



**Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Wednesday, 16 November 2022.**

**Councillors present:**

Dilys Neill - Chair  
Stephen Andrews  
Tony Berry  
Gina Blomefield  
Claire Bloomer  
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  
Richard Keeling  
Juliet Layton  
Andrew Maclean

Nick Maunder  
Richard Morgan  
Richard Norris  
Nigel Robbins  
Gary Selwyn  
Lisa Spivey  
Tom Stowe  
Ray Theodoulou  
Steve Trotter  
Clive Webster

**Officers present:**

Rob Weaver – Chief Executive  
David Stanley – Deputy Chief Executive  
Angela Claridge - Director of Governance  
Andrew Brown – Business Manager for Democratic Services  
Caleb Harris – Democratic Services  
Wayne Smith – Democratic Services

**42 Apologies**

No apologies had been received.

Councillor Berry provided verbal apologies for Councillor Trotter and advised Councillor Theodoulou would be arriving late.

Councillor Coleman advised that he would be leaving the meeting at 3.00pm and returning at 4.15pm

**43 Declarations of Interest**

For openness and transparency Councillor Webster declared an interest as a member of Moreton-In-Marsh Town Council.

There were no Declarations of interest from Officers.

#### **44 Minutes**

##### **Minutes from Council 21 September 2022 (including restricted item)**

Minutes from Council 21 September 2022 were considered and the following comments or amendments were made.

Minute 30 'Council noted that no Driffield Parish Councillors had taken part in the consultation but had not requested to speak at the Council meeting. Should read 'Council noted that ~~no~~ Driffield Parish Councillors had taken part in the consultation but had not requested to speak at the Council meeting.

Minute 31 'Council noted that the 50 year period referenced in the Financial Impacts section 3.1 was a standard measure of useful economic life rather than indicating the lifetime of the fabric of the roof. *The Chief Finance Officer agreed to provide further clarification how these two periods differ to Councillor Ind.'*

Councillor Ind stated that the clarification had not been provided, but the new Chief Finance Officer had agreed to arrange this.

RESOLVED: Council agreed that, with the inclusion of the amendments, the Minutes of the Council meeting 21 September 2022 were an accurate record.

**Voting Record – For 22, Against 1, Abstentions 9, Absent 2**

##### **Minutes from Council 5 October 2022**

Minutes from Council 5 October 2022 were considered and there were no comments or amendments.

RESOLVED: Council agreed that the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting 5 October 2022 were an accurate record.

**Voting Record – For 22, Against 1, Abstentions 9, Absent 2**

#### **45 Announcements from the Chair, Leader or Chief Executive (if any)**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Joe Harris announced the very recent reported death of Sue Pangborne, Executive Director of Publica Group and a highly valued member of the Cotswold District Council executive team. Further tributes would be made Sue at future meetings.

Cotswold District Council had won an award for the Best High Volume New Housing Development at Whitelands in Tetbury.

Thanks were given to Members and Officers who had taken part in the recent Council Peer Review. The findings from this review would enable the Council to compare itself to other Councils and review how well it was operating.

Council

16/November2022

The Chief Executive stated that, as Christmas and the end of the year approaches, Council was invited to reflect and remember those less fortunate and suffering through ill health, the loss of loved ones, the impact of war or through other circumstances beyond their control.

Tribute was also paid to Council Members and Officers, who invariably enter Local Government to make a positive difference to the lives and welfare of local people, and who, throughout the year, had arranged support and shelter for refugees from Ukraine and were now helping and supporting residents struggling with the ongoing Cost of Living crisis.

The Chair introduced Council Officers.

## **46 Public Questions**

### **Cirencester Rugby Club Car Park Response**

QUESTION from Mr Slater, to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance:

Mr Slater stated that the Whiteway car park at the Rugby Club appeared to be under-utilised. It had been developed at a cost of around £400k and the published accounts also showed that a rental cost of £1,000 per month was being paid, which was contracted for 10 years. The total cost to the taxpayer would therefore be over £600k with little revenue being generated. **What is the strategy to utilise this 'white elephant' which is costing the taxpayers significantly on a daily basis?**

RESPONSE from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for finance stated that the car park at the Rugby Club had been converted as part of a legacy project from the previous administration to provide decant parking whilst a new multi-storey car park was built in Cirencester. The construction of the multi-story car-park had been delayed due to changes in car usage and a reduced need for car parking. Increasing usage of the Whiteway car park was being considered within a new strategy looking at car parking provision and utilisation across the district.

### **External Consultants**

1<sup>st</sup> QUESTION from Mr Fowles, to the Leader of the Council

Mr Fowles stated that since being elected in May 2019 the current administration had regularly appointed external consultants and allocated budgets to explore initiatives and projects, many of which appeared to have been still-born. One of these was the now shelved £75m Recovery Investment Strategy which had been allocated a consultancy budget of £350k.

**Would the Leader confirm how much of the £350k has been used, and supply a breakdown of all consultants that have been appointed along with a breakdown of the costs since May 2019?**

1<sup>st</sup> RESPONSE from the Leader of the Council.

The Leader of the Council stated that the amount of the £350k consultancy budget for the Recovery Investment Strategy that had been used, had been the subject of a similar Member Question and referred Mr Fowles to that response for details. The Leader of the Council also agreed to arrange for a written response, providing a breakdown of all consultants and their project costs, to be prepared and sent to Mr Fowles.

### **Officers Leaving The Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> QUESTION from Mr Fowles, to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance:

In December 2021 Mr Fowles had asked a question about staffing levels and the number of staff that had left the Council since May 2019, and how many of these had been terminated and at what cost to the taxpayer. Mr Fowles confirmed he had received a response from the

Council

16/November2022

Publica Managing Director Jan Brittan confirming that 99 members of staff had left. Mr Fowles stated that this was 37% of the workforce, and had been at a cost to the taxpayer of £880k.

**Could you please give me an update on the number of employees that have left the Council over the past 12 months, a breakdown of those who resigned and those whose roles were terminated and an update on the cost to council tax payers?**

2<sup>nd</sup> RESPONSE from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance:

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance recalled the previous question and stated that the factual information that Mr Fowles had requested would be sent to him as a written response and challenged the accuracy of the figure of 37% of staff that had been stated. It was also stated that employees left the organisation for a number of reasons and there was nothing untoward in the way the Chief Executive of the Council or the Managing Director of Publica were running the organisation in conjunction with the administration.

### **SLM Leisure Centre**

QUESTION from Mr Gibson, to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, or the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance:

During Covid Cotswold District Council arranged a series of grants for SLM which was a 'for profits' organisation. After the first grant was organised, it was agreed that subsequent grants would be repaid using future profits from the leisure centres.

**Please can you confirm what profits and repayments have been generated and why this has not been accounted for in the 2023 budget even though the tender renewal is in January 2023?**

RESPONSE The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing stated that the figures were not currently available, but a written response including these would be sent to Mr Gibson

SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN RESPONSE from the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

The grant figure you quoted is correct, and is the total received under the furlough scheme, all of which was passed on to the 15,000 SLM employees that were on furlough while the sites were closed. No dividends were paid during that year, and after accounting for the support SLM received from central government and local authorities the company suffered a loss of over £11m.

The figure of £12m refers to an intra group dividend paid the previous year (2019/20) to SLM's parent company Castle View International Holdings Ltd, as part of a restructure of the Castle View Group. The actual dividend paid by the group to its shareholders in that year was £1.5m, no dividends were paid by the group in 20/21.

I hope the above clears up any confusion, but if you need any further information please let me know.

### **Kemble Gardens**

QUESTION from Mr McEwan to the Leader of the Council

Kemble Gardens are an important asset for the community in Kemble. Cotswold District Council had been social rented homes on the site, but no update has been made for some time.

**Could you please provide residents with an update on plans for the site?**

RESPONSE from the Leader of the Council

Council

16/November2022

The Leader of the Council stated that it had proved difficult to develop the site due to its enclosed location, however plans were still ongoing and a public announcement on the future of the site will be made in the next few months. Councillor Berry, the Ward Member for Kemble, asked to be involved in discussions about the site.

QUESTION from Mr Wilkinson to the Leader of the Council

The LGA had stated that even significant Council Tax rises would not bridge the funding gaps being faced by local authorities.

**What tough choices will you be making over the coming months and what reductions in services should Cotswold residents expect?**

RESPONSE from the Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council stated that local authorities have faced austerity over the past 12 years and CDC core funding had been cut by 60%. With this context a budget consultation was underway that includes potential increases in council fees and charges alongside savings to be made by the Council, Publica and Ubico, although no final decisions have been made.

### **Cirencester Transport and Town Plans**

QUESTION from the Chair of the Park Community Group to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning

The Chair of the Community group stated that at a meeting of the Community Group, the number and variety of infrastructure and transport plans affecting Cirencester (e.g. Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan, Cirencester Town Master Plan etc.) and the new Steadings Development, had been discussed.

**Could CDC please elaborate how the various planning exercises are aligned, coordinated and prioritised particularly in the light of the Climate Emergency Strategy 2030?**

RESPONSE from the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning

The Cabinet Member provided context for the many strategies and plans covering Cirencester and confirmed that the Council had taken the unusual step of appointing a Sustainable Transport Officer to engage and raise the profile of this important work.

The Steadings development had passed through the planning process during the Council's previous administration when active transport and infrastructure details had been agreed. Renegotiation of these details was not now possible, although the Sustainable Transport Officer has continued to work with developers to see if any improvements can be incorporated.

### **Cotswold News Response**

QUESTION from Ms Heaven to the Leader of the Council

I have received the October edition of Cotswold News and have discovered that the Council has 18, Liberal Democrats, 14 Conservatives, 1 Green Party and 1 Independent Councillors, there are only articles promoting the Liberal Democrat or Independent Councillors.

**Could you explain why all 16 pages contain photographs and articles promoting Liberal Democrats or the Independent Councillor and none of which include Conservative Councillors?**

RESPONSE from the Leader of the Council.

The Leader of the Council stated that Cotswold News was an important way of communicating important information to Cotswold residents and, although opportunities for Councillors not in the current administration had been given the opportunity to provide articles.

## **47 Member Questions**

**Question 1, from Councillor Claire Bloomer to Councillor Joe Harris, The Leader of the Council**

I am concerned about the spread of graffiti in our towns and the increasing effort and cost to clean it up. Has the Council considered using community payback by offenders to clean up areas blighted by graffiti thereby saving both officer time and council funds?

**Response 1, from Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council to Councillor Claire Bloomer**

This is a great idea and one I hope we can make a reality. Officers have approached the Gloucestershire Community Offending Team who undertake such projects within the county to ask whether there are teams that carry out the removal of graffiti as part of restorative justice. Officers are still awaiting a response and will update me once a response is received.

**Question 2, from Councillor Claire Bloomer to Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council**

We have recently seen more cuts to bus services in the Cotswolds. These cuts will have a huge impact on residents who rely on them to get to work, to the shops, for medical appointments and to see friends and family. What can the Council do to help residents whose bus services are being withdrawn?

**Response 2, to Councillor Joe Harris, The Leader of the Council to Councillor Claire Bloomer**

Gloucestershire County Council are responsible for bus services in our area but the District Council will always do what it can to try and help improve the situation with the very limited resources we have. Firstly, it's worth noting that bus services in Gloucestershire have been decimated over the past decade due to cuts to bus subsidies. This has made it much harder for people to get around, particularly in rural areas. The current situation is in large part the result of the Government's austerity programme which has put the squeeze on local authority budgets over the past decade. More recently issues including a nationwide shortage of bus drivers and the forthcoming withdrawal of the Covid recovery grant (in March 2023) and the reluctance to return to bus use post-Covid, particularly amongst concessionary fare holders (only around 50% of whom have returned to regular bus use) have been the driving issues behind cuts to public transport services. In combination, these are having a severe effect on the ability of bus companies to reliably operate routes. I think we will see further cuts coming over the next few months. The District Council will continue to work with community transport providers such as Cotswold Friends in order to help target support to the most isolated and most vulnerable in our District. This is however not a long term solution to the lack of provision in public transport in our District and as a council we'll work proactively with Gloucestershire County Council, through our Sustainable Transport Manager, to try and improve access to public transport. It's worth noting that the Government's own net-zero targets won't be met without meaningful investment into public transport so we can only hope that this spurs them into action. Walking and cycling may be options for others, and we are working with the County Council to improve those infrastructure networks.

**Question 3, from Councillor Tony Berry to Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation**

I note that Cabinet has approved a sum of £125,000 for new car parking charge machines which have a higher speed for authorising card charges and don't accept cash. Given the

Council

16/November2022

inflationary challenges facing the Council, would this not be a good opportunity to save a not unsubstancial amount of money by retaining our existing machines and at the same time pleasing all those members of the public who still want to pay for their parking in cash?

**Response 3, from Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation to Councillor Tony Berry**

There is a Capital Budget of £125,000 to replace the payment machines. Only £21,195 of this Capital fund will be utilised to change the remaining machines, not yet converted, to card only payment and upgrade all machines with the latest technology. This will allow card payments to be made off-line which will increase the speed of payment and reduce waiting times. One of the Council's priorities is to make all its car parks cashless. The removal of cash enabled machines will significantly reduce the amount of travelling required for the cash collector contractor and therefore will reduce carbon emissions. Residents will still be able to pay by credit or debit card or by using Apple or Google Pay at all parking machines or by using the PayByPhone mobile app. I note that Conservative-run Gloucestershire County Council has recently transitioned to cashless car parking machines.

**Supplementary Question 3a, from Councillor Tony Berry to Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation**

In your response you state that, of the £120,000 approved budget, only £21,195 has been spent, could you please tell me what the other £100k is going to be spent on?

**Supplementary Response 3a, from Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation to Councillor Tony Berry**

I do not know what the other £100k is being spent on, but I will check with the officer and have a written response sent to you.

**SUPPLEMENTARY WRITTEN RESPONSE from the Cabinet Member for Economy and Transformation**

This money has been put in the capital programme for the replacement of machines. Only a part of this will be spent to upgrade the machines (instead of replace). However, the money will need to remain in the capital programme as the machines will need replacing in the future. The remainder of the capital funding is profiled to be spent in 2025/26 on the basis that the upgrade should mean that the machines last longer.

**Question 4, from Councillor Tony Berry to Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council**

Please could you tell us how many old road signs you sold at the recent auction and the amount received for them net of commission?

**Response 4, from Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council to Councillor Tony Berry**

The Council is looking at a number of ways of selling old street signs. We're doing this to inform how we'll sell the rest. As a first step we recently used a local auction house where 10 signs were put up for auction, all were sold generating a small income of £18.70 after commission and VAT. I think we can do much better by targeting how we sell the signs and I think it unlikely we'll use an auction again. To date we have had 52 enquiries, which we are following up and hope to make substantially more than we achieved at auction.

**Question 5, from Councillor Stephen Andrews to Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council**

In September 2020 the Council approved its first Recovery Investment Strategy to provide critical support to the key priorities in the Corporate Plan 2020-2024. This was re-approved

Council

16/November2022

more recently in July of this year to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan to 2020-2024. At the same time, there was no analysis of the financial risks within the strategy that might impact upon the delivery of key Corporate Plan outcomes and there was no prioritisation within the Corporate Plan of those outcomes. Given the stated intent to rescind the Recovery Investment Strategy, which outcomes within the Corporate Plan is it proposed to scale back or will no longer be delivered?

**Response 5, from Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council to Councillor Stephen Andrews**

We're not planning to scale back or cancel any of the outcomes in our Corporate Plan although they may now take longer for us to achieve due to the expected recession and tightening of the public finances. The months of political uncertainty in Government and the effects of the disastrous mini-budget have made these impacts much worse than they might have been had we been governed by a stable fiscally-responsible government throughout 2022.

**Supplementary Question 5a, from Councillor Stephen Andrews to Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council**

Will rescinding of the Recovery Investment Strategy have an impact on the Corporate Plan, and if this is the case, could the changes be presented along with the amended plan?

**Supplementary Response 5a, from Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council to Councillor Stephen Andrews**

There will be an impact on the feasibility of doing things, however this will not 'tank' the Corporate Plan and much of it will remain.

**Question 6, from Councillor Julia Judd to Councillor Andrew Doherty, Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste and Recycling**

We were told earlier this year that instances of green waste fly tipping have greatly increased. Please could we be told by what percentage (ideally since 2019 or from whenever there are recent records) and how much it has cost the Council to collect green waste fly tipping?

**Response 6, from Councillor Andrew Doherty, Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste and Recycling to Councillor Julia Judd**

2020	914
2021	1107
2022	534 (To end of Q2)

**Reported Green waste cases April to March**

2019	23
2020	55
2021	30
2022	15 (To end of Q2)

**Green waste % of total incidents**

2019	4.36%
2020	6.02%
2021	2.71%
2022	2.81% (To end of Q2)

Officers are still awaiting a response from Ubico for the cost to clear green waste and will update Cllr Judd once a response is received.

Council

16/November2022

**Question 7, from Councillor Tom Stowe to Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transformation**

Following the news of the Cabinet's u-turn and its decision to rescind the planned £75,000,000 Recovery Investment Strategy. Can the Cabinet Member please confirm the sunk costs incurred by the Council in relation to developing these now abandoned plans over the last 3 years, including Consultancy fees, Officer time and any other associated costs.

**Response 7, from Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transformation to Councillor Tom Stowe**

The costs incurred to date on schemes that will not progress and therefore regarded as 'sunk' are around £50,000 made up of procurement and technical advice, tax advice and funding advice. Some of this advice is not specific to the Recovery Investment Strategy and will help inform more general capital programme activities in the future. The nature of these schemes is such that there were always anticipated to be sunk costs on schemes that did not go ahead. The Council allocated £350,000 from its Priorities Fund to support its work in this area of which £152,175 remains unused. £87,512 was used to finance the 'Economic Development Lead' and 'Affordable Housing Programme Manager' posts in 2020/21 and 2021/22.

**Supplementary Question 7a, from Councillor Tom Stowe to Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transformation**

Please can you confirm that ALL Officer time accrued developing these plans is included in the figures in your written response?

**Supplementary Response 7a, from Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transformation to Councillor Tom Stowe**

I cannot reassure you that every minute fraction of time spent by every Officer supporting the strategy can be accounted for. I am confident however that Officers will continue to support future Council decisions going forward.

**Question 8, from Councillor Theodoulou, Councillor Jenny Forde, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing**

Is the administration planning to increase the cost to the public of any leisure services?

**Response 8, from Councillor Jenny Forde, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing to Councillor Ray Theodoulou.**

There are currently no plans to increase costs to the public.

**Supplementary Question 8a, from Councillor Theodoulou, Councillor Jenny Forde, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing**

Do you expect more than one contractor to bid for the Leisure and Cultural contracts?

**Supplementary Response 8a, from Councillor Jenny Forde, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing to Councillor Ray Theodoulou.**

Yes, more than one contractor has already shown interest in bidding for the contracts.

**48 Cost of Living Working Group**

The purpose of the report was to set out how the Council is responding to the Cost of Living and Warm Places Motions and to make recommendations for funding allocations for specific initiatives.

Council

16/November2022

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing introduced the report and summarised how local initiatives in every community area across the Cotswolds were helping residents with the Cost Of Living Crisis. The Cost of Living Working Group had been established to promote, support and engage with these local initiatives and provide help and guidance to help residents to access what was available.

Council welcomed the report and the allocation of funds in the recommendation that would further help and support those on low incomes who were struggling to manage the crisis.

Council noted that a few areas of the District did not have established food distribution organisations and Town Councils had taken on much of this community coordination and support.

Council noted that the Cost of Living Working Group had recognised that all residents were having to deal with the Crisis including employed and self-employed workers, and those not in receipt of benefits.

**RESOLVED:** Council noted the response to the Cost of Living and Warm Places Motion detailed in this report and agreed to allocate match funding of £20,000 for the Council Tax Hardship Fund from the balance of the Covid-19 Hardship Fund earmarked reserve, and, agreed to allocate £40,000 from the Council Priorities Fund towards establishing a Food Network.

**Voting Record – For 30, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 4,**

#### **49 Council Tax Support Scheme Proposals for 2023/24**

The purpose of the report was to present the results of the public consultation on proposals for revising the current Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme with effect from 1 April 2023.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and summarised the proposed changes to income bands and eligibility of the benefit and its impact on the Council's Council Tax income levels.

Council noted the additional recommendation to enable Officers to consider backdating Council Tax Support beyond the current four week limit (but no more than six months) in exceptional circumstances.

Council noted that the CTS scheme was still not as widely known as (for instance) the 25% single person discount, and this could lead to potential recipients not realising they would be entitled to receive it.

Council noted that residents are able to (and should) apply for CTS if they believe they may be entitled to it, and there would be no negative consequences if it later emerged that they were not entitled.

Council noted that the Response to Comment 6 in the report annex: *“It is inevitable that there will always be some households that are not eligible for support. Households could review their own spending to make the necessary changes to reduce their outgoings”*. was insensitively worded.

Council

16/November2022

RESOLVED Council agreed to increase income bands as detailed within paragraph 2.8 and Annex B of the report from 1 April 2023, and also to enable officers to consider backdating Council Tax Support for a period beyond four weeks, but for no longer than six months, if there were exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances (or good cause) would apply in situations such as

- The claimant was seriously ill (physically or mentally)
- Someone the claimant should have been able to rely on for support did not give the support required (such as the Council, Advice Agency, DWP or a support worker) and therefore the claimant was not aware they were able to claim for Council Tax Support
- Some external factor that prevented a claim being made (such as imprisoned, detained under the Mental Health Act)

**Voting Record – For 31, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 3,**

#### **50 Recommendation from Cabinet 3rd October 2022: Changing Places Toilets**

The purpose of the report was to consider a recommendation from Cabinet on 3 October 2022 relating to funding for “Changing Places” toilets.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and provided a summary of the allocated funding of £162,500 that had been provided to be used installing four ‘Changing Places’ toilets across the District.

Council welcomed the funding, and noted that it must be spent by March 2024 and was provided for the building of four ‘Changing Places’ toilets and this number was not negotiable.

Council noted that suitable land had been identified at four locations, and where this was within a commercial venue that charged an admission fee, this fee would not be payable by those wanting to use the ‘Changing Places’ toilets.

Council noted that the new toilets would be listed on the ‘Changing Places’ national register to enable them to be identified and utilised, and local signposting would also be put in place to highlight their locations.

RESOLVED: That Council resolves to allocate a capital budget of £162,500 in 2022/23 to install four accessible ‘Changing Places’ toilets across the district for people with severe disabilities following a successful bid for funding from the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities.

**Voting Record – For 32, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 2,**

#### **51 Recovery Investment Strategy**

The purpose of the report was to Council to rescind the Recovery Investment Strategy for the reasons as set out in this report.

The Cabinet Member for the Economy and Transformation introduced the report and summarised the reasons that the visionary and ambitious Recovery Investment Strategy, that had been developed in 2020 to underpin the Council’s Corporate Priorities should now be rescinded following circumstances that now prevent it from delivering its objectives.

Council

16/November2022

Council noted that the pandemic had delayed the implementation of the full strategy although some initiatives had continued, and the strategy had been refreshed and re-approved by Council in July 2022.

Council noted that on 23 September 2022 the proposals within the Government's 'mini-budget' were "...poorly received by markets with a significant impact on gilts and a huge spike in yields and a further fall in sterling...". These factors along with existing global factors (the pandemic, Ukraine war) combined to cause widespread political and financial insecurity, and increased the cost of borrowing.

Council noted that during a period of financial instability, the proposed investments within the strategy could no longer be reasonably expected to deliver the previously anticipated strong rates of return.

Council noted that the Council's corporate priorities remained unchanged and, although it was recommended that the strategy was rescinded, important investment opportunities supporting these priorities would still be considered, developed and initiated where it made sound financial sense to do this and strong business cases could be established.

**RESOLVED:** Council agreed to rescind the Recovery Investment Strategy for the reasons set out in this report.

**Voting Record – For 32, Against 1, Abstentions 0, Absent 1,**

## **52 Implications of Elections Act 2022**

The purpose of the report was to provide an update on the key elements of the Elections Act 2022 and its implications for the Council's Returning Officer and Electoral Services team.

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and summarised the key elements from over the 500 new regulations and processes within the Elections Act 2022, and the specific implications of the introduction of Voter Identification (ID).

Council noted that at the next CDC local elections in May 2023, everyone voting on the day will be required to show photo identification at polling stations, and the Council needed to prepare for this.

Council noted that the preparations and delivery of Voter ID would produce significant additional operational and financial burdens and risks for the Council as its Elections Team and Returning Officer works to:

- ensure those without a passport, photo driving license or other existing photo id are able to vote
- improves the accessibility of polling stations
- ensures that at least one woman was present at every polling station
- ensures privacy screens with mirrors were available at every polling station
- ensures all polling station and elections staff are trained and understand all of the new policies and requirements and feel able to challenge and refuse the opportunity to vote to those without the correct identification.

Council noted that details of the additional requirements of the act had been sent to Councillors prior to the meeting

Council

16/November2022

Council noted that CDC would work support Town and Parish Councils to ensure their elections incorporated the changes without significant additional burdens.

RESOLVED: Council noted the report confirming £23,910 had been allocated from the Council's Priorities Fund to provide additional staff resource to enable the Council to meet the requirements for Voter ID at elections taking place on or after 4 May 2023.

RESOLVED: Council agreed to instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for DLUHC to request that the Government suspends the introduction of Voter ID and associated provisions at polling stations for elections scheduled to take place in May 2023

**Voting Record – For 23, Against 5, Abstentions 3, Absent 0,**

RESOLVED: Council agreed to instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Member of Parliament for the Cotswolds seeking his support for such a suspension

**Voting Record – For 20, Against 8, Abstentions 2, Absent 0,**

### **53 Executive Scrutiny Protocol**

The purpose of the report was to present Council with the Draft Executive Scrutiny Protocol for consideration and approval.

Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council introduced the report and proposed that it was agreed by Council.

Councillor Stephen Andrews, the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee seconded the proposition.

RESOLVED: That Council agreed to approve the addition of an Executive Scrutiny Protocol into the Constitution.

**Voting Record – For 28, Against 1, Abstentions 0, Absent 0,**

### **54 Draft Programme of Meetings 2023-24**

The purpose of the report was to set a programme of Council and committee meetings for 2023-24.

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance provided background and context for the proposed timetable of future Council meetings to May 2024.

Council noted that the recommended changes included:

- changing and cancelling some meetings during the pre-election period, the period between the election and the first post-election Annual Council, and around the Coronation of King Charles III
- avoiding Gloucestershire school holidays
- avoiding clashes with County Council and Town and Parish Council meetings
- continuing with Committee meeting starting times in the afternoon to enable Councillors in paid employment to attend meetings.

Council

16/November2022

- recommending Planning and Licensing Committee and Sub-Committees consider starting all meeting at 2.00pm and recommend Audit and Overview and Scrutiny Committees start their meetings at 5.00pm and take no longer than three hours.

Council noted that some CDC Councillors were also County Councillors and Town and Parish Councillors and it was important that any changes to meeting times and dates should not clash with these other responsibilities.

Council noted the gap between meetings of the Planning and Licensing Committee from March to June 2023 was due to the holiday period and the local elections and requested a report to a future meeting so that a meeting date for the Planning and Licensing Committee could be set for mid-late April 2023.

**RESOLVED:** That Council agreed to approve the programme of meetings for May 2023 and the inclusion of a Licensing Sub-Committee meeting on 26 April 2023 as set out in part 2 of the report and shown in Annex A and

- noted that the Leader of the Council had agreed to move the Cabinet meeting originally scheduled for 6 March 2023 to 13 March 2023 and to cancel the Cabinet meeting that was scheduled for 3 April 2023
- approved the programme of meetings for June 2023 to May 2024 (Annex B)
- delegated authority to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer), in consultation with Group Leaders, to make changes to the programme of meetings in the event that there is any future decision of Council to change the committee structure or committee remits that impacts the programme of meetings;
- delegated authority to the Democratic Services Business Manager to set meeting dates for the Performance and Appointments Committee and the Licensing Sub-Committee (Licensing Act 2003 Matters)
- agreed that meetings shall start at the same times as in 2022/23 subject to the following changes:
  - all Planning and Licensing Committee meetings to start at 2pm
  - Licensing Sub-Committee meetings to start no earlier than 2pm
  - Annual Council meetings on 25/05/2023 and 15/05/2024 to start at 6pm
  - Overview and Scrutiny and Audit Committee meetings to start at 5pm
  - authority is delegated to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) to set dates for member training and briefing sessions and any working groups established by the Council.
  - the Constitution Working Group considers recommending a change to the Council's Constitution so that meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit and that committees should have a maximum duration of three hours.

**Voting Record – For 19, Against 9, Abstentions 0, Absent 0,**

## **55 Notice of Motions**

Council debated and passed the following motion;

**Motion 1 on Provision of Community Public Access Defibrillators on New Developments.  
Proposed by Councillor Tom Stowe, seconded by Councillor Stephen Andrews.**

Council

16/November2022

This Council notes that according to the British Heart Foundation there are over 30,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests in the United Kingdom each year where emergency medical services attempted to resuscitate the victim. However, the survival rate is very low. Early use of Automated External Defibrillators could double the chances of survival, however, unfortunately, for every 1 minute delay the chances of survival can reduce by 10%. Given the rural nature of our district, the chances of swift medical intervention from the emergency services are limited, therefore, access to a good network of Community Public Access Defibrillators, that can be accessed swiftly, is vital to safeguard the health and well-being of our residents.

The Council also noted that in many cases the responsibility for the installation of CPADs in our communities fell to local voluntary and community groups. This presented many challenges, not just for funding, but also working and negotiating with various parties with regard to finding suitable siting and electrical supplies for the devices. With ongoing and future development throughout the district, keeping up with the installation of new CPADs could be a very difficult task. Best practice guidance stated that CPADs should be located no further than 400 metres apart.

This Council believes that the Health and Well-being of our residents should be at the forefront of everything that it does.

**RESOLVED:** The Council therefore resolves to give authority to the Forward Planning Team to investigate options to amend the Regulations in the new Cotswold Local Plan to address this issue, and to ensure that any new housing developments within the district include the provision for the supply and installation of sufficient Community Public Access Defibrillators to cover the housing and industrial area of the new development. An exception may be considered for smaller developments of less than 6 properties.

**Voting Record – For 28, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 0,**

Council debated and passed the following motion;

**Motion 2 on Menopause. Proposed by Councillor Claire Bloomer, seconded by Councillor Andrew Doherty.**

Council notes that 51 per cent of the UK population will directly experience the menopause during their lifetime, over 13 million women in the UK are either menopausal or perimenopausal at any time, 4.5 million of those 13 million women are in the workplace, three out of four women experience menopause-related symptoms with one in four experiencing serious symptoms, 1.6 million working days are lost to menopause symptoms annually as a result. Menopause can see women experiencing a wide range of symptoms including hot flushes, fatigue, anxiety, disturbed sleep, heavy and erratic periods, mood swings, rage, heart palpitations, and itchiness. The intensity and combination of some of these symptoms can be unsettling. In particular, when oestrogen levels decrease in the lead up to menopause, cognition. Women may struggle with memory, word retrieval, and other cognitive activities. For some, the change in cognitive function is so pronounced they fear they are developing dementia or Alzheimer's. These changes can also reduce their confidence to manage their work, home and social life. Hormone levels may exacerbate existing conditions such as ADHD, and medication and strategies for managing those conditions may not work as effectively as they once did. Many menopausal women are finding it difficult to obtain Hormone Replacement Therapy medicines due to increased demand and supply chain issues, adding to their anxiety. Support for women with menopausal symptoms in the workplace is variable and understanding by managers and other employees is often limited. In some cases, understanding and empathy is so poor that women receive insults and rude comments from

Council

16/November2022

colleagues and managers. As a result, many women end up leaving their workplace as they feel unable to continue in their role.

Cotswold District Council welcomes steps taken by Cirencester Town Council to develop a menopause policy for its staff. Adjustments that can be made including allowing flexibility in work patterns, increasing ventilation, allowing people to move their work location to be closer to a toilet giving time off to attend medical appointments and support groups designating a member of staff for women to approach about the effect of the menopause on their work and providing professional counselling if requested. Cotswold District Council also welcomes the establishment of an All Party Parliamentary Group on Menopause in 2021.

RESOLVED: Council agreed that Cotswold District Council should:

- asks its Teckal companies, Publica and Ubico, to review their menopause policies to ensure that their staff and CDC retained staff going through the menopause have the understanding and support they need
- commit to campaigning for menopause support to form a central part of the next national Women's Health Strategy
- work with Gloucestershire County Council and other local health organisations to ensure that support for those experiencing menopause is a central part of the next Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing strategy
- support the #MakeMenopauseMatter campaign which is calling for mandatory menopause training for all GPs and menopause to be taught as part of every medical school curriculum, menopause guidance and support to be in every workplace, menopause to be added to the Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum for schools throughout the UK.

**Voting Record – For 24, Against 0, Abstentions 0, Absent 2,**

#### **56 Next meeting**

The next meeting of Council will take place on Wednesday 18 January 2023 at 2.00pm.

#### **57 Matters exempt from publication**

Council did not exclude the press and public from the meeting as they did not discuss the contents from the exempt annexes

#### **58 Exempt minutes of 21 September Council meeting**

Council did not exclude the press and public from the meeting as they did not discuss the contents from the exempt annexes

The Meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and closed at 6.00 pm

Chair

(END)