



Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Wednesday, 21 May 2025

Members present:

Mark Harris

Nikki Ind

Gina Blomefield

Claire Bloomer

Nick Bridges

Patrick Coleman

Daryl Corps

Mike Evely

David Fowles

Laura Hall-Wilson

Joe Harris

Paul Hodgkinson

Angus Jenkinson

Julia Judd

Juliet Layton

Andrew Maclean

Helene Mansilla

Mike McKeown

Dilys Neill

Andrea Pellegram

Nigel Robbins

Lisa Spivey

Tom Stowe

Jeremy Theyer

Clare Turner

Jon Wareing

Ian Watson

Len Wilkins

Tristan Wilkinson

Officers present:

Matt Abbott, Head of Communications

Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services

Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer)

Julia Gibson, Democratic Services Officer

Nickie Mackenzie-Daste, Senior Democratic Services Officer

David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer

Rachael White, Communications Officer

Frank Wilson, Interim Managing Director (Publica)

Kirsty Winters, Communications Officer

Kira Thompson, Democratic Services Officer

1 Election of a Chair

The outgoing Chair of Council, Councillor Nikki Ind opened the meeting and welcomed newly elected councillors Laura Hall-Wilson (Tetbury with Upton) and Nick Bridges (Watermoor). District Councillors Daryl Corps, Joe Harris, Mark Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, and Lisa Spivey were congratulated on their recent election to Gloucestershire County Council. It was noted that Councillor Spivey had made history as the first woman elected as leader of the County Council.

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The first item of business was the election of the new Chair of Council,

The outgoing Chair called for nominations for the position of Chair of Council.

Councillor Joe Harris proposed Councillor Mark Harris as Chair. Councillor Harris was commended on a personal and professional level, his many years of public service and valuable experience as Vice-Chair of Council were noted.

Councillor Claire Bloomer seconded the nomination, reaffirmed the comments made by Councillor Harris and noted the excellent work done in representing Cotswold District Council.

There were no further nominations for the position of Chair of Council so the nomination was put to a vote and agreed by Council.

Voting Record:

28 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention

Having been elected Councillor Harris signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chair. The Proper Officer witnessed the signature.

The Exchange of the Council Regalia took place, during which the chains of office were formally transferred from Councillor Ind to Councillor Harris.

Councillor Harris expressed his gratitude for the honour of being elected Chair of Council. The outgoing Chair, Councillor Nikki Ind, was thanked for her exemplary leadership and strong sense of community. Reflecting on his journey from humble beginnings to local involvement, the Chair affirmed his deep connection to the Cotswolds and his commitment to constructive, efficient debate. He pledged to represent the district's communities and uphold values both in the chamber and beyond.

To APPOINT Councillor Mark Harris as Chair of Council (Resolution)

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mark Harris be appointed as Chair of Council for the Civic Year 2025/26.

For	Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Evemy, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Nigel Robbins, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	28
Against	None	0

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Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Mark Harris	1
Carried		

2 Appointment of a Vice-Chair

The Chair presided over the appointment of a Vice-Chair of Council and called for any nominations.

Councillor Juliet Layton nominated Councillor Ray Brassington, who had recently stepped down as Chair of the Planning and Licensing Committee, stating that his experience would be extremely valuable in the role of Vice-Chair.

Councillor McKeown seconded the nomination and echoed the comments made by Councillor Layton.

There were no further nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of Council.

The nomination was put to a vote and agreed by Council.

Voting Record:

29 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

It was noted that Councillor Brassington had sent apologies and would sign the Acceptance of Office at a later date.

To APPOINT Councillor Ray Brassington as Vice-Chair of Council for the Civic Year 2025/26. (Resolution)

Council RESOLVED that Councillor Ray Brassington be appointed as Vice-Chair of Council for the Civic Year 2025/26.

For	Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Every, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Nigel Robbins, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	29
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

3 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Ray Brassington, Tony Dale, Tony Slater, Michael Vann, and David Cunningham. Apologies were also noted from the Chief Executive Officer, Robert Weaver.

4 Announcements from the Chair, Leader or Chief Executive

The Chair echoed the earlier congratulations to newly elected Members of Cotswold District Council and to the Members of Gloucestershire County Council.

The Chair invited Councillor Daryl Corps to pay tribute to Sue Stapley, a long-standing Moreton-in-Marsh resident who had recently passed away. She was remembered as a passionate advocate for community service, with a career spanning the BBC, legal advocacy, and extensive voluntary work. She served in roles including Governor of the Royal Shakespeare Company, Chair of Playground Proms, and Trustee of LAMDA. A founding member of the SDP and the first national chair of the 300 Group, she championed women in politics. Locally, she contributed to the Moreton Neighbourhood Plan and Moreton Against Overdevelopment. Her warmth, style, and strong principles were fondly remembered. Councillor Corps thanked members for the opportunity to honour her.

There were no announcements from the Leader.

There were no announcements from the Deputy Leader.

5 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from Members present.

6 Resignation of Leader

Councillor Joe Harris had notified the Proper Officer of his resignation as Leader of the Council, effective from 20 May 2025. His resignation was formally noted, and the Chair thanked him for his significant achievements and dedicated service to Cotswold District Council.

The outgoing Leader of the Council reflected on his six years in leadership and eleven years as Leader of the Liberal Democrat group. He expressed pride in the Council's achievements, including pandemic support, affordable housing, poverty reduction, and environmental and community initiatives. He acknowledged the collaborative efforts of council members, staff, and his Cabinet, highlighting his deputy, the Chief Executive,

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and Councillor Tony Dale. He emphasised the importance of principled leadership, teamwork, and public service, and confirmed he would remain a ward councillor.

Members expressed heartfelt thanks to the outgoing Leader for his leadership, dedication, and vision over the past six years. They acknowledged his influence on colleagues' political journeys and his encouragement for others to stand for election. His compassionate and determined leadership, commitment to the Cotswolds, and the strong, supportive group dynamic he fostered were widely praised. His move to a cabinet role at the County Council was welcomed, with confidence in his continued positive impact. His energetic and relentless campaigning style, was seen as a reflection of his passion for public service.

7 Election of Leader

The Chair introduced the item, noted the requirement to elect a Leader of the Council until the annual meeting in May 2027 and called for nominations.

Councillor Lisa Spivey formally nominated Councillor Mike Evemy, highlighting his extensive local government experience, long-standing public service, and leadership as Cabinet Member for Finance since 2019. She described him as a principled, pragmatic leader and inspiring colleague.

Councillor Patrick Coleman seconded the nomination, praising Councillor Evemy's thoughtful, patient, and reliable nature, and thanked him for his willingness to take on the role.

The opposition were thanked for their patience and courtesy during the item.

There were no further nominations for Leader of Council.

The nomination was put to a vote and agreed by Council.

Voting Record;

29 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

Resolution : to Elect Councillor Mike Evemy as Leader of the Council (Resolution)		
Council RESOLVED that Councillor Mike Evemy be appointed as Leader of Council for a term of office extending to the Annual Council meeting in May 2027.		
For	Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Evemy, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Nigel Robbins, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy	29

	Theyer, Clare Turner, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

8 Announcement of the Leader on Cabinet appointments

The newly elected Leader thanked members for their support and their vote of confidence.

He paid tribute to the outgoing Chair, Nikki Ind, for her friendly but firm leadership over the past two years and congratulated the newly elected Chair and Vice-Chair. A warm welcome was extended to new councillors Laura Hall-Wilson and Nick Bridges. The leader also congratulated Councillor Lisa Spivey on her election as Leader of Gloucestershire County Council and acknowledged the success of members elected to County Council.

Tribute was paid to the outgoing Leader for transformational leadership and the positive changes to the Council during his tenure were noted. Emphasis was placed on a commitment to being an approachable and inclusive Leader for all members, regardless of party.

Key priorities were outlined with the emphasis on maintaining focus on core services, affordable housing, climate action, community wellbeing, and digital transformation.

The emerging challenge of local government reorganisation(LGR) was noted and the Leader pledged to lead the Council's response while maintaining focus on current objectives.

The Leader then announced the following Cabinet Appointments:

Leader – Councillor Mike Every

- Executive functions and corporate plan delivery
- Local government reorganisation and devolution
- Town and parish council liaison
- Communications
- Publica and UBICO
- Member development

Deputy Leader and Housing and Planning – Councillor Juliet Layton

- Strategic housing

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- Homelessness
- Forward planning and the local plan
- Development management, heritage and conservation
- Biodiversity emergency response
- Neighbourhood planning

Finance – Councillor Patrick Coleman

- Financial strategy and management
- Property and assets
- Revenues and benefits
- Grant funding and Crowdfund Cotswold

Climate Change and Digital – Councillor Mike McKeown

- Climate emergency response
- Community energy and energy efficiency
- Council sustainability and sustainable transport
- Digital innovation, inclusion, and accessibility
- Adoption and governance of AI technologies
- Cybersecurity and data governance

Economy and Council Transformation – Councillor Tristan Wilkinson

- Economic development
- Council transformation
- Business liaison
- Flooding and sewage

Health, Culture and Visitor Experience – Councillor Paul Hodgkinson

- Public health
- Parking operations and public toilets
- Leisure centres
- Culture and museums
- Tourism
- Community safety partnership

Communities – Councillor Claire Bloomer

- Cost of living support
- Liaison with third sector
- Diversity, inclusion and young people
- Safeguarding
- Refugee and asylum response

Environment and Regulatory Services – Councillor Andrea Pellegram

- Waste and recycling
- Environmental and regulatory services

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- Street cleaning
- Public realm

The Leader made the following points:

- Councillor Juliet Layton, appointed Deputy Leader; retained Housing and Planning portfolio and passed Environmental and Regulatory Services to:
- Councillor Andrea Pellegram, who had joined Cabinet to lead on Waste and Recycling, drawing on her professional background.
- Councillor Patrick Coleman was appointed Cabinet Member for Finance, bringing extensive experience, including prior chairing of the Audit and Governance Committee.
- Councillor Paul Hodgkinson would continue in his portfolio for Health, Culture, and Visitor Experience, with the added responsibility for Public Toilets; a role seen as complementing his County Council position.
- Councillor Claire Bloomer retained the Communities portfolio, continuing work to support low-income residents and tackle cost-of-living challenges.
- Councillor Tristan Wilkinson had taken on the Transformation portfolio, focusing on internal change to support financial sustainability.
- Councillor Mike McKeown had been appointed to a new Digital portfolio, with a focus on technology for improved services and cost efficiency, and he would continue to lead carbon reduction efforts.

The Leader concluded by thanking councillors for their support and looked forward to working with members and officers to enhance the district.

RESOLVED: The Full Council NOTED the appointments of the Cabinet portfolio holders.

9 Appointment of Committees 2025/26

Councillor Mike Evemy, Leader of the Council, introduced the annual report on political balance and committee appointments.

The report set out those matters reserved to Council at its Annual Meeting:

- To make appointments to Committees for the Civic Year 2025/26.
- To make appointments to the positions of Chair and Vice Chair of Committees for the Civic Year 2025/26.

A change in political balance following a recent by-election was noted, increasing the number of Conservative members from 9 to 10. Committee allocations were adjusted accordingly, with revised seat distributions and nominations.

The report also confirmed committee chair and vice-chair appointments and the continuation of existing substitution arrangements. Councillor Evemy moved the

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recommendations as set out in the report, and the Chair invited comments or questions

On behalf of the Conservative Group, Councillor Tom Stowe thanked the Chair and congratulated Councillor Evely on his election as Leader of the Council, highlighting his experience and knowledge. The Group expressed hope for steady leadership through upcoming challenges and confirmed their intention to hold the administration to account while offering constructive alternatives.

The importance of committee work was emphasised, particularly given ongoing financial pressures, uncertainties around local government reorganisation, and national policy changes.

The dedication of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Chair, Councillor Gina Bloomfield, was praised, along with a call for continued support for the Committee.

Continuity on the Planning and Audit & Governance Committees was welcomed, with recognition of members' valuable experience.

Councillor Laura Hall-Wilson was introduced as the newest Conservative member, noted for strong local representation.

Regarding devolution and local government reorganisation, a call was made for all members to work collaboratively to ensure an effective transition and improved governance.

The Conservative Group thanked the former Vice Chair and outgoing member for their valued contributions. They welcomed new members and noted the apolitical nature and importance of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work. The Group also welcomed the new Vice-Chair of the committee.

Additionally, the Conservative Group expressed gratitude to the former Leader, Councillor Joe Harris, for his effective leadership and acknowledged the importance of cross-party cooperation.

There were no further comments or questions.

Councillor Mike Evely proposed the nominations which were seconded by Councillor Tom Stowe .

The recommendations were put to a vote and agreed by Council.

Voting Record:

25 For, 0 Against, 0Abstain

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Councillors David Fowles, Joe Harris, Nigel Robbins and Ian Watson did not vote.

To AGREE appointments to Council committees and working groups for the Civic Year 2025/26 and to make appointments to the positions of Chair and Vice Chair of Committees for the Civic Year 2025/26. (Resolution)

Full Council RESOLVED to:

1. DETERMINE that, in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 ("the Act"), the Council shall continue to apply the political balance provisions under the Act to committees as shown in Annex A;
2. APPOINT Councillors to serve on the Council's Committees and working groups as set out in Annex B for a term of office expiring at the next Annual Meeting of the Council;
3. APPOINT Chairs and Vice-Chairs for the Council's Committees and working groups as shown in Annex B;
4. NOTE the arrangements for substitutions set out in part 4 of the report;

For	Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Evemy, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Jon Wareing, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	25
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0

Carried

10 Record of Attendance 2024/25

The Leader introduced the report, the Councillors' Record of Attendance for the Civic Year 2024/25, noting it was for information only.

It was highlighted that the published attendance record covered Council, committee, and working group meetings from the past year, as detailed in the supplement dated 21 May 2025.

It was also noted that Councillors attended other, mostly external meetings, which were not included in the figures presented in the report.

The Leader proposed the report for noting and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Juliet Layton, seconded the proposal.

RESOLVED: Full Council NOTED the report

11 Appointments to Outside Bodies 2025/26

The Leader presented the report which provided Council with a list of nominations to Outside Bodies for the civic year 2025/26 for consideration.

Annex A – Outside Body Nominations was circulated during the meeting.

The Leader drew attention to the nominations for appointment by Council as set out in Annex A, Table 1 as :

- Councillor Angus Jenkinson to the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee and
- Councillor Dilys Neill to the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

A vacancy for a substitute member on the Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee was also noted.

Council also noted the Leader's executive appointments to outside bodies, as listed in Annex A, Table 2.

The resolution was proposed by Councillor Mike Every and seconded by Councillor Juliet Layton.

The Chair then moved to the vote on the recommendations of the Outside Bodies report.

Voting Record:

29 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions

To AGREE nominations to Outside Bodies for the 2025/26 civic year. (Resolution)

Council RESOLVED to:

1. NOTE the appointments to outside bodies by the Leader of the Council in respect of executive functions, as set out in Annex A Table 1;
2. CONFIRM the appointments to the Gloucestershire County Council Economic Strategy Scrutiny Committee and the Gloucestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in Annex A Table 2.

For	Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Every, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Nigel Robbins, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and	29
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	Len Wilkins	
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

12 Rural England Prosperity Fund 2025-26

Councillor Tristan Wilkinson introduced the report and gave an update on the award of the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) for 2025-26, with a capital allocation of £229,240. It was outlined that the fund provided a valuable opportunity to support a range of small local organisations with relatively small grants, which made a significant difference to those groups. Approval of the proposed allocation process was requested as was delegated authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation, and the Council's Section 151 Officer, to approve funding decisions based on recommendations from the REPF assessment panel.

It was noted that

- The capital programme would need to be amended to include the REPF allocation, which was fully government-funded.
- Demand exceeded available funds.

Councillor Tom Stowe expressed support for the scheme and sought clarification on the application window, noting concerns about the tight deadline for applications of 30 May 2025.

The challenging application process for local organisations was acknowledged and the Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that the existing deadline could be extended by a few weeks to allow broader participation and increase outreach.

Councillor Patrick Coleman enquired about the involvement of the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC), given their past role in the administration of related schemes. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the current round would be administered internally due to the late timing of the allocation and the Council's increased capacity.

The decision to manage the fund in-house, was welcomed and the opportunity for the Council's support to be visibly acknowledged in the community was highlighted

There were no further comments or questions for clarity

The resolution was proposed by Councillor Tristan Wilkinson, and seconded by Councillor Mike Every.

The Chair then moved to the vote on the recommendations in the report.

Voting Record:

29 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

To APPROVE the approach for delivery of REPF projects in 2025/26 and AGREE the necessary delegations (Resolution)

Council RESOLVED to:

1. Amend the capital programme for 2025/26 to include the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) scheme capital budget of £229,240, which is fully funded from the 2025/26 REPF grant allocation.
2. Approve the provisional allocations as set out in para 3.1.
3. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation and the Council's Section 151 Officer to allocate the funding, having regard to the recommendations of the REPF Assessment Panel.

For	Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Mike Evemy, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Nigel Robbins, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	29
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

13 Next meeting

The Chair in closing the meeting confirmed that the next scheduled meeting of Full Council would be on 16 July 2025 at 6pm.

The Meeting commenced at 6.00pm and closed at 7.27pm.