



Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Wednesday, 22 September 2021.

Councillors present:

Dilys Neill – Chair
Stephen Andrews
Gina Blomefield
Ray Brassington
Patrick Coleman
Rachel Coxcoon
David Cunningham
Tony Dale
Andrew Doherty
Mike Evely

Nikki Ind – Vice-Chair
Jenny Forde
Joe Harris
Mark Harris
Stephen Hirst
Robin Hughes
Roly Hughes
Sue Jepson
Julia Judd
Juliet Layton

Andrew Maclean
Nick Maunder
Richard Norris
Nigel Robbins
Gary Selwyn
Lisa Spivey
Ray Theodoulou
Steve Trotter
Clive Webster

Officers present:

Amy Bridgewater-Carnall, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Angela Claridge, Interim Monitoring Officer
Caleb Harris, Strategic Support Officer
Claire Hughes, Business Manager, Corporate Responsibility
Ben Patel-Sadler, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Jenny Poole, Deputy Chief Executive
Rob Weaver, Chief Executive

28 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Richard Morgan, Tony Berry, Richard Keeling, Claire Bloomer and Mark Annett.

29 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

30 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2021 were agreed as a true record subject to the following amendments:

In relation to the recorded votes at page three of the minutes under the Affordable Housing Schemes item, Members voting 'for' should read 28.

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In relation to the recorded votes at page four of the minutes under the Recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet - Tetbury and Fairford Leisure Provision Task and Finish Group item, Members voting 'for' should read 17 and 'abstentions' 11 with six Members being absent.

At page six of the minutes, under the resolution of item 24, 'the updated Planning Protocol as outlined at Appendix 6, is adopted;' should instead read 'the updated Planning Protocol as outlined at Appendix 6, is adopted as of 1 September 2021;'

Council noted the reasons behind the late circulation of the July draft minutes which was partly due to staff shortages within Democratic Services. Officers would endeavour to get draft minutes circulated in a shorter time frame going forwards.

Officers would endeavour to ensure that Member's names were spelled correctly.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2021 were agreed as a true record subject to the above amendments being made.

Record of Voting – for: 26, against: 0, abstentions: 0, absent: 8.

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

The Chair of the Council, Councillor Dilys Neill welcomed Members and Officers back to the Council Chamber as the return to in-person meetings continued.

Members of the public and press who were watching the webcast of the meeting were also welcomed.

The Chair of the Council and the Mayor of Cirencester Town Council, Councillor Claire Bloomer had recently attended the Relay for Life. Members and Officers had been saddened by the death of Tallis Shakespeare (Tree Officer, Cotswold District Council) who had recently passed away following a battle with cancer. The Chair proposed that a team of Members and Officers be put together to compete in the 2022 Relay for Life in memory of Tallis Shakespeare.

Following the completion of the July Council meeting, the Chair had worked with Councillors Nikki Ind and Julia Judd to lead a working group to look at the climate change awards system. In relation to this, Council noted that Cabinet were best placed to discuss this matter and take a decision on it. In relation to the Chair's award for community service, Council noted that a nomination was sought by the Conservative Group for a Member to take part in the work in this area as part of the working group.

Council noted the importance of ensuring that Member conduct within meetings was appropriate at all times.

It was further noted that public questions were welcome, but should always be relevant to Council business and should not be used to facilitate party political debate.

The Constitution Working Group would continue to look at Member Questions and how these could be appropriately facilitated within Council meetings.

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The Chair outlined the Member debating and consideration of motions procedures.

Council noted that Councillor Roly Hughes would be selling poppies outside Tesco Metro from 30 October.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Joe Harris addressed the Council, welcoming back Members and Officers to the Council Chamber.

Members noted the importance of webcasting meetings to make Council decisions more accessible to members of the public.

The Leader of the Council paid tribute to Tallis Shakespeare.

In relation to the resettlement of refugees from Afghanistan, the Council noted that it was crucial to support these individuals. A Gloucestershire-wide approach was being utilised in this regard which had been working well. The Council was working with partners to offer accommodation to refugees within the District.

In relation to the recent Local Government Ombudsman decision, Members noted that the Council would always be open and honest when things had not gone to plan. The Leader made a public apology to the resident affected and offered assurance that the Council's revenues and benefits team had worked hard to make improvements to ensure that this would not occur again. A report had already been considered by Cabinet in this regard at their September meeting.

Members noted that in recent years, the Council had been identified as one of the District authorities receiving the least amount of complaints.

The first Parish Council Forum meeting would be held in October, with one being held at Trinity Road and the other taking place at Moreton Area Centre. The purpose of these meetings was one step in terms of improving the relationship between the District and Parish Councils.

In relation to National Park designation, the Council noted that it was not a foregone conclusion that the Cotswolds would become a National Park. The Leader expressed a view that if the Cotswolds was to become a National Park, the housing issues affecting the area would be exasperated due to the likely price increases of properties. In the event that planning responsibility was removed from the Council, Members noted the possibility of large-scale housing development taking place. The Council would be lobbying against the proposals.

The Chief Executive wished to express his condolences in relation to the passing of Tallis Shakespeare who would be missed by his colleagues and friends across the Council.

32 Public Questions

A record of public questions and answers are available in the schedule attached to these minutes. Two questions were asked by Mr Gibson and were directed to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Joe Harris.

Due to technical difficulties, Mr Gibson, who had joined the meeting virtually was unable to address Council.

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The Leader of the Council had received the questions in advance of the meeting and provided responses to both.

33 Member Questions

A record of Member questions and answers are available in the schedule attached to these minutes.

Questions were asked by:

Councillor Julia Judd to Councillor Andrew Doherty, Cabinet Member for the Environment, Waste and Recycling.

Councillor David Cunningham to Councillor Andrew Doherty, Cabinet Member for the Environment, Waste and Recycling.

Councillor Richard Norris to Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance.

34 Funding for Essential Maintenance of Council Service Property Asset - Cirencester Leisure Centre

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Mike Evemy introduced the report and informed Council that Cirencester Leisure Centre was a key community facility.

Council noted that urgent maintenance was required in order that the facility could remain operational. Members noted the summary of required work which was outlined in the report.

Members noted that the pool would need to be closed during the completion of these works.

Officers would work with the contractor to ensure that any pool closures were kept to a minimum.

Council noted that the first instances of paint flaking had been observed in June 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. The continual flaking of paint had caused structural issues which now required attention. These works could not have been completed during the closing of leisure centres during the pandemic due to the lack of available contractors and staff due to the pandemic. Whilst not ideal to close the leisure centre, which would result in a loss of revenue, the works were essential to ensure the longevity of the facility.

The Committee noted that as part of the contract between SLM and the Council, SLM retained some responsibility for the maintenance of the building, although the responsibility for the structure remained with the Council which was why the approval of Council was being sought to commission the required structural works.

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance proposed that Council agreed the recommendations as set out in the report. This was seconded by Councillor Jenny Forde.

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RESOLVED that Council, as recommended by Cabinet agreed the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Record of Voting – for: 26, against: 0, abstentions: 0, absent: 8.

35 Notice of Motions

Members had been given notice of a number of Motions, detailed on the agenda.

a) Motion – Scrap the Proposals in the Planning White Paper

Proposed by Councillor Rachel Coxcoon, Seconded by Councillor Joe Harris.

Council noted that the debate around the motion needed to take place before any further proposals were made.

Councillor Rachel Coxcoon provided further context around the motion.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Joe Harris reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Clive Webster expressed his support for the motion.

Councillor Patrick Coleman expressed his concerns around how the Government would manage the process of amending the planning regulations.

Councillor Stephen Andrews proposed that the motion moved to a vote.

Councillor Joe Harris expressed a view that the proposed planning amendments would not benefit local communities.

Councillor Rachel Coxcoon provided a summary of the motion.

RESOLVED that the motion was carried.

Record of Voting – for: 16, against: 0, abstentions: 10, absent: 8.

b) Motion - Community Funding for the 2022 Queens Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Proposed by Councillor Julia Judd, Seconded by Councillor Stephen Hirst.

Council noted that this motion would be considered by the Cabinet as it had financial implications.

Councillor Julia Judd provided further context around the motion and requested that a figure of £500 per ward Member be added to the motion so that the final paragraph then read:

‘This council therefore resolves to set aside specific community funding of £500 per Ward Member to support communities to run special events over the weekend, enabling them to kick-start their plans to organise a one off never to be forgotten event’.

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Councillor Mike Every expressed a view that due to the financial implications arising from the revisions to the motion, it was appropriate for the matter to be considered formally at Cabinet so further work on the financial details could be completed.

RESOLVED that the matter would be formally considered by Cabinet at its November 2021 meeting.

c) Motion – Cotswold Shopping Festival

Proposed by Councillor Richard Morgan, Seconded by Councillor Stephen Hirst.

RESOLVED that this motion was withdrawn.

d) Motion – Dog Waste Bin Provision

Proposed by Councillor Julia Judd.

RESOLVED that this motion was withdrawn.

e) Motion – 20mph is Plenty Where People Are

Proposed by Councillor Jenny Forde, Seconded by Councillor Andrew Doherty.

Councillor Jenny Forde provided further context around the motion.

Councillor Andrew Doherty expressed his support for the motion.

Councillor Roly Hughes expressed his support for the motion.

Councillor Stephen Hirst addressed the Council and informed members that Gloucestershire County Council had every intention of adopting 20mph maximum speed limits in areas where vulnerable road users and vehicles mixed.

Councillor Lisa Spivey expressed her support for the motion.

Councillor Rachel Coxcoon expressed her support for the motion.

Councillor Clive Webster expressed his support for the motion.

Councillor Stephen Andrews addressed the Council and emphasised the importance of continuing to lobby partners to achieve the amending of speed limits.

Councillor Ray Theodoulou addressed the Council and expressed a view that it would be important to secure the support of the police in relation to the revision of speed limits across the District.

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Councillor Joe Harris wished to place on record his thanks to Councillor Roly Hughes for his work around the '20 is plenty' scheme and acknowledged the importance of ensuring this was formally adopted in order that lives could be saved.

Councillor Gina Blomefield expressed her support for the motion

Councillor Jenny Forde provided a summary of the motion.

RESOLVED that the motion was carried.

Record of Voting – for: 26, against: 0, abstentions: 0, absent 8.

The Chair of the Council, Councillor Dilys Neill and all Members wished to place on record their thanks to Democratic Services for their help in ensuring the meeting had run smoothly.

36 Next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 17 November 2021 – 2pm.

However, after discussions with Members following this meeting, the decision was taken to rearrange the proposed 17 November Council meeting.

The final Council meeting of 2021 would take place on Wednesday 15 December 2021 – 2pm.

The Meeting commenced at 6pm and closed at 7.40pm

Chair

(END)