

Cabinet
10/March2025



COTSWOLD
District Council

Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet held on Monday, 10 March 2025

Members present:

Mike Evely	Mike McKeown
Juliet Layton	Tristan Wilkinson

Officers present:

Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst	Nickie Mackenzie-Daste, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant	Gemma Moreing, Business Information Lead
Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer)	Cheryl Sloan, Business Manager - Business Continuity, Governance and Risk
Paul James, Economic Development Lead	Robert Weaver, Chief Executive

Observers:

Beth Boughton

68 Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Harris, Councillor Bloomer, Councillor Hodgkinson.

69 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

70 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2025 were considered. There were no amendments to the minutes.

Proposed by Councillor Mike Evely
Seconded by Councillor Juliet Layton

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 6 February 2025 be approved as a correct record.

Voting record:
2 For, 0 Against, 2 Abstain.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 6 February 2025 were approved as a correct record. (Resolution)		
For	Mike Evely and Juliet Layton	2
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Mike McKeown and Tristan Wilkinson	2
Carried		

71 Leader's Announcements

The Leader had made apologies. The Deputy Leader, and Chair for the meeting had no announcements.

72 Public Questions

There were no public questions.

73 Member Questions

There were no member questions.

74 Schedule of Decisions taken by the Leader of the Council and/or Individual Cabinet Members

There were two Cabinet Member decisions to report to Cabinet since Cabinet last met on 6 February 2025.

Cabinet Member Delegated Decision 1.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning participated in a decision meeting on 13 February 2025 regarding the progression of the Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan to public consultation.

The Cabinet Member considered the recommendations within the report and resolved to AGREE that the submitted documents met the requirements of Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 and RESOLVED that the Council should launch the statutory 'Regulation 16' consultation period for the standard six-week period.

This decision was effective on 24 February 2025.

Cabinet
10/March2025

Cabinet member Delegated Decision 2.

The Cabinet Member for Health, Culture and Visitor Experience Decision participated in a decision meeting on 25 February 2025 regarding the de-accession of artefacts from Corinium Museum.

The Cabinet Member considered the recommendations within the report and RESOLVED to DISPOSE of the three items through deaccession:

- LB528 Swathe-Turner
- LO X093 Eastbury Christening Gowns
- Sly Collection – comprising a number of hats

This decision was effective on 6 March 2025.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet NOTED the two decisions taken.

75 Decision taken under the Chief Executive's urgency powers

The purpose of the report was for Cabinet to note a decision taken by the Chief Executive Officer under urgency powers.

The Chief Executive introduced the item and explained that urgency powers were used due to tight deadlines that prevented the Local Development Scheme from being presented to Cabinet.

The decision was deemed necessary to submit the Local Development Scheme to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) by the 6 March deadline. The submission outlined the planning reports and policies that Cotswold District Council intended to develop and implement over the coming years and would serve as a timetable for key policy documents.

The urgency powers were used to meet this deadline, and the decision was cleared by the Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Leader of the Council.

Following questions about the timing of the submission and the availability of grant funding, the Chief Executive confirmed that the timescales set out were achievable with existing resources and promised to provide further clarification on the submission timing.

Councillors praised the progress made, highlighting the importance of engagement and supplementary planning documents. They emphasised the need for more retail premises in Cirencester Town Centre due to decreasing vacancy rates and noted the town's thriving economy. It was also suggested that encouraging business diversity would strengthen the town's resilience.

The Chief Executive noted that a public consultation was scheduled for the summer.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet noted the decision taken by the Chief Executive under his urgency powers as set out in Annex A.

76 Issue(s) Arising from Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit and Governance

The recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 03 March 2025 were specifically related to two items on the agenda:

Recommendations regarding the Publica Transition Plan – Phase 2

1. That consideration be given to what Phase 3 of the Publica Transition may look like in view of local government reorganisation.
2. That the Council undertakes an annual review of the Publica Transition.
3. That consideration is given to wider communications about the Publica Transition to the public and town and parish councils following the pre-election period for the County Council elections.

Recommendations regarding the Q3 Service Performance Report

1. That a review is undertaken of the performance indicators used to measure the waste collection service with a view to supplying the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with additional data (already collected/measured by Ubico) that gives a more accurate picture of collection performance.

The Deputy Leader asked Cabinet to note that it was intended to raise these recommendations when the respective items were discussed later in the agenda. Cabinet agreed to note the recommendations and consider them during the discussion of the relevant items.

No issues were raised by the Audit and Governance Committee for consideration.

77 Ubico Business Plan 2025/2026

The purpose of the report was to consider the draft Ubico Business Plan 2025-2026, produced by Ubico in consultation with the Directors and Shareholders, and to recommend that the Leader, as shareholder representative, approve the plan.

Beth Boughton, Managing Director of Ubico presented the Ubico Business Plan for 2025–26 to Cabinet. The plan required approval from the majority of shareholders, including Cotswold District Council.

The plan had previously been considered by Cabinet Members in December 2024 and again at an all-member briefing in February.

Cabinet
10/March2025

Once all partner councils had completed their review processes, a written resolution would be issued for shareholder sign-off.

The complexity of the current environment, citing financial uncertainty, fleet replacement needs, and past service disruptions due to staff sickness was acknowledged. The Cabinet Member for Economy and Environment expressed confidence in the plan, describing it as a stable foundation for Ubico's future. Clarity was sought as to the expected timeline for sign-off across councils. Officers confirmed that the process was on track for completion by late April, or early May 2025.

Financial concerns were raised regarding the £8.9 million of expenditure on waste and recycling services and the Council's financial challenges. Progress on the £300,000 savings target in street services was requested, with assurance sought on efficiency improvements. It was confirmed that a review was underway, and data collection would guide potential service changes.

The discussion covered the 'customer journey project,' with concerns about reporting delays and missed bin collections. While Publica handled customer interactions, Ubico was working on digitising processes to improve communication. Councillors suggested a Saturday overtime shift to address missed Friday collections.

It was confirmed that a standalone trade waste service had been considered but not pursued due to market saturation and logistical challenges. Ubico was commended for its emergency response efforts in local communities.

Fleet decarbonisation was discussed as key to reducing the Council's carbon footprint and financial costs. A costed plan for a smooth transition, especially with local government reorganisation, was emphasised. The Managing Director confirmed Ubico's work with Gloucestershire's climate leadership group on infrastructure needs and the trial of electric HGVs since August, with operational data to guide future fleet decisions.

The discussion concluded with a request for better coordination between Ubico and Publica to improve reporting accuracy on waste collection, especially for green bins.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

1. Noted the draft Ubico Business Plan 2025-2026, and
2. Noted that the Leader of the Council, as shareholder representative, would sign the written resolution to approve the draft Ubico Business Plan 2025-2026 in due course and before the deadline of 28 April 2025.

78 Publica Transition Plan Phase 2

The purpose of the report was to consider the Publica Transition Plan Phase 2 Transition Plan, to note its content, and to approve the recommendations therein.

Cabinet
10/March2025

It was noted that the Plan had already been presented to Overview and Scrutiny and that a final decision was to be made at Council on 19 March 2025.

The Chief Executive Officer highlighted the key differences in Phase 2, particularly the reduced number of services being transitioned due to local government reorganisation and financial priorities. Waste, leisure, project management, and property and assets were identified as key areas for transition. It was confirmed that staff communication had been ongoing, and lessons learned from Phase 1, particularly regarding communications, had been applied. The complexity of Phase 2 was noted due to fragmented (i.e. shared) roles across multiple councils.

The Deputy Leader emphasised the rationale for the transition, citing improved focus on Council priorities, clearer performance measurement, and greater agility in service delivery. Financial implications were acknowledged but the transition seen as important for future efficiency and savings.

Cabinet Members highlighted improved staff morale and the benefits of direct Council management following Phase 1 implementation. Optimism about a potential Phase 3 was expressed.

Cabinet reviewed and noted three recommendations put forward by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The recommendations included linking Phase 3 considerations to local government reorganisation, conducting an annual review, and giving consideration to wider communications about the Publica Transition to the public and town and parish councils. Cabinet approved the responses to the recommendations that had been circulated at the meeting.

Proposed by: Councillor Mike Evely

Seconded by: Councillor Juliet Layton

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommended to Full Council to:

1. Approve the implementation of Phase 2 of the Publica Transition based on the Phase 2 Transition Plan;
2. Delegate to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council the decision to deal with any final detail matters arising from the Phase 2 Transition Plan;
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Governance in liaison with the Leader to update the constitution by making any consequential changes required as a result of Phase 2 of the Publica Transition.
4. Carry out a budget re-basing for the 2026/7 financial year so that the funding provided to Publica is proportionate to the services received.

Voting Record:

4 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstain

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommend to Full Council to		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the implementation of Phase 2 of the Publica Transition based on the Phase 2 Transition Plan; 2. Delegate to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council the decision to deal with any final detail matters arising from the Phase 2 Transition Plan; 3. Delegate authority to the Director of Governance in liaison with the Leader to update the constitution by making any consequential changes required as a result of Phase 2 of the Publica Transition. 4. Carry out a budget re-basing for the 2026/7 financial year so that the funding provided to Publica is proportionate to the services received. 		
(Resolution)		
For	Mike Evemy, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown and Tristan Wilkinson	4
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

79 Green Economic Growth Strategy outcome of consultation

The purpose of the report, introduced By Councillor Tristan Wilkinson, Cabinet Member for Economy and Environment, was to update Cabinet on the results of the consultation on the refreshed Green Economic Growth Strategy and to propose adoption of the strategy following minor amendments.

It was noted that the new strategy supported the Council's core agenda and built on the success of the 2020-2024 strategy. The importance of having a specific forward plan to bring vibrancy, diversity, and collaboration among organisations was emphasised. Local businesses showed strong passion, and the Council aimed to support them in reaching their full potential. A recent consultation received limited responses, but those that did mentioned the Together Gloucestershire Initiative, which encouraged local spending. The Council supported a bid by Together Gloucestershire to the strategic economic development fund, approved by the City Regional Board. Acknowledging the difficult time for local businesses, a discussion on resilience highlighted the need for stability and continuity. Positive aspects of local businesses were discussed, with Cirencester's occupancy rates among the best in the country. Optimism about the long-term prospects for the Cotswolds and Gloucestershire was expressed, with the Missing Link A417 and the Royal Agricultural University (RAU)'s Innovation Village proposal being noted. Ongoing discussions with the RAU about their vision were encouraged.

Councillor Wilkinson publicly praised the Economic Development Lead for representing the Council excellently to local businesses, showcasing trustworthiness, passion, and

Cabinet
10/March2025

authority. His role in securing external funding for community benefit was also commended. The recent Drive and Thrive event, focused on sustainable growth, was highlighted as a successful initiative involving local businesses and partners. The importance of Cotswold Lakes for tourism and leisure was noted. The need for good bus services to support local businesses and infrastructure as part of a green growth strategy was highlighted.

The Deputy Leader commended Councillor Wilkinson, Councillor Tony Dale and the Economic Development Lead and for their work. The strategy was brought to Cabinet for agreement.

Proposed by Councillor Tristan Wilkinson
Seconded by Councillor Mike McKeown

RESOLVED that Cabinet

1. Noted the results of the consultation on the Green Economic Growth Strategy 2025-29.
2. Agreed to adopt the strategy subject to the changes set out in Section 4 of the report.
3. Delegated authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Economy and Environment, to make final amendments to the strategy before publication.

Voting Record:

4 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstain.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- 1. Noted the results of the consultation on the Green Economic Growth Strategy 2025-29.**
- 2. Agreed to adopt the strategy subject to the changes set out in Section 4 of the report.**
- 3. Delegated authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Economy and Environment, to make final amendments to the strategy before publication. (Resolution)**

For	Mike Evely, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown and Tristan Wilkinson	4
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

80 Service Performance Plan 2024/25 Quarter 3

The purpose of the report was to provide an update on progress on the Council's priorities and service performance.

The Chief Executive introduced the Service Performance Plan, which had been pre-reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 March. The Committee had recommended a review of the performance indicators used to measure the waste collection service, with a view to providing additional data to give a more accurate picture of collection performance.

The Business Information and Performance team were thanked for their hard work in collating the information and provided an overview of the highlights and lowlights from the report.

Highlights included:

- the successful transition of employees during Phase 1 of the Publica transition,
- the launch of a retrofit support service,
- the second round of the Unsung Heroes Awards, and
- the first campaign associated with the Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT) software.
- high customer satisfaction,
- planning applications determined within agreed timescales, and
- an increase in gym memberships and visits to the Leisure Centre.

However, some areas had not met targets, such as

- the number of affordable homes delivered during Q3, which was affected by bad weather and project rephrasing.
- the number of missed bin collections exceeded the target in Q3, although there was a notable reduction compared to Q2. It was noted that the adjusted scheduling during the Christmas period had contributed to a rise in missed collections in December.

Suggestions were made to monitor additional data, including planning enforcement. The Chief Executive agreed to discuss this with the team.

Officers involved in the electric vehicle charge point roll-out were thanked. Progress on planning and affordable housing was noted, and the importance of enforcement and infrastructure improvements was emphasised.

A slight decline in business rates payments was noted, along with a decrease in the percentage of household waste recycled, which was part of a national trend.

A discrepancy in the residual waste per household figures was pointed out and further investigation was requested.

The response (circulated at the meeting) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendation for a review of performance indicators used to measure waste collection, with the aim of providing additional data for a more accurate picture of performance, was agreed.

Cabinet also requested that officers continue to explore route-level real-time reporting to highlight repeated challenges in the waste service.

Cabinet
10/March2025

Cabinet RESOLVED to

1. Note overall progress on the Council priorities and service performance for 2024-2025 Q3.

The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 7.25 pm