



## **Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Wednesday, 24 September 2025**

### Members present:

Mark Harris (Chair)

Gina Blomefield

Nick Bridges

Patrick Coleman

David Cunningham

Tony Dale

Mike Evemy

David Fowles

Paul Hodgkinson

Nikki Ind

Angus Jenkinson

Julia Judd

Juliet Layton

Andrew Maclean

Mike McKeown

Dilys Neill

Andrea Pellegram

Nigel Robbins

Tony Slater

Tom Stowe

Jeremy Theyer

Clare Turner

Michael Vann

Jon Wareing

Ian Watson

Len Wilkins

Tristan Wilkinson

### Officers present:

Jane Portman, Interim Chief Executive  
Officer

Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and  
Electoral Services

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

Julia Gibson, Democratic Services Officer

Tyler Jardine

Kira Thompson, Election and Democratic  
Services Support Assistant

Michelle Burge, Chief Accountant and  
Deputy Section 151 Officer

Joseph Walker, Head of Economic  
Development and Communities

## **36 Apologies**

Apologies were received for Councillor Clare Bloomer, Councillor Ray Brassington, Councillor Laura Hall-Wilson, Councillor Joe Harris, Councillor Helene Mansilla and Councillor Lisa Spivey.

## **37 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

Council considered the minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 July 2025.  
A wording error was identified in the response to Councillor Gina Blomefield's question from the previous meeting.

Councillor Juliet Layton proposed the approval of the amended minutes, the proposal was seconded by Councillor Stowe, put to the vote and agreed by Council.

RESOLVED that the amended minutes of Full Council 16 July 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record.

Voting record:

For 21, Against 0, Abstentions 6

<b>To APPROVE the minutes of Full Council 16 July 2025 (Resolution)</b>		
For	Gina Blomefield, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, David Cunningham, Tony Dale, Mike Every, David Fowles, Mark Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown, Tony Slater, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Michael Vann, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	21
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Andrew Maclean, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Nigel Robbins, Clare Turner and Jon Wareing	6
<b>Carried</b>		

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**39 Announcements from the Chair, Leader or Chief Executive**

Chair's Announcements

The Chair highlighted the success of both the Phoenix Festival, which welcomed over 22,000 people and the Orpheus Festival, noting the value of such events in strengthening community life. He thanked volunteers, noted Cotswold Districts Council's funding had enabled inclusion and community pride, and suggested similar events be supported further north in the District.

The Leader welcomed Tyler Jardine, the new Trainee Democratic Services Officer, and wished him a long and successful career at Cotswold District Council.

Leaders Announcements

The Leader congratulated two local winners of the BBC Gloucestershire Make a Difference Awards.

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Ed Simpson, a 16-year-old from Cirencester who had raised over £100,000 for charity while undergoing treatment for leukaemia, had won the Young Hero Award. Students from the National Star College received the Green Award for creating a hedgehog-friendly campus.

The Leader reminded Members of the following events:

- A planning enforcement briefing was planned for Monday 29 September. The briefing would update members on enforcement issues, discuss challenges, and aimed to improve communication between members and officers.
- An online Local Government Organisation (LGR) briefing on 14 October. This briefing was in preparation for the Council discussion in November. Members were reminded that the Cabinet would formally submit the Council's response after the November discussion.
- An All-Member briefing on the Local Plan update scheduled for 7 October, ahead of the Regulation 18 consultation documents being considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 October and Cabinet on 16 October. The public consultation was expected to start in early November.

## **40 Public Questions**

There were three public questions.

### Question 1

Nicola Charleswaith, a resident, raised concerns about ongoing rat infestations at their newly purchased home. They reported that, despite notifying the Senior Environmental Officer and Health Officer on 12 September no progress report had been received. The infestation had caused damage to electrical wiring, leading to power loss, and required multiple pest control interventions. The resident highlighted health hazards, property damage, personal disruption, and the impact on their family, and requested clarity on what long-term preventative measures would be enforced.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning shared the feedback obtained from officers.

Following the resident's concerns, the Officer had visited the property, confirmed it had been boarded up, and contacted the property owner's business address but received no response. They planned to serve a "prevention of damage by pests" notice if no satisfactory action was taken. Further, the officer shared recent correspondence with the neighbouring property owner, who expressed surprise at the infestation and indicated they would engage a pest control firm to investigate. The officer confirmed that the issue remained open and would continue to be pursued due to its unacceptable nature.

### Question 2

Valerie Dyson, a resident, raised concerns about black bin collections in Middle Duntisbourne since the June 2024 service reorganisation, reporting frequent missed

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collections. The issue was attributed to insufficient small vehicles for narrow lanes, with only one narrow access truck often breaking down. The resident questioned why the Council had not invested in new vehicles despite unspent 2024–25 capital allocations, noting that the missed collection rate was over double the target, and asked why bin collection was not being prioritised.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Regulatory Services acknowledged ongoing issues with Friday bin collections, caused by vehicle breakdowns, insufficient crews, and reliance on agency staff. A new Friday service round will soon be implemented, moving some collections to Wednesday. Vehicle replacement and refurbishment plans were underway. Improvements to communication with residents, including a future app, were being developed. Smaller vehicles suitable for narrow lanes were being considered.

### Question 3

Councillor Ben Eddolls, Member for Stow on the Wold Town Council, raised concerns about the poor condition of public toilets in Stow on the Wold, describing them as frequently dirty and inadequate for visitor numbers. Complaints had been received from the public highlighting issues with cleanliness, functionality, and odour.

The Cabinet Member for Health, Culture and Visitor Experience acknowledged the seriousness of public toilet standards, noting that users should expect clean facilities. They confirmed raising previous concerns with officers and the contractor, and that toilets were currently cleaned three times a day. While visitor numbers during the summer made maintaining cleanliness challenging, the Cabinet Member emphasised the need to review practices, improve standards, and follow up with officers.

## **41 Member Questions**

Members' written questions, written responses, supplementary questions and supplementary responses can be found in Annex A attached.

18:41- Councillor David Fowles left the meeting and did not return.

## **42 Corporate Plan 2024-2028 Update**

The purpose of the report was to seek Council adoption of a refreshed Corporate Plan for the period 2025 through to 2028.

The report was introduced by Councillor Mike Evemy, Leader of the Council.

The Council had updated its priorities to reflect changing national and local contexts, including the proposed Local Government Reorganisation and the new Local Plan for the district. A new priority, "Planning for the Future," was added to guide sustainable

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development, housing, and transport, acknowledging that the Council may not exist in three years.

Other priorities included maintaining high-quality, reliable services amid uncertainty; tackling the climate emergency by reducing emissions, promoting biodiversity, and greening operations; delivering affordable and suitable housing while addressing empty homes and homelessness; and supporting a resilient local economy, including high streets, the visitor economy, and sustainable business growth.

Councillor Cunningham asked the Leader to clarify the differences between the updated corporate plan and the previous version, noting that they seemed very similar. The Leader explained that the last plan had dated from January 2024 and that the new version removed some previously delivered items while introducing new priorities, including "Planning for the Future." He highlighted that the updated plan provided clear direction for officers, assigned accountability to named Members, and included achievable delivery dates, ensuring it was both practical and actionable.

Councillor Layton seconded the report and reserved the right to speak.

The Chair then moved to the debate.

Members of the Conservative Group raised concerns that the Corporate Plan appeared uninspiring, underwhelming and rushed whilst not showing how outcomes would be measured to ensure success.

The Cabinet Member for Health, Cultures and Visitor Experiences highlighted the two key areas of his portfolio, the Creative Cotswolds and the Community Safety Partnership which were claimed to be inspirational in their delivery.

Members agreed that housing and community resilience was key to responding to the climate emergency and urged the Council to confirm that the registered housing providers were planning on updating older housing across the district.

Councillor McKeown, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Digital, confirmed that the figures included in the Corporate Plan reflected the reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> of Cotswold District Council activities.

A Member stressed that housing alone does not build communities and called for better follow-through on infrastructure, environmental issues, and unfinished developments, emphasising the importance of the inclusion of "Planning for the Future" in the Corporate Plan.

Councillor Layton rose to second the resolutions and noted that the document served both to set aims and priorities for councillors and, importantly, to ensure officers were clear on them. The Local Plan was highlighted as central to much of the Council's work,

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underpinning areas such as climate change, housing, registered providers, and community support.

The Chair invited Councillor Mike Every to sum up. It was noted that keeping staff informed and engaged during the LGR process would be essential to maintaining continuity of services. It was also highlighted that the Local Plan would play a key role in shaping the District's future, with an emphasis on building sustainable communities rather than solely increasing housing provision.

#### Voting record

For – 19, Against – 0, Abstain - 6

Councillor Len Wilkins and Councillor David Fowles did not vote.

<b>To APPROVE the recommendations and adopt the Corporate Plan 2025 - 2028 (Resolution)</b>		
For	Gina Blomefield, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Tony Dale, Mike Every, Mark Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Juliet Layton, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Nigel Robbins, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson and Tristan Wilkinson	19
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	David Cunningham, Julia Judd, Andrew Maclean, Tony Slater, Tom Stowe and Jeremy Theyer	6
<b>Carried</b>		

### **43 Treasury Management Outturn**

The purpose of the report was to receive and discuss details of the Council's treasury management performance for the period 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

The report was introduced by Councillor Patrick Coleman, Cabinet Member for Finance, who made the following points arising from consideration by the Audit and Governance Committee.

- The Audit and Governance Committee commended the 2024–25 Treasury Management Outturn Report, confirming that activities aligned with the approved strategy, prudential indicators, and statutory guidance, with no breaches identified.
- The Committee had identified the Council's prudent approach to maintaining sufficient internal cash balances and emphasised the continued focus on investment security and liquidity amid market volatility.
- It was acknowledged that the Council was in a stronger financial position than many other authorities, with resources carefully and wisely invested in pooled funds under sound professional advice.

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- The Audit and Governance Committee suggested that future reports include clearer information on long-term investment performance expectations.

The recommendations were seconded by Councillor Nigel Robbins. He noted that investment returns were higher than expected, at £1.6 million against a forecast of £1.2 million, due to delayed capital spending and stronger yields.

19:31 Councillor Tony Slater left the Chamber and did not return.

The Chair then moved to the debate.

A question was raised regarding the approval of any future borrowing by the Council and whether the decision would come before Council or Cabinet. The Chief Accountant and Deputy S151 Officer would clarify the value which determined which body would action the request.

A Member observed that investment returns appeared broadly in line with service cost inflation, suggesting the Council had maintained the real value of its investments. The Deputy S151 Officer confirmed this was broadly correct, noting an average return of 4.6%, with overall costs rising by slightly less, resulting in a positive position overall.

Voting record:

For – 25, Against – 0, Abstain - 0

Councillors Tony Slater and David Fowles did not vote having left the meeting.

<b>To APPROVE the treasury management outturn report 2024/25 (Resolution)</b>		
For	Gina Blomefield, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, David Cunningham, Tony Dale, Mike Every, Mark Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Nigel Robbins, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	25
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
<b>Carried</b>		

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## **44 Notice of Motions**

No motions were received.

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**45** **Next meeting**

The next Council meeting was 26 November 2025 at 2pm.

The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 7.40 pm

Chair

(END)