

Cabinet  
07/March2022



COTSWOLD  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet held on Monday, 7 March 2022.**

Councillors present:

Rachel Coxcoon  
Andrew Doherty  
Mike Evely

Jenny Forde  
Joe Harris  
Juliet Layton

Lisa Spivey

Officers present:

Angela Claridge, Director of Governance & Development  
Caleb Harris, Strategic Support Officer  
Claire Locke, Group Manager  
Phil Measures, Service Leader  
Ben Patel-Sadler, Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Jenny Poole, Deputy Chief Executive  
Rob Weaver, Chief Executive  
Frank Wilson, Executive Director (Finance)

Observers:

Councillor Stephen Andrews  
Councillor Patrick Coleman

**101 Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence.

**102 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**103 Minutes**

Cabinet agreed that the following amendment would be made to the draft minutes:

At page 11 (minute 97) of the draft minutes, the words 'above £500' should be deleted.

Councillor Joe Harris proposed that the Cabinet approve the minutes of the 7 February 2022 meeting subject to the above amendment being made.

This was seconded by Councillor Mike Evely.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 7 February 2022 be approved as a correct record subject to the relevant amendment being made.

**Record of Voting – for: 7, against: 0, abstention: 0, absent: 1.**

#### **104 Chair's Announcements (if any)**

The Chair addressed the conflict in Ukraine, with Cabinet noting the unfolding humanitarian crisis and the scale of the number of people leaving the country to flee the conflict.

Cabinet noted that the Cotswolds would play its part in ensuring that refugees fleeing the conflict would be provided with sanctuary. Plans were currently being developed to determine the exact offer from the District in this regard.

Cabinet noted that some Cotswold residents had relatives attempting to flee the Ukraine to join their families here.

Cabinet noted that the Local Plan Consultation was going well. The Chair encouraged all Members and residents to take part in the survey so their voices could be heard.

The Chair wished to place on record his thanks to Councillor Coxcoon and the Officers working on this project for ensuring that the revised consultation platform had resulted in an easier and more efficient collation and analysis of responses.

#### **105 Public Questions**

There were no public questions.

#### **106 Member Questions**

There were no Member questions.

#### **107 Financial, Council Priority and Service Performance Report - 2021-22 Quarter Three**

The Chief Executive introduced the report and addressed the key headlines, including a performance improvement around benefit processing, a reduction in call waiting times, the land charges team bringing their performance back within targets and the number of missed bin collections reducing.

Cabinet noted that an improvement in performance was required in relation to the number of food inspections (although recruitment had been undertaken in this area which would have a positive impact on performance going forwards).

Cabinet further noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had recently considered the Performance Report and their feedback and comments had been shared with the Cabinet.

Cabinet noted that work would be continuing to ensure that the layout of Performance Reports would be amended to ensure they were easy to read and that performance trends could be easily identified. These amendments would be undertaken alongside the work and associated recommendations of the Performance Task and Finish Group.

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The Deputy Chief Executive addressed the Cabinet and highlighted the key financial aspects of the report, with Members noting the underspend in relation to the current budget.

Cabinet noted the current financial pressures facing the Council and where revenue may decrease in the future (for example if the usage of car parks did not significantly increase following the Covid-19 pandemic).

In response to a Member query, Cabinet noted that the Council's Car Parking Improvement Board would welcome feedback from Members in relation to how the enforcement service would interact and manage relationships with the public as the service returned to an 'in-house' arrangement.

Cabinet noted that the Planning team had worked to ensure that referrals made by the Planning Referrals Group were robust in terms of current legislation, ensuring that appropriate planning recommendations were submitted by Officers for consideration by the Planning Committee.

Cabinet noted that in terms of increased amounts of recycling collections, it was anticipated that this trend would continue.

Cabinet noted that a new boiler had been purchased for the Trinity Road site due to the old system having failed and certified as beyond economic repair.

Cabinet further noted the additional costs related to the recently agreed staff pay award (for the current financial year). This had been budgeted for.

Cabinet noted the shortage of public sector staff across the country and the associated competitive nature of recruitment when attempting to fill vacant positions.

Cabinet noted the challenges associated with the provision of affordable housing.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Cabinet reviewed overall progress on the Council priorities, service delivery and financial performance for 2021-22 Q3.

**108 Changes to Cotswold District Council's Offices at Trinity Road, Cirencester to Facilitate Agile Working and Increase Commercial Income**

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report.

The proposals outlined in the report were based on feedback from staff and the requirements associated with the renting out of office space to external organisations.

Cabinet noted that approximately 35% of the office space at the Trinity Road site would be rented out.

Cabinet further noted that meeting/collaborative space would be available for Council staff to use. The future arrangements would seek to meet the needs of the Council and its employees based on their roles.

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Cabinet noted the costs associated with the setting up of the offices to accommodate the future arrangements as outlined in the report. Works had been prioritised based on their urgency.

Members noted the forecasted revenue generation following the implementation of the proposed working arrangements.

Cabinet noted that staff would be encouraged to minimise their energy usage when working from home to assist in tackling the current climate emergency. Works would also be undertaken at the Trinity Road to improve the energy performance of the building.

Due to the increase in energy costs, Cabinet noted that staff and organisations would become increasingly mindful of their energy use.

In response to a Member query, the Cabinet noted that Officers would look at using second-hand furniture to avoid procuring new furniture which would assist in reducing the carbon footprint associated with the furnishing of the building.

Cabinet noted that planning work had been undertaken to ensure that teams were placed in appropriate areas away from potential tenants to minimise disruption (staff call handling teams being in their own designated areas, along with staff dealing with sensitive information being afforded privacy for example). This work would be continually progressed.

Cabinet expressed a view that it would be important to ensure that the new offices were comfortable and modern which would aid productivity and would appeal to internal staff and external organisations looking to rent space within the Trinity Road site.

Cabinet were provided with assurance that the gender split in terms of future office space usage would be monitored as well as the gender pay gap.

Cabinet noted that provision for staff being able to wash and shower at the office would be included in the future plans. This was particularly relevant for staff who sometimes worked in muddy/dirty conditions off-site but who would often need to return to the office later in the day.

As part of these works, Cabinet noted that work would be undertaken to de-clutter the building to increase the amount of usable space.

A separate piece of work would be undertaken in the future to determine how the Council's civic space might be used and utilised.

Councillor Mike Evemy proposed that the final decision on whether or not to proceed with the proposals should be submitted for the Council to take a final decision at the 16 March 2022 meeting.

This was seconded by Councillor Joe Harris.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet agrees to recommend that Council:

- (a) Supports the proposed changes to office layout;
- (b) Seeks tenants to occupy space that will be created in the West wing of the building;
- (c) Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive to agree lease arrangements in consultation with the Interim Head of Legal Services and the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance. Page 95
- (d) Allocates funding of up to £975,000 from the Recovery Investment Strategy budget in the Capital Programme to facilitate the changes to the Trinity Road offices and fund structure repairs identified in the building condition survey;
- (e) That the detailed costs be agreed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive and the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance.
- (f) Notes that the gross revenue savings of £202,000 will contribute towards the savings from the Recovery Investment Strategy.

**Record of Voting – for: 7, against: 0, abstention: 0, absent: 1**

#### **109 Electric Vehicle Charging Point Infrastructure and Fee Setting**

Councillor Rachel Coxcoon introduced the report.

Cabinet noted that the newly installed chargers would not only be suitable for current vehicle charging purposes, they could be upgraded in the future if required.

Cabinet further noted that discussions were taking place with partner authorities and landowners to ensure charging points were installed at appropriate sites across the District.

Cabinet noted that the price of energy had resulted in difficulties in determining what an appropriate charging fee would be.

Mr McKeown as a member of the public addressed the Cabinet with some comments in relation to charging rates during off-peak hours at the discretion of the Chair.

Cabinet noted the difference in price in relation to those individuals who could charge at home using their own energy supply and the proposed charges of the Council's charging points.

Cabinet noted that work was continuing in relation to charging, but noted that fees needed to be flexible in relation to demand.

Cabinet noted that Officers would look into rates for overnight/off-peak charging.

Cabinet noted that until demand was known, it was not yet possible to determine exact rates for day and evening charging rates.

Cabinet noted that Officers would be cognisant of a potential booking system so that charging points could be used as efficiently as possible, by as many people as possible.

Cabinet noted the importance of working with Town and Parish Councils to ensure that charging points were installed in both town and rural locations (according to need).

Councillor Rachel Coxcoon proposed that Cabinet agreed the recommendations as outlined in the report.

This was seconded by Councillor Mike Evemy.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

(a) Approve that the first phase of EVCPs are installed, as detailed in this report, with costs of up to £259,123 inclusive of a 5% contingency sum utilising capital allocated within the MTFS but noting that this sum will reduce to approximately £163,000 if grant funding is received;

(b) Note that the replacement fast chargers for Beeches Road, Cirencester and Moreton in Marsh have been pre-approved by the Chief Executive using Urgency powers;

(c) Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive/S.151 officer in consultation with the Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for Finance and Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning to agree final costs in (a) prior to work commencing;

(d) agree that a standard fee per kWh is introduced based on the formula within the report, comprising revenue costs + £0.04. Based on current electricity price forecasts of £0.24/ kWh, the fee to the customer would be £0.37/kwh;

(e) that delegated authority is given to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Members for Finance and Climate Change to review and set fees between the annual renewal process, to mitigate the risk of financial losses to the Council, as costs fluctuate;

(f) That amendments are made to the Parking Order, restricting vehicles from parking in charging bays unless they are charging a vehicle;

(g) delegated authority is given to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to review and make a final decision following consultation feedback on the amendments to the Parking Order;

(h) that the financial implications of this report be built into the revenue budget (income and expenditure) in the future based upon the projections given in the business case.

**Record of Voting – for: 7, against: 0, abstention: 0, absent: 1.**

## **110 Glover Review of Protected Landscapes - Consultation Response to Government Report**

Councillor Juliet Layton introduced the report with Cabinet noting the response provided by the Council in relation to Glover Review of Protected Landscapes.

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Cabinet noted that the Council was not supportive of the District becoming a National Park. The Government had not yet responded directly in terms of the Cotswolds becoming a National Park. Cabinet further noted that the Council's response to the Review sought a response from the Government in this regard.

Cabinet noted that as a planning authority, the Council had a wider scope of activities than that of a National Park (a landscape focus). It would be important that policy was not designated to an authority fulfilling the planning function. Cabinet noted that the Council was seeking to retain as many planning responsibilities as possible.

Cabinet agreed that Officers would be given delegated authority to liaise with Cabinet Members to ensure the responses to specific questions were as robust as they needed to be.

Cabinet noted the importance of ensuring that adequate social and affordable housing was available across the District.

Councillor Juliet Layton proposed that Cabinet agree the recommendations as outlined in the report.

This was seconded by Councillor Joe Harris.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

(a) Approves Annex A for submission to Government as the Council's response to the consultation on the Government response to the Glover Review.

(b) Gives delegated authority to the Chief Executive to make minor alterations to the responses in Annex A in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Development Management and Licensing

Record of Voting: for: 7, against: 0, abstention: 0, absent: 1.

### **III Schedule of Decisions taken by the Leader of the Council and/or Individual Cabinet Members**

Cabinet noted the decisions taken by the Cabinet Member for Development Management and Licensing and the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Waste and Recycling.

### **II2 Issue(s) Arising From Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit**

Cabinet noted the document provided by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in advance of the meeting to highlight comments for Cabinet to consider.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and closed at 7.48pm

Chair

(END)