



## Cabinet

**Meeting: Wednesday, 12th October 2022 at 6.00 pm in Civic Suite, North Warehouse, The Docks, Gloucester, GL1 2EP**

<b>Membership:</b>	Cllrs. Cook (Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment) (Chair), H. Norman (Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources), S. Chambers (Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy), Lewis (Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure) and Padilla (Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods)
<b>Contact:</b>	Democratic and Electoral Services 01452 396126 <a href="mailto:democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk">democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk</a>

## AGENDA

<b>1.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b>  To receive any apologies for absence.
<b>2.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>  To receive from Members, declarations of the existence of any disclosable pecuniary, or non-pecuniary, interests and the nature of those interests in relation to any agenda item. Please see Agenda Notes.
<b>3.</b>	<b>MINUTES</b> (Pages 5 - 8)  To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2022.
<b>4.</b>	<b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)</b>  The opportunity is given to members of the public to put questions to Cabinet Members. A question may be rejected if it:  (i) Is not about a matter for which the local authority has responsibility or influence; or (ii) Is illegal, improper, defamatory, frivolous or offensive; or (iii) Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the

- Council, Cabinet or Committee in the past 6 months; or
- (iv) Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information; or
  - (v) Is related to confidential staffing matters; or
  - (vi) Is relating to the personal affairs or conduct of individual Members or Officers.

To ask a question at this meeting, please submit it to [democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk) by 12 noon on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022 or telephone 01452 396203 for support.

**5. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)**

To receive any petitions or deputations provided that no such petition or deputation is in relation to:

- Matters relating to individual Council Officers, or
- Matters relating to current or pending legal proceedings

**6. LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)**

Any Member of the Council may ask the Leader of the Council or any Cabinet Member any question upon:

- Any matter relating to the Council's administration
- Any matter relating to any report of the Cabinet appearing on the summons
- A matter coming within their portfolio of responsibilities

Only one supplementary question is allowed per question.

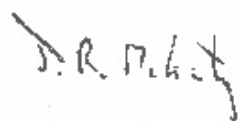
Questions must be submitted to [democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk) by 12 noon on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022. Responses to questions will be published in an addendum to the agenda by 12 noon on the day of the Cabinet Meeting.

**7. ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME ENFORCEMENT UPDATE REPORT (Pages 9 - 14)**

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member for Environment updating Members on the Council's approach to the enforcement of environmental crime within Gloucester.

**8. ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT UPDATE (Pages 15 - 24)**

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods seeking to provide an update on the support offered to current and former members of the armed forces, reservists and their families as part of our commitment to the Gloucestershire Armed Forces Community Covenant.



**Jon McGinty**  
**Managing Director**

**Date of Publication: Tuesday, 4 October 2022**

## NOTES

### **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

The duties to register, disclose and not to participate in respect of any matter in which a member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest are set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.

Disclosable pecuniary interests are defined in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 as follows –

<u>Interest</u>	<u>Prescribed description</u>
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the Council) made or provided within the previous 12 months (up to and including the date of notification of the interest) in respect of any expenses incurred by you carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract which is made between you, your spouse or civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner (or a body in which you or they have a beneficial interest) and the Council (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the Council's area.  For this purpose "land" includes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not carry with it a right for you, your spouse, civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner (alone or jointly with another) to occupy the land or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the Council's area for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) – (a) the landlord is the Council; and (b) the tenant is a body in which you, your spouse or civil partner or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner has a beneficial interest
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where – (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the Council's area and (b) either – i. The total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or ii. If the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in

which you, your spouse or civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

For this purpose, "securities" means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

NOTE: the requirements in respect of the registration and disclosure of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and withdrawing from participating in respect of any matter where you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest apply to your interests and those of your spouse or civil partner or person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner where you are aware of their interest.

### **Access to Information**

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For enquiries about Gloucester City Council's meetings please contact Democratic Services, 01452 396126, [democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk).

If you, or someone you know cannot understand English and need help with this information, or if you would like a large print, Braille, or audio version of this information please call 01452 396396.

### **Recording of meetings**

Please be aware that meetings may be recorded. There is no requirement for those wishing to record proceedings to notify the Council in advance; however, as a courtesy, anyone wishing to do so is advised to make the Chair aware before the meeting starts.

Any recording must take place in such a way as to ensure that the view of Councillors, Officers, the Public and Press is not obstructed. The use of flash photography and/or additional lighting will not be allowed unless this has been discussed and agreed in advance of the meeting.

### **FIRE / EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

If the fire alarm sounds continuously, or if you are instructed to do so, you must leave the building by the nearest available exit. You will be directed to the nearest exit by council staff. It is vital that you follow their instructions:

- You should proceed calmly; do not run and do not use the lifts;
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings;
- Once you are outside, please do not wait immediately next to the building; gather at the assembly point in the car park and await further instructions;
- Do not re-enter the building until told by a member of staff or the fire brigade that it is safe to do so.



## CABINET

**MEETING** : Wednesday, 14th September 2022

**PRESENT** : Cllrs. Cook (Chair), H. Norman, S. Chambers, Lewis and Padilla

**Others in Attendance**

Managing Director

Head of Place

Director of Communities

Director of Policy and Resources

Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

**APOLOGIES** : None

**18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**19. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022 are confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**20. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)**

There were no public questions.

**21. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)**

There were no petitions or deputations.

**22. LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)**

There were no questions to the Leader or Cabinet Members.

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**23. REPORT OF THE HISTORIC PLACES PANEL FOLLOWING ITS VISIT TO GLOUCESTER IN OCTOBER 2021**

Cabinet considered the report of the Leader of the Council that sought to apprise Members of the conclusions and recommendations of the Historic Places Panel (HPP) in the report received from Historic England presenting the conclusions and to advise them of the proposed action plan.

The Leader of the Council summarised the report. He noted that the findings of the Panel were broadly positive and drew Members' attention to the response to each of their recommendations in appendix one. The Leader of the Council referred to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (5<sup>th</sup> September 2022 minute 33) and asked that officers give consideration to their proposals.

**RESOLVED** that the summary of the report received from the Historic Places Panel and the action plan that is proposed to address the recommendations made by the Panel is noted.

**24. HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY UPDATE**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy that presented an update on progress delivering the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy in year two (2021/22).

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy advised Members that progress in key areas had been made despite unexpected challenges over the preceding year including the Ukrainian and Afghan refugee response and the council's cyber incident. Among the achievements she particularly highlighted the affordable warmth initiative (3.5.4) and placed it in the context of the current energy crisis. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy further referred to the provision of new accessible homes (3.5.7) and the importance of the outreach program in tackling rough sleeping. She commented that a real difference continued to be made to people's lives.

The Cabinet Member for Environment noted the significant achievements recorded in the report (3.5) and stated that officers should be praised for their work.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report and the progress made towards delivering the strategy is noted.

**25. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP AND ACTIVITY UPDATE**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods that updated Members on the work that Council officers have undertaken regarding community safety and that of the Stronger Safer Gloucester Partnership.

The Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods outlined the background to the report and the partners involved as well as some of the

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achievements made so far and intended to be made in future. He reminded Members of the emphasis on safeguarding throughout.

The Cabinet Member for Environment commented on the difficult and never-ending nature of dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour. He stressed the importance of praising the work done by both officers and partners. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy paid tribute to Solace's work alongside the council housing teams and the good progress they have made together.

**RESOLVED** that the work undertaken by council officers, the Stronger Safer Gloucester Partnership, elected members and council partners regarding community safety is welcomed.

**26. SOCIAL VALUE POLICY PROGRESS UPDATE**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that provided an update on the Social Value Policy which was adopted in October 2020.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources summarised the report and noted that social value had been integral to the Forum development. She emphasised the weighting that the Policy gives it in procurement and some of the benefits which have been delivered (3.6). The Cabinet Member for Environment informed Members that he believed that the Social Value Policy will generate even greater benefits in the future.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the progress made against the aims of the Social Value Policy is noted
- (2) the Social Value Policy is extended to 2023 to allow for the changes to the National Themes Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) to be reviewed and implemented to complement local opportunities.

**27. PERFORMANCE MONITORING QUARTER 1 - 2022/23**

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources that sought to inform Members of the Council's performance against key measures in Quarter 1 of 2022/23.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources highlighted the key features of the report. She noted that no questions had been asked concerning her own portfolio at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting (5<sup>th</sup> September 2022) and advised them to invite other Cabinet Members so that they may be scrutinised on the reported performance of their portfolios.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure informed Members of his concern over past footfall in the Museum of Gloucester/Tourist Information Centre (CD & VE

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1). He however advised them that he had observed attendance improving after recent difficulties.

**RESOLVED** that the Quarter 1 Performance Report 2022/23 at Appendix 1 to the report is noted.

**28. RISK MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22**

Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Audit Risk Assurance (Chief Internal Auditor) presenting the Strategic Risk Register (SRR) and updating Members on the Council's risk management activities from 2022/23 for their awareness.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources reminded Members that the Risk Management Annual Report and Action Plan 2022/23 (Appendix 1) incorporated outcomes from the 2021/22 independent review.

**RESOLVED** that the Strategic Risk Register and the planned risk management arrangements for 2022/23 are noted and endorsed.

**Time of commencement: 6.00 pm**

**Time of conclusion: 6.11 pm**

**Chair**





<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>12 October 2022</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Environmental Crime Enforcement Update Report</b>		
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Environment</b>		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Budget/Policy Framework:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Ismael Rhyman, City Centre Manager</b>		
	<b>Email: Ismael.rhyman@gloucester.gov.uk</b>	<b>Tel: 396784</b>	
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>None</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE**

**1.0 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To update Cabinet on the Council’s approach to the enforcement of environmental crime within Gloucester.

**2.0 Recommendation**

2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that the actions being taken to prevent or reduce the environmental crime within the City of Gloucester be noted.

**3.0 Background and Key Issues**

3.1 All environmental crimes reported to the City Council and within the public realms of the City boundary are investigated in one of two ways:

- The City Council dedicated in-house Enviro-Crime Team- consisting of 2 permanent senior Environmental Crime Officers and one temporary Officer
- Through a contract with 3GS, which, can act as the agent to investigate and prosecute on behalf of the City Council.

**3.2 3GS Contract**

3.2.1 In July 2019, the City Council entered into a contract on a trial basis with 3GS to provide a service to tackle environmental crime, including littering and fly-tipping. This agreement was cost neutral in that the operational costs were met through the payment of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) in accordance with Environment Protection Act 1990. As part of the arrangement, 3GS also undertook to both inform and educate residents about the importance of maintaining a clean, green local environment. Following a competitive tender

process, 3GS have been awarded a further contract to provide environmental crime services to the City Council from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 for three years with an option to extend for a further two periods of 12 months.

- 3.2.2 Whilst 3GS Enforcement Officers have a city-wide remit, they operate primarily within the inner-City Centre zone, targeting those committing ‘Littering’ offences. As and when needed and when directed to do so, 3GS Enforcement Officers do take on and carry out complex fly-tipping investigations on behalf of the City Council.
- 3.2.3 3GS Enforcement Officers have also been granted delegated powers to investigate and take enforcement actions against those in breach of ‘trade waste related offences’ and do carry out periodic campaigns, where all businesses within a selected area are visited and where breaches are identified, the necessary enforcement actions are taken.
- 3.2.4 The City Council is in the process of establishing a system whereby 3GS Officers would deal with ‘offending peddlers’ (individual who are granted licenses by the Police under the Pedlars Act 1871 to sell goods on the streets, but who are not allowed to stay static) in the City Centre and carry out enforcement actions against motorists who drop litter from moving vehicles, using new legislation.
- 3.2.5 The following table identifies the number of FPNs issued (by 3GS Officers) and paid since July 2021 by 3GS.

Year	No of FPN Issued	Amount paid
2021	966	£51,985
2022	740	£31,275

- 3.2.6 Where correctly issued FPNs are not paid, evidence is forwarded to our legal advisors, One Legal, to issue court proceedings. In the past 12 months, One Legal brought 224 prosecutions on behalf of Gloucester City Council for various environmental crime offences, including littering, fly-tipping and other waste-related offences.
- 3.2.7 Whilst the success rate at court for prosecution cases is around 90%, the fines and witness surcharges awarded (approximately £50,000.00 in the last 12 months) against convicted offenders at court are kept by the HMCS, with the City Council only receiving the legal costs for bringing those cases to court.
- 3.2.8 The presence 3GS Enforcement Officers in the City Centre is a major contributing factor in assisting us to constantly achieve an ‘A’ grade for cleanliness in the City Centre (for the littering and detritus element).

### 3.3 **In-house Enviro-crime Team**

- 3.3.1 Prior to 2021, enforcement of enviro-crimes (within the public realm) at the City Council was only conducted on an ad-hoc basis and different aspects of it

were handled by various teams/services. In June of 2021, an in-house team within the City Centre Management service, was formed, dedicated solely to tackle and address waste related offences across the City. This team consists of two permanent Senior Officers supported by temporary officers working on specific work with external funding.

3.3.2 The team have been collectively working on a number of projects since they started, including the Barton and Tredworth Project and dealing with an illegal waste site, as well as dealing with 'day to day' waste related issues reported to the Council

3.3.3 The Barton and Tredworth Project includes collaborative working between the Waste and Recycling Team, Private Sector Housing, Community Wellbeing and the Environmental Crime Team. In November 2021, the enviro crime team conducted a large scale survey, door knocking on over 100 properties to gather information on how people manage their waste. This enabled the team to target education and enforcement going forward."

3.3.4 In July 2022, as part of the Barton and Tredworth project, the Enviro-crime team, alongside the waste and recycling team, conducted a waste receptacle project initially focusing on this ward. The teams have collectively engaged with over 2000 households, focusing on educating residents on the council's waste policy and using enforcement notices for the few who have not complied.

3.3.5 The two senior Enviro-crime Officers has also been tackling the ongoing problems at an illegal waste site. This included monthly taskforce meetings with various departments such as planning, neighbouring authorities and the Environment Agency. One senior Officer has been working closely with One Legal on this project and has subsequently issued, 2 waste carriers documentation requests and 2 waste clearance notices to offenders. A court process is currently ongoing.

3.3.6 Following strengthening relationships with the police to enhance this work, the team was able to secure 6 extra CCTV cameras which were decommissioned from another district and donated for use in the City. These cameras will act as a deterrent in hotspot areas as well as allowing the team to serve penalty notices on offenders who commit offences in vehicles, where the vehicle registration is visible, quickly and efficiently.

3.3.7 The following table identifies the number of FPNs issued by the in-house team and the amount received in fines between April 2021- July 2022.

<b>Year</b>	<b>No of FPN Issued</b>
2021	61
2022	97
Payment plans	7

3.3.8 On average, for every 4 investigations carried out, 1 FPN is issued

3.3.9 For those FPNs that go unpaid, a final warning letter is sent by the team which has proven to be effective in receiving additional payments. For repeat

offenders or aggravated matters such as fly tipping in the course of making money, the team are aiming to take these to court.

### **3.4 Next Steps**

3.4.1 In addition, the Council is in the process of recruiting a new Coordinator to oversee the combined work of Enviro Crime team and the Waste and Recycling team further. The enviro crime team will continue to work closely with Private Sector Housing and the Community Wellbeing team to continue to make the tackling of environmental crime and waste related offences a priority as well as look at addressing underlying causes with the help of colleagues.

3.4.2 Given the number of fixed penalty notices issued coupled with a commitment to long term projects and collaborative working with both internal and external partners, it shows a sustained and successful approach to tackle environmental crime which will be continued.

### **4.0 Social Value Considerations**

4.1 Although there are no social value considerations as a direct result of this Report, engagement with communities has been beneficial not only through the raising of awareness of environmental crimes but also in the support provided by communities in the identification of potential environmental crimes.

### **5.0 Environmental Implications**

5.1 Fewer incidents of environmental crime will have a significant impact through, for example, reduced fly tipping and the resultant possible hazardous waste across the City. The increase in education around the issue is a positive way to support communities to make considered choices about how they manage their waste, and hence, protect our environment.

### **6.0 Alternative Options Considered**

6.1 This report is a project update, so no alternative options are considered or proposed.

### **7.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

7.1 To update members on positive progress made in addressing incidents of environmental crime across the City.

### **8.0 Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising as a direct result of this Report.

### **9.0 Legal Implications**

9.1 There are no legal implications arising as a direct result of this Report.

### **10.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications**

10.1 There are no risks or opportunity management implications arising directly from this Report.

### **11.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:**

11.1 A PIA screening was completed and a full assessment was not required.

## **12.0 Community Safety Implications**

12.1 We know from experience that when neighbourhoods look cared for the behaviour of residents reflects this. Areas where there is poor waste management, fly tipping and other issues, often also attract anti-social behaviour. Addressing environmental crime will help to make our communities safer and encourage residents to care about the place where they live.

## **13.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications**

13.1 No issues arising as a result of this Report.

**Background Documents:** None

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<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>12 October 2022</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Armed Forces Community Covenant Update</b>		
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Communities &amp; Neighbourhoods</b>		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Budget/Policy Framework:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Isobel Johnson – Community Wellbeing Officer</b>		
	<b>Email: <a href="mailto:isobel.johnson@gloucester.gov.uk">isobel.johnson@gloucester.gov.uk</a> Tel: 39(6298)</b>		
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>1. Gloucester City Council – Specific Measures</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE**

**1.0 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To provide an update to Cabinet on the support offered to current and former members of the armed forces, reservists and their families as part of our commitment to the Gloucestershire Armed Forces Community Covenant (‘the Covenant’).

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that:

- (1) Work undertaken to support current and ex-service personnel as part of the Council’s ongoing commitment to the Covenant be endorsed.

**3.0 Background and Key Issues**

3.1 An Armed Forces Covenant exists between the people of the UK and the Armed Forces and their families. It lays out the principles that should exist in the relationship between the Armed Forces and the rest of the Nation, including respect, support and fair treatment. It makes clear that no-one who has served should face disadvantage from their service and that, in some cases, special consideration is appropriate.

3.2 A Gloucestershire Armed Forces Community Covenant (‘the Covenant’) stands alongside the Armed Forces Covenant and is a voluntary statement of mutual support between the people of Gloucestershire and the local Armed Forces community. In March 2022, Gloucestershire County Council hosted a re-signing of the Covenant following a motion from the County Armed Forces Champion, Councillor Andrew Gravells. The Covenant was re-signed by all of the original signatories as well as several Parish and Town Councils, 10 years to the day

of the first signing, to highlight the continued commitment to the armed forces community.

- 3.3 Through its membership of the Covenant, Gloucester City Council has made a commitment to the wider Armed Forces Covenant, to support the Armed Forces community within Gloucester and the wider County. Cllr Collette Finnegan represents the Council as its Armed Forces Champion, and this position is appointed to (or re-appointed to) annually by the Council. In addition, we now have an Armed Forces Officer Champion and an operational Lead Officer based in the Community Wellbeing Team. They will be working towards several outcomes this year and liaising regularly with partners.
- 3.4 In following these commitments, the Council is involved in a number of areas to support the Armed Forces, their families and those who have served to be a part of the wider community. The aims of the Covenant are as follows –
- Encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces community in their areas.
  - Encourage the Armed Forces community to help and support the wider community, whether through participation in events and joint projects or other forms of engagement such as volunteering.
  - Promote understanding and awareness among the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces community.
  - Recognise and remember the sacrifices made by the Armed Forces community at many annual events.
  - Encourage activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces community into local life.
- 3.5 The 2011 census results indicated that over 300 serving members of the military were living in Gloucester at the time of the survey, not including partners or children. The results of the 2021 census are being released in phases. Phase 1 of the topic summaries, that includes the number of armed forces veterans, will be available in October 2022 and will provide us with a more accurate picture.
- 3.6 In January 2019 the Ministry of Defence estimated that by 2028 there will be 1.6 million veterans living in the UK with over a half of all veterans being aged 65 or older and 87% of all veterans being male.
- 3.7 Gloucestershire is home to 18 Army Cadet detachments with 2 of these being located in Gloucester, namely - Malmesbury Road Platoon and the Gloucestershire ACF Band & Corps of Drum.
- 3.8 In the previous 12 months, 10 individuals who identified as service or ex service personnel have been re-housed in Gloucester through the Gloucestershire Homeseeker Choice Based Lettings Scheme. The reasons for re-housing were as follows; downsize to non-family home (1), homeless or



threatened as homelessness (4), low housing need (1) and significant or urgent medical warfare (4).

- 3.9 The armed forces bill of 2006 was renewed in 2021 and makes provision for a further period of five years, ending no later than 2026. Now known as the Armed Forces Bill 2021, it requires the council to pay due regard to the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant in terms of housing.
- 3.10 We are required to comply with the Code of Guidance on Homelessness 2018 and have regard to armed forces personnel in our housing allocation scheme. In addition, we are committed to improving housing outcomes for members and ex-members of the armed forces. The countywide Homeseeker plus allocations policy gives additional preference in terms of re-housing armed forces members. Members of the armed forces have a local connection to the district of their choice. This greater level of choice evidences the additional preference afforded to those who are serving or have recently served in the armed forces.
- 3.11 In addition to any duties owed under the homelessness legislation, on discharge, members of the armed forces with Homeless priority need (i.e. dependent children or vulnerable as a result of disability) will be awarded Gold band for 6 months from the discharge date. Those that are homeless with a non-priority need are given Silver band from their discharge date. Should they become homeless again within 5 years of the discharge priority need or unintentionally homeless applicants will be awarded Gold band again for 6 months from Notice being received.
- 3.11 The 'duty to refer' applies to the Ministry of Defence under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, therefore they are required to refer any service personnel facing homelessness within 56 days to the local housing authority. This enables access to housing services as early as possible in the process and increase access to social housing.
- 3.12 The charity Alabare run a 12-bed home for veterans based in Longlevens which is the second of their Gloucestershire properties.
- 3.13 A list of specific measures that the Council implements in support of the Covenant is included at Appendix 1 and covers areas such as housing advice & support, enabling and supporting events and charitable causes and access to Council services. It is these customer facing aspects of the Council which are likely to be more relevant to our Armed Forces.
- 3.14 The Council is also represented by Councillors and senior officers at several annual events to mark a range of important dates such as Remembrance Day but also events to celebrate our local armed forces community operating out of Imjin Barracks. In November 2021, the city council events team supported the Royal British Legion in delivering a successful Remembrance Day memorial service. In June 2022, the Gloucester Armed Forces Day made a welcome return to the Docks. It brought together multiple charities, organisations and services and was well attended by local people. In addition to providing support with the organising and delivery of key dates, the Council recognise both the

historical and ongoing sacrifices and efforts of our armed forces with the flying of flags outside North Warehouse and social media campaigns.

- 3.15 Our District Council partners in addition to Gloucestershire County Council are also signed up to the Covenant and continue to work together to improve how councils can collaborate as a network, with a particular focus on -
- 1) Identifying where contributions can be made to the South-West Regional Development Project.
  - 2) Obtaining a better understanding of the needs of children and young people in the armed forces community.
  - 3) Understanding our workforces better in terms of their connection to the armed forces.
  - 4) Aligning our services and sharing resources to increase the support available to veterans and their families
- 3.16 The Armed Forces Community Covenant Meeting, organised by Gloucestershire County Council, meets quarterly.
- 3.17 The Community Wellbeing Team are connected to relevant charities, organisations and other agencies to discover how the council can work in partnership to better support the armed forces community. Most notably, Walking With The Wounded, SSAFA (Soldiers, Seamen, Airmen and their Families Association), Gloucester Community Networking and the Occupational Therapy team at Gloucestershire NHS Trust. Through these connections, the Community Wellbeing Team are able to;
- Support the mental health of injured veteran's by matching them into meaningful volunteering opportunities
  - Help integrate veterans and their families into their local community through community building activities
  - Enhance the support of SSAFA and the Occupational Therapists by linking them to other resources and services such as the Community Wellbeing Agents who have access to schemes such as exercise on referral at Aspire Leisure Centre
- 3.18 There are several mental health organisations represented at the armed forces community covenant partnership meeting. This provides the council with close links to vital counselling and therapy services which officers can refer veterans and their family members to, if necessary. The council also works closely with the community wellbeing agents and social prescribers who can support with low level mental health conditions.
- 3.19 The Council's website which was updated this year, includes a page dedicated to information about the support we offer to Armed Forces Personnel and veterans and includes resources and links to other pages.
- 3.20 The council applied for the Bronze Defence Employer Recognition Award in Spring 2022. The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same. The scheme

encompasses bronze, silver and gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant. In order to achieve bronze, organisations must;

- pledge to support the armed forces, including existing or prospective employees who are members of the community
- must have signed the Armed Forces Covenant
- promote being armed forces-friendly and be open to employing reservists, armed forces veterans (including the wounded, injured and sick), cadet instructors and military spouses/partners.
- Hold policies which enable reservists, cadet instructors time off to train and volunteer

The council were awarded bronze in Spring 2022 and hope to achieve Silver in 2023.

- 3.21 As stated above, the Council holds a Military Reservist Policy as well as a Special Leave Policy which provides staff with time off in respect of periods of mobilisation. These policies are easily accessed on the staff intranet.
- 3.22 A staff survey was created to discover if the council need to better support veterans, reservists, or staff who have family members currently serving. Only 16 staff completed the survey and amongst the respondents, 2 officers have relatives currently serving, 8 are related to veterans and 6 have no connection at all. There were some useful suggestions around mental health and apprenticeship schemes which have been fed into the Armed Forces Partnership. The same survey will be open to staff in October 2022 along with key findings from the 2021 Census.
- 3.22 Gloucestershire County Council has access to a free online training program for front line services on armed forces awareness. This is so staff can effectively sign post and ensure the right support is being provided. This training is regularly promoted through the staff intranet and social platforms.

#### **4.0 Social Value Considerations**

- 4.1 For the Armed Forces Community, the Covenant encourages the integration of service life into civilian life and encourages members of the Armed Forces community to help their local community.

#### **5.0 Alternative Options Considered**

- 5.1 There are no alternative options for consideration

#### **6.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Council are committed through the Gloucestershire Armed Forces Community Covenant to work in partnership and act together to honour the covenant. The council encourage support for the Armed Forces Community working and residing in the City and work to recognise and remember the sacrifices that they have, and continue to make.

## **7.0 Future Work and Conclusions**

- 7.1 A recent action from the Armed Forces Partnership is the creation of an Armed Forces Hub. A place where the armed forces community can access specialist support and guidance. Gloucester Community Networking are the lead organisation for the project and the council will support as necessary.
- 7.2 Following the success of the Defence Employer Scheme Bronze Award, the Council plans to apply for the Silver Award which in addition to the requirements of the Bronze Award involve:
- the employer must proactively demonstrate that service personnel/armed forces community are not unfairly disadvantaged as part of their recruiting and selection processes
  - the employer must actively ensure that their workforce is aware of their positive policies towards defence people issues. For example, an employer nominated for support to the Reserves must have an internally publicised and positive HR policy on Reserves
  - within the context of Reserves the employer must have demonstrated support to mobilisations or have a framework in place. They must demonstrate support to training by providing at least 5 days' additional unpaid/paid leave (wherever possible not to Reservist employees' financial disadvantage)
  - the employer must not have been the subject of any negative PR or media activity
- 7.3 Supporting the VCS with events to mark key dates in the armed forces calendar.
- 7.4 Gloucester City Council remains committed to our Armed Forces community and an annual update report for Cabinet will continue to be provided each autumn.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 Financial implications are discussed within the report and appendix. associated with this report.

(Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report)

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

(One Legal have been consulted in the preparation of this report)

## **10.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications**

- 10.1 N/A

## **11.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):**

11.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

## **12.0 Other Corporate Implications**

### Community Safety

12.1 There are no community safety comments associated with this report.

### Sustainability

12.2 There are no sustainability comments associated with this report.

### Safeguarding

12.3 There are no safeguarding comments associated with this report.

### Staffing & Trade Union

12.4 There are no staffing or trade union comments associated with this report.

### Press Release drafted/approved

12.5 This report re-iterates the Council's support for the Armed Forces Covenant and although the content of the report may not naturally be considered news worthy there has been high level political pressure around supporting our Armed Forces Community from senior Government Ministers over the Summer months. The report may provide an opportunity however to formally acknowledge the interest shown by Government in this area of work, re-iterate our commitment to the Covenant and confirm our thanks and gratitude to both veterans and serving personnel within Gloucester.

## **Background Documents:**

Gloucestershire Armed Forces Community Covenant

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## Appendix 1 – Gloucester City Council Specific Measures

Theme	Measure(s)
Organisational Development	Staff who are members of the Territorial Army or other military support service are, supported through flexible working arrangements contained in HR policies
Building Control	For Armed Forces personnel returning from duty with a disability, the Council provides free Building Control advice and will not charge for any applications made for extensions or alterations to their home.
Remembrance Sunday Event	The Council continues to work with armed forces charities on events including the sale of poppies for Remembrance Sunday and the promotion of Armed Forces Day through internal & external communications and inclusion in the Council's events calendar. Plans for this year's event are in progress.
Armed Forces Day Committee	The council support the Armed Forces Day Committee by promoting the event on social media, helping with volunteer recruitment and attending the event to talk to residents about the armed forces covenant.
British Legion Poppy Day	The council are supporting the Royal British Legion with the planning and delivery of this year's event. It will take place on Sunday 13th November and will consist of a service at the Gloucester Park memorial, a military parade through the city gate streets and a Cathedral service in the afternoon.
War Memorial, Cenotaph & War Graves	The Council commits to maintaining the war memorial at the cenotaph in Gloucester Park and the war graves at Tredworth Cemetery, to a high standard.
Army Recruitment Events	The Council will continue to support recruitment events by enabling access to suitable sites
Housing Advice & Homelessness	In the previous 12 months, 10 individuals who identified as being armed forces or ex service personnel have been re-housed in Gloucester through the Gloucestershire Homeseeker Choice Based Lettings Scheme with our allocations policy enabling them to benefit from priority need.
Benefit Claimants	Where applicants are in receipt of housing benefit (HB) and/or council tax support (CTS), the City Council has adopted a policy to disregard as income some extra elements of war disablement pensions. The total expenditure for 2021/22 war disablement pension is £29,734. The Council received a subsidy of 75% of this value totalling £22,301. Therefore, the cost to the council is £7,433.
Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)	The Council provides further help with housing costs through the use of DHP, with a local procedure enabling us to disregard as income some extra elements of war disablement pensions (the same as in housing benefit) when awarding payment.
Under-occupation Reductions in Housing Benefit	Legislation continues to assist armed forces personnel in that a bedroom used by members of the armed or reserve forces will not be counted as a 'spare' room whilst they are away from their main place of residence, providing that they have an intention to return to the property and they were in fact treated as a non-dependant person prior to their absence.
Access to Council Venues	The Council offers a 10% discount to Defence Privilege card holders to use at the Guildhall and the Museum (for exhibitions or events where charges are applied) The Council will also promote cultural events through the AFCC Partnership and by working with Imjin Barracks to ensure that serving officers and their families are made aware of activities taking place and where discounts are applicable.

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