



Council
21/January2026

Minutes of a meeting of Council held on Wednesday, 21 January 2026

Members present:

Mark Harris (Chair)	Ray Brassington (Vice-Chair)	
Gina Blomefield	Paul Hodgkinson	Lisa Spivey
Claire Bloomer	Nikki Ind	Tom Stowe
Nick Bridges	Angus Jenkinson	Jeremy Theyer
Patrick Coleman	Julia Judd	Clare Turner
Daryl Corps	Juliet Layton	Michael Vann
Tony Dale	Helene Mansilla	Jon Wareing
Mike Evely	Mike McKeown	Ian Watson
David Fowles	Dilys Neill	Len Wilkins
Laura Hall-Wilson	Andrea Pellegram	Tristan Wilkinson
Joe Harris	Nigel Robbins	

Officers present:

Jane Portman, Chief Executive Officer	David Stanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer
Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services	Kira Thompson, Election and Democratic Services Support Assistant
Angela Claridge, Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer)	Clara Wiggins, Communications Manager
Julia Gibson, Democratic Services Officer	Matt Abbott, Head of Communications
Nickie Mackenzie-Daste, Senior Democratic Services Officer	Kevin Dunford, Licensing Officer
Tyler Jardine, Trainee Democratic Services Officer	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager for Environmental, Welfare and Revenue Service

60 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor David Cunningham and Councillor Tony Slater.

61 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

62 Minutes

Council considered the minutes of the Council meeting held on 26 November 2025.

Councillor Evey proposed the approval of the minutes. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Stowe, put to the vote and agreed by Council.

RESOLVED that the minutes of Full Council 26 November 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record.

Voting record:

26 For, 0 Against, 4 Abstentions.

To APPROVE the minutes of Full Council 26 November 2025 (Resolution)		
RESOLVED that the minutes of Full Council 26 November 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record.		
For	Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Tony Dale, Mike Evey, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson and Len Wilkins	27
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	Juliet Layton, Helene Mansilla, Nigel Robbins and Tristan Wilkinson	4
Carried		

63 Announcements from the Chair, Leader or Chief Executive

Chair's announcements:

The Chair drew members' attention to upcoming training and briefings. Treasury management training, provided by Arlingclose, had been scheduled for 27 January at 2:00 pm in the Chamber, prior to the Audit and Governance Committee meeting, and was open to all members. An all-member budget briefing had been scheduled via Teams for 10 February 2026 at 6:00 pm, ahead of the Council budget meeting on 23rd February 2026 at 6:00 pm.

Members were encouraged to attend.

The Chair highlighted that Councillor Laura Hall-Wilson would run the Cirencester 10k on 22 February 2026 for the Pied Piper Appeal, Gloucester Hospital's charity. Members

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were encouraged to support her and sponsorship details were available via Democratic Services.

The Chair also informed members of the death of former Councillor Carol Topple, aged 90. She had moved to London, and her funeral had taken place in Putney. The Chair noted her long service and contributions to the Council and extended condolences to her family.

The Chair invited the Leader to speak.

Leader's announcements:

The Leader provided an update on Cabinet changes. Councillor Tony Dale had rejoined the Cabinet on 1 January 2026, taking over from Councillor Paul Hodgkinson. The Leader thanked Councillor Hodgkinson for his service and welcomed Councillor Dale back. Councillor Claire Bloomer had also stepped down from the Cabinet for personal reasons. The Leader acknowledged her work since May 2023, particularly her championing of the Low-Income Family Tracker programme.

Rather than appointing a new Cabinet member, Councillor Bloomer's responsibilities were reallocated among existing members: Councillor Patrick Coleman assumed cost of living support; Councillor Tony Dale, safeguarding; Councillor Juliet Layton, refugees; and the Leader took on liaison with the third sector, diversity, inclusion, and young people. Responsibility for member development was handed from the Leader to the Deputy Leader, Councillor Layton. Democratic Services was requested to update the website and circulate the revised list of Cabinet members and portfolios, effective immediately.

It was noted that Councillor Andrea Pellegram had stepped down from the Local Plan Oversight Board, and Councillor Patrick Coleman had been appointed as her replacement.

The Leader welcomed the Government's changes to inheritance tax for farmers, noting the Council's work and correspondence with the Chancellor. While the threshold increase would provide relief to farmers in the Cotswolds, the Council would continue to press the government and engage with local MPs to provide clarity to those concerned.

Concerns remained regarding housing targets imposed by the government. Feedback from public consultations, town and parish councils, and residents indicated strong opposition to the government's targets, and the Leader confirmed the Council would share the results of the consultation with government, ensure ministers understood the serious consequences of the Council having to meet an excessive housing target, and committed to fight for its reduction while planning for genuinely affordable homes where needed.

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Finally, the Leader updated members on local government reorganisation in Gloucestershire. A recent call with the Local Government Minister, officials, and over 300 council leaders and chief executives confirmed that seven-week consultations for phase three areas, including Gloucestershire, would begin in early February. All three proposals for Gloucestershire were expected to be consulted on, with decisions scheduled before the summer parliamentary recess and elections to the new shadow authority or authorities would be held in May 2027. The Chief Executive would provide further updates on preparations and the roles of senior officers.

The Chair thanked Councillor Claire Bloomer for her contributions, noting the positive impact of initiatives including the Unsung Heroes programme, which she co-led. Members were reminded that nominations for the next Unsung Heroes awards were open.

The Chair then invited the Chief Executive Officer to speak.

Chief Executive Officer's announcements:

The Chief Executive provided an update on local government reorganisation in Gloucestershire. Following a competitive process, three Cotswold District Council officers had been appointed as leads to the programme work-streams: David Stanley (Finance), Helen Martin (Neighbourhoods and Communities), and Matt Abbott (Communications, Engagement and Branding). The Chief Executive confirmed that arrangements would be put in place to ensure there would be no detriment to the Council's services and that further details would be provided in due course.

Members were also advised that the Government would announce the start date for the forthcoming seven-week public consultation, which would be open to all those with a connection to Gloucestershire, and that further information would be shared with members to support local engagement.

64 Public Questions

There were two public questions:

Question 1

Councillor Alison Tighe, Mayor of Stow-on-the-Wold, was invited to speak.

Councillor Tighe stated that she had recently written to Cotswold District Council to express concerns regarding the Local Plan update. Stow-on-the-Wold wished to ensure that the challenges facing the town were fully recognised and addressed through the Local Plan update. Her specific question was: would the Local Plan provide clear and deliverable solutions to address housing needs, particularly the shortage of affordable and social housing, given that the consultation document identified symptoms of

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decline but did not propose specific remedies to reverse that decline, and that potential development sites within the town were limited in scale?

Councillor Evemy thanked Alison Tighe for her correspondence and for raising concerns regarding Stow-on-the-Wold, noting that similar points had also been raised by the ward member, Councillor Neill. He advised that, although the Regulation 18 consultation had concluded, significant work was ongoing ahead of Regulation 19, including the assessment of sites that may have become available or been put forward. He offered to arrange a meeting with Alison Tighe, the Director of Communities and Place, Councillor Neill and other relevant representatives to discuss the specific challenges facing Stow-on-the-Wold and to help inform the next stage of the Local Plan process.

Councillor Layton, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning added that the housing need in Stow-on-the-Wold was well understood within her portfolio and was raised regularly by ward members. She explained that the Local Plan must work within the constraints of available sites but confirmed that social housing was being actively considered and that smaller sites could be appropriate for such provision, notwithstanding land ownership constraints. Councillor Layton confirmed she would also be willing to attend the proposed meeting and reiterated the Council's awareness of the issues facing the town and its commitment to addressing them where possible.

Councillor Tighe then asked a supplementary question, asking whether the Council would bring forward solutions to address parking pressures in Stow-on-the-Wold, noting limited off-street parking in the town centre, the recent introduction of time limits at the Tesco car park, and longstanding requests for a parking review.

Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Health, Culture and Visitor Experience, thanked the speaker for the question and acknowledged the concerns raised regarding parking in Stow-on-the-Wold. He noted that a district-wide parking strategy had been developed over the past two years and was published on the Council's website. He explained that any substantial development within the Local Plan would inform updates to the parking strategy and that the Council would work with local town councillors to identify suitable solutions, including potential additional parking provision. Councillor Dale offered reassurance that the Council remained committed to maintaining and investing in parking to support appropriate travel where alternatives such as walking or cycling were not feasible.

Question 2

The speaker introduced herself as Mary Cobbett, a licensed Citizens Advice benefit advisor, also serving both the Cirencester alms houses and the Cirencester Pantry. The public speaker gave some background to the questions she raised explaining her concerns regarding older pensioners in the Cotswolds who had retired before April 2016 and were receiving unexpected tax demands on their state retirement pension.

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They noted that these pensioners were not receiving the correct housing benefit and Council Tax reduction, as their benefits were being calculated on gross income rather than net income. Many were unaware of their entitlement to a recalculation which had to be applied for through Cotswold District Council on receiving their simple tax assessment bill from the government. This lack of awareness of the possibility of claiming refunds was causing financial hardship and stress, sometimes resulting in a 'eat or heat' decision.

The speaker asked:

1. How many pensioners in the Cotswolds living solely on pension credit are receiving housing benefit and Council Tax reduction?
2. As letters and leaflets are being sent to residents regarding new Council Tax rates, can the Council include a warning for recipients of Simple Assessment tax demands to contact CDC immediately to reclaim any housing benefit or Council Tax reduction owed?
3. A further question was directed to Councillor Joe Harris, as Vice Chair of the LGA Board: can this emerging national issue, where local authorities are required to address lost income due to changes in state pension taxation, be raised at LGA forums to ensure all local authorities are aware and can take action?

Councillor Mike Evely thanked the speaker for raising their concerns about older pensioners in the Cotswolds receiving unexpected tax demands on their state retirement pensions and losing entitlement to housing benefit and Council Tax reduction. Councillor Evely acknowledged that the issue was largely a consequence of government policy, including the failure to increase the basic rate threshold, and recognised the stress caused to pensioners who were unfamiliar with such administrative processes. He confirmed that the Council would provide a written response with information on how many residents were affected and that officers in Revenues and Benefits would be involved in compiling the data. Councillor Evely also highlighted the importance of improving communication with residents, particularly those who may not be online, to ensure they are aware of their entitlements.

Councillor Evely noted that Councillor Joe Harris, Vice Chair of the LGA Board, was aware of the issue raised. While he was not able to provide a response at the meeting, it was confirmed that Councillor Harris would raise the matter in the appropriate forums to ensure wider awareness and consideration.

Councillor Coleman, Cabinet Member for Finance, emphasised that the issue extended beyond communication to the approach taken by tax authorities, and local administration. He noted the Council's responsibility to support residents facing unfair treatment, while acknowledging the complexity of the matter and that national policy was the underlying cause. Both Councillors confirmed their commitment to working

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with officers and local partners to mitigate the impact on affected pensioners and to explore practical solutions to raise awareness and provide assistance.

Data provided subsequently by the revenues and benefits team is at Annex A:

Councillor McKeown spoke and advised Members of a newly announced Warm Homes Programme, which replaced the previous scheme and offered fully funded home energy upgrades for households with incomes below £36,000, including owner-occupiers and renters. The scheme provided up to 100% funding for measures such as insulation, heat pumps and solar panels. Members were asked to consider how eligible residents could be made aware of the scheme, including through existing partnerships such as Warm and Well.

Members were also reminded that the Council's Home Energy Efficiency Officer had delivered free public presentations and home energy advice, including information on available grants and support, and could be invited by town and parish councils to speak to local residents and publicise the scheme.

Mary Cobbett then asked a supplementary question:

Emphasising that the issue was a national one and not caused by local authorities Mary Cobbett noted that under long-standing benefits case law, local authorities had a responsibility to identify and account for tax liability when assessing housing benefit, which differed from PAYE arrangements. She explained that tax liability could only be disregarded for 30 weeks and that this period had been exceeded in the 2024/25 financial year, meaning benefits should have been reassessed from November 2025.

As a result, the speaker had had to appeal regarding housing benefit, which had to be submitted to the local authority, and emphasized that urgent action was needed. Ms Cobbett expressed hope that Cotswold District Council, given its strong record in administering Council Tax reductions and cost-of-living support, would engage constructively to resolve the matter and support the development of case law that could guide other local authorities.

Councillor Every responded and reassured Ms Cobbett that he was aware of a case that had been raised where these issues were being raised and that a written answer would be provided.

65 Member Questions

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

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66 Appointment of Committees- vacant seat Planning & Licensing Committee

Purpose:

To make an appointment to Planning and Licensing Committee for the remainder of the Civic Year 2025/26, following the resignation from the Committee of Councillor Tristan Wilkinson on 9 December 2025.

The Leader, Councillor Mike Evey, introduced the item and advised that, in addition to appointing a member to the vacant Liberal Democrat seat on the Planning and Licensing Committee, the Council was also required to appoint a Liberal Democrat member to the Audit and Governance Committee.

The vacancies had arisen following the resignation of Councillor Wilkinson and the appointment of Councillor Dale to Cabinet, which, under the Constitution, made him ineligible to continue serving on the Audit and Governance Committee.

Councillor Mike Evey proposed the nomination of Councillor Joe Harris to the Planning and Licensing Committee and Councillor Paul Hodgkinson to the Audit and Governance Committee. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Juliet Layton.

There were no questions for clarity. The Chair then moved to the debate.

During debate, comments were made regarding recent attendance levels and quorum arrangements at the Planning and Licensing Committee, with assurance given that quorum requirements could be reviewed by the Constitution Working Group at an appropriate time.

The Chair then moved to the vote on the resolution which was proposed by Councillor Mike Evey and seconded by Councillor Juliet Layton.

Voting record:

31 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

To approve the appointments to Planning and Licensing Committee and Audit and Governance Committee (Resolution)

Full Council RESOLVED to appoint:

1. Councillor Joe Harris to the vacant Liberal Democrat seat on the Planning and Licensing Committee (previously Councillor Tristan Wilkinson) for a term of office expiring at the next Annual Meeting of the Council.
2. Councillor Paul Hodgkinson to the vacant Liberal Democrat seat on the Audit and Governance Committee (previously Councillor Tony Dale) for a term of office expiring at the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

For	Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Tony Dale, Mike Evemy, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Nigel Robbins, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	31
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

67 New Fee for Primate Licenses

The purpose of the report was to seek the Council's approval to implement fees for primate licensing applications, with the proposed fees having been approved by the Planning and Licensing Committee at its meeting on 14 January 2026.

Councillor Andrea Pellegram, Cabinet Member for Environment and Regulatory Services, introduced the report and outlined the Animal Welfare (Primate Licences) (England) Regulations 2024, made under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The regulations established a licensing scheme requiring private primate keepers to meet zoo-level welfare standards.

It was noted that the regulations had come into force on 6 April 2025 and required existing and prospective primate keepers to hold a license, with inspections undertaken prior to the determination of an application and at least once during the license period. The scheme applied to specified primate species, as set out in the regulations.

Members were advised that the regulations allowed local authorities to charge fees, and the report set out the proposed fees for applications, renewals, and variations.

The Chair invited questions of clarification. Members asked how many primates were currently kept within the district and whether the proposals would generate a material income. It was confirmed that the matter had previously been considered by the Planning and Licensing Committee and that officers were not aware of any primates currently being kept within the district.

Councillor Tom Stowe seconded the recommendations and spoke in support of the proposals, noting that while the item focused on licensing fees, it also reflected wider animal welfare responsibilities. Concerns regarding the keeping of primates in captivity

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were acknowledged, and it was noted that the licensing regime would provide a degree of protection by enabling the Council to monitor private keeping and welfare standards.

Members were advised that the proposed fees were based on full cost recovery, aligned with other licensing fees, and subject to annual review. It was emphasised that the fees were not intended to generate income but to ensure that inspection and enforcement costs were met by applicants rather than taxpayers.

The Chair then moved to the debate. During debate, Members expressed support for the proposals and highlighted broader animal welfare considerations. The importance of effective monitoring was emphasised, and officers were thanked for their work. Reference was made to wider scientific recognition of sentience, and support was expressed for calls to restrict or prohibit private primate ownership, with suggestions that the issue be raised with local Members of Parliament.

Members also queried enforcement arrangements. It was explained that the Council retained responsibility for enforcement and would work with external organisations, including the RSPCA and specialist rescue centres, where license conditions were not met. This could include supporting the rehoming of animals where necessary.

The Chair then moved to the vote on the resolution proposed by Councillor Andrea Pellegram and seconded by Councillor Tom Stowe.

Voting record

31 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

To AGREE that the fees applicable to Primate Keeper Licence applications are set as detailed in paragraph 3.9. (Resolution)		
Following the resolutions of the Planning and Licensing Committee on 14 January 2026, Council RESOLVED to:		
1. Agree that the fees applicable to Primate Keeper Licence applications be set as detailed in paragraph 3.9.		
For	Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Tony Dale, Mike Evey, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Nigel Robbins, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	31
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

68 Treasury Management Mid-Year Report

The purpose of the report was to allow Members to receive and discuss details of the Council's Treasury Management performance for the period 01 April to 30 September 2025..

Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Patrick Coleman, introduced the Treasury Management report for the first six months of the financial year. It was noted that the report showed a broadly positive position, although future financial uncertainty remained.

Members were advised that the statutory override for externally managed pooled investments had been extended for a further four years beyond 31 March, which was beneficial given the Council's investment holdings of £10.5m in strategic pooled funds, primarily held for income generation. Some capital growth had been achieved during the period, and overall trends were reported as positive.

The presence of the Deputy Chief Executive Officer was noted for the purpose of responding to technical questions.

The Chair thanked Councillor Coleman and invited questions for clarification.

Clarification was sought regarding the Council's pooled fund investments with reference to recent volatility in global stock markets. Questions were asked as to what extent the Council actively managed its pooled funds and whether the Council relied on external consultants to rebalance or switch investments in response to market movements, or whether management of the funds was undertaken on a more passive, "light-touch" basis.

Councillor Patrick Coleman noted that the question was helpful in improving members' understanding of financial markets. He observed that there was a distinction between stock market movements and pooled fund performance and suggested that the relationship between these investment types would be best explained by the Deputy Chief Executive Officer.

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer, explained that the Council's pooled fund investments were detailed in Table 5 on page 49 of the public report and advised that these investments were held for the long term, typically over a five-to ten-year period, and that the decision to invest in specific funds had been made by Council some years previously. Any change to those investments would require a further Council decision.

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Members were cautioned that past performance was not a reliable indicator of future performance and it was highlighted that there were costs associated with changing investments and changes should not be undertaken lightly. He noted that the initial investment of £12.5 million had reduced in value to £11.686 million as of 30 September 2025, and that selling and reinvesting would crystallise that capital loss.

It was further clarified that the Council undertook regular reviews, with support from its advisers, to ensure the investment portfolio remained diversified across different asset classes, including property funds, income-maximising funds, and multi-asset funds. This approach reduced exposure to any single market or fund. He advised members to note current performance and confirmed that the Audit and Governance Committee could provide further assurance regarding the robustness of the investments.

It was noted that the Council's Treasury Management Risk Reserve had been established approximately 18 months earlier to manage the risk associated with the statutory override relating to pooled fund valuation losses. This statutory override allowed the Council to disregard unrealised losses at a specific point in time. Without the override, the Council would have been required to account for such losses. It was confirmed that the reserve was reviewed regularly and was being used to mitigate future pressures, particularly in light of reduced investment income anticipated as internal resources were used to fund capital investment, including the waste fleet replacement programme, in the period leading up to local government reorganisation.

Concerns were raised about the Council's investment in Fundamentum Housing REIT. It was noted that a similar social housing investment fund had collapsed. Members questioned whether the Council's investment was secure.

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer advised that a written response would be provided to members. It was confirmed that the investment had been made relatively recently and that the Council received ongoing advice from its investment advisers, who would flag any concerns. Assurances were given that any significant risks would have been identified.

Referring to figures in Table 5, members noted significant variation between the performance figures of the various funds. It was suggested that it would be helpful for members to receive comparative sector benchmarks to assess whether individual funds were performing above or below average.

Prior to the response being given, Councillor Mike Evely declared an interest in one of the funds in the table, explaining that he was appointed to the board of the Municipal Investment Trust, which held a share in CCLA, one of the investment managers referenced. He confirmed that the role was unremunerated and that he held no personal financial interest. The Chair sought and received clarification on this point.

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The Deputy Chief Executive Officer confirmed that he would provide members with a detailed breakdown of the long-term performance of the cautious multi-asset income fund, noting that short-term performance figures could be misleading when viewed in isolation.

Members sought clarification as to how the Council's values, including ethical and environmental considerations, were reflected in its investment decisions.

In response, the Deputy Chief Executive Officer confirmed that ethical investment considerations had been raised previously and that the Council's advisers had provided a detailed assessment of the ethical characteristics of the pooled funds approximately 18 months earlier. It was noted that there was no single definition of ethical investment, but that the assessment had considered matters such as climate priorities and sector exposure. There was an undertaking to circulate the information to members again.

Councillor Nigel Robbins spoke in support of the recommendations and added that questions of this nature frequently arose among local authorities with investments in pooled funds, and that such authorities continued to invest where appropriate assurance was provided. The Member commented on the statutory override, observing that it reflected a lack of understanding by central government of local authority investment practices.

Councillor Robbins noted that the Council's investment position compared favourably with other authorities within the adviser's portfolio. It was acknowledged that while higher returns could be pursued, the Council had adopted a balanced approach between risk and return. The advantage of the Council's strong cash reserves was highlighted, which reduced the need for external borrowing and associated interest costs.

It was further noted that the report had already been considered by the Audit and Governance Committee and Members were encouraged to vote in favour.

Councillor Coleman summed up and noted that the Council's investment performance was generally mid-table, with most councils achieving between 3.5% and 4.5%, and expressed appreciation for the forthcoming written answers and for the support provided.

The Chair moved to the vote on the resolution proposed by Councillor Coleman and seconded by Councillor Robbins.

Voting record:

31 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions.

To note and approve the recommendations around the Treasury Management performance Report 2025/26 (Resolution)

Full Council RESOLVED to:

1. Note the Council's Treasury Management performance for the period 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2025 and the Quarter 2 Prudential Indicators.
2. Approve the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2025/26.

For	Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Tony Dale, Mike Evey, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Nigel Robbins, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	31
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

69 Notice of Motions

It was noted by Council that the Chair, Councillor Mark Harris, would propose a motion to Council.

Councillor Mark Harris was invited by the Vice-Chair to propose Motion 1, Making the Cotswolds a Dementia-Friendly District, and made the following points:

- Town and parish councils had an important role in shaping places that were more navigable and supportive for people living with dementia and their families, without taking on direct service delivery.
- The motion sought to provide leadership, coordination, and encouragement, drawing on guidance and best practice from the Local Government Association, the Alzheimer's Society, and existing local groups.
- A report was requested to set out realistic next steps for supporting towns and parishes within existing or minimal additional resources.
- The approach aligned with the Council's corporate plan priorities on health and wellbeing, inclusion, reducing isolation, and enabling residents to live independently for longer.

Councillor Harris commended the motion as compassionate, practical, and forward-looking.

Members spoke in support of the motion and made the following points:

- It was noted that support from officers would be sought to produce a report on the Cotswolds becoming a dementia-friendly district.
- The value of existing local resources, including Gloucestershire's memory centre, was recognised.
- Challenges faced by carers, particularly those not formally recognised, were highlighted, including long delays in accessing support services.
- The significant social, emotional, and practical impacts of dementia on individuals and their families were noted, alongside the importance of effective signposting to local organisations and community groups.
- Dementia-friendly communities were highlighted as helping to remove barriers, promote inclusion, and deliver wider benefits for other residents, including neuro-divergent individuals.
- The need to review dementia care in acute hospital settings was raised, along with the importance of arranging powers of attorney at an early stage.
- The role of businesses, retail, hospitality, and town-centre organisations in providing practical support was emphasised, including the need for education and training.
- Community-based dementia-friendly initiatives were highlighted, such as cafés, local projects, and training programmes already operating across the district.
- County-wide initiatives and future developments, including virtual training opportunities, were noted.
- The importance of embedding dementia- and age-friendly principles in planning to reduce isolation and improve accessibility was emphasised.

Officers confirmed that proposed extra wording at points 3 and 4 were agreed with the consent of the meeting, specifically to reference the NHS in Resolution 3 and to amend the final bullet of Resolution 4 to read "people with dementia, carers, and communities across the district."

Councillor Paul Hodgkinson seconded the motion proposed by Councillor Mark Harris, expressing strong support. It was noted that the motion was thoughtful, practical, and proportionate, building on existing work across the county without committing to costly new services. It was observed that dementia affects not only those living with the condition but also carers, families, volunteers, and the wider community, and that creating dementia-friendly communities would make everyday life easier and more dignified. Positive local examples, including dementia-friendly cafes and initiatives supported by Gloucestershire County Council in partnership with the NHS, voluntary sector, and Alzheimer's Society were highlighted. The motion was commended as humane, sensible, forward-looking, and supportive of partnership working.

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The Chair moved to the vote on the motion proposed by Councillor Harris and seconded by Councillor Hodgkinson

Voting record:

31 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstention

Resolved that Full Council AGREED to pass the following motion:

That Cotswold District Council commits to championing the development of Dementia Friendly towns and communities across the Cotswold District, working in partnership with town and parish councils, community organisations, businesses, and relevant public sector partners.

This commitment aligns with the Council's Corporate Plan objectives relating to supporting healthy, inclusive communities, reducing inequality, and enabling residents to live well and independently for longer.

That Cotswold District Council commits to championing the development of Dementia Friendly towns and communities across the Cotswold District, working in partnership with town and parish councils, community organisations, businesses, and relevant public sector partners.

This commitment aligns with the Council's Corporate Plan objectives relating to supporting healthy, inclusive communities, reducing inequality, and enabling residents to live well and independently for longer.

Councillor Mark Harris resumed chairing the meeting following the conclusion of the motion.

Motion to make the Cotswolds a dementia-friendly district (Motion)

Full Council resolved to:

1. Endorse the principle of promoting Dementia Friendly Communities across the District, consistent with nationally recognised good practice.
2. Request that Cabinet refer this initiative to the appropriate Committee or service area to identify how the Council can:
 - provide leadership,
 - coordinate partners, and
 - support town and parish councils wishing to pursue Dementia Friendly status.
3. Ask officers to explore the relevant guidance and support available through the Local Government Association, the NHS, Alzheimer's Society, including any existing frameworks, toolkits, or case studies.
4. Request a short report to Council within six months outlining:
 - potential actions the District Council could take within existing resources,

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ opportunities for partnership working, and ○ suggested next steps for supporting people with dementia, carers and communities across the District. 		
For	Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Ray Brassington, Nick Bridges, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, Tony Dale, Mike Evemy, David Fowles, Laura Hall-Wilson, Mark Harris, Joe Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Andrea Pellegram, Nigel Robbins, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins	31
Against	None	0
Conflict Of Interests	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Carried		

70 Next meeting

The next meeting of Full Council was confirmed as being on Monday 23 February at 6:00 pm. It was noted that this would be Budget Council.

The Meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and closed at 4.05 pm.

(END)

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Annex A: Public Questions - Question 2.

Data regarding persons in receipt of benefits:

Benefit/ Support	No. of people in receipt
Housing Benefit and Guaranteed Pension Credit	24
Council Tax Support Scheme and Guaranteed Pension Credit	249
Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support and Guaranteed Pension Credit	744
Housing Benefit and Savings Pension Credit	1
Council Tax Support Scheme and Savings Pension Credit	47
Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support and Savings Pension Credit	88

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Member Questions for Council – 21 January 2026

#	Questioner	Question	Response
1	Cllr Julia Judd to Cllr Andrea Pellegram, Cabinet Member for Environment and Regulatory Services	<p>I regularly receive emails from residents complaining that their food, general waste and/or recycling bins have not been collected.</p> <p>Residents are often unable to report missed bins on the Council web page, and the information about missed collections invariably does not apply to those whose bins have been missed.</p> <p>In their recent annual report, Ubico published that they make 99.92% 'collection accuracy' in their Operational Performance section. This dazzling statistic is hard to believe as it does not represent the reality of resident's day to day experiences across the district.</p> <p>Could you please explain how "collection accuracy" is calculated including how a missed collection is defined?</p> <p>Are missed collections attributed to operational failures (such as vehicle</p>	<p>Collection services are provided to all residents at a fixed frequency, but each resident will likely not present containers on every scheduled collection day throughout the year. A resident may be on holiday for example.</p> <p>It is for these reasons that industry guidance has been produced on how to understand participation in a service. A resident is deemed to participate in a service if they present their containers a minimum of once in three opportunities (e.g. if the collection service is fortnightly, a container would have to be presented once in a six-week period).</p> <p>As not all containers are presented each collection day, we can't judge collection accuracy by counting the number of containers collected. Missed collections are therefore judged according to the number</p>



		<p>breakdowns or staff shortages) included in this calculation? If so, please can you provide the number of missed collections for green waste, general waste and recycling, broken down by reason (including operational issues)?</p>	<p>that have been reported by residents. This is the number that is currently reported.</p> <p>A further measure relates to the number of collections that are attempted by the crews on the scheduled day of collection but not completed. Reasons for non-completion include blocked access or contaminated recycling.</p> <p>A further issue relates to service failures, where collections are not made on the scheduled day of collection due to wider issues e.g. vehicle breakdown.</p> <p>Following comments made at January Overview and Scrutiny, officers have been asked to report on service disruptions differently, so that in future we will be able to see (1) service failures; (2) missed bins.</p> <p>The intention is that this information will better reflect the experience of residents.</p>
1b	Cllr Julia Judd to Cllr Andrea Pellegram, Cabinet Member for Environment and Regulatory Services	Supplementary question: How can the council and UBICO make sound, future-proof business decisions	Response to supplementary question: We take this issue very seriously, and



		<p>about the waste service if missed collections cannot be reported on the portal and therefore are not captured in the data, despite clear evidence of these issues through direct resident correspondence?</p>	<p>residents remain at the forefront of our thinking.</p> <p>Service disruption has been caused by factors such as severe weather, an ageing vehicle fleet and staff illness, but we work hard to manage these challenges. All reported cases are scrutinised, and we learn from service failures, maintaining regular engagement with UBICO to drive improvement. A £6 million investment in a new vehicle fleet has just been approved, which should significantly improve service delivery.</p> <p>Improving two-way communication with residents is a corporate priority, including website improvements and longer-term plans for proactive notifications when issues occur.</p> <p>This work is complex but well advanced and remains firmly on my radar.</p>
2	<p>Cllr Len Wilkins to Cllr Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning</p>	<p>The recently published "Service Performance Report 2025-26 Quarter 2 2025" includes a snapshot of Planning Enforcement cases and shows that 648</p>	<p>The Enforcement Team recently completed a review of its structure and capacity, which resulted in a small restructure introducing a new administrative role and an additional Enforcement Officer post. Two recruitment</p>



		<p>cases were active at that time, with a clear upward trend in new cases.</p> <p>CDC's organisation chart shows that two out of the four of the staff positions in this department are vacant and are interim appointments.</p> <p>It's clear that this department is under-resourced and struggling to keep on top of its workload, what plans does CDC have to improve this unfortunate position?</p>	<p>campaigns have since concluded, and we have successfully appointed to the administrative position, with the new starter joining week commencing 12 January 2026, and to the Enforcement Officer role, who is expected to start in late February or early March. A further recruitment exercise is underway for the Senior and Principal Enforcement Officer roles, with adverts closing on 20 January. These posts are historically challenging to fill, so in the interim, two contractors are covering these positions until the end of February.</p> <p>Alongside completing permanent recruitment and maintaining interim cover where necessary, the team are reviewing internal systems and processes to improve efficiency and streamline case handling. We are also updating the Enforcement Plan to ensure it provides clear service standards, and we are reviewing the website with the aim to improve access to information. These measures, combined with the additional posts already secured, will help</p>
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			the team manage its growing workload more effectively.
2b	Cllr Len Wilkins to Cllr Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning	Supplementary question: Has the Council followed up the suggestion on resourcing Planning Enforcement through the veterans organisations, whose skills and organisational capabilities would be well suited to the role.	Response to supplementary question: As part of its recruitment processes, the Council advertises vacancies across a wide range of recruitment platforms, including the Career Transition Partnership, which is the official resettlement service for the Armed Forces. This ensures that opportunities are visible to veterans and those leaving military service whose skills and organisational experience may be well-suited to Planning Enforcement roles. All posts are widely advertised and are open to all applicants. Appointments are made on the basis of suitability and merit through the Council's standard recruitment and interview processes. The Council is therefore open to recruiting from any background, including veterans, provided candidates meet the requirements of the role.



<p>3</p>	<p>Cllr Laura Hall-Wilson to Cllr Andrea Pellegram, Cabinet Member for Environment and Regulatory Services</p>	<p>Earlier this month, we saw bin collections cancelled in Tetbury on Monday 5th January due to weather conditions, the weather continued to be very cold on Monday night and into Tuesday morning and the CDC website let residents know collections would be cancelled across the district. Yet to resident's delight, the Lorries did in fact collect the bins in Tetbury on Tuesday 6th January.</p> <p>Can you let me know why you don't contact members of this council to update them and allow them to communicate with residents about bin collections and why the website gives seemingly contradictory information?</p>	<p>I believe that the information added to the website, in relation to the service suspension, was as follows:</p> <p><i>Any scheduled collections (including outstanding service delays) that were due today have been suspended due to the adverse weather conditions, please leave your containers kerbside and crews will return as soon as possible.</i></p> <p>This information was removed the next morning following an improvement in weather conditions that allowed Ubico to recommence service delivery.</p> <p>I am currently working with officers to see how we can improve communications with residents and local councillors about service disruptions and to improve our online reporting systems.</p>
<p>3b</p>	<p>Cllr Laura Hall-Wilson to Cllr Andrea Pellegram, Cabinet Member for Environment and Regulatory Services</p>	<p>Supplementary question: Going forwards can members receive an email if there's due to be a break in service provision for waste collections, so that we (councillors) can fulfil our roles of</p>	<p>Response to supplementary question: The matter will be referred back to officers to explore improved solutions for missed collections and notifications.</p>



		being a conduit between the Council and our residents?	We acknowledge the challenges of relying on councillors to relay information for every missed street, but commit to reviewing options which will directly assist residents. A fuller, written response will be provided after consultation with the relevant officers.
4	Cllr David Fowles to Cllr Mike Evemy, Leader of the Council	<p>Cotswold District Council recently published and distributed the taxpayer funded "Cotswold Together" magazine. A key focus of the publication were the Local Plan update and Local Government Reorganisation.</p> <p>These are important issues which affect the whole District on which all members and parties have cooperated in attempting to deliver the best outcome for the citizens of the Cotswolds.</p> <p>Despite this, the publication focusses entirely on the Liberal Democrats, why was there no engagement with the Conservatives concerning stories, overall content and format?</p>	<p><i>Cotswolds Together</i> is one tool in a comprehensive communications strategy which engages hundreds of people every day, via multiple channels and content types. This strategy seeks to ensure residents across the district are informed and aware of the services the Council is delivering, the support it provides, and the work it is undertaking on behalf of communities – while also facilitating two-way interaction and engagement.</p> <p>Developed in full accordance with the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority, <i>Cotswolds Together</i> was distributed to maximise awareness and engagement around two key, live issues: the Local Plan consultation, and the latest on local government reorganisation. Local</p>



			<p>Plan content (and the Council's wider suite of messaging on that issue) was informed by comments made by members from across the Council Chamber at Full Council, Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings between July and October. It also included updates on the Council's updated corporate plan, the roll out of EV chargers and other climate issues, and a feature on how funding is being invested into the Cotswold community.</p> <p>Content was planned and developed by the Council's communications team, overseen and approved by the Council's corporate leadership team, and signed off by me as Leader of the Council and portfolio holder for communications. This is in line with normal practice and process for communications distributed via any channel, at councils up and down the country.</p> <p>Where Cabinet members are featured in the Council's communications they appear by virtue of their role and their group</p>
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			<p>membership is not mentioned. This would be the same should there be a different group leading the administration.</p> <p>Several members from across the Council have shared feedback on the newsletter, which the communications team will consider as it creates the next edition of Cotswold Together. More and all feedback is welcome!</p>
4b	Cllr David Fowles to Cllr Mike Evey, Leader of the Council	Supplementary question: Given the title of <i>Cotswolds Together</i> , can the administration commit to engaging the opposition on content and stories, including considering featuring members and providing a courtesy sign-off with the opposition leader, to ensure all parties are appropriately included?	Response to supplementary question: The Council's communications follow standard local authority practice. The Leader of the Council is consulted on corporate communications, and Cabinet Members are featured where relevant to their roles. Other members are not routinely consulted for corporate priorities, although backbench members from all parties are occasionally included in published articles. Officers prepare content based on council discussions, including matters such as the Local Plan, for which Councillor Juliet Layton is the lead member, and Local Government Reorganisation, for



			<p>which Councillor Mike Evemy is the lead member, and the communications team ensures professional delivery. The recent <i>Cotswolds Together</i> publication was well received, and we will continue to produce such communications at appropriate times.</p>
5	<p>Cllr Ray Brassington to Cllr Mike Evemy, Leader of the Council</p>	<p>The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 24th February 2025 record that a member of the public (Mr Peter Hooper) asked "<i>what action the Council would take to provide more grave plots for the ever-growing number of residents of Stratton</i>". In response, Councillor Joe Harris "<i>acknowledged the frustration and suggested meeting up with Mr Hooper to explore the situation further</i>", and "<i>proposed that his Executive Assistant would arrange a meeting with Mr Hooper and relevant officers to find a resolution and provide clarity for people in Cirencester</i>".</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member currently responsible for Cemeteries please provide an update on the current situation with regard to the</p>	<p>Together with Claire Locke, I met with Mr Hooper in my previous role as Cabinet Member for Finance. Cllr Patrick Coleman now holds that role which includes responsibility for our cemeteries.</p> <p>Following exploratory work, I'm please to advise that there are 106 available full grave spaces at Stratton Cemetery following the expansion into Plot 12 in Q4 2025.</p> <p>There are also 350 available full grave spaces at Chesterton Cemetery.</p> <p>The cremated remains areas at both Chesterton and Stratton both have ample available space.</p>



		availability of grave plots in Stratton and Cirencester?	
5b		No supplementary question was asked.	
6	<p>Urgent Question asked at Full Council:</p> <p>Cllr Laura Hall-Wilson to Cllr Andrea Pellegram, Cabinet Member for Environment and Regulatory Services</p>	<p>For over a week, the people of Tetbury have been blighted by the most appalling smoke pollution from continuous burning of waste on Tetbury Industrial Estate. I have received too many emails, messages and calls to count from distressed residents. The thick black smoke has filled homes, prevented children from playing outside at nursery and poured over the roads blocking visibility. Residents have moved out to nearby relatives or air b and b accommodation.</p> <p>The team at environmental health have been very responsive to me and visited on several occasions, keeping me updated and receiving evidence in the form of photos and videos. The fire brigade have attended and the police have attended. None are in any doubt that a serious offence has occurred and a fixed penalty notice has been issued, yet still the fires rage on.</p>	<p>Officers from Cotswold District Council attended Tetbury Industrial Estate on multiple occasions last week in response to reports of fires and nuisance affecting nearby residents.</p> <p>As part of our enforcement powers, the owner of the site has been issued with a fixed penalty notice and a nuisance abatement notice, which is the action available to the council at this stage.</p> <p>Should the fine not be paid, or the smoke nuisance recur, the council will be able to commence legal proceedings. We will continue to monitor the situation and take further action where appropriate to protect local residents.</p> <p>The fire is now completely out, which was established from officer visits this morning, Tuesday 20 January 2026..</p>



		<p>What more can this council do to enforce the law and protect our residents from this dreadful intrusion and prevent a very serious fire spreading on the site?"</p>	<p>In future, as on this occasion, it is important to establish early contact with the Fire Service, and to liaise with the Police and the Environment Agency, especially if there's an escalation. The Council used the legal powers available to it, and if the fire had spread, putting public safety at risk, the emergency services would be the 1st responders responsible for dealing with the incident.</p>
6B		<p>Supplementary Question: Can you please give an indication of the likely timescale for further legal action, and what advice the Council would give to residents should the burn start again in the future?</p>	<p>Response to supplementary question: Actions open to the Council: A case file is being prepared concerning the offence of an unauthorised or harmful deposit, treatment or disposal of waste. The file will be submitted to legal services who will make an assessment of the evidence and the seriousness of the offence. They will come to a decision on the disposal of the case, for example, whether to prosecute and which offences to pursue, based on the evidential and public interest tests.</p> <p>If the FPN already served, is not paid within the prescribed period of 28 days, then a</p>



			<p>case file on this offence will also be submitted to legal services.</p> <p>If fires recur on site, further investigations will take place, but in addition, a potential breach of the abatement notice will be investigated, and if there is evidence of breach, then a case for prosecution will be prepared. Depending on the nature of the material being burnt, action can be taken under the Clean Air Act 1993, if the emissions are assessed as dark smoke (there is a legal assessment for this) . If the abatement notice is ignored, and site burning of waste continues, consideration can be given for an application to High Court for an injunction.</p> <p>What advice the Council would give to residents should the burn start again in the future?</p> <p>We would ask residents to report any future incidents to the Council, and we will advise and investigate. Residents are asked to keep a log of events, to provide supporting evidence of the incidents and the impact on them. As with any fire, if it</p>
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			appears out of control, putting people or property at risk, the Fire Service must be contacted by calling 999.
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