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COTSWOLD
District Council

Cabinet
16/October2025

Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet held on Thursday, 16 October 2025

Members present:

Mike Evemy (Leader)	Juliet Layton	
Patrick Coleman	Paul Hodgkinson	Tristan Wilkinson
Andrea Pellegram	Mike McKeown	

Officers present:

Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services	Julia Gibson, Democratic Services Officer
Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer)	Matthew Britton, Principal Planning Policy Officer
Helen Martin, Director of Communities and Place	Susan Hughes, Business Manager for Support and Advice
Nickie Mackenzie-Daste, Senior Democratic Services Officer	Paula Massey, Customer Enabling Manager
David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer	Jo Symons, Head of Planning Policy and Infrastructure

Observers:

Councillor Gina Blomefield

133 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Claire Bloomer.

134 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

135 Minutes

The Cabinet considered the minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2025. There were no amendments.

Approval of the minutes was proposed by Councillor Mike McKeown, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Digital, and seconded by Councillor Tristan Wilkinson, Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation.

The proposal was put to the vote and agreed by Cabinet.

Voting record:

7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

To approve the minutes of a meeting of Cabinet held on 4 September 2025. (Resolution)		
RESOLVED that the minutes of Cabinet held on 4 September 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting.		
For	Patrick Coleman, Mike Eevemy, Paul Hodgkinson, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown, Andrea Pellegram and Tristan Wilkinson	7
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

136 Leader's Announcements

There were two announcements from the Leader, who expressed condolences and solidarity with the Jewish community following the recent horrific attacks in Manchester. On behalf of the Council and residents within the district, the Leader conveyed that the Council was deeply saddened by the events and reaffirmed its commitment to opposing all forms of antisemitism.

The Leader also extended sympathies to the friends and family of the individual who was found deceased in the Forum car park toilets, recognising the distress this incident had caused.

137 Public Questions

There was one public question, raised by Mr R. Gibson. Mr Gibson spoke in a personal capacity, regarding the Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit report presented to the Audit and Governance Committee on 30 September 2025, and sought clarification on whether the councillor mentioned in relation to procurement irregularities was a current Cabinet Member.

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The Leader, Councillor Mike Evemy, advised that it would not be appropriate to disclose the councillor's name, as this was neither necessary nor in the public interest, and confirmed that no improper conduct had been identified.

Reference was made to the Members' Code of Conduct and Nolan Principles. The Leader reiterated that no fault had been found, no complaint had been made, and that the Monitoring Officer could provide a formal response on Code of Conduct matters if required.

138 Member Questions

Question 1: from Councillor Daryl Corps to Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning Councillor Juliet Layton.

In light of the staggering number of houses being earmarked for Moreton-in-Marsh in the Updated Cotswold District Council Local Plan Review, can the cabinet member for Housing and Planning please provide a date when the Moreton Working Group will next meet? This grave situation surely triggers a meeting due to the urgency of the challenges now facing the town and the surrounding Villages. I'm sure local stakeholders selected to join this group will be urgently anticipating a meeting.

The following response was given by Councillor Layton:

A date for this meeting has been set and invites will be sent in the next few days. It is important to reiterate at this point that since the Moreton Working Group was instigated, the game has changed. The government's new housing targets mean we are having to plan for thousands more homes in locations across the district. As members will have noted from the draft consultation document published in advance of this Cabinet meeting, the options we've been forced to develop for meeting those targets propose, indicatively at this stage, thousands of homes in the north, south and east of the district. Moreton-in-Marsh is still significantly impacted, that is well noted and understood. But given the challenge before us now supersedes the previous development proposals for Moreton-in-Marsh, the meeting will be to discuss how the council best engages with stakeholders in Moreton moving forward. It will be a chance to discuss how that group can most effectively represent its communities on the matter, given we are going to be unable – out of fairness – to replicate a Working Group model in all of the areas impacted by the government's new housing targets.

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

The Cabinet was advised that, two Cabinet Member delegated decisions had been taken prior to the publication of the agenda and these were reported to Cabinet members.

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Cabinet Member Delegated Decision 1:

Councillor Patrick Coleman, Cabinet Member for Finance participated in a Delegated Decision meeting on 6 October 2025 regarding the allocation of funds collected from the Rissington Road Car Parking Tourism Levy in Bourton-on-the-Water for 2025/26.

The decision was effective on 15 October 2025.

Cabinet Member Delegated Decision 2:

Councillor Patrick Coleman, Cabinet Member for Finance participated in a Delegated Decision meeting on 6 October 2025 regarding the determination of ten new applications and thirteen renewal applications for Discretionary Rate Relief submitted under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 for the financial years 2023/2024, 2024/2025 and 2025/2026.

The decision was effective on 15 October 2025.

RESOLVED that Cabinet NOTED the decisions.

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

The Leader welcomed Councillor Gina Blomefield, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, who introduced the recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 October 2025 which, after discussing Cotswold District Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation asked that the Council continued to lobby government for a significantly lower housing target for the Cotswold District given:

- a) 80% of the district is within the Cotswold National Landscape area.
- b) The infrastructure challenges across the district (sewage capacity, rural roads, public transport, etc.)
- c) Lack of access to facilities and employment in many areas.
- d) The need for government support to address some of these challenges (e.g. funding for a bypass).
- e) The reality of what scale of development and supporting infrastructure will be deliverable in the remaining developable parts of the district.

The Leader, Councillor Mike Evemy responded that he had drafted a letter to go to Steve Reed MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, which would set out what Cotswold District Council were doing and reiterate the recommended messages.

The letter outlined the challenges and constraints unique to the district that impacted the Council's ability to deliver the government's housing targets. It also referenced infrastructure and enquired what support the government could provide to unlock funding and ensure that utility providers were positioned to support growth with adequate and timely provision.

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Councillor Blomefield thanked Cabinet for considering the Overview and Scrutiny recommendation. Councillor Blomefield also expressed appreciation to Bromford for attending Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, noting that the housing association had provided valuable insight into tenant management, property maintenance, energy efficiency programs, and plans to expand their portfolio using government grants for social and affordable housing.

The importance of the Local Plan for the Cotswold District was emphasised given the significantly increased government housing targets. The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny thanked officers and Cabinet Members for joining the meeting and facilitating a productive discussion. It was noted that the recommendations from the Committee were unanimously supported and that there was an ongoing need to align housing targets with the necessary infrastructure.

The Leader thanked Councillor Blomefield and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their diligence.

141 Safeguarding Policy Update - July 2025

The purpose of the report was to inform Members of the updated Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Councillor Mike Evemy, Leader of the Council introduced the report in Councillor Bloomers absence and stated that Safeguarding was a statutory duty for the Council, delivering services directly affecting adults at risk, young people and children. It was noted that the revised policy removed specific job titles for designated and deputy safeguarding leads to ensure continued relevance as personnel change. The updated policy consolidated changes to referral processes, clarified key responsibilities, and ensured the Council continued to meet its statutory duty of care in reporting safeguarding concerns. Terminology had been updated from "vulnerable adults" to "adults at risk" in line with national and local safeguarding board practice.

It was noted that safeguarding activity had increased, with 11 cases reported in 2024–25 and six cases to date in 2025–26, most frequently relating to mental health and suicide ideation.

Ongoing training and awareness were identified as essential, with provision available through IHASCO Level 2 e-learning and Gloucestershire LearnPro, funded within existing training budgets. Further review of resourcing for the safeguarding function may be required to ensure continued compliance and effectiveness.

It was further noted that Officers would work with the Communications Team to update internal and public information on safeguarding, and members would be offered Level 2 e-learning training on safeguarding adults and children early in the new

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year. The proposed member training was welcomed by the Deputy Leader and those present.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Mike Evemy, seconded by Councillor Tristan Wilkinson and subsequently put to the vote.

Voting record:

7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

To agree and adopt the updated Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. (Resolution)		
RESOLVED that cabinet agreed and adopted the updated Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.		
For	Patrick Coleman, Mike Evemy, Paul Hodgkinson, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown, Andrea Pellegram and Tristan Wilkinson	7
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

142 Council Tax Support Scheme 2026/2027

The purpose of the report was to ask Cabinet to consider and recommend to Full Council the revised Council Tax Support Scheme for the financial year 2026/2027.

Councillor Patrick Coleman, Cabinet Member for Finance, introduced the report and noted that the scheme continued the principles established under the current administration over six years ago. He highlighted that, unlike previous approaches which sought to reduce support, the Council now operated one of the most generous and equitable schemes in the country. He emphasised the particular challenges faced by low-income households in rural areas, such as limited public transport and distance from key services, and thanked officers for their detailed work in developing the proposals.

Strong support was expressed by members, who stated that maintaining such support schemes during difficult financial times was essential to protecting vulnerable residents and addressing hidden hardship within the district.

Councillor Evemy commended the Council for sustaining full relief for residents on the lowest incomes and avoiding the pursuit of small arrears. He also noted the scheme's recognition of larger families through higher levels of support, aligning with the Council's commitment to tackling child poverty.

Councillor Coleman suggested that the recommendation for delegation be a separate point, the original two recommendations were split into three, no further amendments were made.

The resulting three recommendations were proposed by Councillor Patrick Coleman, seconded by Councillor Mike Evemy and subsequently put to the vote.

Voting Record:

7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

To consider and recommend to Full Council the revised Council Tax Support Scheme for the financial year 2026/27 (Resolution)

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommended that Council:

1. Agree the increase to income bands as detailed within paragraphs 3.2, 3.3 and Annex A of this report from 1 April 2026.
2. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, in Consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, to amend the income bands by the September 2025 CPI rate due to be published on 22 October 2025, should this be different to the assumed increase set out in the report and annex A.
3. Agree that any balance remaining in the earmarked reserve 'Hardship Fund' be made available in 2026/27 financial year for reasons detailed in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7 of the report.

For	Patrick Coleman, Mike Evemy, Paul Hodgkinson, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown, Andrea Pellegram and Tristan Wilkinson	7
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

143 Cotswold District Local Plan (2011-31) Regulation 18 Consultation

The purpose of the report was to seek approval to consult on the Preferred Options for development in the Cotswold District for the Regulation 18 consultation, and further technical documents as and when necessary; and to approve the updated Local Development Scheme to progress the Plan to submission in winter 2026 and adoption in winter 2027.

Councillor Mike Evemy, Leader of the Council introduced the item. It was noted that, following changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, the government's

housing requirement for the district had more than doubled, with a target of 18,650 homes over 18 years (1,036 per year), up from fewer than 500 in the previous plan.

The district's constraints were highlighted, including over 80% protected national landscape and significant infrastructure limitations, which restricted suitable locations for development. The Council was reported to be at risk of speculative development due to the absence of a five-year housing land supply, with potential impacts on infrastructure, services, the local economy, and the natural environment.

The consultation document was presented as a means to gather residents' views on options for meeting housing targets, including existing permissions and potential sites. It was emphasised that the consultation was indicative, high-level, and designed to inform locally-led decisions rather than being imposed externally by government. While proposals could be challenging, particularly for smaller settlements, public engagement was encouraged to help shape the future provision of social and affordable housing alongside necessary infrastructure.

The consultation was scheduled to open on 5 November 2025, with details provided via the Council's planning portal. Four public exhibitions and two town and parish council forums were planned, with officers attending formal public meetings where invited. Young people would be engaged through visits to local sixth forms and further education centres. Information would also be communicated via newsletters, social media, and the Council website.

The Cabinet noted that the consultation presented a preferred scenario (Option 5) and other development options, with indicative housing figures. Officers confirmed that site assessments were ongoing, with final figures dependent on infrastructure, feasibility, landscape sensitivity, and flood risk, alongside consultation feedback. New sites could also be submitted during the consultation. Members stressed the importance of commercial viability, cumulative impacts on transport, schools, services, and the environment, and the need to plan strategically to secure infrastructure ahead of development.

Councillor Juliet Layton, reaffirmed the importance of public engagement and encouraged residents to submit considered responses online. She emphasised that robust consultation feedback would strengthen the Council's position during the inspection process and noted that all residents, not just those living near proposed sites, would be affected by development.

Councillor Blomefield, in her position as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, was then asked to comment or ask any questions. The planned local consultations were welcomed and councillors and town/parish representatives were encouraged to attend the forums to better inform residents and promote constructive responses. The

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importance of working within current government housing requirements was emphasised and support for the officers' work in preparing the consultation expressed.

Councillor Blomefield raised a concern regarding the risk that speculative development could occur on land intended for infrastructure, such as bypasses, schools, or GP surgeries, potentially hindering future planning. Officers confirmed that development ahead of a local plan posed such risks. While the planning process could seek contributions towards infrastructure, large projects not identified in the plan remained vulnerable until formally allocated.

Councillor Blomefield acknowledged the Council's efforts and reiterated Overview and Scrutiny's view that new housing must be supported by appropriate infrastructure.

Councillor Layton confirmed that climate-resilient and sustainable housing policies were in place and would be strengthened under Regulation 19, while Councillor Evemy stressed that strong consultation responses were essential for the Council to manage development and justify site decisions.

It was noted that a final version of the consultation document had been published as a supplement. The supplement contained some changes, mainly between paragraphs 2.9 to 2.16 which further explained the issue of development density. The figures in Table 1 had also been updated to exclude sites where there was no reasonable prospect of the density of development being increased.

In addition, further to the feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the following changes had been made:

- The name of the strategic site in Moreton-in-Marsh had been updated to Strategic extension north, south and east of Moreton-in-Marsh; and
- For clarity, two footnotes had been added to Table 2 to explain how the 'current dwellings' and 'new dwellings' figures were calculated.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Mike Evemy, seconded by Councillor Juliet Layton and subsequently put to the vote.

Voting Record:

7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

To approve consultation on Cotswold District's Preferred Development Options (Regulation 18) and related technical documents, and to approve the updated Local Development Scheme to enable Plan submission in winter 2026 and adoption in winter 2027. (Resolution)

RESOLVED that Cabinet

1. Approved the Cotswold District Council Local Plan Review Regulation 18 Consultation Preferred Options (November 2025) document and the commencement of a six-week public consultation on this, together with a call for sites from 5 November 2025 to 18 December 2025.
2. Delegated authority to the Director of Communities and Place, the Accountable Officer and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning to agree any minor amendments or additions to the Consultation Document prior to the Regulation 18 Consultation.
3. Delegated authority to the Director of Communities and Place and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning to approve for consultation any supporting technical documents for the Regulation 18 consultation.
4. Delegated authority to the Director of Communities and Place and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning to approve additional technical documents for further Regulation 18 consultation as and when necessary.
5. Approved the Local Development Scheme.

For	Patrick Coleman, Mike Eevemy, Paul Hodgkinson, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown, Andrea Pellegram and Tristan Wilkinson	7
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

144 Budget Strategy and Medium Term Financial Strategy Update

The purpose of the report was to set out the Budget Strategy to support the preparation of the 2026/27 revenue and capital budgets and present an updated Medium Term Financial Strategy forecast.

Councillor Coleman introduced the 2026–27 Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy, acknowledging the work of officers, particularly the Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer and his team. It was noted that while the report contained challenges, it also highlighted positive progress. Attention was drawn to the capital programme, particularly the significant funding allocated for new Ubico waste vehicles, emphasising the detailed planning underway to determine vehicle type, fuel source, and maintenance schedules.

Annex D was referenced, noting that red in the report indicated savings, while the budget cap at the bottom highlighted the potential scale of the budget gap if worst-case scenarios materialised. It was further emphasised that professional advice, including that from consultants PIXEL, underpinned the Council's planning.

Councillor Patrick Coleman highlighted Annex C, showing that Cotswold was among the worst-affected councils under Fair Funding 2.0, reflecting the area's relatively prosperous status. He also drew attention to Annex B, detailing financial support to struggling authorities, demonstrating the importance of careful financial management. It was also reported that the Council had made good progress on capital receipts and revenue management, and confirmed there was no immediate risk of applying for exceptional financial support. It was emphasised that the primary focus remained resident-focused transformation and smarter internal working projects, including digitalisation and AI efficiencies, to address the budget gap.

The Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer was invited to comment on the business rates pool. It was explained that the pool had retained approximately £40–50 million locally since its establishment in 2013–14, but this would likely be its final year. Cabinet noted that government guidance on Fair Funding 2.0 was still awaited, with PIXEL's current interpretation suggesting a flatter funding position in 2027–28 and 2028–29 than the Council had previously assumed. It was stressed that further work was required to identify budget and efficiency savings, income generation, and potential funding gains to close the budget gap.

It was confirmed that the Council anticipated receiving a three-year provisional settlement before Christmas, which would allow more robust forward planning despite uncertainty from potential local government reorganisation. It was highlighted that the Council expected to generate a budget surplus of over £500,000 this year, adding to last year's similar surplus, providing additional financial resilience.

Councillor Gina Blomefield observed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had rigorously reviewed the Council's finances. She highlighted concerns over the funding gap, uncertainty in interest rates, inflation, and broader national and global factors, but expressed support for the approach led by Councillor Patrick Coleman and the Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Patrick Coleman and seconded by Councillor Mike Evemy and subsequently put to the vote.

Voting Record:
7 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

To approve the 2026/27 Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy update. (Resolution)		
RESOLVED that Cabinet approved the 2026/27 Budget Strategy as outlined in the report.		
For	Patrick Coleman, Mike Evemy, Paul Hodgkinson, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown, Andrea Pellegram and Tristan Wilkinson	7
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

145 Next Meeting Date

It was noted that the next meeting of Cabinet was scheduled for 20 November starting at 6.00 pm.

The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 7.30 pm

(END)

Cabinet Response to Member Question – Cabinet 16 October 2025.

Question	Response
<p>Question 1 from Councillor Daryl Corps to Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning</p> <p>Moreton-In-Marsh Working Group</p> <p>In light of the staggering number of houses being earmarked for Moreton-in-Marsh in the Updated Cotswold District Council Local Plan Review, can the cabinet member for Housing and Planning please provide a date when the Moreton Working Group will next meet? This grave situation surely triggers a meeting due to the urgency of the challenges now facing the town and the surrounding Villages. I'm sure local stakeholders selected to join this group will be urgently anticipating a meeting.</p>	<p>A date for this meeting has been set and invites will be sent in the next few days. It is important to reiterate at this point that since the Moreton Working Group was instigated, the game has changed. The government's new housing targets mean we are having to plan for thousands more homes in locations <i>across</i> the district. As members will have noted from the draft consultation document published in advance of this Cabinet meeting, the options we've been forced to develop for meeting those targets propose, indicatively at this stage, thousands of homes in the north, south and east of the district. Moreton-in-Marsh is still significantly impacted, that is well noted and understood. But given the challenge before us now supersedes the previous development proposals for Moreton-in-Marsh, the meeting will be to discuss how the council best engages with stakeholders in Moreton moving forward. It will be a chance to discuss how that group can most effectively represent its communities on the matter, given we are going to be unable – out of fairness – to replicate a Working Group model in all of the areas impacted by the government's new housing targets.</p>

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