



Wednesday, 17 January 2024

TO EACH MEMBER OF GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL** of the **CITY OF GLOUCESTER** to be held at the Civic Suite, North Warehouse, The Docks, Gloucester, GL1 2EP on **Thursday, 25th January 2024** at **6.30 pm** for the purpose of transacting the following business:

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. **MINUTES (Pages 17 - 44)**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16 November 2023.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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.

4. **CALL OVER**

Item 9 will be debated and does not need to be reserved for discussion.

(a) Call over (items 10-17) will be read out at the meeting and Members invited to reserve the items for discussion.

(b) To approve the recommendations of those reports which have not been reserved for discussion.

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

The opportunity is given to members of the public to put questions to Cabinet Members or Committee Chairs. Questions may be provided that questions do not

contravene the provisions set out Council Procedure Rule 10(2).

To ask a question at this meeting, please submit it to democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk by 12 noon on Friday 19 January 2024 or telephone 01452 396203 for support.

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

A period not exceeding three minutes is allowed for the presentation of a petition or deputation 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

7. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive announcements from:

- a) The Mayor
- b) Leader of the Council
- c) Members of the Cabinet
- d) Chairs of Committees
- e) Head of Paid Service

8. **MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME**

- a) Leader and Cabinet Members' Question Time (45 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 Council's summons
- A matter coming within their portfolio of responsibilities

- b) Questions to Chairs of Meetings (15 Minutes)

Questions and responses will be published at least 24 hours before the meeting. Supplementary questions will be put and answered during the meeting, subject to the relevant time limit.

ISSUES FOR DECISION BY COUNCIL

9. **PETITION - SAINTBRIDGE POND AND NATURE RESERVE (Pages 45 - 50)**

To consider the report of the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment concerning the Council's proposed response to a petition regarding Saintbridge Pond and Nature Reserve that has obtained in excess of 1,000 signatures, thus triggering a Council debate in accordance with the Council's

Petitions Scheme.

10. **COUNCIL TAX - SECOND PROPERTY PREMIUM AND EMPTY HOMES PREMIUM AMENDMENT (Pages 51 - 56)**

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources recommending that from 1st April 2025 council tax be increased for properties occupied only periodically and for empty homes.

11. **LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME (Pages 57 - 62)**

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources seeking approval to retain the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25.

12. **CHELTENHAM, GLOUCESTER AND TEWKESBURY COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY JOINT COMMITTEE (Pages 63 - 76)**

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy seeking approval from Council for the establishment of a Joint Committee to facilitate governance of the allocation of infrastructure funding from Community Infrastructure Levy receipts received by Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury.

13. **REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2024 (Pages 77 - 98)**

To consider the report of the Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel concerning the review of Members' allowances and seeking a decision on an appropriate scheme for the payment of allowances in 2024-25.

14. **CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES (Pages 99 - 154)**

To consider the report of the Head of Paid Service regarding various changes to the Council's Constitution.

15. **REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACES (Pages 155 - 180)**

The consider the report of the Returning Officer concerning the recommendations from the compulsory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places.

16. **DESIGNATION OF MONITORING OFFICER (Pages 181 - 184)**

To consider the report of the Head of Paid Service regarding the designation of a Monitoring Officer for the Council.

17. **PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS, MAY 2024-APRIL 2026 (Pages 185 - 212)**

To consider the report of the Policy and Governance Manager seeking approval for the Programme of Meetings, May 2024-April 2026.

MOTIONS FROM MEMBERS

18. NOTICES OF MOTION

1. PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR CHAMBERS-DUBUS

“In 2021, across England and Wales the proportion of disabled people was 17.8% so in the drive for equality this council needs to make sure 17.8% of licenced taxis and private hire vehicles available during all operating hours are Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs).

Currently, whilst there are WAVs licensed by the council most only operate during daytime hours and many of those concentrate on providing specialist services to schools, colleges and other day time projects. This means that disabled people struggle and are often limited when needing a taxi to go shopping, get to work or go the railway station etc.

The situation in the evening and at weekends is worsened as there are very few taxis and operators prepared or available to take disabled people for a night out to the cinema, pub, restaurant, nightclub or simply to visit friends.

Whilst acknowledging the Councils licensing team are making changes to increase the number of WAVs, taxi and private hire operators need further encouragement to ensure that at least 17.8% are WAVs.

This council therefore resolves to:

- Provide business rate discounts to taxi operators who can ensure 17.8% of their vehicles are WAVs and operate them at all times of the day.
- Offer a registration rebate to operators who provide WAVs in the evenings and during weekends.
- Provide free, quality disability awareness training to operators and drivers to enable them to safely transport disabled people.
- Consider other incentives for operators.

Review and increase the percentage of WAVs available for public use, particularly during the evenings and at weekends.”

2. PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR HUDSON

“This Councils notes;

A motion to this council on spiking in 2021 has helped progress the work by the Council and offers thanks to Gloucestershire Constabulary, GCC Licensing team, Nightsafe partners, and the individual licensed premises in Gloucester who have put extra measures in place to prevent and detect incidents of spiking in Gloucester.

The measures include drink testing kits, educational campaigns, the introduction of quiet areas for potential victims, spiking training, urine testing kits, and the successful street medic scheme who are medically trained to help those who may have been spiked and feel unwell.

This Council supports the continuation and expansion of all these measures to ensure ALL licensed pubs, nightclubs and restaurants in Gloucester are aware of spiking and have provision to prevent and detect incidents in the day and night time economy including knowing how to support potential victims to get help and stay safe.

The Council resolves:

- To explore whether conditions on licenced premises can be included through the Council's licencing regime whether voluntarily or mandatory to ensure venues have appropriate security and staff training in place to improve safety including the search for spiking paraphernalia and recognising signs that someone could be perpetrating this offence;
- To commit to work with key stakeholders, particularly those in the night-time economy, to review existing practices in use and implement all possible safety options as a matter of urgency, including training for staff on how to administer the kits, what to do in the event of a positive result, and promotional material promoting how customers can access the kits;
- To commit to working in partnership with all key stakeholders, to renew Gloucester's Purple Flag status, a benchmark of safety in the night-time economy;
- To work in partnership with all key stakeholders (including The Gloucester BID and OPCC), to determine a funding stream to restart the Best Bar None accreditation scheme which aims to improve and monitor standards of licensed premises."

3. PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR HILTON

"This council notes the increase in graffiti that is appearing on private and public buildings across the city.

This council recognises the negative impact that graffiti has on a particular area that is suffering from this anti-social crime.

This council agrees to review its current policy on dealing with the removal of graffiti from both public and private buildings.

This council agrees that it must strengthen its arrangements with key stakeholders to ensure more is done to catch and prosecute the perpetrators in a timely manner."

4. PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR A. CHAMBERS

“Gloucester City Council notes that the city centre is looking empty and bland. The city scene is below standard compared to that of the Gloucester Docks area. And the city centre is a grey space that needs uplifting.

Gloucester City Councils mission is to get more people outside and green the grey in our city. We know adding beautiful planters and softening an urban landscape are great ways to achieve this. They create colourful and welcoming spaces for communities that people want to spend time in and enjoy.

Here are five reasons why you this City Council motion should be accepted to enable all city councillors to green the grey.

Improved air quality

Did you know plants absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen into the air? This is the process known as photosynthesis and as humans breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide plants do the opposite making the surrounding air quality better. Trees and plants also act as filters for urban pollutants and fine particulates by trapping the nasties in their leaves and bark. That’s why the more plants we have in our Gloucester City environment the better, they not only help us breathe better and cleaner air they form an essential part of our surrounding atmosphere. ***City council to add a minimum of 20 planters to the city centre 5 North/ 5 South/ 5 East and 5 West streets. Planters to include colour and greenery.***

Good for mental and physical health

Studies have proven that seeing and being close to plants helps reduce anxiety and stress levels in human beings. Gloucester City is dominated by the hospital tower block some older 1960s apartment blocks that don’t have any outside space, that can have a negative effect on adults and children including decreased concentration levels and increased psychological stress. Providing planters in Gloucester will help bring people closer to nature, they will create inviting greener spaces and people are more likely to leave their homes, go outside and exercise if there are attractive spaces filled with colourful plants to enjoy. ***Gloucester City Council to include in the planters, plants that give good scents and aromatic smells to the public.***

Sustainable communities

The fact is we all want to contribute to living in a more sustainable world, in cities there are a number of ways we can use plants to contribute to our sustainable development. Rooftop allotments are a great way of growing fruit and vegetables in a sustainable way, it has long term environmental benefits; saves money and is much more nutritious than shop bought produce. The community benefits are also greater as [urban gardening](#) connects the community together over common sustainable purposes. ***There are several roof top spaces on City Council buildings around the city that are not being used. These would make the perfect place for these allotments. City Council to review places for***

allotments.

Economic benefits

In towns and shopping centres the addition of simple landscaping and planters by businesses can be largely effective in attracting more customers and boosting sales. The addition of plants, flowers and shrubs help to cultivate a positive environment where people can thrive. Greenery can also provide economic benefits to property owners; investing in landscaping can potentially boost property values and attract a wealthier market. Planting can reinforce a sense of identity amongst neighbourhoods providing potential jobs or hobbies for the community. Initiatives like rooftop allotments are a great example of this – they encourage residents to get involved in their communities through allotment rentals all the while providing fresh produce for the locals. ***City Council to look into a Greener Gloucester City Centre business Competition. Where businesses make the outside of their premises greener with plants and hanging baskets. The mayor will then pick a winner, second place and runner up.***

Defining spaces & pedestrian movement

Planters, when used strategically, provide the ability to divide spaces and manage pedestrian movement to aid with meeting social distancing requirements; pathways can be clearly separated from other areas. They can also be used to hide unsightly areas, to act as subtle visual and physical access barriers, or simply to enhance dead space between commercial buildings and roads. ***Gloucester City Council Centre to look at defining spaces movement with 50 additional planters to be included. These 50 are additional to the 20 planters the City Council are providing. These planters will be sponsored by local businesses. The cost of the planter/ soil/ plants and small advertising badge and QR code to the business website would be covered by the local Gloucester business. This would raised income for the 50 additional sponsored planters as well as help to cover the cost of the watering of the planter. Businesses sponsorships will be for 1 year, and other businesses can take on the sponsorship of planters in following years. This would be a self funding green scheme.***

This motion is a fairly simple motion to make happen, which could be actioned with plan and locations before the 30.03.2024 and implemented with planters on the streets of Gloucester before 30.04.2024 deadline.”

5. PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR A. CHAMBERS

“Gloucester City Council recognises that Public benches should be viewed for health and wellbeing benefits – not anti-social behaviour.

Gloucester City Council encourages people to hang out on public benches which is recognised as essential for mental health and social wellbeing and should not be viewed as unwelcome lingering or potential anti-social behaviour, according to new research published by the University of Sheffield and The Young Foundation.

Researchers in the University's Department of Landscape and the London-based think tank, found that sitting on benches allows people to spend longer outside, which is both beneficial for [mental health](#) and allows people to connect with others in their community. This is particularly important for people who find cafes too expensive or may be marginalised from other collective environments, such as work or education.

The findings are part of the Bench Project – a collaboration between the University's Department of Landscape and The Young Foundation with Sheffield Hallam University, The University of Sussex and the Greenwich Inclusion Project – which investigated the use of [public spaces](#) in two different London neighbourhoods, Woolwich and Sutton.

The researchers found that access to free public benches was also beneficial for physical health, as they can provide resting places for those with limited mobility to walk around. They also provide places to sit for people who want to meet in large groups, for example teenagers after school, and a space for people who are not in work or education to sit outside and watch the world go by – combatting loneliness and isolation.

The project addressed concerns that hostile architecture – the use of deliberately uncomfortable seating - is being used to dissuade people from meeting in public spaces. And while the traditional park bench – wooden slats, metal arms – is strong on comfort, it's less flexible as a meeting place for many people who enjoy gathering in larger groups.

They also argue that what is considered to be 'anti-social behaviour' around benches is often simply 'differently-social'. They found that people who share space together in a park or town square are largely tolerant of big groups, banter and the occasional drink (only where acceptable, legal and allowed). In diverse communities, this acceptance of a wide range of behaviours is crucial, and being able to use benches and enjoy high quality public space can contribute positively to a sense of local belonging.

The research also found people should be encouraged to use benches through good planning, design and management of spaces. Good visibility, open space, zoned quiet and noisy areas and high pedestrian movement should be used to help people feel safe.

The project, which was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, has produced an 18-minute documentary, titled 'Alone Together, the Social Life of Benches' which will be premiered in Woolwich and Sutton in 2015. Directed by Esther Johnson, the film shows the daily rhythms of life in the two locations.

Clare Rishbeth, from the University of Sheffield's Department of Landscape and the project's Principal Investigator, said: "It is heartening to find how sitting outside can improve quality of life for many people, and underlines the importance of socially aware design of both benches and public space."

Radhika Bynon, from The Young Foundation, added: "Benches are egalitarian,

and the current trend of removing them in cities damages community life. Our research found that benches help [people](#) to feel a sense of belonging to an area, and helps to combat loneliness and isolation."

Gloucester City Council understands that good comfortable seating is fundamental on the health and wellbeing of the city Centre.

Therefore Gloucester city council will provide a minimum of 16 x additional benches or seating systems which will take 2 people minimum per application. (Therefore additional seating for 32 people). This will work out as 4 bench/ seat systems per Gate street. 4 x East / 4 x West/ 4 x North/ 4 x South

Gloucester city council will also offer to business the opportunity to sponsor a further 20 benches/ seat systems. To be placed also on these gates streets pedestrian area. The businesses will sponsor the benches and will have a small brass plaque on each bench with which company sponsored the bench and a QR code taking you to the company website.

The sit down Gloucester seating & bench motion is a simple one to get installed and fitted in the city. Therefore action plan to be created with 4 weeks of the motion 25/02/24 sponsorship packages out to public 14/03/24 Installation of seating by 30/04/24

Cllr Chambers notes:

"Outdoor seating reduces isolation. Also when space is shared, everyone benefits – studies show that shared places become safer and more interesting. We are always passing through places; sometimes it's good to just be somewhere and feel a sense of belonging."

6. PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR O'DONNELL

"Council members,

I rise today to propose a motion that addresses a critical issue within our community – the urgent need for emergency accommodation. It is no secret that our city is facing a growing crisis of homelessness and displacement, exacerbated by a lack of affordable housing options. In light of this, I propose that we explore the possibility of converting empty properties into emergency accommodation to provide immediate relief to those in need.

Empty properties, whether they be vacant homes, abandoned buildings, or unused commercial spaces, present a unique opportunity to address the pressing issue of emergency housing. By repurposing these properties, we can swiftly provide safe and secure shelter to individuals and families who find themselves without a home due to unforeseen circumstances.

This motion aims to achieve several key objectives:

1. **Utilizing Existing Resources:** Empty properties represent an underutilised resource within our community. By converting them into emergency accommodation, we can make the most of these existing structures and ensure that they serve a purpose in addressing the urgent needs of our most vulnerable residents.
2. **Swift Response to Emergencies:** Converting empty properties into emergency accommodation allows us to respond quickly to crises such as natural disasters, economic downturns, or sudden displacement. This immediate response is crucial in ensuring that individuals and families have a safe place to stay during times of uncertainty.
3. **Cost-Effective Solution:** Converting empty properties into emergency accommodation can be a cost-effective approach compared to constructing new facilities from scratch. By repurposing existing structures, we can minimize expenses while still providing essential shelter and support services to those in need.
4. **Community Engagement and Revitalisation:** This motion also presents an opportunity for community engagement and revitalisation. By converting empty properties, we can breathe new life into neglected areas, fostering a sense of pride and community ownership. This approach not only addresses the immediate need for emergency accommodation but also contributes to the long-term development of our city.

To achieve these objectives, I propose the following actions:

1. **Conduct an inventory:** Initiate a comprehensive survey to identify and assess all empty properties within our jurisdiction that have the potential to be converted into emergency accommodation.
2. **Establish partnerships:** Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including property owners, community organizations, and housing agencies, to develop a framework for converting empty properties into emergency accommodation. This partnership will ensure the efficient utilization of resources and expertise.
3. **Streamline regulations:** Review and amend existing regulations, if necessary, to facilitate the conversion process. This may include expedited planning permissions, zoning adjustments, and financial incentives to encourage property owners to participate in this initiative.
4. **Allocate funding:** Allocate a dedicated budget to support the conversion of empty properties into emergency accommodation. This funding can be sourced from various channels, including government grants, public-private partnerships, and community fundraising efforts.
5. **Monitor and evaluate:** Establish a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the effectiveness of the converted emergency accommodation and make necessary adjustments to ensure optimal outcomes for the residents.

In conclusion, converting empty properties into emergency accommodation presents a viable and practical solution to address the pressing issue of homelessness and displacement within our community. By repurposing these properties, we can provide immediate relief to those in need, utilize existing resources, and foster community engagement and revitalization. I urge all council members to support this motion and work together to make a positive impact on the lives of our most vulnerable residents.

7. PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR O'DONNELL

“Council members,

I rise today to propose a motion that addresses a significant concern within our community I have spoken to Ben Baker, who i believe is the curator and he tells me they still have 4 years left on the lease – there is urgent need to repair and maintain the historic Kings Theatre in Eastgate Street. This iconic landmark holds immense cultural and historical value, and it is our responsibility to ensure its preservation for future generations to enjoy, and I feel it will make a great asset for gloucester.

The Kings Theatre has long been a centerpiece of the community, serving as a hub for entertainment and cultural events. However, over time, neglect and lack of maintenance have taken their toll on this magnificent structure. The deterioration of the building not only poses safety risks but also threatens to erase an essential part of our local heritage.

This motion aims to achieve several key objectives:

1. **Preservation of Cultural Heritage:** The Kings Theatre stands as a testament to our community's rich history and cultural identity. By repairing and maintaining this iconic landmark, we demonstrate our commitment to preserving our heritage and ensuring that future generations can appreciate and enjoy its architectural and historical significance.
2. **Economic Revitalisation:** The restoration of the Kings Theatre has the potential to contribute significantly to the economic revitalisation of Eastgate Street and the surrounding area. A restored and vibrant theatre will attract visitors, stimulate local businesses, and create job opportunities, thus enhancing the overall economic prosperity of our community.
3. **Community Engagement:** The Kings Theatre has always been a gathering place for the Gloucester community, fostering a sense of unity and pride. By investing in its repair and maintenance, we provide a space for cultural events, performances, and community activities, promoting social cohesion and engagement among our residents.

To achieve these objectives, I propose the following actions:

1. **Conduct a Comprehensive Assessment:** Initiate a thorough assessment of the current condition of the Kings Theatre, including structural integrity, safety

hazards, update disability access and necessary repairs. This assessment should be done no later than 4 weeks and will serve as a foundation for developing a comprehensive restoration plan.

2. **Secure Funding:** Explore various funding sources, including government grants, private sponsorships, community fundraising, and partnerships with arts and cultural organisations, to secure the necessary financial resources for the repair and maintenance of the Kings Theatre.
3. **Develop a Restoration Plan:** Engage architectural and engineering experts to develop a detailed restoration plan that addresses the structural, aesthetic, and functional aspects of the Kings Theatre. This plan should prioritize safety, accessibility, and the preservation of historical elements. This should be looked at within 6 months of this motion
4. **Establish Partnerships:** Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, such as heritage preservation organizations, local businesses, and community groups, to form partnerships that will support the restoration efforts. These partnerships can provide expertise, resources, and community engagement opportunities.
5. **Implement a Maintenance Program:** Once the restoration is complete, establish a comprehensive maintenance program to ensure the ongoing preservation and upkeep of the Kings Theatre. This program should include regular inspections, repairs, and necessary upgrades to maintain the building's integrity and functionality.

In conclusion, the repair and maintenance of the Kings Theatre in Eastgate Street is not only a matter of preserving our cultural heritage but also an opportunity for economic revitalization and community engagement. By investing in this iconic landmark, we demonstrate our commitment to our community's history, identity, and future prosperity. I urge all council members to support this motion and work together to restore the Kings Theatre to its former glory.”

8. PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR A. CHAMBERS

“Gloucester City council agrees that flags are a very British way of expressing joy and pride – they are emotive symbols which can boost local and national identities, strengthen community cohesion and mark civic pride.

The City Council understands that the government wants to see more flags flown, particularly the Union Flag, the flag of the United Kingdom. It is a symbol of national unity and pride. The government has recently issued guidance encouraging the flying of the Union Flag on all UK government buildings throughout the year, alongside other national and local flags.

The Government website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flying-flags-a-plain-english-guide/flying-flags-a-plain-english-guide>) states the Government is keen for local authorities and other local organisations to follow suit. The Government have made it easier for the Union Flag to be flown

alongside other flags, so organisations can highlight their local identities, as well as their national identities, and celebrate special days or events which champion civic pride.

In England, the flying of flags is treated as advertisements for the purposes of the planning regime to ensure the flags do not impact on safety or amenity. Some flags require formal consent (permission) from the local planning authority, whereas others like the Union Flag do not. The detailed controls over flag flying are set out in detailed regulations (see link shown above).

As long as the above legislation is adhered to, This Gloucester City Council will promote the display of the Union Flag around Gloucester.

Gloucester City Council will purchase a minimum of 1000 Union Flags (average cost of Union flag is £3.00 on quantities of 100 plus brought) therefore the total spend for the Union flags is very low a maximum of £3,000

The positive benefit to Gloucester City of the promotion and supply of Union Flags in the City will increase National pride, National Identity and National awareness of the City of Gloucester. Gloucesters City's overall financial income will be increased with more tourists visiting, which will enable the realisation of financial gain to the city of tens of thousands of pounds brought in by visiting tourists drawn to the Union Flag display. Therefore a great financial return on the very small outlay.

Each shop/ store and building within the immediate Gloucester city centre gated walls streets will be provided with a free Union flag to display. Those opting out of the Union flag display will have to return their flag to be used at another location by another retailer/ business or residential premises with the designated area.

Shops will ideally buy and install a wall mounted flag pole. This will help set the scene well and provide a wealth of colour and national pride to Gloucester City as well as a decorated street.

Let's make our city have the most Union Flags within a square kilometre in the whole country, restore community well-being.

Let's be proud of our British Identity, our Union flag and our British history.

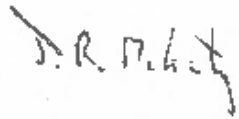
Union Motion to be programme planned by 25/02/2024

Union Flags purchased by 07/03/2024

Union Flags to be issued to shops/ stores/ buildings by 14/03/2024

Union Flags issued and installed by 30/04/2024.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. R. McGinty', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Jon McGinty
Managing Director

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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

Agendas and reports can be viewed on the Gloucester City Council website: www.gloucester.gov.uk and are available to view five working days prior to the meeting date.

For enquiries about Gloucester City Council’s meetings please contact Democratic Services, 01452 396126, 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 Mayor 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

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- 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.



COUNCIL

MEETING : Thursday, 16th November 2023

PRESENT : Cllrs. Williams (Mayor), Hudson (Sheriff & Deputy Mayor), Cook, Norman, S. Chambers, Lewis, Padilla, Hilton, Chambers-Dubus, Gravells MBE, Tracey, Morgan, Wilson, Bhaimia, D. Brown, Taylor, Field, Patel, Toleman, J. Brown, Hyman, Bowkett, Ackroyd, Castle, A. Chambers, Conder, Dee, Durdey, Evans, Kubaszczyk, O'Donnell, Radley, Zaman, Sawyer, Campbell and Trimnell

Others in Attendance

Managing Director
Corporate Director
Monitoring Officer
Head of Culture
Head of Finance and Resources
Head of Place
Head of Transformation and Commercialisation
Policy and Governance Manager
Democratic and Electoral Services Team Leader

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Pullen, Brooker and Finnegan

43. MINUTES

43.1 **RESOLVED that:-** The minutes of the ordinary Council meeting which took place on 21 September 2023 and of the extraordinary Council meeting which took place on 19 October 2023 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

44.1 Councillor Field declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 (1) by virtue of his employment by the King's School.

45. CALL OVER

45.1 The Mayor invited Members to indicate whether they wished to reserve agenda items 9, 10 and/or 11 for discussion. It was indicated that item 9 was to be reserved for discussion.

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46. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

46.1 A Gloucester resident submitted the following question:

Why are there certain things being moved away from people's graves - we pay money for the plot for our loved ones, why are we not allowed to add things to make it personal for us?

46.2 Councillor Norman, Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, responded:

The cemetery is maintained in accordance with the rules and regulations of the cemetery. Deed Holders are allowed to place Ornaments within the 3ft by 2ft planting boundary. All plot holders are given written notice in accordance with the rules and regulations prior to items been removed.

46.3 A Gloucester resident submitted the following question:

If its ok to put a wooden bench on the outskirts of the graves then why are we not allowed a wooden border around our loved ones resting place especially if we keep it maintained? I've had my wooden border around my son's garden for 4 months now, why has it now only came to your attention, even though I have previously had plastic borders, and why wasn't the wooden border on a neighbouring grave removed sooner, instead of being allowed to remain for up to a year until a headstone was place on it?

46.4 Councillor Norman responded that:

The cemetery is maintained in accordance with the rules and regulations of the cemetery, any boarders which are not consistent with the rules are removed. Wooden benches are placed around the edges of the cemetery allowing the grounds team to safely maintain the grounds.

46.5 A Gloucester resident submitted the following question:

I understand benches should have a stable base for the benches to sit on. Why is there loads around the cemetery that has no base and has not been removed?

46.6 Councillor Norman responded as follows:

Families have a choice as to whether they wish to have their wooden bench placed on lawn or on a hardstanding. Families are notified when purchasing a bench that benches need to remain removable to allow access for future burials.

46.7 A Gloucester resident asked the following question:

How is having the border around my son's grave a health and safety risk?

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46.8 Councillor Norman answered that

When using commercial mowers and strimmer's we must be practical with what materials are placed around the grounds to ensure that our employees and members of the public are kept safe from flying objects. Granite kerb sets and chippings that are stone mason approved and fitted by a mason that has liability insurance to fit in the cemetery are approved because they are made of suitable material that contains the chippings within the borders. This allows the grounds team to maintain the grounds and limit the health safety risk of injury to staff and members of the public.

46.9 A Gloucester resident asked:

Why are the cemeteries and crematorium garden rules so rigid? A lot of money is paid, so why can't the rules be tailored to families' needs and why can't families make the gardens how they choose to have them in memory of their loved ones, as long as they maintain them?

46.10 In answer, Councillor Norman stated:

Families purchase the burial rights to the grave which allows them to authorise who can be buried in the plot, We allow families to personalise their grave for their loved one within the 3ft x 2ft border as per the rules and regulations.

46.11 A resident of Gloucester asked:

Does the Council not think families have been through enough to now send a letter threatening to remove their lost family members resting place? Will you be going around the cemetery and sending letters to every single resting place breaking the rules and regulations or is it just certain people?

46.12 Councillor Norman answered that:

The rules and regulations apply to all plots purchased from August 2014. All graves purchased after this date not complying with the Cemetery rules and regulations will receive a letter politely asking Deed Holders to remove any items that are not permitted per the rules and regulations.

46.13 A Gloucester resident asked:

How would you feel if it was you who was getting threatened to have personal items removed from your loved ones resting place?

46.14 Councillor Norman in answer stated:

We send a polite letter out to deed holders asking them to remove anything which does not comply with the rules and regulations. We allow families to personalise their grave for their loved one within the 3ft x 2ft border as per the rules and regulations.

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46.15 A Gloucester resident asked:

How does it affect anyone else when the family cut around the edge of the grave their self?

46.16 Councillor Norman answered that:

Not all families have the time to maintain their own graves and the rules apply across the board to any burial rights purchase from August 2014. Rules and regulations across the whole of the cemetery allows us to maintain the cemetery to a high standard. We have had situations in the past where families have asked to maintain their own area and unfortunately, graves have not been maintained.

46.17 A resident of Gloucester asked:

There is more health and safety issues around the crematorium, why are those issues not being fixed?

46.18 Councillor Norman stated

All health and safety issues are addressed in accordance with Council procedures, if you have any specific health and safety concerns please raise these with the Bereavement Services Manager who will address each case individually.

46.19 A Gloucester resident asked:

Have the rules and regulations actually been looked at properly when been reviewed in 2014 or just passed on and kept the same - the same thing has been happening since the early 90s and seems to be no change?

46.20 Councillor Norman responded that:

The rules were implemented in August 2014 by Gloucester City Council to allow us to maintain the cemetery to an appropriate standard.

46.21 A resident of Gloucester asked:

I have Safety concerns over Longsmith carpark footbridge. Which flies over cross keys pub garden that sits directly under the closed off redundant footbridge from Longsmith carpark (thats been closed). This footbridge concrete has fallen off the soffit and is only suspended above peoples heads due to a weak seagull netting. This will kill people when the bird netting gives way and large concrete shards fall on peoples heads. I note a city councillor has raised this already. What are you going to do about this?

46.22 Councillor Norman responded that:

Structural inspections have been ongoing since the closure and will continue in the coming weeks. We will seek to follow the recommendations of the

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engineers on site and should work be required on this area we will liaise with the affected tenants to ensure works are carried out safely.

46.23 A Gloucester resident asked:

Longsmith remains closed months later, is this because it's not safe for the carpark to be fully used?

46.24 Councillor Norman responded that:

There have been a number of works carried out to include tap testing and removal of the affected concrete. It is safer for all to carry this out with the car park closed. A specification for works will be drawn up in the coming weeks as the initial concrete testing is now drawing to a close.

46.25 A Gloucester resident asked:

I have major safety concerns over the kings walk car park we're there are bricks flaking of from the wall and the ceiling sand seems to be unsafe just like longsmith car park are the council waiting for someone to die before they act I get we need parking but what at the safety of the public ?

46.26 Councillor Norman answered that:

We are aware of some water ingress in some areas of the car park which has caused the concrete to expand and then 'pop'. This along with all our multi storey car parks is being checked by structural engineers and again specifications for ongoing works is currently being collated. We have not been advised that this car park needs to shut but will continue monitor the situation.

46.27 A Gloucester resident asked:

How much a week is lost in car park revenue at Longsmith car park?

46.28 Councillor Norman stated:

The Council would normally receive revenue in the region of £7k a week on this car park. £5k covers operating costs with the remaining £2k covering costs and future investment across the whole car park portfolio.

46.29 A Gloucester resident asked

How much money has been lost in revenue so far for Longsmith, Gloucester City Council car park? (Provide dates and amounts)

46.31 Councillor Norman advised

The Council would normally receive in the region of £7k a week on this car park. The car park has been closed for 7 weeks so approx. £49k. This is

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pure revenue, operating costs over the same period are £35k with the remaining £14k reinvested across the car parks portfolio.

46.32 A Gloucester resident asked:

Kings theatre could the council consider some urgent funding to improve the theatre for the public and allow for a sign to go on east gate street advertising the theatre.

46.33 Councillor Lewis, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure, responded that

Kings theatre is run by a group of dedicated trustees and volunteers. The council owns the building and provides ongoing support through essential maintenance to maintain the building's exterior.

Beyond these essential maintenance requirements, the city council has no funds available to invest into the theatre's development. However, if the theatre submits the information, the council is able to help promote the theatre's events through the Visit Gloucester website.

Gloucestershire County Council is responsible for directional street signage. Requests for additional street signage can be made by the Kings Theatre trustees to the county council.

46.34 A Gloucester resident asked:

After so many years of a PSPO public space protection order being in place, where one of the rules is there is no drinking alcohol within the city centre, why do we see daily down and outs still drinking, and why do the police do nothing about it? Why was it only and for the very first time there was an operation recently after the PSPO in operation for 6 plus years?

46.35 Councillor Padilla, Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods stated that:

The PSPO in Gloucester city centre has always been enforced through our partner agency approach called Street Aware, which has focussed on an "engage, support, enforce" approach. This is where people seen drinking are given education and information, and the opportunity to comply with the PSPO and offered support if they need it; enforcement then takes place if people drink persistently and engage in anti-social behaviour.

Since implementation, the city centre PSPO has been enforced where appropriate, and this is through the Street Aware partnership process- by the police and the CPO's (City Protection Officers) who are authorised on behalf of the Council to undertake this enforcement work. City Safe and the City Protection Officers have been funded in partnership by the Council, the BiD and OPCC to deal with anti-social behaviour including being the front-line responders in the Street Aware process, with the procedure being that they call on Police for back up when needed. This summer we saw a need for

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increased enforcement because the usual engagement and support were not being accepted by a number of individuals we were trying to engage with. In response, the Street Aware partnership delivered Operation Ebrius, which was a proactive enforcement operation. Op Ebrius saw Policing resources ringfenced and brought together all partners to be proactively managed by the City council. We saw an increase in engagement with drinkers, and a consistent approach from all partners removing alcohol when people were seen drinking. This had an almost immediate positive impact on the city centre and saw a reduction in incidents occurring. Op Ebrius was a temporary enforcement led operation which was possible because of external funding and we have recently secured additional funding to continue this work. We are working with partners currently to align processes to continue and embed this working.

46.36 A Gloucester resident asked the following:

Why is SWEP not being called this year to help the homeless?

46.37 Councillor Stephanie Chambers, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy responded that

SWEP is the acronym for Severe Weather Emergency Protocol and is a national response to periods of severe weather across the country throughout the year. The Council implements SWEP as necessary throughout the year in response to weather events that may result in negative health impacts to people sleeping rough. This remains the case and SWEP continues to operate.

47. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

47.1 Councillor A. Chambers presented a petition with 156 signatures:

The petition requested that the council to discounted licence rates for disabled taxis in Gloucester City and request operators to ensure there is always an accessible/disabled taxi on shift which gives priority to blue badge disabled customers as well as do all the city council can to encourage more disabled taxis in Gloucester.

47.2 Councillor Norman accepted the petition and advised that the request could present a challenge by virtue of taxi drivers being self employed and that they therefore choose their own hours of work. She stated that she would look into the matter and respond in further detail in due course.

47.3 Councillor A. Chambers presented a petition with 1,106 signatures.

The petition requested that: the council agrees to getting the rules and regulations reviewed at the cemetery [in regard to the installation of borders and the keeping of ornaments on burial sites]

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- 47.4 Councillor Norman acknowledged the petition and advised that issues raised would be addressed during the Members' Questions item as well as the notice of motion pertinent to the matter which had been submitted.

48. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 48.1 The Leader of the Council, Councillor Cook, announced that the Food Dock had opened the previous month and that several more were due to open soon. He stated that with the new University campus due to open in early 2024, it would provide both work opportunities and further income generation in the area.
- 48.2 The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, Councillor Norman, informed Members that 'Putt Pot Noodle' was due to open in the former Primark site providing 10 full time and 30 part time jobs. It also showed the success of repurposing former retail units.
- 48.3 Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure, Councillor Lewis, proffered an apology for a comment made at the most recent extraordinary Council meeting.

He informed Members that Freedom Leisure had been appointed as interim provider of leisure services for the City. Much provision had been restored and many previous staff had been reemployed.

- 48.4 Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning Strategy, Councillor S. Chambers, advised that the home building survey for 2022/23 had concluded and that 1,354 had been built with 417 of these being affordable. This represented the biggest increase since records began and thanked Members and Officers for their endeavours in achieving this.
- 48.5 Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods, Councillor Padilla, informed Members that a funding application to the Safer Streets fund had been successful and £184k had been awarded towards various projects.
- 48.6 The Head of Paid Service announced that a new political group, consisting of Councillor A. Chambers and Councillor O'Donnell – the Community Independents Group – had been formed and that details of revised committee constitution would be published in due course.

49. MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

- 49.1 With regard to question 1, Councillor Hilton asked the Cabinet Member whether she agreed that the Council should stand in solidarity with the Ukraine and condemn those who removed the flag without permission. Councillor Norman agreed and asked that anyone with information on it to come forward.
- 49.2 With regard to question 2, Councillor Hilton asked when all schools would recommence swimming lessons at GL1. Councillor Lewis confirmed that some schools were already back, but that others had temporary alternative

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arrangements in place and would return later. He agreed to provide more detail in writing.

- 49.3 With regard to question 7, Councillor Field asked what the difference was between weeds being sprayed and being 'knocked out.' Councillor Cook responded that at some points in the year, some weeds were too wet for spraying to be effective and that 'knocking out' (i.e. removal) was the preferred method of maintenance.
- 49.4 In respect of question 10, Councillor Hilton asked what was being done to claw back the remainder of overspend. Councillor Norman responded that one measure was the previously discussed acquisition of temporary accommodation. Service Managers had been asked to conduct reviews of all spending from a 'value for money' perspective.
- 49.5 With regard to question 12, Councillor A. Chambers asked if there had been any overspend on projects related to the Forum. Councillor Cook responded that there had been no overspend.
- 49.6 In respect of question 15, Councillor Hilton asked Councillor S. Chambers was pleased that the previous Home Secretary was no longer in post. Councillor S. Chambers stated that she disagreed with the previous Home Secretary's comments regarding rough sleepers.
- 49.7 In respect of question 16, Councillor O'Donnell asked how many non-UK nationals were single men being temporarily accommodated in hotels. Councillor S. Chambers advised that there were mixed demographics in temporary accommodation and that she would write with an answer in due course.
- 49.8 With regard to question 18, Councillor Hilton asked the Cabinet Members if she would apologise to those seeking an article 4 order to prevent further HMOs. Councillor S. Chambers answered that it was regrettable that the results had not yet been published and that there were multiple pressures on housing.
- 49.9 In respect of question 20, Councillor A. Chambers asked what the council would do to resolve structural issues at Kingswalk. Councillor Norman advised that a full review of all assets was currently underway.

50. TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION ACQUISITION PROGRAMME

- 50.1 Councillor S. Chambers moved and Councillor Norman seconded the motion contained within the report.
- 50.2 Councillor S. Chambers advised that the report sought approval for further capital investment as there had been an increase in the use of temporary accommodation in the past six months and that this was a national trend. She further advised that council owned assets helped only 11% of those in need.

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- 50.3 Councillor Norman stated that there had been an overspend for temporary accommodation but that the forecast spend for Q.2 was less.
- 50.4 Councillor Hilton stated that he was broadly in favour of the proposal as it would be preferable to not spend funds on using hotels. He proposed and Councillor Wilson seconded the following amendment:

Council is asked to RESOLVE that:

- (1) Delegated authority be provided to the Corporate Director in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources and the Director of One Legal to:
 - (a) approves the establishment of a capital investment fund, funded from borrowing, to enable an acquisition programme for buildings or other structures for use as temporary accommodation for households who present as homeless to the Council.
 - (b) explore options and appoint a provider, or other arrangement, to manage the temporary accommodation provided on behalf of the Council.
 - (c) procure and appoint contractors and associated professional services to carry out any works required to bring the properties into use as units of temporary accommodation.
- (2) Acquisitions will be made in accordance with the principles of this report and the total costs will not exceed £5m.
- (3) Endorse the letter sent by Cllr. Sam Chapman-Allen chairman of the District Council Network to the chancellor, Jeremy Hunt MP, which called for the government to urgently:
 - Raise Local Housing Allowance rates to a level that will cover at least 30% of local market rent and commit to annual uprating.
 - Provide £100m additional funding for Discretionary Housing Payments in 2023-24 and an additional £200m in 2024-25.
 - Provide a £150m top-up to the Homelessness Prevention Grant for 2024-25.
 - Review the cap for housing benefit subsidy rate for local authority homelessness placements.
 - Develop policy to stimulate retention and supply in the privately rented sector.
 - Give councils the long-term funding, flexibility and certainty needed to increase the supply of social housing.
- (4) Continue to lobby the city MP, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to provide the city council with additional revenue and capital funding to enable the council to meet its obligations to tackle homelessness within the city of Gloucester.

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- 50.5 The amendment was accepted by the mover of the original motion.
- 50.6 In response to a query from Councillor A. Chambers regarding whether specific provision would be made for military veterans, Councillor S. Chambers advised that she would seek clarity on this and respond in due course.
- 50.7 **RESOLVED that:-**
- (1) Delegated authority be provided to the Corporate Director in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources and the Director of One Legal to:
 - (a) approves the establishment of a capital investment fund, funded from borrowing, to enable an acquisition programme for buildings or other structures for use as temporary accommodation for households who present as homeless to the Council.
 - (b) explore options and appoint a provider, or other arrangement, to manage the temporary accommodation provided on behalf of the Council.
 - (c) procure and appoint contractors and associated professional services to carry out any works required to bring the properties into use as units of temporary accommodation.
 - (2) Acquisitions will be made in accordance with the principles of this report and the total costs will not exceed £5m.
 - (3) Endorse the letter sent by Cllr. Sam Chapman-Allen chairman of the District Council Network to the chancellor, Jeremy Hunt MP, which called for the government to urgently:
 - Raise Local Housing Allowance rates to a level that will cover at least 30% of local market rent and commit to annual uprating.
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 - Review the cap for housing benefit subsidy rate for local authority homelessness placements.
 - Develop policy to stimulate retention and supply in the privately rented sector.
 - Give councils the long-term funding, flexibility and certainty needed to increase the supply of social housing.
 - (4) Continue to lobby the city MP, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to provide the city council with additional revenue and capital

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funding to enable the council to meet its obligations to tackle homelessness within the city of Gloucester.

51. CHELTENHAM, GLOUCESTER AND TEWKESBURY STRATEGIC AND LOCAL PLAN - PUBLIC CONSULTATION (REGULATION 18)

51.1 RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the Strategic and Local Plan Consultation Document (Appendix 1) be approved for consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012
- (2) authority be delegated to the Head of Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing, to prepare diagrams illustrating the general location of development options for inclusion in the consultation document, and Page 79 Agenda Item 10 to make any other necessary minor amendments, corrections and additions to the document prior to publication for consultation.

52. COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP - DISPENSATION

52.1 RESOLVED that:-

- (1) A period of absence from meetings by Councillor Terry Pullen pursuant section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 is approved.
- (2) The Monitoring Officer is authorised to extend Councillor Terry Pullen's current period of absence for up to three months, to 3 March 2023.

53. NOTICES OF MOTION

53.1 Councillor Trimnell proposed and Councillor Hilton seconded the following motion:

“This council notes the two conifer trees over 50+ years on the corner of St Mary's Street and the controversy over imminent felling of one of them.

This council notes the boundary wall to Kings School nearby is unstable due to the tree, but that most of the wall came down in February last year.

The council notes that to rebuild the wall in the same place would invalidate the council's insurance, but to relocate and erect an alternative boundary structure may not.

This council believes a compromise needs to be found with Kings School for the said tree to remain in situ and for an alternative measure of boundary security to be found.”

53.2 The motion was put to the vote and was lost.

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- 53.3 Councillor A. Chambers proposed and Councillor O'Donnell seconded the following motion:

“This council notes that bulk item waste disposal for families and individuals on low income is disproportionate to their household revenue.

Matson, Podsmead and Coney Hill have a large proportion of families on low income and many without vehicles. Therefore the use of the city council landfill is not possible.

This council requests that families and individuals on Universal Credit are included in the reduced fee for bulky item waste collection.

At present not all benefit users are able to use the discounted rate.

I therefore request that all members support this motion to ensure that families and individuals on universal credit have the opportunity to use this discounted collection rate.

Discounted rates for universal credit will help reduce those struggling to dispose of waste legally due to no funds available in a cost of living crisis and will undoubtedly reduce illegal fly tipping.”

- 53.4 The motion was put to the vote and was lost.

- 53.4 Councillor A. Chambers proposed and Councillor O'Donnell seconded the following motion:

“The Covid-19 pandemic has shown us clearly that the Internet is no longer a luxury, a convenient enhancement for lifestyles for those who can afford it. Rather, Internet access has become a basic necessity.

During the lockdown, it has become vital for everyday activities. It often is the only way we can contact and care for close friends and family. In some instances, it even has become the only way to say goodbye to loved ones quarantined in hospital. Yet, online access is also necessary during non-emergencies for fair opportunities to work, study, to engage with government, and to exercise our political freedoms. We thus have weighty reasons to accept a right to Internet access. If we doubted this before, few will doubt this now.

This council notes that WiFi internet access is a basic need and not a luxury. Therefore this motion is to provide FREE fast access WiFi for all Gloucester city residents on every City Council ward.

Free WiFi will be provided to all areas of the Gloucester city by 2026.”

- 53.5 Councillor Radley proposed and Councillor Wilson seconded the following amendment

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“The Covid-19 pandemic has shown us clearly that the Internet is no longer a luxury, a convenient enhancement for lifestyles for those who can afford it. Rather, Internet access has become a basic necessity, **and can be viewed as a utility such as water or power.**

During the lockdown, it has become vital for everyday activities. It often is the only way we can contact and care for close friends and family. In some instances, it even has become the only way to say goodbye to loved ones quarantined in hospital. Yet, online access is also necessary during non-emergencies for fair opportunities to work, study, to engage with government, and to exercise our political freedoms. We thus have weighty reasons to accept a right to ~~Internet access~~ **digital equality**. If we doubted this before, few will doubt this now.

This council notes that ~~WiFi internet access~~ **digital equality** is a basic need and not a luxury. Therefore this motion is to ~~provide FREE fast access WiFi for all Gloucester city residents on every City Council ward.~~

~~Free WiFi will be provided to all areas of the Gloucester city by 2026.~~

- **Request officers explore partnering with the DAISI (Digital Accessibility, Inclusion, Support and Innovation) project hosted by GRCC: leveraging their expertise in digital equity initiatives and existing resources.**
- **Officers review support to help residents on lower incomes to access social tariffs for broadband and mobile phone access and make recommendations for improvement.**
- **Officers review Gloucester City’s Website and report back regarding its accessibility.**

We ask that the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods responds with a cabinet report within 6 months of this meeting.”

53.6 The amendment was accepted by the mover of the motion and therefore became the substantive motion. This was put to the vote and was carried.

53.7 **RESOLVED that:** - The Covid-19 pandemic has shown us clearly that the Internet is no longer a luxury, a convenient enhancement for lifestyles for those who can afford it. Rather, Internet access has become a basic necessity, and can be viewed as a utility such as water or power.

During the lockdown, it has become vital for everyday activities. It often is the only way we can contact and care for close friends and family. In some instances, it even has become the only way to say goodbye to loved ones quarantined in hospital. Yet, online access is also necessary during non-emergencies for fair opportunities to work, study, to engage with government, and to exercise our political freedoms. We thus have weighty reasons to accept a right to digital equality. If we doubted this before, few will doubt this now.

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This council notes that digital equality is a basic need and not a luxury. Therefore this motion is to

- Request officers explore partnering with the DAISI (Digital Accessibility, Inclusion, Support and Innovation) project hosted by GRCC: leveraging their expertise in digital equity initiatives and existing resources.
- Officers review support to help residents on lower incomes to access social tariffs for broadband and mobile phone access and make recommendations for improvement.
- Officers review Gloucester City's Website and report back regarding its accessibility.

We ask that the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods responds with a cabinet report within 6 months of this meeting.

53.8 Councillor A. Chambers proposed and Councillor O'Donnell seconded the following motion:

Pump Tracks offer a fun, safe space for all ages and abilities to enjoy a range of wheel based activities including BMX bikes, scooters, skateboards and rollerblades.

The proposed Coney Hill Pump Track will be a much-used and valued asset by its community and we're keen to work with partners to help more areas such as Saintbridge/ Matson/ White City and Robinswood enjoy these same benefits.

What is a Pump Track?

So what is a pump track? A pump track is designed to create a safe, fun and inclusive playground for all wheels-based users regardless of age or gender. They provide a playground for kids and adults from beginners to professionals, and a sustainable and fun-packed activity for everyone in the community.

Their design combines rolling jumps with turns that teach the basic skills of carrying momentum, balance and speed by using your arms and legs to pump your bike/ skateboard/ scooter around the track....

'A Moment to Learn, a Lifetime to Master'.

Community benefits

Pump Tracks not only offer a space to exercise and improve skills, such as balance and coordination, they also provide a community focal point. Coney Hill Pump Track will become a key feature of the community, with regular meet-ups, litter picks and events.

A planned track at Coney Hill park next to the pond will create a Hub in the area for those walking and cycling, with rest stops and community events. A

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Coney Hill Community Pump Track group hopes to be situated alongside environmental and nature-based projects while a Track.

Support

This Council notes that children and adult well being, fitness and mental health is priority. Therefore this council will allocate an area of City Council land at Coney Hill park off Metz Way by Stanway Road and Boughton Way for the construction of a Pump track.

This location is far enough away from houses and homes to ensure no associated ASB will be generated.

It's an ideal location for a pump track.

This Gloucester City council will work with City Council Planning department, Gloucestershire County Councillor for the ward as well as NHS and city Council Cil & S106 budgets to ensure that this pump track will be built and operational before April 2026

This is a great motion helping keep children off the streets, build community's, support mental health and well being and promote health equalities to one of the County Councils most deprived areas and one the top 10 most deprived areas in England. Please support."

- 53.9 Councillor Cook proposed and Councillor Lewis seconded the following amendment:

"Pump Tracks offer a fun, safe space for all ages and abilities to enjoy a range of wheel based activities including BMX bikes, scooters, skateboards and rollerblades.

The proposed Coney Hill Pump Track will be a much-used and valued asset by its community and we're keen to work with partners to help more areas such as Saintbridge/ Matson/White City and Robinswood enjoy these same benefits.

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A planned track at Coney Hill park next to the pond will create a Hub in the area for those walking and cycling, with rest stops and community events. A Coney Hill Community Pump Track group hopes to be situated alongside environmental and nature-based projects while a Track.

Support

This Council notes that children and adult well being, fitness and mental health is priority. Therefore this council will allocate an area of City Council land at Coney Hill park off Metz Way by Stanway Road and Boughton Way for the construction of a Pump track.

This location is far enough away from houses and homes to ensure no associated ASB will be generated.

It's an ideal location for a pump track.

~~This Gloucester City council will work with City Council Planning department, Gloucestershire County Councillor for the ward as well as NHS and city Council Cil & S106 budgets to ensure that this pump track will be built and operational before April 2026~~ **This Council notes that this request is not on the Council Forward Plan and there is at present no funding to invest in it, however the Council will establish a group including all our partners to develop plans, consult the local community and look for funding to enable delivery of the project in the fullness of time.**

This is a great motion helping keep children off the streets, build community's, support mental health and well being and promote health equalities to one of the County Councils most deprived areas and one the top 10 most deprived areas in England. Please support."

53.10 The amendment was accepted by the mover of the original motion and therefore became the substantive motion.

53.11 **RESOLVED that:-**

"Pump Tracks offer a fun, safe space for all ages and abilities to enjoy a range of wheel based activities including BMX bikes, scooters, skateboards and rollerblades.

The proposed Coney Hill Pump Track will be a much-used and valued asset by its community and we're keen to work with partners to help more areas such as Saintbridge/ Matson/ White City and Robinswood enjoy these same benefits.

What is a Pump Track?

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So what is a pump track? A pump track is designed to create a safe, fun and inclusive playground for all wheels-based users regardless of age or gender.

They provide a playground for kids and adults from beginners to professionals, and a sustainable and fun-packed activity for everyone in the community.

Their design combines rolling jumps with turns that teach the basic skills of carrying momentum, balance and speed by using your arms and legs to pump your bike/ skateboard/ scooter around the track....

‘A Moment to Learn, a Lifetime to Master’.

Community benefits

Pump Tracks not only offer a space to exercise and improve skills, such as balance and coordination, they also provide a community focal point. Coney Hill Pump Track will become a key feature of the community, with regular meet-ups, litter picks and events.

A planned track at Coney Hill park next to the pond will create a Hub in the area for those walking and cycling, with rest stops and community events. A Coney Hill Community Pump Track group hopes to be situated alongside environmental and nature-based projects while a Track.

Support

This Council notes that children and adult well being, fitness and mental health is priority. Therefore this council will allocate an area of City Council land at Coney Hill park off Metz Way by Stanway Road and Boughton Way for the construction of a Pump track.

This location is far enough away from houses and homes to ensure no associated ASB will be generated.

It's an ideal location for a pump track.

This Council notes that this request is not on the Council Forward Plan and there is at present no funding to invest in it, however the Council will establish a group including all our partners to develop plans, consult the local community and look for funding to enable delivery of the project in the fullness of time.

This is a great motion helping keep children off the streets, build community's, support mental health and well being and promote health equalities to one of the County Councils most deprived areas and one the top 10 most deprived areas in England. Please support.

53.12 Councillor A. Chambers proposed and Councillor O'Donnell seconded the following motion:

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“Gloucester City Council created a set of rules and regulations on the 1st August 2014 for the Coney Hill Cemetery and Crematorium.

Following complaints from hundreds of families about their child’s, brothers, mothers fathers, & grandparents graves vases/ personal possessions and borders being removed by the council as they don’t fit into the councils ridged set of rules and regulations has caused much hurt and upset around the families who manage their beloved members final resting place.

Some personal possessions, gifts, pictures, lights and borders have been removed from the graves over night without the families being made aware. I am sure council letters in some cases may have been sent. However this does not help the situation when your beloved family’s members picture/ gift or toy has been removed because it was an inch too big.

This council notes that the rigid cemetery and crematorium rules needs reviewing urgently as currently there are many families who have been given a deadline by the council which have threatened to remove personal items from their beloved ones final resting places.

Graves and resting areas of loved ones should be a place of peace for family members. A place to visit loved ones and feel close. A place of sanctuary where family members are able to make the resting places bespoke to their past family member, a resting place of a beloved family member should have the option to be able to use colours that they liked, as well as pictures and ornaments. The current rules and regulations are too specific and too rigid.

There are fixed rules for set edgings, many families can not afford to buy solid granite sets for edgings and they have used an alternative to mark out their family members resting place. As a result the Council have removed these edgings and the gravel infill leaving the resting place bare and empty. A further 12 letters have been sent by the City council to family members to advise they will have items removed from their loved ones graves if they do not follow the strict council rules.

The council cemetery and crematorium rules need to be reviewed and current family members/users consulted as well as a City wide consultation to reach a fair balance of new rules and regulations which will include a more modern, flexible approach to these final resting places. This council will also postpone any grave / resting place removal till these new rules and regulations have been consulted on, therefore protecting the 12 current graves which are set to be dismantled by Gloucester City Council.

I therefore ask City Council to support this motion to review the current rules and regulations, while working with family members that maintain the resting places to reach a fair & flexible outcome. The consultation must be conducted within a maximum 8 weeks from this council motion and the new cemetery and crematorium rules and regulations will be in action before the 1st May 2024. The graves under threat of dismantle/ removal of edgings and toys etc will be postponed till the new rules and regulations are created as some of these edgings and toys would fit in the new modern rules approach.”

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53.13 Councillor Norman proposed and Councillor Dee seconded the following amendment:

“Gloucester City Council created a set of rules and regulations on the 1st August 2014 for the Coney Hill Cemetery and Crematorium.

Following ~~complaints~~ **a complaint and comments on social media** from hundreds of families about their child's, brothers, mothers, fathers, & grandparents graves vases/ personal possessions and borders being removed by the council as they don't fit into the councils ~~rigid~~ **rigid** set of rules and regulations has caused much hurt and upset around the families who manage their beloved members final resting place.

Some personal possessions, gifts, pictures, lights and borders have been removed from the graves over night without the families being made aware. I am sure council letters ~~in some cases may have~~ been sent. However this does not help the situation when your beloved family's members picture/ gift or toy has been removed because it was an inch too big.

This council notes that the ~~rigid~~ cemetery and crematorium rules needs reviewing urgently as currently there are many families who have been given a deadline by the council ~~which have threatened~~ to remove personal items from their beloved ones final resting places **or the council shall do so and hold for collection.**

Graves and resting areas of loved ones should be a place of peace for family members. A place to visit loved ones and feel close. A place of sanctuary where family members are able to make the resting places bespoke to their past family member, a resting place of a beloved family member should have the option to be able to use colours that they liked, as well as pictures and ornaments. ~~The current rules and regulations are too specific and too rigid.~~ **These needs however need to be balanced with the requirements of a operation cemetery.**

From the 2014 rules, ~~There are fixed rules for set edgings, many families can not~~ **cannot** afford to buy solid granite sets for edgings and they have used an alternative to mark out their family members resting place. As a result, the Council have ~~removed these~~ **written to the families advising that these** edgings and the gravel infill ~~leaving the resting place bare and empty~~ **should be removed within 14 days to comply with the rules which were signed prior to the grave being purchased. Recently,** ~~A~~ **a** further 12 letters have been sent by the City council to family members to advise they will have items removed from their loved ones graves if they do not follow the ~~strict council~~ **cemetery** rules.

This council notes the hard work and dedication of the cemetery team who work in a very challenging area, providing support and guidance to the bereaved with the upmost compassion and empathy.

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~~The council cemetery and crematorium rules need to be reviewed and current family members/users consulted as well as a City wide consultation to reach a fair balance of new rules and regulations which will include a more modern, flexible approach to these final resting places.~~ **The council agrees to conduct a review of the 2014 rules and regulations for the cemetery, considering industry best practice and the rules of all local cemeteries. A report shall be brought to Cabinet outlining the results. Should this review recommend changes to the rules, Cabinet will be asked to approve a full public consultation requesting comments from families who use the cemetery and all Gloucester residents.** This council will also postpone any grave / resting place **edging** removal till these new rules and regulations have been consulted on, therefore protecting the 12 current graves which are set to be dismantled by Gloucester City Council **until the end of the review process and consultation if required.**

~~I therefore ask City Council to support this motion to review the current rules and regulations, while working with family members that maintain the resting places to reach a fair & flexible outcome. The consultation must be conducted within a maximum 8 weeks from this council motion and the new cemetery and crematorium rules and regulations will be in action before the 1st May 2024. The graves under threat of dismantle/ removal of edgings and toys etc will be postponed till the new rules and regulations are created as some of these edgings and toys would fit in the new modern rules approach."~~

53.14 The amendment was accepted by the mover of the original motion and therefore became the substantive motion.

-
53.15 **RESOLVED that:-**

Gloucester City Council created a set of rules and regulations on the 1st August 2014 for the Coney Hill Cemetery and Crematorium.

Following a complaint and comments on social media from hundreds of families about their child's, brothers, mothers, fathers, & grandparents graves vases/ personal possessions and borders being removed by the council as they don't fit into the councils rigid set of rules and regulations has caused much hurt and upset around the families who manage their beloved members final resting place.

Some personal possessions, gifts, pictures, lights and borders have been removed from the graves over night without the families being made aware. I am sure council letters have been sent. However this does not help the situation when your beloved family's members picture/ gift or toy has been removed because it was an inch too big.

This council notes that the cemetery and crematorium rules needs reviewing urgently as currently there are many families who have been given a deadline by the council to remove personal items from their beloved ones final resting places or the council shall do so and hold for collection.

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Graves and resting areas of loved ones should be a place of peace for family members. A place to visit loved ones and feel close. A place of sanctuary where family members are able to make the resting places bespoke to their past family member, a resting place of a beloved family member should have the option to be able to use colours that they liked, as well as pictures and ornaments. These needs however need to be balanced with the requirements of an operational cemetery.

From the 2014 rules, there are fixed rules for set edgings, many families cannot afford to buy solid granite sets for edgings and they have used an alternative to mark out their family members resting place. As a result, the Council have written to the families advising that these edgings and the gravel infill should be removed within 14 days to comply with the rules which were signed prior to the grave being purchased. Recently, a further 12 letters have been sent by the City council to family members to advise they will have items removed from their loved ones graves if they do not follow the cemetery rules.

This council notes the hard work and dedication of the cemetery team who work in a very challenging area, providing support and guidance to the bereaved with the upmost compassion and empathy.

The council agrees to conduct a review of the 2014 rules and regulations for the cemetery, considering industry best practice and the rules of all local cemeteries. A report shall be brought to Cabinet outlining the results. Should this review recommend changes to the rules, Cabinet will be asked to approve a full public consultation requesting comments from families who use the cemetery and all Gloucester residents. This council will postpone any grave / resting place edging removal until the end of the review process and consultation if required.

53.15 Councillor O'Donnell proposed and Councillor A. Chambers seconded the following motion:

“This council notes that there are 20 plus rough sleepers each night in and around our Gloucester City Streets.

After speaking to other organisations who want to remain confidential at this point they have advised that the current system is not fit for purpose.

Rough sleepers who do not own mobile phone devices are unable to receive help as they are missed off the system if they move at the point when the outreach team visit.

This city council owes the rough sleepers a duty of care and protection. Currently there have been numerous incidents of rough sleepers tents and bedding being set on fire.

Not only that there are many rough sleepers who have mental health conditions and also pose a risk to the general public and themselves with several incidents occurring recently.

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There are also more worryingly British military veterans that have served our country sleeping rough with no help or assistance.

Temporary hotel places for rough sleepers and ex British military veterans are becoming increasing harder to obtain due to the fact over 2 large Hotels in our city are full to the brim of small boat economic illegal immigrants. These economic immigrants are predominately male of working age. This therefore has left British ex military veterans and nationals out in the cold.

Moreover, the city's missions night shelter has closed this year meaning many U.K. nationals will be left out in the frost and snow over our harsh winter.

This council notes that a solution is urgently required to safe guarding our cities rough sleepers and make our city overall a safer place.

This motion is for the City Council to find an empty building within the city and form a night shelter within 14 days of this motion with a capacity of 100 people.

This will then enable a safe space and shelter for the rough sleepers and any families that find themselves homeless this Christmas.

This night shelter must remain open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year.

The saving of housing people in the temporary night shelter will ensure that the City Council save enormous costs charged by hotels."

53.16 Councillor S. Chambers proposed and Councillor Padilla seconded the following amendment:

"This council notes that there are ~~20 plus~~ rough sleepers each night in and around our Gloucester City Streets.

After speaking to other organisations who want to remain confidential at this point they have advised **claimed** that the current system is ~~not fit for purpose~~ **does not work as well as it could.**

It can be more difficult for ~~R~~rough sleepers who do not own mobile phone devices ~~are unable to~~ receive help as they ~~are~~ **can be** missed off the system if they move at the point when the out reach team visit.

This city council owes the rough sleepers a duty of care and protection. ~~Currently there have been numerous incidents of rough sleepers tents and bedding being set on fire.~~

~~Not only that there are many~~ **There are** rough sleepers who have mental health conditions and ~~also pose a risk to the general public and themselves with several incidents occurring recently.~~

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~~There are also more worryingly British~~ **No one should be sleeping rough on the streets of Gloucester including** military veterans that have served our country sleeping rough with no help or assistance.

~~Temporary hotel places for rough sleepers and ex British military veterans are becoming increasing harder to obtain due to the fact over 2 large Hotels in our city are full to the brim of small boat economic illegal immigrants. These economic immigrants are predominately male of working age. This therefore has left British ex military veterans and nationals out in the cold.~~

Temporary accommodation for rough sleepers can be harder to obtain due to demand.

~~Moreover, tThe eCity's mMission's night shelter has closed this year meaning many U.K. nationals will be left out in the frost and snow over our harsh winter~~ **will not be opening this winter however Severe Weather Emergency Protocol will continue to operate during extreme weather conditions.**

This council notes that a solution is urgently required to safe-guarding our ~~cities~~ **city's** rough sleepers and make our city overall a safer place.

This motion is for the City Council to ~~find an empty building within the city and form a night shelter within 14 days of this motion with a capacity of 100 people~~ **work with partners to provide a night shelter to help meet the needs of rough sleepers that we owe a duty to in Gloucester.**

This will then enable a safe space and shelter for the rough sleepers and ~~any families that find themselves homeless this Christmas~~ **with children will always be provided with accommodation either through the city council under the Housing Act 1996 or the County Council under the Children's Act 1989 so no family should be without a roof this Christmas.**

This night shelter ~~must remain open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year~~ **will operate to meet the needs that are required in line with assessed.**

~~The saving of housing people in the temporary night shelter will ensure that the City Council save enormous costs charged by hotels~~ **Any cost saving is to be determined, however this shelter would be another offering to support homeless people we owe a duty to."**

53.17 RESOLVED that:-

This council notes that there are rough sleepers each night in and around our Gloucester City Streets.

After speaking to other organisations who want to remain confidential at this point they have claimed that the current system does not work as well as it could.

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It can be more difficult for rough sleepers who do not own mobile phone devices to receive help as they can be missed off the system if they move at the point when the out reach team visit.

This city council owes the rough sleepers a duty of care and protection.

There are rough sleepers who have mental health conditions.

No one should be sleeping rough on the streets of Gloucester including military veterans that have served our country.

Temporary accommodation for rough sleepers can be harder to obtain due to demand.

The City Mission's night shelter will not be opening this winter however Severe Weather Emergency Protocol will continue to operate during extreme weather conditions.

This council notes that a solution is urgently required to safe-guard our city's rough sleepers and make our city overall a safer place.

This motion is for the City Council to work with partners to provide a night shelter to help meet the needs of rough sleepers that we owe a duty to in Gloucester.

This will then enable a safe space and shelter for the rough sleepers and families with children will always be provided with accommodation either through the city council under the Housing Act 1996 or the County Council under the Children's Act 1989 so no family should be without a roof this Christmas.

This night shelter will operate to meet the needs that are required in line with assessed.

Any cost saving is to be determined, however this shelter would be another offering to support homeless people we owe a duty to.

53.18 Councillor Wilson proposed and Councillor Hilton seconded the following motion:

“At the September meeting of Full Council the non availability of audited accounts for Gloucester City Council for the financial years of 2022/22 and 2022/23 was debated. During the course of the debate it was explained that this was partly due to a crisis in local government auditing that was also affecting other councils in the country.

Openness and transparency are nonetheless important, especially in these times of great financial uncertainty.

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Council notes that Gloucestershire County Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council, Stroud District Council and The Forest of Dean District Council have all published draft (unaudited) accounts for 2022/23.

Council therefore requires Gloucester City Council to adopt this practice and ensure that fully audited accounts for 2021/22 and draft (unaudited) accounts for 2022/23 are published on the council's website by January 2024."

- 53.19 Councillor Norman proposed and Councillor Cook seconded the following amendment:

"At the September meeting of Full Council the non availability of audited accounts for Gloucester City Council for the financial years of 2022/22 and 2022/23 was debated. During the course of the debate it was explained that this was partly due to a crisis in local government auditing that was also affecting other councils in the country.

Openness and transparency are nonetheless important, especially in these times of great financial uncertainty.

Council notes that Gloucestershire County Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council, Stroud District Council and The Forest of Dean District Council have all published draft (unaudited) accounts for 2022/23.

Council therefore requires Gloucester City Council to adopt this practice and ensure that fully audited accounts for 2021/22, **subject to completion of audit work by Deloitte, are published on the website. The Deloitte audit is subject to ongoing proposals from Central Government with regards to expected back stop dates to clear the sector wide backlog of audits. Council also requires that** ~~and draft (unaudited) accounts for 2022/23 are published on the council's website by January 2024~~ **before the March 2024 Council meeting to allow transparent debate."**

- 53.20 The amendment was accepted by the mover of the original motion and therefore became the substantive motion.

- 53.21 **RESOLVED that:-**

At the September meeting of Full Council the non availability of audited accounts for Gloucester City Council for the financial years of 2022/22 and 2022/23 was debated. During the course of the debate it was explained that this was partly due to a crisis in local government auditing that was also affecting other councils in the country.

Openness and transparency are nonetheless important, especially in these times of great financial uncertainty.

Council notes that Gloucestershire County Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council, Stroud District Council and The

COUNCIL
16.11.23

Forest of Dean District Council have all published draft (unaudited) accounts for 2022/23.

Council therefore requires Gloucester City Council to adopt this practice and ensure that fully audited accounts for 2021/22, subject to completion of audit work by Deloitte, are published on the website. The Deloitte audit is subject to ongoing proposals from Central Government with regards to expected back stop dates to clear the sector wide backlog of audits. Council also requires that draft (unaudited) accounts for 2022/23 are published on the council's website before the March 2024 Council meeting to allow transparent debate.

53.22 Councillor Patel proposed and Councillor Zaman seconded the following motion:

“This council strongly condemns the horrific atrocities by Hamas on the people of Israel on 7th October 2023.

We not only condemn those atrocities, but also the current campaign of bombings (over 10,000 bombs so far) by Israel on residential towers, schools, hospitals, ambulances and refugee camps killing and injuring thousands of innocent Palestinian people. Since 7th October, approximately 10,000 Palestinians have died (40% of those were children) and over 1,400 Israeli's in this latest conflict.

We call on the council leader to write to the MP Richard Graham and PM Rishi Sunak urging Israel to immediately stop the bombings and collective punishment against 2 million Palestinian people, and also call on Hamas to free the innocent kidnapped Israeli citizens back to Israel. We also support a call for a ceasefire by both IDF and Hamas.

A blockade preventing access to the most basic human necessities such as food, water, electricity, medical supplies etc is also classed as a war crime under International Law.

This council agrees with the world that Hamas are terrorists and that they don't represent the Palestinian people, and furthermore acknowledges that Israel's fight is with Hamas, not the Palestinian people.

We therefore call on the British Government and all its allies to listen to us and the world, and request an immediate end to the siege and the constant bombardment of Gaza.

We also call on the Home Secretary to cease her unacceptable attempts to suppress the democratic rights of the British people to peaceful protests.

This council prays for peace not only in Israel/Palestine, but all over the world and we condemn all forms of hate crimes such as Antisemitism, Islamophobia etc.”

53.23 **RESOLVED that:-**

**COUNCIL
16.11.23**

This council strongly condemns the horrific atrocities by Hamas on the people of Israel on 7th October 2023.

We not only condemn those atrocities, but also the current campaign of bombings (over 10,000 bombs so far) by Israel on residential towers, schools, hospitals, ambulances and refugee camps killing and injuring thousands of innocent Palestinian people. Since 7th October, approximately 10,000 Palestinians have died (40% of those were children) and over 1,400 Israeli's in this latest conflict.

We call on the council leader to write to the MP Richard Graham and PM Rishi Sunak urging Israel to immediately stop the bombings and collective punishment against 2 million Palestinian people, and also call on Hamas to free the innocent kidnapped Israeli citizens back to Israel. We also support a call for a ceasefire by both IDF and Hamas.

A blockade preventing access to the most basic human necessities such as food, water, electricity, medical supplies etc is also classed as a war crime under International Law. This council agrees with the world that Hamas are terrorists and that they don't represent the Palestinian people, and furthermore acknowledges that Israel's fight is with Hamas, not the Palestinian people.

We therefore call on the British Government and all its allies to listen to us and the world, and request an immediate end to the siege and the constant bombardment of Gaza.

We also call on the Home Secretary to cease her unacceptable attempts to suppress the democratic rights of the British people to peaceful protests.

This council prays for peace not only in Israel/Palestine, but all over the world and we condemn all forms of hate crimes such as Antisemitism, Islamophobia etc.

Time of commencement: 6.30 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 9.40 pm hours

Chair



Meeting:	Council	Date:	25 January 2024
Subject:	Petition – Saintbridge Pond and Nature Reserve		
Report Of:	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Environment		
Wards Affected:	Abbeydale		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Mark Graham- Open Spaces Strategy Team Leader		
	Email: mark.graham@gloucester.gov.uk	Tel:	39-6785
Appendices:	1. Petition Front Sheet		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the Council's proposed response to a petition regarding Saintbridge Pond and Nature Reserve that has obtained in excess of 1,000 signatures, thus triggering a Council debate in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- (1) The contents of the petition be noted.
- (2) The contents of this report be noted.
- (3) The management plan for Saintbridge Pond Nature Reserve that already exists and has been shared with partners is noted.
- (4) It is noted that the Council will not plan to carry out dredging at this time, for the reasons set out in this report, but will keep this position under review.
- (5) It is noted that the Council will work with partners to manage the perimeter vegetation and foliage at the site.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 A petition regarding Saintbridge Pond and Nature Reserve was submitted to the Council by the Friends of Saintbridge Pond and Nature Reserve (FOSPNR) and supported by Councillor Gravells, Ward Councillor for Abbeydale. The petition, formed of both paper and online versions, had 1251 signatures as at the date of submission to the Council and therefore meets the threshold for a Council debate.
- 3.2 The petition asks the Council to fulfil its ownership duties by providing a maintenance / business plan for the perimeter vegetation and foliage at Saintbridge Pond and Nature Reserve, and to reduce the amount of silt to address the loss of wildlife habitats and eradicate the invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam and the Giant

Reed which crowds out native species and reduce wildlife habitat. The full wording of the petition is included at Appendix 1.

- 3.3 The Council is the owner of Saintbridge Pond which has Green Flag status. A management plan exists for the site and this was submitted as part of the Green Flag application. The management plan is for 5 years and was updated last year, with input from partners, including the Environment Agency (EA) and Friends of Saintbridge Pond. The current level of silt does not impact on the green flag status and the previous inspector who granted status did not raise concerns.
- 3.4 Saintbridge Pond is classified as a formal reservoir under the Reservoirs Act 1975 (the Act) and as such, dam safety elements are operated and managed by the Environment Agency. As a requirement of the Act an independent Reservoir Panel Engineer carries out a thorough inspection at least once a year. Any issues raised from these inspections will be acted upon and in the last 12 months the EA have carried out works embankments and flood walls that hold flood water when the storage area is operated.
- 3.5 Regular meetings take place with partners to discuss the management of the site and any arising issues. Partners include the EA and Friends of Saintbridge Pond.
- 3.6 It is the view of the Council, following discussions with the EA, that from a flood risk perspective and from a biodiversity perspective, dredging of the pond is not currently needed and there are no concerns regarding flood water storage capacity.
- 3.7 In terms of the management of wildlife and biodiversity of the site, this has not deteriorated though it has changed over time. The life cycle of a pond, impacted by nature is that it will evolve from a pond to a wetland and eventually become land over a period of time. The biodiversity of the site will therefore change naturally. This does not mean that the Council accepts the full and permanent evolution of the site from pond to land, rather that a partial evolution of the pond/land in the short to medium term is acceptable as long as it does not impact on the flood risk.
- 3.8 Himalayan Balsam and Giant Reed exist across many sites all over the country and do not grow because of the silt. Therefore, the removal of silt is unlikely to lead to these species ceasing to grow on the site. Activities carried out at other locations such as Balsam bashing can be undertaken to address the Balsam growth.
- 3.9 The silt can create a smell, as noted by residents. The period during desilting work, should it take place, would create a significant increase in smell.
- 3.10 The main holding area for flood water is the dry basin located off Redpoll Way. There is an access path along a section parallel to the River Twyver relief channel to allow the EA access to maintain and operate the dam elements such as the trash screen and penstocks. This path is not a formal right of way and is subject to silt deposition following operation of the storage basin. Alternate routes are available and sediment clearance from the path is carried out as soon as practical by the Council.
- 3.11 The estimated cost for removal of the sediment to create an expanse of open water within the lower pond is in the region of £700,000.

4.0 Social Value Considerations

4.1 Environmental impact is a key consideration as part of our social value work. Environmental implications are laid out below.

5.0 Environmental Implications

5.1 If the pond is not dredged the area will continue to transform to a wooded wetland with two watercourse channels running through it. This provides a bio-diverse habitat which has evolved from what the original site habitat would have looked like. Should the pond not be dredged, the eco-system and wildlife would not be lost and would continue to change with the natural site evolution.

5.2 Consequently, dredging the pond will have a negative impact on the current wildlife and eco-systems that are succeeding at the site.

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

6.1 The Council could proceed to carry out the removal of silt at this location. However, this is unlikely to reduce the issues long term and would be at substantial cost to the Council which would reoccur approximately every 20 years.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 As stated above, the removal of silt is not guaranteed to address the issues being raised and would be at substantial cost to the Council.

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

8.1 The Council, along with several partners including Stroud District Council and the EA, are investigating opportunities to manage the source of the sediment higher up in the Cotswold Escarpments in the form of Natural Flood Management (NFM). This involves re-naturalising manmade concrete watercourse channels, de-culverting sections and providing land use management interventions such as tree planting to improve erosion control and alternative livestock drinking points to prevent poaching of ground that introduces sediment into the watercourses.

8.2 Discussions with the EA and National Highways are also planned with regards to the M5 motorway discharges that enter the River Twyver and Sud Brook. These are considered to contribute to water quality issues and sediment deposition within the city's urban watercourses.

8.3 Activities such as 'Balsam Bashing' which has been carried out at other sites in the City, can be planned with partners at the appropriate time of the year.

9.0 Financial Implications

9.1 The cost to remove the majority of sediment from the lower pond would be in the region of £700,000. A significant element of this is the disposal of the sediment, and this figure could be a significant under-estimate should the arisings be considered contaminated.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

10.0 Legal Implications

- 10.1 As detailed in the body of the report, the Council are the owners of the land and are responsible for its maintenance. A management plan is in place for the area and was prepared in consultation with partners, including the EA and Friends of Saintbridge Pond.

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

11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 11.1 The flood risk at the site will continue to be monitored by the Council and the EA and any changes to the management plan in light of changes to flood risk will be made.

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:

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

13.0 Community Safety Implications

- 13.1 None

14.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications

- 14.1 None

Background Documents:

None



Saintbridge Pond & Nature Reserve

(Located between Abbeydale, Coney Hill and Saintbridge Wards, parallel with Painswick Road - GL44PS)

Residents Petition to Gloucester City Council

Gloucester City Council are the riparian owners of Saintbridge Pond & Nature Reserve (2004 awarded protected Nature Reserve Status, and the largest volume of water in Gloucester City's urban areas) and as such are responsible for its maintenance and upkeep of ecosystems there which plants and wildlife depend on.

Residents and Friends of Saintbridge Pond & Nature Reserve (FOSP) have compiled this petition to ask Gloucester City Council to fulfil their ownership duties by providing a maintenance / business plan for the perimeter vegetation and foliage, and to reduce the amount of silt. This will address the loss of wildlife habitats and eradicate the invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam and the Giant Reed which crowds out native species and reduce wildlife habitat.

The level of silt affects water quality, it reduces the oxygen increases the loss of tiny invertebrates and creates a foul smell in Summer while the high-water levels in winter are a threat to local buildings and life which upset the biodiversity of the area. Pedestrian paths are impassable as the silt from the channels flowing into the Saintbridge Pond overflow. (2023 the path at the dry balancing pond has denied access for residents for the past three weeks).

Saintbridge pond was last desilted back in 2009 (14 years ago). Gloucester City Council have a duty to their residents, to keep them safe, to return Saintbridge Pond back to its original state where families, residents (estimated 1000 footfall per day!) can enjoy their daily walk for their health & well-being. Saintbridge pond is a lifeline for many people. Silt needs to be removed from Saintbridge pond, Gloucester City Council need to provide a safe and welcoming environment as it once used to be. (Green Flag Status)

Total Signatures (enclosed) :- 1251

Petition Dated : 09/11/2023

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Report to:	Cabinet Council	Date:	10 January 2024 25 January 2024
Subject:	Council Tax - Second Property Premium and Empty Homes Premium Amendment		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	Yes	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Greg Maw, Head of Finance & Resources		
	Email: greg.maw@gloucester.gov.uk	Tel:	01452 396422
Appendices:	None		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 In May 2022, the Government’s ‘The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill’ put forward proposals to charge discretionary Council Tax premium options on second homes. The Bill received Royal Assent on 26 October 2023 and gives Local Authorities the option to include a council tax premium on properties which are occupied periodically (second homes) and a reduction from two years to one year before an empty home premium is applied.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RECOMMEND:**

- (a) To increase council tax for all properties which are occupied periodically by 100% from 1 April 2025 subject to any exemptions set out in subsequent Regulations and for implementation to be in accordance with those Regulations and guidance, and
- (b) To increase the council tax empty homes premium to 100% for properties empty for between one and five years (currently between two and five years), from 1 April 2025 subject to any exemptions set out in subsequent Regulations and guidance.

2.2 Council is asked to **RESOLVE:**

- (a) to increase council tax for all properties which are occupied periodically by 100% from 1 April 2025 subject to any exemptions set out in subsequent Regulations and for implementation to be in accordance with those Regulations and guidance, and

- (b) To increase the council tax empty homes premium to 100% for properties empty for between one and five years (currently between two and five years), from 1 April 2025 subject to any exemptions set out in subsequent Regulations and guidance.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 For Council Tax purposes second homes are properties that are furnished but where no-one lives as their main residence. Council Tax is charged at the standard 100% charge, in line with the property council tax band. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 enables Billing Authorities to determine a higher amount for properties occupied periodically (second homes) of up to an additional 100%. The conditions are:
- There is no resident of the property and
 - The property is substantially furnished.
- 3.2 There is no legal definition for what constitutes substantially furnished. In any disputed cases we will always visit and make an assessment.
- 3.3 With increased pressure to find housing for people in need the Council wants to encourage homeowners to bring homes into use to the benefit of all residents. The premium supports the council's strategy to bring empty homes back in to use more quickly and generate additional income.
- 3.4 Long-term empty homes within Gloucester City, are currently subject to an Empty Homes Premium, introduced in April 2019 and which allows additional council tax premium charges as follows:
- 100% additional Empty Homes Premium on properties which are empty for more than two years but less than five years.
 - 200% additional Empty Homes Premium on properties which are empty for more than five years but less than ten years.
 - 300% additional Empty Homes Premium on properties which are empty for more than 10 years.

The Act amends the definition of a long-term empty dwelling, reducing the period from two years to one. Changes to the definition of a long-term empty dwelling allows an empty home premium of an additional 100% on properties which are empty for more than one year but less than five years.

- 3.5 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 received Royal Assent on the 26 October 2023. A billing authority's decision to charge a premium for a second home must be made at least one year before the beginning of the financial year to which it relates and will become available from 1 April 2025. A change to the Empty Home Premium can be implemented from 1 April 2024 providing the decision is taken before the start of the financial year.
- 3.6 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) section 11C subsection (3) legislates that any Billing Authority wishing to implement the discretionary second home premium charge must make a Council resolution confirming its requirements at least one year before the beginning of the financial year to which it relates, hence the request for the approval to increase council tax on second homes at this early stage. A billing authority that wishes to vary a determination relating to the Empty

Homes Premium must do so before the beginning of the financial year under Section 11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) subsection (5).

- 3.7 Approval is sought to allow the Council to make timely decisions once detailed guidance is available and regulations made for the premium on properties that are occupied periodically.
- 3.8 The Government encourages billing authorities to adopt Council Tax premiums on long-term empty properties with the purpose of incentivising property owners to bring those empty properties back into use.
- 3.9 The Act addresses the issue of empty furnished properties by proposing a 100% increase in Council Tax to be applied to second homes and closes the loophole where furnishing an empty property negates the Empty Home Premium.

4.0 PROGRESS

- 4.1 As of 2 October 2023, Gloucester City Council records show that 153 properties throughout the city are recorded as Second Homes. The breakdown is as follows:

Number of Band A Properties	Number of Band B Properties	Number of Band C properties	Number of Band D properties	Number of Band E properties	Number of Band F Properties	Number of Band G Properties	Number of Band H Properties
67	35	28	15	7	0	1	0

- 4.2 Based on Council Tax charges for 2023-24 financial year, if an additional 100% second home premium were to be introduced, additional charges of approximately £249k could be billed, generating £27k a year for Gloucester City Council.
- 4.3 Empty homes tend to have a more fluid position than second homes. As of 2 October 2023 records show that 54 properties, detailed in the table below, are subject to the 100% empty homes premium as they have been empty and unoccupied for over two years.

Number of Band A Properties	Number of Band B Properties	Number of Band C Properties	Number of Band D Properties	Number of Band E Properties	Number of Band G Properties
27	16	6	3	1	1

An additional £85k is billed for council tax empty homes premium on these properties recorded as empty for in excess of two years. It cannot be assumed that a change in timescales from two years to one year will result in similar additional premiums being levied, however the figures should provide context. It should also be noted that there will be an element of fluidity around the figures for empty homes and an amount should be considered for non-collection.

- 4.4 Any additional income generated would be shared across the City Council's main preceptors, Gloucestershire County Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 The purpose of the Empty Homes Premium change is to encourage property owners of long-term empty properties to bring those properties back into use. There are negative effects on the community associated through long term empty properties which are likely to fall into disrepair and be subject to anti-social behaviour such as squatting or vandalism.
- 5.2 The rationale behind changing the 100% Empty Homes Premium for long-term empty properties, currently empty for more than two years but less than five years, to empty for more than one year but less than five years is to provide owners with a further incentive to bring empty homes back into use, thus supporting the aims of the Council's Long Term Empty Property Strategy as well as generating additional Council Tax income. A working group across service areas is currently reviewing the council's approach to empty homes, engaging with owners to understand their behaviours and what the council can do to incentivise getting empty properties back into use.
- 5.3 The purpose of the Second Home Premium is to close the loophole where furnishing an empty property negates the Empty Home Premium charge as well as generating additional Council Tax income.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet and then Council resolve to increase council tax for all properties which are occupied periodically by 100% from 1 April 2025.
- 6.2 It is recommended that the Cabinet and then Council resolve to increase the council tax empty home premium to 100% for properties empty for between one and five years from 1 April 2025.
- 6.3 A notice will be published in at least one local newspaper within 21 days of determination.
- 6.4 Subsequent regulations and detailed guidance will be tracked and a work plan put in place including a communication strategy to ensure that council taxpayers are notified of the introduction of a Second Home Premium and changes to the Empty Home Premium in advance of 1 April 2025. The work plan will factor in a key task to identify properties that are excluded from the premium and records updated accordingly in advance of 1 April 2025.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications associated with the recommendation. The Council have the software to enable the billing amendments to take place.
- 7.2 There are positive financial impacts, based on data as of 2 October 2023 and the current year council tax charges, additional council tax of £334k could be charged.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 amends the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The effect being that for financial years beginning on or after

1 April 2025 a billing authority may by determination increase council tax by 100% where there is no resident of a dwelling, and the dwelling is substantially furnished. A determination must be made at least one year before the beginning of the financial year to which it relates.

- 8.2 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 amends the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The effect being that for financial years beginning on or after 1 April 2024 a “long term empty dwelling” can be a property that (a) has been unoccupied, and (b) it has been substantially unfurnished for a period of one year rather than the current 2 years.

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 9.1 There is a risk that the introduction of a second home premium may encourage Council Tax ‘avoidance’ whereby owners of second homes may transfer the property to Business Rates. Currently only properties that are available to let for more than 20 weeks (140 days) in a calendar year should be rated for business rates by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). From April 2023, the rules surrounding this are still applicable, however, in addition, the owner must evidence to the VOA that the property was actually let for short periods totalling at least 70 days in the previous year. This amendment for the second homeowner to evidence that the property has been let should ensure that any properties transferring from the Council Tax register to Business Rates are only those where the property is genuinely being utilised for business purposes. There may be some properties currently on the Business Rates list which will need to be transferred to the Council Tax register.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

- 10.1 None

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

- 11.1 Not applicable.

Sustainability

- 11.2 Not applicable

Staffing & Trade Union

- 11.3 Not applicable

Background Documents:

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 – Chapter 2 Section 79 and 80 [Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023](#)

Report to Cabinet 9 January 2019 – Council Tax Empty Homes Premium - [Gloucester City Council - Empty Homes Premium](#)

[The Local Government Finance Act 1992 Chapter 1 Section 11B](#)

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Meeting:	Cabinet Council	Date:	6 December 2023 25 January 2024
Subject:	Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	Yes	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Karen Haile, Service Delivery Manager (Revenues & Benefits)		
	Email: Karen.Haile@gloucester.gov.uk	Tel: 396476	
Appendices:	1. Council Tax Support Scheme – Gloucester City Council		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To seek approval to retain the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RECOMMEND** that

- (1) the current Local Council Tax Support scheme, as the approved scheme for Gloucester City in 2023/24, be adopted for 2024/25
- (2) The scheme approved at 2.1 (1) above be updated to align with any legislation changes in January 2024 and to be implemented from 01 April 2024.
- (3) Any urgent amendments to the scheme approved at 2.1 (1) above, in the event of a national emergency and authorised by the government, be adopted and implemented immediately

2.2 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- (1) the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme, as the approved scheme for Gloucester City in 2023/24, be adopted for 2024/25
- (2) The scheme approved at 2.1 (1) above be updated to align with any legislation changes in January 2024 and to be implemented from 01 April 2024
- (3) Any urgent amendments to the scheme at 2.1 (1) above, in the event of a national emergency and authorised by the government, be adopted and implemented immediately

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Members will be aware that the current Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme was approved and adopted at a meeting of full Council on 26th January 2023.
- 3.2 Council Tax charges are the means by which local residents make a contribution towards the cost of local services.
Prior to April 2013 Council Tax Benefit was administered under a national scheme set by Central Government which allowed eligible local residents to claim up to 100% reduction from their Council Tax bill – subject to legislative and means tested income requirements. The Council were able to receive full funding from the Government to cover all of the Council Tax Benefit awards made.
- 3.3 From April 2013 Council Tax Benefit was abolished and replaced with a Local Council Tax Reduction scheme. Any working age person who is liable to pay Council Tax can apply for a reduction in their Council Tax under the Local Council Tax Reduction scheme. The scheme is not legislated by Central Government, rather each local authority now has its own scheme. Central Government no longer fully funds this locally administered award, as there was an expectation that Local Authorities would amend their local schemes to fund the shortfall. Gloucester City Council's scheme remains more generous than many local authorities as residents can still apply for, and receive up to, 100% reduction from their council tax charge (subject to means testing)
- 3.4 As the rollout of Universal Credit continues, administratively it has made sense to align Local Council Tax Support to Universal Credit. The traditional link between Housing Benefit (which will no longer be available to new working age claimants) and Local Council Tax Support will not exist anymore, and it is essential the scheme is changed to assist those affected.
- 3.5 **Pension Age Customers** - It is important to note that those customers who reach pensionable age are not affected as Council Tax support for pensioners was never localised and remains under the jurisdiction of a national scheme.
- 3.6 For working age claims there is a complex means-tested assessment involving multiple aspects of the household circumstances including income, capital, residents and relationships. Although the scheme retains a number of these complex areas, some were removed in the 2020/21 scheme making it easier to administer and understand. In addition, the scheme now has a more simplified way of managing claims from people receiving Universal Credit, which all working age households receiving welfare benefit support are migrating to over the coming years.

4.0 Social Value Consideration

- 4.1 Gloucester City Council's local council tax support scheme is more generous than many other local authorities as it retains the ability to award 100% support to those households which are most financially disadvantaged.
- 4.2 Gloucester City Council also have a Council Tax discretionary hardship scheme for those City residents who may find themselves in exceptional circumstances. For

this purpose, exceptional is defined as 'not typical, entirely unusual, and only likely to happen very infrequently'. A resident would have to demonstrate financial hardship or exceptionally difficult personal circumstances and must also have applied for all other exemptions, discounts and benefits before an award can be considered. Any award made would be for the current financial year's Council Tax only.

- 4.3 The longer-term consideration of the policy is to align Gloucester City Council's Local Council Tax Support scheme to Universal Credit which will make the scheme less onerous to administer, and easier for customers to understand and assist with their budgeting. Full migration of the existing legacy benefit caseload to Universal Credit is not expected to be achieved until at least 2025.

5.0 Environmental Implications

- 5.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this report

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 Amendments to the scheme have not been considered for the 2024-25 year.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 Gloucester City Council have managed to maintain the current scheme broadly mirroring the original fully funded scheme for ten years, to date. Whilst the Council are facing a range of financial pressures, it is not considered pertinent to amend the scheme at this time. The rising costs of living across the UK continues to impact households with increased food prices and energy bills; the current scheme offers a degree of financial support in uncertain financial times for our residents.
- 7.2 As government funding continues to decrease, we also need to strike a balance between a revised scheme that is fair and affordable for those who receive support, and also for all our residents who receive council services. However, we do remain committed to providing support to our residents with low incomes.

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 8.1 January 25th 2024 - meeting of the full Council are asked to resolve that the scheme approved at 2.1 above be updated to align with any legislation changes prior to April 2024 and be implemented from 01 April 2024, with the caveat that any urgent amendments to the scheme in the event of a national emergency and decreed by central government may be implemented immediately.

9.0 Financial Implications

- 9.1 A review of the scheme is carried out annually to assess the financial cost of the scheme and to ensure it remains operationally and financially viable, taking into account ongoing changes in legislation and financial requirements. Central Government no longer fully funds this locally administered award, as there was an expectation that Local Authorities would amend their local schemes to fund the shortfall. The funding for the local scheme reduced immediately by 10% of direct

subsidy in April 2013. Overall funding has continued to reduce, including the level of admin grant.

9.2 For 2024/25 there are no changes proposed

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

10.0 Legal Implications

10.1 The Local Government Finance Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit and instead required each authority to design a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to amounts of council tax. The prescribed regulations set out the matters that must be included in such a scheme.

The Local Council Tax Support 'LCTS' scheme is required under Section 9 of the Local Government Finance Act 2012.

10.2 Pensioners (those over state pension age) are protected from any changes, but otherwise the Council has discretion to decide how it wishes to design its scheme to cover any shortfall, in accordance with the prescribed requirements.

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

11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

11.1 Implementation of the minimum payment element of the Council Tax Support scheme has been deferred for another year.

11.2 The cost of the scheme and administration lies solely with the billing authority, however any uncollected council tax will be reflected in the collection fund. The council only has a minority stake in this of approximately 11.5%, with the majority of the revenue collected being dispersed to the preceptors; 74.3% to County Council and 14.2% to the Police and Crime Commissioner respectively.

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:

12.1 There are no changes proposed so PIA not relevant

13.0 Community Safety Implications

13.1 None

14.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications

14.1 None

Background Documents:

Local Government Finance Act 1972 –
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/contents>

Gloucester City Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Gloucester City Council's local Council Tax Support Scheme was introduced in April 2013 based on the default scheme set out by the government controlled by Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) 2012 Regulations.

Legislative requirements

The government set out elements of the scheme which are required to be administered by all councils and are detailed in the prescribed requirements legislation. Changes being applied from 1 April 2023 will be set out in The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 and, once published, can be viewed on www.legislation.gov.uk

The Government has also set out rules in the following Regulations:

- Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012, which protect claimants of state pension credit age;
- Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012;
- Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

The 'Prescribed Requirements' regulations detail how Council Tax Support will be worked out for people of state pension credit age. In designing a local Council Tax Support scheme for people of state pension credit age, local authorities must include the provisions of the council tax reduction schemes 'Prescribed Requirements' regulations.

The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) 2012 Regulations include all of the provisions of the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012, ensuring that claimants of state pension credit age are protected, and they also made provision for deciding CTS entitlement for working age claimants.

The scheme is reviewed on an annual basis and updated where it is appropriate to do so in line with local priorities and to reflect changes within the wider Welfare Benefit system. No changes that require consultation are being made for 2024/25.

On the 30th January 2020 the council agreed a number of changes to the local scheme for people who are not pensioners which came into force from 1 April 2020. The changes aligned Gloucester City Councils scheme to Universal Credit and made the scheme less onerous to administer. These changes have been incorporated into the Gloucester City Council scheme as per the attached document.



Council Tax Support
Scheme 2023.pdf

There are no amendments planned for 2024-25 and it is proposed to retain the current policy.

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Meeting:	Cabinet Council	Date:	6 December 2023 25 January 2024
Subject:	Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Community Infrastructure Levy Joint Committee		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	Yes	Budget/Policy Framework:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Adam Gooch, Planning Policy Manager		
	Email: adam.gooch@gloucester.gov.uk	Tel:	39- 6836
Appendices:	1. Community Infrastructure Levy Joint Committee – Terms of Reference		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report seeks approval from Council for:

- (1) The establishment of a Joint Committee to facilitate governance of the allocation of infrastructure funding from Community Infrastructure Levy receipts received by Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury as set out in appended Terms of Reference
- (2) Agreement of pooling arrangements for the Infrastructure Fund by the three Joint Committee partner councils, managed through Community Infrastructure Levy Joint Committee Terms of Reference, and
- (3) Engagement with wider infrastructure providers.

2.0 Recommendations

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

- (1) it be agreed that the establishment of a Community Infrastructure Levy Joint Committee under s101(5) and s102 Local Government Act 1972 and under Part 1A Chapter 2 Section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and pursuant to the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012;
- (2) it be agreed that the Community Infrastructure Levy Joint Committee Terms of Reference (Appendix 1);

- (3) it be agreed that the pooling of strategic infrastructure Community Infrastructure Levy monies by the three partner Councils of Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury with governance as set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy Joint Committee Terms of Reference;
- (4) engagement with wider infrastructure providers outside the local authorities be entered into to identify any wider infrastructure priorities to be considered by the Community Infrastructure Levy Joint Committee.

2.2 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that:

- (1) it be agreed that the establishment of a Community Infrastructure Levy Joint Committee under s101(5) and s102 Local Government Act 1972 and under Part 1A Chapter 2 Section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and pursuant to the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012;
- (2) it be agreed that the Community Infrastructure Levy Joint Committee Terms of Reference (Appendix 1);
- (3) it be agreed that the pooling of strategic infrastructure Community Infrastructure Levy monies by the three partner Councils of Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury with governance as set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy Joint Committee Terms of Reference;
- (4) engagement with wider infrastructure providers outside the local authorities be entered into to identify any wider infrastructure priorities to be considered by the Community Infrastructure Levy Joint Committee.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area. It is an important tool for local authorities to use to help deliver infrastructure needed to support development. CIL is governed by the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- 3.2 CIL is paid to the council by developers at set times from the commencement of development. In Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury council areas, this is done in accordance with the adopted 'Instalments Policy'. CIL is a means outside wider government funding through which the council is able to collect and pool additional developer contributions to deliver infrastructure improvements.
- 3.3 Gloucester City Council approved the introduction of CIL in October 2018 with commencement of charging on planning applications granted permission on or after 1st January 2019.
- 3.4 CIL has a close relationship with the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the emerging Strategic and Local Plan (SLP) which spans Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury administrative areas. From its inception it has been envisaged that a significant proportion (70-80%) of funds collected via CIL will be spent on strategic 'Infrastructure'. It is proposed this is pooled between the three authorities. This is to be spent on larger, more costly infrastructure projects across the three council areas

and must be used for the 'provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure needed to support development'.

- 3.5 Whilst CIL has been in place for some time, it has taken a long period for the fund to build up. As of the end of October 2023, the strategic CIL pot stood at approximately £11.9m. Whilst this may look like a significant sum of funding available, the reality is that it provides just a small fraction of that needed to deliver the infrastructure demands for our areas.
- 3.6 Between 15% and 25% is secured for community spending. If a qualifying development was to occur within the boundary of Quedgeley Town Council, this 'Neighbourhood Funding' must be passed to them. If an approved 'Neighbourhood Planning Area' (NPAs) has a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan, monies would be retained by the City Council to be spent in consultation with the Neighbourhood Planning Forum. Most of Gloucester City is unparished and there are currently no active NPAs, therefore the community pot from development in these areas is retained by the City Council as a 'Neighbourhood Fund'. In November 2020, Gloucester City Council agreed to the creation of a new governance body to administer the expenditure of this money through the CIL Neighbourhood Fund, whereby community groups can bid for funds to support projects.

Joint Committee

- 3.7 It is proposed that a Joint Committee be set up between Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council to work jointly and collaboratively to advise the councils on the expenditure of pooled strategic pot CIL monies, working within an agreed Terms of Reference (Appendix 1). The Joint Committee will be supported by an Officer Working Group, which will work together to assess bids for funding and submit recommendations to the Joint Committee for approval.
- 3.8 The Joint Committee will:
- Oversee the Strategic CIL application process and scrutinise each project bid for strategic fit and compliance with CIL requirements.
 - Be accountable for the oversight, monitoring and governance of awards.
 - Take an objective and detached view of applications.
- 3.9 Each council shall appoint a Committee member and a substitute who shall be either the Leader or other appointed Cabinet / Executive Member. The quorate membership of the Committee will be three, made up of one member from each council. Each council will have one vote.
- 3.10 The Officer Working Group will work within a Terms of Reference, which is currently being prepared and will be agreed once the Joint Committee is established. It will report to the Committee, and include the following activities:
- Making recommendations to the Committee
 - Contract management where triggered
 - Application revisions and extensions
 - Financial updates
 - Project delivery scrutiny, and

- Checking compliance with funding agreements.
- 3.11 The Committee will be hosted under local government arrangements by Tewkesbury Borough Council and hosting arrangements reviewed every two years. The host authority will provide Secretary/Clerk, S151 and Monitoring Officer roles of the Committee.
- 3.12 Meetings of the Committee will occur at least annually to agree Strategic CIL allocations. Other meetings may be required to respond to the programme of the additional functions. Meetings which make decisions on the allocation of CIL funding will be in public.
- 3.13 The councils have reviewed and updated infrastructure projects that could be wholly or partly funded through Strategic CIL funds. The infrastructure list for Gloucester City (which will be considered for approval at Cabinet on 6th December as part of the Infrastructure Funding Statement) is provided at Appendix 3. Any future updates will be brought to Cabinet Members for approval. This list will form the basis for consideration of infrastructure projects by the Joint Committee.

Pooling of funds

- 3.14 In order to make the most effective use of CIL funds, and ensure sufficient monies to deliver strategic scale infrastructure, it is proposed that strategic contributions from each CIL charging authority are pooled. This is supported through the National Planning Policy Guidance on CIL, which states, *'Charging authorities can choose to pool a proportion of their Community Infrastructure Levy... Where local authorities are working jointly to prepare development plans for their areas, pooling of levy receipts may be a useful mechanism for funding strategic infrastructure projects that have cross-boundary benefits. Each of the charging authorities included in the pooling arrangements should be content that funding for infrastructure outside the authority's area will support development of its own area'*.
- 3.15 This principle is embedded within the Joint Committee Terms of Reference (Appendix 1), which proposes 100% pooling of strategic 'infrastructure' CIL. The key justifications for this are:
- Taking into account, S106 obligations, CIL to date together with wider funding either secured or identified, there is, and will remain, a significant funding gap to meet the infrastructure demands of the adopted Gloucester, Cheltenham & Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy.
 - Without commitment to pooling, all councils will face ongoing challenges to fund large infrastructure projects, and it will take a longer period of time to deliver priorities for investment.
 - By committing to pooling, within the parameters of the Joint Committee Terms of Reference, it sends a positive message to the broad range of infrastructure providers that the councils are committed to enabling infrastructure priorities across the area.
 - By building in trigger point reviews regarding pooling, this provides all partner councils with the ability to renegotiate the level of pooling in the future.
 - If Gloucester City was to retain a percentage of the strategic CIL receipts, in parallel to the Joint Committee it would have to put in separate governance procedures which, given the level of CIL currently being collected may be

challenging to allocate due to the high values of strategic infrastructure and this would not be efficient in respect of time and resources.

Infrastructure list

- 3.16 An Infrastructure list is included within the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS), reported at least annually to Cabinet.
- 3.17 The list for Gloucester City Council includes infrastructure priorities within existing plans and strategies and is contained in the IFS report, alongside those identified by Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council.
- 3.18 The councils are very aware that infrastructure identified by the local authorities may not identify all priorities. Therefore, a wider targeted exercise will be undertaken with key stakeholders such as NHS, emergency services, utilities, Environment Agency and Sport England. Should additional items be identified for our area which are considered priorities ahead of the full review of the IDP to support the SLP an update to the Infrastructure List will be presented to Cabinet.

4.0 Social Value Considerations

- 4.1 The delivery of infrastructure necessary to support development and new communities brings obvious social value benefits.

5.0 Environmental Implications

- 5.1 None directly from this report, however CIL infrastructure projects that may be in the future funded, may have implications.

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 In determining the most effective approach to determining how strategic CIL funds should be spent, a CIL Board has been considered. However, this is not considered the best approach for several reasons, including:
- The concern of the time and administration that would be needed to service a CIL Board and then recall decisions back to each individual council for final approval, building in delay and uncertainty for infrastructure providers.
 - Easier and more efficient to engage on a collective basis with infrastructure providers and adds transparency into future CIL allocation and the setting of priorities through the operation of a Joint Committee.
 - Commitment from the three councils to define an effective Terms of Reference that build in the safeguards including a full consensus vote, review triggers and scrutiny mechanisms.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 Having considered alternatives, the proposed approach to spending strategic 'infrastructure' CIL monies through a Joint Committee is considered the most effective approach, with appropriate safeguards and scrutiny secured through Terms of Reference.

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 8.1 Once approvals have been secured from the three councils, the first meeting of the Joint Committee will be organised, where the process for the assessment of pipeline and projects for investment will be agreed.
- 8.2 The Infrastructure List is included within the IFS, which must be reported to Cabinet at least annually. This provides an opportunity for a review of the list at regularly points in time. Furthermore, as set out at paragraph 3.18, an additional update may be necessary to reflect priorities of wider key stakeholders.
- 8.3 Monitoring and review would be undertaken by the Joint Committee and reported back to Cabinet.

9.0 Financial Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct financial, property or asset implications of the recommendations in this report. However, the Council may indirectly benefit from the strategic element of the CIL which can be used to enhance / provide infrastructure in the city.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.)

10.0 Legal Implications

- 10.1 The 'strategic' element of CIL receipts must be spent on infrastructure (being otherwise than the up to 5% for administration and the neighbourhood portion). Charging authorities can choose to pool a proportion of their Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts to fund infrastructure including for out of their own area spending. Each of the charging authorities included in the pooling arrangements should be content that funding for infrastructure outside the authority's area will support development of its own area.
- 10.2 Under national Planning Policy Guidance charging authorities are encouraged to consider publishing a memorandum of understanding detailing the administration, principles, and governance that will be implemented for any pooled fund, covering, but not limited to:
- A proposed governance structure and decision-making process for agreeing how the pooled fund is implemented and spent;
 - The proportion or amount of levy each charging authority will contribute;
 - The procedure for collecting the pooled levy;
 - The strategic infrastructure projects the pooled fund will be spent on;
 - A system for returning pooled funds to an authority in the event that it is necessary to do so;
 - A proposed review mechanism for the memorandum.
- 10.3 It is further recommended that the memorandum of understanding is a publicly accessible document, which clearly explains how the pooled levy will be administered and spent. A memorandum of understanding is not being proposed, but the Joint Committee's terms of reference will set out how the pooled levy will be administered and spent.

10.4 The Authority has a variety of legislative powers to set up governance arrangements, including the general power of competence set out in Section 1 of the Localism Act. This includes the setting up of Joint Committees under s101(5) and s102 Local Government Act 1972, Part 1A Chapter 2 Section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.

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

11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

11.1 Not having a clear CIL prioritisation of infrastructure projects may risk receipts not being targeted towards the most critical infrastructure needed to deliver development and fulfil our requirements in the delivery of the JCS and Gloucester City Plan.

11.2 Not having clear and transparent governance in place around the prioritisation and spend of CIL 'infrastructure' funding will risk it not being spent on agreed infrastructure priorities.

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:

12.1 A People Impact Assessment (PIA) scoping exercise has been undertaken and all impacts were neutral. A full PIA assessment is not therefore required.

13.0 Community Safety Implications

13.1 None

14.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications

14.1 None

Background Documents:

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Formal Adoption of Charging Schedule and Supporting Policies alongside Approval of the Regulation 123 List for Publication and Setting a Commencement Date for Charging (October 2018).

Proposals to set up Local Governance Arrangements to distribute Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Neighbourhood Funding in Gloucester (November 2020).

Gloucester Infrastructure Funding Statements (December 2023).

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Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury

Community Infrastructure Levy Joint Committee

Terms of Reference

Introduction

Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council worked together to produce the Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (2017) (the JCS) as the overarching strategy to guide the development of their area. The three councils (the member councils) have agreed to pool the receipts received from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) with the aim of working together to achieve the objectives of the JCS.

To facilitate an open and transparent joint approach to the governance of the application of CIL receipts the member councils have resolved to establish a joint committee.

Purpose

The Community Infrastructure Levy Joint Committee (the “Committee”) shall work jointly and collaboratively to advise the member Councils on CIL generally and make decisions on bids for CIL monies that have been pooled by the constituent Councils. The member Councils of the Committee are charging authorities for the purposes of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) (the “CIL Regulations”). The Committee shall consider how community infrastructure levy (CIL) receipts should be spent to support the development of the Council’s area, in accordance with Regulations 59(1) and 59(3) of the CIL Regulations.

Regulation 59(1) of the CIL Regulations provides (1) that charging authority must apply CIL to funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure to support the development of its area.

Regulation 59(3) of the CIL Regulations provides that a charging authority may apply CIL to funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure outside its area where to do so would support the development of its area.

The member councils believe that working together to pool CIL receipts for the development of infrastructure within their collective administrative areas will support the delivery of their shared objectives as set out in the JCS and consequently will support development within their respective areas in accordance with Regulation 59(3) of the CIL regulations.

The Pooled Fund

In recognition of the joint approach the member councils have agreed Infrastructure Funding Statements (IFS) and Infrastructure Lists (IL) which identify infrastructure priorities that are consistent with the objectives of the JCS and their localities to support development across the JCS area.

It is the intention of the member councils to pool 100% of the CIL receipts they receive net of any CIL receipts which are either passported to local councils or are allocated by the member councils to their individual neighbourhood CIL funds in accordance with Regulation 59A of the CIL regulations.

Notwithstanding the agreement by the member councils to pool 100% of their net CIL receipts, it is recognised by the member councils that the IL's agreed by the member councils may contain infrastructure projects which are of greater importance to one member council, notwithstanding that but the project is of benefit to the JCS area as a whole. There may from time to time be exceptional circumstances where specific infrastructure is identified as a new priority for one or more councils. Where this occurs, this will be presented to the Joint Committee for consideration.

Any member council that considers it is no longer appropriate for the member councils to pool 100% of their net CIL receipts shall be able to trigger a review of these terms of reference in accordance with the Governance section appearing herein below.

The Role of the Joint Committee

The Committee shall:

- Oversee the Strategic CIL application process and scrutinise each project bid for strategic fit and compliance with CIL requirements.
- Be accountable for the oversight, monitoring and governance of awards.
- Take an objective and detached view of applications.

The first meeting of the Committee will be to agree the process for assessment of pipeline of projects for investment.

The CIL officer working group shall be made up of appropriate officers of each CIL charging authority and Gloucestershire County Council and will report to the Committee.

The working group activities shall include:

- Making recommendations to The Committee,
- Contract management where triggered,
- Application revisions and extensions,
- Financial updates,
- Project delivery scrutiny, and
- Compliance with funding agreements.

Governance

The Committee is a Joint Committee under s101(5) and s102 Local Government Act 1972 and under Part 1A Chapter 2 Section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and pursuant to the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.

The Committee will include Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council.

These terms of reference will be reviewed as a minimum every 2 years. An earlier review will be triggered by any key changes in policy and or legislation relating to CIL or by a member council wishing to review the proportion of net CIL receipts that the member councils pool pursuant to these Terms of Reference.

Host Authority

The Committee will be hosted under local government arrangements by Tewkesbury Borough Council and hosting arrangements reviewed every 2 years.

The Host Authority will provide Secretary/ Clerk S151 and Monitoring Officer roles of the Committee. This time allocation will be funded from the 5% administration of CIL.

Membership

Each Council shall appoint a Committee member and a substitute who shall be either the Leader or other appointed Executive Members. The quorate membership of The Committee will be 3 made up of one member from each council.

If a quorate meeting cannot be achieved, the meeting will be rearranged. Each Committee member shall remain in office until removed or replaced by his or her appointing Council or in the case of an Executive member, until he or she ceases to be a member of the Executive.

Functions of the Committee

Each of the Councils by establishing the joint committee empowers the Committee to make decisions on bids for CIL monies in respect of sums received by its member Councils. The bids will be considered, and the monies allocated in a manner which is consistent with the infrastructure commitments contained with the annual IFS published by the councils, this includes the IL (including any interim assessments) and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (being updated to support the emerging Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic and Local Plan). Allocation of funding will be made on a project-by-project basis, not per financial year.

The Committee will support and engage in such other additional functions as the respective Councils may determine from time to time including but not limited to:

1. Identifying the future strategic infrastructure and investment needs
2. Providing an evidence base for spending decisions on strategic locally identified priorities
3. Consulting with Gloucestershire County Council on proposals for CIL expenditure and to consider Gloucestershire County Council spending priorities (if any) for CIL expenditure
4. Exploring other sources of funding and opportunities for match funding streams
5. Determining the method for evaluating and scoring to rate each application submitted and review weighting for criteria
6. Scrutinising full applications and project presentations including any special terms under which an award is made.
7. Monitoring the delivery of projects that have had funding allocations, including regular reporting from officers in relation to contract management and financial updates.
8. As and where necessary calling individual projects into account where Grant contract conditions trigger review.
9. Determining how any unallocated funds within the pooled fund should be treated.

Voting

One vote for each Council.

Normal rules as to declarations of interest shall be applied in accordance with the Host Authority's Code of Conduct

Decisions shall be made by full consensus vote.

Quorum

A representative from each Council must be present. No business shall be transacted at any meeting unless the quorum is reached. If quorum is not reached within 30 minutes of the start of the

meeting (or if quorum ceases to be present during a meeting) the meeting shall be adjourned to the same time and venue to a date determined by the Chair.

Meetings

The Chair and Vice Chair of the meeting will be elected at the first meeting and then each Annual Meeting of the Committee and if the Chair or Vice Chair is not present at any meeting within 10 minutes of the start of the meeting then those present will elect a Chair to act for that meeting.

The Chair and Vice Chair will be from different councils.

Only a voting member is entitled to be elected as Chair or Vice Chair of the Committee.

Meetings will occur at least annually to agree Strategic CIL allocations. Other meetings may be required to respond to the programme of the additional functions. Meetings which make decisions on the allocation of CIL funding will be in public.

Constitution

The constitution of the Host Authority shall apply to the Committee.

Attendance

Gloucestershire County Council shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Committee to input on matters relevant to the functions and activities of the Committee but shall have no voting rights nor be involved in scrutiny.

Each member Council may send appropriate officers to meetings the Committee or any sub-committee thereof, to support its Members.

Responsibilities of the Chair and Vice Chair

The role of the Chair is to ensure that the meetings of the Committee are conducted efficiently and effectively.

The role of the Vice Chair is to deputise for the Chair during any period of the Chair absence or at other times as appropriate and their responsibilities shall be the same as those of the Chair.

Member Conduct

Members shall be subject to the code of conduct for elected members adopted by the Council that nominated them to be a Committee Member.

Scrutiny

The decisions made by the Committee shall be subject to the decisions being reported back through relevant Cabinet/Executive Committee of each of the member Councils.

Any decision by the Committee, except those agreed as urgent in accordance with these provisions shall not be implemented until the member Councils have formally reported back through their own Cabinet/Executive Committee.

All decisions of the Committee (unless considered urgent) shall be subject to the "call in" process of each member Council. If not called in during that period any decision shall then be available for implementation.

Where the Committee decides that a decision is urgent it shall record the reasons for such urgency in the minutes of the meeting and any subsequent "call in" of that decision should normally relate

only to the process leading to the decision and not to the decision itself and the chair of the member Councils Scrutiny Committee shall be advised immediately.

Liability of Members

Committee Members shall have the same responsibilities as those that apply when sitting on other committees and bodies as an appointed representative of their nominating Council.

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Meeting:	General Purposes Committee Council	Date:	11 January 2024 25 January 2024
Subject:	Review of Members' Allowances 2024		
Report Of:	Independent Remuneration Panel		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Tanya Davies, Policy & Governance Manager		
	Email: tanya.davies@gloucester.gov.uk	Tel:	39-6125
Appendices:	1. Report of the Members' Allowances Panel 2. Draft Members' Allowances Scheme for 2024-25		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To report the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) with regard to the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme and seek a decision on an appropriate scheme for the payment of allowances in 2024-25.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 General Purposes Committee is asked to **RESOLVE TO RECOMMEND** to Council that the recommendations contained in the Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Appendix 1) be approved.

2.2 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that the recommendations contained in the Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Appendix 1) be approved.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

3.1 In line with the established process and following a detailed review of Members' allowances in 2023, this year, a minor review of the scheme was due. The Panel were mindful that the revised scheme had been in operation for less than a year and that elections to the Council would take place in May 2024. The Panel also noted that the link to the local government pay award had been renewed during the detailed review, ensuring that Members' allowances would increase in line with pay awards for Council officers for a further three years, subject to any further recommendations approved.

3.2 The Panel commenced its work in August 2023 reviewing the recommendations carried forward from the last review, conducting a survey and carrying out relevant research, supported by the Policy and Governance Manager. Correspondence has taken place via email and the Panel met once to consider the findings of the review and to agree its recommendations.

- 3.3 All Members were asked if there were any areas of the scheme that required attention and invited to comment on whether there were any barriers to Members using the provisions relating to support for dependent care.
- 3.4 17 out of 39 Members responded to the questionnaire, which represents a response rate of 44%. The Panel would like to thank those Members who took the time to respond and also to take the opportunity to strongly encourage all Members to respond to the questionnaire in future years as the responses have a significant influence on the proposals and it is important that all Members have a say in their allowances.
- 3.5 Of those Members who responded to the survey, 65% indicated that they were happy with the scheme or had no comments. However, when the Panel took into account the number of non-respondents, the percentage of all Members with no comments was 85%. Of those who provided comments, they were largely general comments about allowances being too low to cover the hours put in by Councillors and to attract new Councillors. For most respondents, the availability of support for dependent care was not relevant to them, but a small number of comments were received about the inadequacy of the rate payable for adult dependent care.

The Panel's Recommendations

- 3.6 The Panel's full report is at Appendix 1 to this report. Having considered relevant factors, the Panel is recommending no increase to the Basic Allowance for the 2024-25 Scheme of Allowances, noting that it remains linked to the local government pay award and will be increased in line with staff pay. A mechanism for any flat rate increase, if required, has been reconfirmed.
- 3.7 The only Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) that the Panel are proposing changes to are those for Group Leaders and Deputy Group Leaders, and this follows on from their comments during the last review. The proposal recommends moving away from an allowance payable to all postholders, irrespective of the Group size, to a principle that all postholders should receive an identical allowance to recognise their contribution to good governance of the whole Council, with an additional variable uplift to reflect political group size. Both elements of the allowance would be based on percentages of the Basic Allowance and the Panel's recommendations for those elements are set out in the tables in Appendix 1. Key to the proposal is that it can be applied to any number and formation of political Groups, reflecting the fact that all Group Leaders and Deputy Leaders make an equal contribution to good governance, but that a larger Group will place more demands on postholders than a smaller Group.
- 3.8 The Panel were keen to understand why the child and dependent care provisions were not utilised more by Members and, although survey comments indicated that they were needed by a lot of Members, they would like to encourage those Members to whom they are relevant to make use of them.
- 3.9 The Panel also looked at the rates payable for child and dependent care and the associated provisions. They found the arrangements for childcare to be sufficient, though have recommended a small change to the rate payable for non-registered childcare (e.g. babysitters) to reflect the fact that the UK Living Wage should be applied to all work. With regard to dependent care, based on evidence provided and

further research, the Panel found the rate payable to be inadequate and have recommended that the rate be increased to a maximum that is aimed at covering the full costs of care required to enable Councillors to attend Approved Duties.

- 3.10 For both child and dependent care, the Council will expect to reimburse actual costs incurred, with the rates stated as an appropriate maximum in each case. To ensure appropriate safeguards and audit trail, Councillors will continue to complete the existing self-declaration, but in the case of registered care for both children and dependents, a copy of the relevant invoice will also be required.
- 3.11 As the dependent care provisions are currently being utilised and claims being reimbursed at the existing inadequate rate, the Panel propose that the relevant recommendations been implemented with immediate effect, rather than waiting until the new Scheme takes effect in April 2024.
- 3.12 The Panel would like to thank Members for their involvement in the review.

Quedgeley Town Council

- 3.13 The Panel acts as the Members' Allowances Panel for Quedgeley Town Council (QTC), making recommendations to the Parish Council as it does to the City Council. QTC must have regard to the Panel's recommendations, but is ultimately entitled to agree its own scheme.
- 3.14 As this was a minor review, the Panel did not look at QTC allowances. Should QTC wish the Panel to review their allowances in more detail, they are welcome to make this request to the Policy and Governance Manager.

General Purposes Committee

- 3.15 The General Purposes Committee considered the Panel's report and recommended it to Council for approval unamended.

4.0 Social Value Considerations

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5.0 Environmental Implications

- 5.1 The scheme makes provision to cover the costs of using public transport outside the city boundaries and encourages its use by not allowing mileage claims within the city boundaries.

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 The Panel only conducted a minor review on this occasion, however, the Scheme proposed represents the Panel's view on the appropriate level of allowances having disregarded the other options.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 When agreeing a Members' Allowances Scheme, the Council is required to have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel. The recommendations in the attached report represent the views of the Council's appointed Panel in light of the evidence reviewed.

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 8.1 If the proposed Scheme for 2024-25 is approved, it will take effect from 1 April 2024 and any scheduled pay awards will be implemented at the appropriate time, with the exception of the recommendations regarding the dependent care allowance which would be effective immediately.
- 8.2 The new Scheme will be published on the Council's website.
- 8.3 The next detailed review is scheduled to report to Council in January 2027 and in the intervening years a short exercise will be undertaken to identify whether there have been any significant changes that require the Panel to consider recommending any changes to the Scheme.

9.0 Financial Implications

- 9.1 If approved, using existing appointments as a reference point, the total cost of the scheme for 2024-25 would be £390,467. This does not include any uplift to reflect any staff pay award that may be agreed for 2024-25.
- 9.2 The total costs stated do not include any travelling, subsistence or carers' costs.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

10.0 Legal Implications

- 10.1 The review of Members' Allowances meets the Council's obligations under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, which require the Council to make and publish a Scheme of Allowances by the 31st March each year that makes provision for the payment of a Basic Allowance; the Scheme may also make provision for the following allowances if the Council authority intends to make such payments:
- (a) special responsibility allowance;
 - (b) dependents' carers' allowance;
 - (c) travelling and subsistence allowance; and
 - (d) co-optees' allowance.
- 10.2 The Council is required to establish and maintain an independent remuneration panel which makes recommendations to Council on the matter of Members' allowances. The Council must have regard to the recommendations of the Panel when agreeing its Scheme.

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

11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

11.1 The Panel are satisfied that their recommendations do not present any risk to the Council.

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

12.1 During the PIA Screening Stage issues around age and gender were identified, however, the Panel considered that the impact on these areas was neutral as, the scheme actively seeks to remove barriers by offering an appropriate level of remuneration and increasing allowances annually in line with staff pay, noting that the Panel must operate within the relevant legislative and policy framework. Any impact is further mitigated by making provision for the costs of engaging child and dependent care cover and favourable provisions relating to maternity/paternity/parental leave and leave for ill health reasons.

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

13.0 Community Safety Implications

13.1 None.

14.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications

14.1 None.

Background Documents: None

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REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL TO GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL

Introduction

1. On 26th January, 2023 the City Council confirmed all of the recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) following our review of members' allowances. We are grateful for the Council's support for our recommendations which, as always, had a sound base in the evidence we received.
2. Within those recommendations there were a number of issues which we wished to flag up for ongoing review, with a view to making further recommendations, if appropriate, for implementation wef May, 2024 i.e. after the Council elections that month.
3. These issues were:
 - how the Basic Allowance was calculated;
 - role of/allowance for the Deputy Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in the light of operational experience;
 - an alternative approach to Group Leaders' allowances related to both governance and group size;
 - Member Champions and any Council response to our findings.
4. In addition, we have invited members of the Council to advise us of any issues with the Scheme of Allowances, by way of an annual check.
5. The Panel was also invited to consider the Scheme's provisions relating to expenses that could be claimed by councillors for dependent care support.

The Basic Allowance

6. The Council approved our recommendation that the Basic Allowance be set at £6,465 for 2023/24, to include a 4.04% uplift to reflect the rather unique flat rate approach to the staff award for that year. It has since been uplifted by a further 3.88% to £6,716 following the most recent staff pay award.
7. The Panel was minded to give further consideration to how the Basic Allowance was calculated, and the possibility of updating the formula that was used in 2015 for this purpose.

8. The elements of the original formula were:
 - number of hours per week worked by councillors;
 - a relevant local employment figure for hourly pay;
 - a percentage reduction to account for voluntary service.
9. The Panel was anxious to reflect in any revised formula (a) a realistic figure to reflect the number of hours per week that councillors devoted to Council and constituency work – *19.5hpw was the likely average figure revealed in the survey of all councillors in 2022*; (b) an up-to-date and relevant local employment statistic for Gloucester – *the gross median hourly pay for part-time, rather than full-time, employees in Gloucester is £10.62*; and (c) a more relevant and realistic percentage of hours that were unremunerated, in accordance with Government guidelines – *the original formula used a 33% reduction but the Panel felt that a figure nearer 20% was more relevant*.
10. While the Panel would have liked to work with this data to produce a meaningful and robust formula for the future, it has not proved possible to develop this approach in a way that results in an acceptable level of allowance to recommend to the Council.
11. The Panel is however satisfied that the present allowance, indexed as it is to staff pay awards, has origins in the formulaic approach adopted in 2015 (see recommendation 2 below re. any future flat-rate staff awards).
12. **RECOMMENDATION 1: That the Council note the Panel’s position; and**
13. **RECOMMENDATION 2: That the Council approves that any flat-rate staff increase awarded in the future be applied to councillors’ allowances at the percentage level adjustment applied in the award to Officers’ expenses.**

Deputy Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

14. The Council accepted our recommendation that there was parity in the roles and responsibilities of the Chairs of the Planning and Overview and Scrutiny Committees, each entitled to an allowance of £5,373.

15. The Panel did not feel however that the same parity existed at Deputy Chair level, in the context of needing detailed subject and procedural knowledge. It therefore did not recommend an allowance for the Deputy Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, but agreed to keep the matter under review in the light of operational experience.
16. The Panel has noted that all three main parties have a role in directing the work programme of the Committee, including a spokesperson from the administration. It might therefore be invidious to consider an allowance for the Deputy Chair in isolation.
17. The Panel has been advised that, as a result of the Peer Review, there is a desire to rebalance the focus of the overview and scrutiny function, with a greater emphasis on policy development work.
18. In these circumstances, it would seem appropriate for the Panel to take no action on this matter for the time being and to monitor the situation in the light of operational experience of the change in focus.
19. **RECOMMENDATION 3: That the Council note the intention of the Panel to monitor this situation and to reconsider the matter as and when the Council requests a review.**

Allowances for Political Group Leaders (Particularly Minority Group Leaders)

20. One of our recommendations to the Council in January 2023 was to note our intention to bring forward a recommendation relating to Group Leaders' allowances for implementation post-May 2024 elections.
21. The Panel has looked carefully at Gloucester's role description for a Group Leader which includes :
 - credible checks and balances when in opposition;
 - co-operation with other political groups;
 - monitoring performance of the Council;
 - 'shadow' one or more service or corporate areas of the Council;
 - effective political group management and leadership;
 - ensuring compliance with codes of conduct and protocols.

22. The Panel believes that the Group Leader role is instrumental in the good governance of the whole Council, irrespective of being in administration or opposition/minority and irrespective of group size.
23. We have explored the principle that all group leaders should receive an identical allowance to recognise their contribution, in that capacity, to good governance with an additional variable uplift to reflect political group size.
24. While initially we felt the principle might not apply to the Deputy Leader role, we have been persuaded that, in line with our criteria for awarding SRAs, the role should be recognised in this way.
25. The following tables represent a possible allocation to Group Leaders and Deputy Group Leaders in Gloucester based on the present Basic Allowance of £6,716. It covers the range 2 to 19 members since the leadership of any group beyond 19 in size is likely to be the Council Leader/Deputy Leader and receive an allowance in those capacities anyway.
26. Its make-up can be applied to any formation of political groups and works on the legal basis that a legitimate group may comprise no fewer than two members giving notice to the Monitoring Officer that they wish to be recognised as a political group on the Council.

Group Leader	Governance Element (50% BA)	(19-13 members) (75% BA)	(12-6 members) (50% BA)	(5-2 members) (25% BA)	Total – Governance and Group size
<i>Leader of Group</i>	£3,358	£5,037			£8,395
<i>Leader of Group</i>	£3,358		£3,358		£6,716
<i>Leader of Group</i>	£3,358			£1,679	£5,037

(Note: By virtue of the "one member one SRA" rule, not all of these allowances may be taken up as post-holders may have other SRA positions of higher level)

Deputy Group Leader	Governance Element (12.5% BA)	(19-13 members) (25% of Group Leader)	(12-6 members) (25% of Group Leader)	(5-2 members) (25% of Group Leader)	Total – Governance and Group size
<i>Deputy Leader of Group</i>	£839	£1,259			£2,099
<i>Deputy Leader of Group</i>	£839		£839		£1,680
<i>Deputy Leader of Group</i>	£839			£420	£1,259

27. We believe that the above structure is a fairer and more relevant way of determining leadership allowances and can be applied to whatever balance of political administration exists immediately post- May 2024 elections and beyond.
28. **RECOMMENDATION 4: That the special responsibility allowances for Political Group Leaders and Deputy Political Group Leaders be as set out in the above tables, effective from May 2024;**
29. **RECOMMENDATION 5: That the Scheme of Allowances be amended to delete reference to [allowances applying to] a maximum of 2 Minority Group Leaders and 2 Minority Deputy Group Leaders (i.e. Note 2 to the Schedule of Special Responsibility Allowances.)**

Dependent Care and Child Care Allowances

30. The Panel has noted the present provisions of the Scheme regarding dependent care support expenses for councillors as follows:
- Registered childcare – actual costs up to a max hourly rate equivalent to the current UK Living Wage for each child being cared for;
 - Non-registered childcare – actual costs up to a max £10 per hour (flat rate)
 - Care for dependent children with severe disabilities and care for dependent adult relatives – actual costs up to a max £10 per hour for each dependent.
31. The Panel has voiced concern that councillors do not appear to be taking advantage of the provisions of the Scheme designed to support them in

meeting council commitments. The Panel has strived to understand the reasons for this and, if possible, to consider proposing any change in the Scheme of Allowances to facilitate better take up and to remove any potential barrier.

32. Firstly, the Panel has noted that the Council is committed to the UK Living Wage. While this is recognised in the Scheme in its payment for registered childcare, there is no stated equivalent for non-registered childcare. The Panel feels this anomaly should be remedied.
33. One particular piece of evidence we have considered indicates that the cost of securing relevant, safe and professional support for a dependent relative could potentially cancel out any allowance received and could place a limit on the degree to which a councillor was able to get involved in civic and Council duties. It is worth emphasising also that, as Gloucester City Councillors' regular duties tend to take place in the evening, unlike child care/babysitting for these times, which a family member or friend may provide, the care for dependent relatives is likely to require qualified and specialised support for the particular needs of the person cared for.
34. It seems that dependent care support arranged through the local authority or private provider, which would normally comprise a series of care visits throughout the day or night, would not be structured to cover say a 4 x hour block of care while a councillor was attending an evening meeting. It is noted that Gloucester City Councillors' regular duties tend to take place in the evenings.
35. Putting in place an alternative provision for dependent care will need to provide safeguards for the authority balanced with robust support for councillors who need to arrange proper cover. We have considered the following:

To what extent should any payment under the Scheme take account of any "attendance payment" received by the councillor from the Government?

To what extent should the Scheme require verification of care support provided?

To what extent should support under the Scheme of Allowances be limited in either value or time covered?

Should cover/support be available in respect of all approved duties under the Scheme?

36. Our conclusion is that the Scheme of Allowances should aim to cover the full cost of providing cover for dependent care support at a rate that is reflective of the real costs incurred by Councillors in Gloucester, but that a reasonable maximum rate per hour should be set as a safeguard. As with all expenses, claims will relate to any aspect of the Approved Duties covered in the Scheme and for any reasonable time period.
37. There should however be provision within the Scheme for any payment in excess of the specified hourly maximum to be authorised by the appropriate nominated senior officer in exceptional circumstances.
38. Such claims should not be subject to means testing and therefore, for these purposes, the receipt of other financial allowances (e.g. Government attendance payment) will not be relevant. We feel that the practice of submitting a simple declaration form identifying the duties for which the allowance is being claimed should continue.
39. Additionally, claimants should provide relevant invoices from their registered care provider to support their claims (a principle we feel should apply also to claims for registered childcare providers). The Panel believes that the underlying principle must be that there is a duty on all councillors to claim honestly within the provisions of the Scheme of Allowances. The Panel is aware that payments under the Scheme of Allowances could be audited under the Council's internal audit work programme.
40. **RECOMMENDATION 6: That the Scheme of Allowances be amended to reflect the following::**

Registered childcare: actual costs up to a maximum hourly rate equivalent to the current UK Living Wage for each child cared for, with self-declaration and claims backed by invoices submitted from the care provider;

Non-registered childcare: actual costs up to a maximum hourly rate equivalent to the current UK Living Wage (flat rate) with self-declaration;

Care for dependent children with severe disabilities and care for dependent adult relatives: actual costs up to a maximum of £30 per hour for each dependent, with self-declaration and claims backed by invoices submitted from the care provider.

In all cases, an appropriate nominated senior officer be authorised to approve claims that exceed these levels in exceptional circumstances.

Claims may be made against all aspects of the Approved Duties specified in the Scheme.

41. The Panel sees no reason why the proposed changes to the dependent care/childcare allowances should not be implemented with immediate effect.
42. **RECOMMENDATION 7: That the above changes to dependent and child care allowances be implemented with immediate effect.**

Graham Russell
Chair of Panel

October, 2023.

GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

The Gloucester City Council, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003, hereby makes the following Scheme:

1. Citation

- 1.1 This scheme may be cited as the Gloucester City Council Members' Allowances Scheme and shall have effect on and from 1 April 2024 until the scheme is amended or a new scheme is adopted.

2. Interpretation

- 2.1 In this Scheme,

'the Council' means the Gloucester City Council;

'Councillor' means a Member of Gloucester City Council who is a Councillor.

'co-opted member' means a member of a committee or sub-committee of the Council who is not a member of the authority.

'year' means a period beginning 1 April and ending on 31 March.

3. Basic Allowance

- 3.1 Subject to paragraphs 9 and 10, for each year a Basic Allowance of £6,716.03 shall be paid to each Councillor.
- 3.2 All incidental costs incurred by a Councillor in the performance of their duties are to be covered by the Basic Allowance unless they are claimable elsewhere under this Scheme. This includes, but is not limited to, stationery and other office supplies, printer cartridges and any telephone costs incurred from the use of a private telephone.
- 3.3 The printing of business cards and headed paper are excluded from paragraph 3.2 above and will be provided on request.
- 3.4 The Council will offer and provide Councillors with the necessary IT equipment required to perform the role. The details of this provision are the subject of a separate policy.

4. Special Responsibility Allowances

- 4.1 For each year a Special Responsibility Allowance shall be paid to those Councillors who hold the special responsibilities in relation to the Council that are specified in Schedule 1 to this Scheme.
- 4.2 Subject to paragraphs 10 and 15, the amount of each such allowance shall be the amount specified against that special responsibility in that Schedule.
- 4.3 Where a Councillor holds more than one position of responsibility, only one Special Responsibility Allowance shall be paid, such an allowance being the higher or the highest of the relevant allowances.

5. Attendance at meetings

- 5.1 If a Councillor does not attend at least two-thirds of the total number of scheduled meetings of the Council, or of the Cabinet, or of Committees of which he/she is a Member (unless absent on health or maternity/paternity/parental leave grounds), the Councillor concerned should be invited to pay back an appropriate percentage of his/her Basic Allowance up to a maximum of 25% of the Basic Allowance.
- 5.2 If a Member is absent from Council business for more than one continuous month (other than on health or maternity/paternity/parental leave grounds) the Member concerned should be invited to pay back a sum equivalent to the amount of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances paid for any single period of absence which exceeds one month.
- 5.3 For periods of long term absence on health grounds the Council should review its position on a case by case basis.
- 5.4 Should any absence be expected to exceed six months, an extension may be agreed by resolution of Council.
- 5.5 Paragraph 5.1 does not apply to the Mayor or Sheriff/Deputy Mayor holding Civic Office during the year in question.
- 5.6 Maternity/paternity/parental leave applies to parents regardless of their gender, and includes parents who choose to adopt.

6. Attendance Allowances

- 6.1 No attendance allowance shall be payable.

7. Pensions

- 7.1 Councillors are not eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

8. Travel, Subsistence and Dependents' Carers Allowances

- 8.1 Travel, Subsistence and Dependents' Carers Allowances shall be paid to Councillors in accordance with Schedule 2 to this Scheme.

9. Renunciation

- 9.1 A Councillor may, by notice in writing given to the Policy and Governance Manager elect to forego any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under this Scheme.

10. Part Year Entitlements

- 10.1 If the Term of Office or duties undertaken by a Councillor begin or end part way through a financial year, or amendment of the Scheme during the financial year changes the amount to which a Councillor is entitled, then calculation of the allowance payable shall be on a pro-rata basis having regard to the proportion that the Term of Office, period of duty or relevant

periods of the Scheme bear to the month in the financial year in which they occur based on the number of days in that month.

11. Withholding of allowances

- 11.1 Where payment of any allowance is due or has already been made in respect of any period during which the member concerned is
- (a) suspended or partially suspended from his/her responsibilities or duties as a member of the authority in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000, or regulations made under that Part; or
 - (b) ceases to be a member of the authority; or
 - (c) is in any other way not entitled to receive the allowance in respect of that period, the authority may withhold the payment of an allowance for that period or, as the case may be, require that such part of the allowance already paid as relates to any such period be repaid to the authority.

12. Overpayment

- 12.1 If a Councillor is paid any allowance under this scheme with respect to any period and it subsequently becomes apparent that the Councillor was not entitled to that payment for that period for any reason then the Council may recover the overpayment from that Councillor.

13. Annual Adjustment of Allowances

- 13.1 This scheme makes provision for an annual adjustment of allowances indexed to the Local Government staff pay award.
- 13.2 The application of this index will be reviewed in 2027.

14. Co-optees

- 14.1 Co-opted members will not receive an allowance but will be fully reimbursed for any travel expenses incurred in attending meetings.

15. Membership of more than one authority

- 15.1 Where a Councillor is also a member of another authority that Councillor shall ensure that he/she does not receive allowances from more than one authority in respect of the same duties.

16. Claims and Payments

- 16.1 Payments shall normally be made by bank transfer:
- (a) in respect of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances, subject to paragraph 15.2, in instalments of 1/12th of the amounts specified in this Scheme on the 27th day of each month (or the last working day before that day if it is not a working day) and for which Councillors will not be required to submit a claim.
 - (b) in respect of Travel, Subsistence and Dependents' Carers allowances, on the 27th day of each month (or the last working day before that day if it is not a working day) where the

claim is received by the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager by not later than the 1st day of that month.

- 162 Where a payment of 1/12th of the amount specified in this Scheme in respect of a Basic or Special Responsibility Allowance would result in the Councillor receiving more or less than the amount to which, by virtue of paragraph 10, he or she is entitled, the payment shall be restricted to such amount as will ensure that no more or less is paid than the amount to which he or she is entitled.
- 163 Claims for Travel, Subsistence and Dependents' Carers allowances must be submitted on the appropriate form within six months of the date in respect of which the claim is being made. The payment of any claims not meeting this deadline will be at the discretion of the Head of Paid Service.

SCHEDULE 1 Special Responsibility Allowances

The following are specified as the special responsibilities in respect of which Special Responsibility Allowances are payable, and the amounts of those allowances:

Responsibility	Multiplier of BA	SRA £pa
Leader of the Council	3.5	23,506.11
Deputy Leader of the Council	2.25	15,111.07
Cabinet Members		
Communities and Neighbourhoods	1.75	11,753.05
Culture and Leisure	1.75	11,753.05
Environment	1.75	11,753.05
Performance and Resources	1.75	11,753.05
Planning and Housing Strategy	1.75	11,753.05
Chairs of Committees		
Planning Committee	0.8	5,372.82
Audit and Governance Committee	0.5	3,358.02
Licensing and Enforcement Committee	0.5	3,358.02
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	0.8	5,372.82
Deputy Chairs of Committees		
Planning Committee	0.1	1,343.21
Other positions of additional responsibility		
Minority Group Leader (13-19 Members)	0.5 + 0.75	8,395.04
Minority Group Leader (6-12 Members)	0.5 + 0.5	6,716.03
Minority Group Leader (2-5 Members)	0.5 + 0.25	5,037.03
Minority Group Deputy Leader (13-19 Members)	0.125 + 0.1875	2,098.76
Minority Group Deputy Leader (6-12 Members)	0.125 + 0.125	1,679.00
Minority Group Deputy Leader (2-5 Members)	0.125 + 0.0625	1,259.25
Mayor	0.6	4,029.62
Sheriff and Deputy Mayor	0.2	1,343.21

Notes:

1. Where a Councillor holds more than one position of responsibility, only one Special Responsibility Allowance shall be paid, such an allowance being the higher or the highest of the relevant allowances.

This following is not part of the Scheme of Members' Allowances and is provided for information.

Civic allowances are paid to the Mayor and Sheriff and Deputy Mayor in recognition of the costs associated with performing civic duties. These allowances are not subject to an annual adjustment as set out in paragraph 13.

Mayor	£6000.00
Sheriff and Deputy Mayor	£3,500.00

SCHEDULE 2

Approved Duties

The following are deemed to be approved duties for the purposes of claiming travel, subsistence and dependents' carers allowances. Travel and subsistence expenses will only be paid where the duties necessitate travel beyond the Gloucester City Council boundaries:

- (a) Attendance, by right of membership or express invitation or as an observer with a legitimate interest, at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Groups, Panels and Task and Finish Groups.
- (b) Attendance, by right of membership or express invitation, at meetings of any joint Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Groups, Panels, Steering Groups to which the Council has appointed.
- (c) Attendance, by right of appointment, at meetings of approved Outside Bodies.
- (d) Attendance at Member training courses facilitated by the Council.
- (e) Attendance at a meeting of any association of authorities of which the authority is a member;
- (f) Attendance at meetings, Member training courses, conferences or any other events facilitated by external bodies, provided that authorisation has been given in advance and in writing by the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the relevant Political Group Leader, where appropriate.

Payments in respect of the above approved duties shall be paid in accordance with the following rates:

A. Travel and Subsistence Allowance

Claims for travel and subsistence allowances must be submitted to the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager either electronically or in writing on Expenses Claim Form EC5.

(a) Travel Allowances

Upon its implementation, Members are invited to make use of the Green Travel Policy for identifying the most sustainable and cost effective means of travel. In order to do so, Members should inform the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager (or the Corporate Support Team in the case of Cabinet Members) of their need to travel.

Mileage allowances

Motor mileage within the City boundaries is deemed to be covered within the Basic Allowance. Motor mileage for attendance at approved duties, as defined above, is payable where the duties necessitate travel beyond the Gloucester City Council boundaries only.

Full addresses must be provided for all starting locations and destinations. Distances will be checked against the quickest route identified by AA Route Planner and any discrepancies will be raised with the Councillor so that details of the actual route taken can be recorded and reimbursed.

Mileage rates will be paid in accordance with the rates paid to staff and will increase or decrease in line with any changes agreed in the staff rates. The current rates are:

Use of private motor vehicle	50p per mile
Use of bicycle	£16 flat rate per month or 15p per mile

Public Transport and Parking

Bus travel	Actual fares reimbursed. Tickets or receipts must be provided.
Rail travel	Train tickets should be arranged in advance through Democratic and Electoral Services in order to achieve value for money and to take advantage of early booking discounts. Where, in exceptional circumstances, a Councillor must purchase their own train ticket, the amount reimbursed will not exceed the amount of an ordinary fare or any available cheap fare; first class travel will not be reimbursed. Councillors purchasing their own train tickets should provide their receipt or ticket when claiming reimbursements.
Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles	Fares will only be reimbursed if travel by taxi is required due to the urgency of the approved business or if public transport is not reasonably available. Receipts must be provided.
Toll fees, ferry, garaging and parking charges	Actual fees or charges reimbursed. Receipts must be provided.

Accommodation

If a Councillor is required to stay overnight for attendance at approved duties, they should contact Democratic and Electoral Services who, following discussion with the Councillor about their requirements, will make the necessary accommodation arrangements in order to ensure that the Council achieves value for money.

(b) Subsistence Allowances

Subsistence within the City boundaries is deemed to be covered within the Basic Allowance. Subsistence for attendance at approved duties, as defined above, is payable for duties outside Gloucester City Council boundaries only. All claims for subsistence must be supported by receipts. Where claims can be made, eligibility is based on the time of day meals are taken and time away from home, as follows:

Breakfast	£6.29 (payable for absence from home of more than 4 hours before 11.00am)
Lunch	£8.72 (payable for absence from home of more than 4 hours which includes the hours of 12 noon-2.00pm)
Evening Meal	£15.10 (payable for absence from home of more than 4 hours ending after 6.00pm)

B. Dependents' Carers Allowance

Councillors may claim reimbursement of care expenses when a Councillor attends any of the approved duties defined in Schedule 2 to this Scheme and incurs costs for the provision of care for children and adult dependents.

When travelling away from home to an approved duty which may involve an overnight stay, care expenses may be claimed in respect of the total duration of the duty, less any period during which a dependent is cared for at no cost to the Councillor.

In order to claim the for reimbursement of care expenses, a Dependents' Care Expenses claim form must be completed and signed by both the claimant and the carer before submission to the Policy and Governance Manager. When registered care is engaged, relevant invoices must also be provided.

(a) Childcare

Eligible Councillors may claim for the reimbursement of the actual amount paid for childcare provision at the following rates:

Registered childcare	up to a maximum hourly rate equivalent to the current UK Living Wage for each child being cared for
Non-registered childcare	up to a maximum hourly rate equivalent to the current UK Living Wage per hour (flat rate)

Up to a total of one hour travelling time may be added to the claim, where applicable, to enable the Councillor to travel to and from meetings, provided the child/children remain with the carer for the duration.

Childcare costs may be claimed for children aged 15 or under and for or any new claims, evidence of eligibility must be provided e.g. birth certificate. The child must normally live with the claimant as part of the family.

Registered childcare means Ofsted registered and the provider's unique reference number must be provided. In the case of non-registered childcare, a carer can be any responsible mature person who does not normally live with the claimant as part of the family, but should not be a parent. The claimant bears sole responsibility for making appropriate care arrangements.

(b) Dependent Care

Eligible Councillors may claim for the reimbursement of actual amount paid for registered care provision, up to a maximum of £30.00 per hour for each dependent. In exceptional circumstances, the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the relevant Political Group Leader, is authorised to approve claims that exceed this amount.

Up to a total of one hour travelling time may be added to the claim, where applicable, to enable the Councillor to travel to and from meetings, provided the dependent/s remain with the carer for the duration.

Dependent care costs may be claimed for children with severe disabilities and dependent adult relatives living in the Councillor's home and for whom the Councillor is directly responsible.

Registered care means from a provider registered with the relevant regulator and the provider's unique reference number must be provided.



Meeting:	General Purposes Committee Council	Date:	11 January 2024 25 January 2024
Subject:	Constitutional Changes		
Report Of:	Monitoring Officer		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Alice McAlpine, Monitoring Officer Email: alice.mcalpine@gloucester.gov.uk		
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (A) Updated Officer Code of Conduct (B) Comparison of Current Employee Code of Conduct with proposed updated Officer Code of Conduct 2. (A) Updated Planning Committee Functions as set out in Part 3C of the Constitution. (B) Comparison of current Planning Committee Functions as set out in Part 3C of the Constitution with updated Planning Committee Functions as set out in Part 3C of the Constitution 3. Changes to Council Procedure Rules 		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To propose changes to the Officer Code of Conduct and the Planning Committee Functions. The report also seeks authority to update the Council Procedure Rules in relation to Questions by the Public Question; Petitions and Deputations from the Public; questions by Members and Motions on Notice.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 General Purposes Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that:

- (1) The updated Officer Code of Conduct set out in Appendix 1 is adopted.
- (2) The updated Planning Committee Functions as set out in Appendix 2 is adopted.
- (3) The Council Procedure Rules 10, 11, 12 and 13 in Part 4 of the Constitution are amended as set out in Appendix 3 are adopted.

2.2 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that:

- (1) The updated Officer Code of Conduct set out in Appendix 1 is adopted.
- (2) The updated Planning Committee Functions as set out in Appendix 2 is adopted.
- (3) The Council Procedure Rules 10, 11, 12, 13, 24 and 25 in Part 4 of the Constitution are amended as set out in Appendix 3 is adopted.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

Updated Officer Code of Conduct

- 3.1 The Officer Code of Conduct is considered to be an integral part of the suite of documents that ensure that high standards of behaviour are maintained and, alongside the Member Code of Conduct, the Officer Code of Conduct underpins a strong governance culture. The updated Officer Code of Conduct is considered to provide clarity on the role of Officers at the Council and ensures that the Officer Code of Conduct aligns with the recently adopted Member Code of Conduct and Member/Officer Protocol.
- 3.2 The changes can be summarised as follows:
 - 3.2.1 references to employees have been replaced with references to Officers, to properly reflect the duties of Officers to the Council as an elected body and to align with the Member/Officer Protocol.
 - 3.2.2 adds clarity the responsibility of Officers to provide support across the Council and to act in way that maintains public confidence in the Council as a whole.
 - 3.2.3 clarifies the expectations in relation to personal relationships between Officers and Officers and Members and reinforces the importance of not being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs while at work.
 - 3.2.4 it proposes that subject to consultation with Trade Unions the rules in relation to secondary employment will apply to all Officers of the Council and not just those at Grade F and above.
 - 3.2.5 updates the expectations of Officers in relation to the use of Council facilities and systems as well as social media.
- 3.3 The differences between the current Code of Conduct and the updated code of conduct are shown as track changes at Appendix 1B.

Changes to Functions of Planning Committee

- 3.3 Minor Amendments are proposed to the Functions of the Planning Committee. The amendments bring the Planning Committee functions into alignment with other Gloucestershire councils' planning committee functions and addresses technical issues that have arisen.
- 3.4 The differences between the current arrangements and the amended arrangements are shown as track changes at Appendix 2B.

Council Procedure Rules

- 3.5 A number of changes are proposed to Council Procedure Rules in order to bring the rules up to date with current practice and further improve the efficient dispatch of Council business. All proposals are highlighted in Appendix 3 and the main changes are set out below.

Rule 10 - Questions by the Public

- 3.6 The changes proposed to public questions are aimed at providing a process that mirrors the one that is in place for Members. As notice of public questions is already required, it follows that the responses to the submitted questions be published in advance of the meeting and members of the public be permitted to attend and ask one supplementary question without notice if they would like to.
- 3.7 Currently the Constitution permits members of the public to ask one question, however, in practice we have allowed any number of additional questions to be asked. In recent times, this has meant that individuals have on occasion asked as many as seven questions at a single meeting, which is more than Members are permitted to ask, and can mean that a disproportionate amount of time is spent on public questions. It is therefore proposed that a maximum of 3 questions per person be accepted, which is in line with neighbouring Councils that have a limit.

Rule 11 – Petitions and Deputations from the Public

- 3.8 It is proposed that a notice requirement is introduced for petitions and deputations to ensure that a substantive response can be provided at the meeting at which they are presented. In the case of petitions, it is also important to have this information in advance to enable a petition to be handled in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme, particularly if a petition has met the threshold for a Council debate.
- 3.9 A further amendment proposes to confirm current practice whereby a ward Member can present a petition on behalf of members of the public if the petition organisers request it and the Member agrees.

Rule 12 – Questions by Members

- 3.10 The first amendment proposed seeks to ensure that Group Leader priority for questions to Cabinet Members is applicable to any number of political Groups. The second amendment seeks to bring questions to Chairs of Meetings into line with the provisions for questions to Cabinet Members. A lower maximum of three questions per Member is proposed because Chairs of Committees have a narrower remit than Cabinet Members.

Rule 13 – Motions on Notice

- 3.11 Currently, there are no limits of the number or time spent on notices of motion. The Constitution does include provision for Group Leaders to select which motions will be called for debate (Rule 13(3)), however, this provision is not used in practice and therefore following a meeting of the General Purposes Committee it is proposed that this rule is deleted. Recently, the number of motions received at Council meetings has increased, with as many as seven or eight motions on a single agenda, and there is a need to consider how best to handle motions to ensure the efficient and effective dispatch of Council business and to keep Council meetings to a reasonable length, noting that there is an optional three hour guillotine that, to date, Members have not voted to invoke.

- 3.12 Practice at neighbouring councils has been considered and General Purposes Committee were asked to consider two options:
- (i) A limit on the number of motions that a single Member can move or second, with a suggested limit of three. Thereafter, all motions could be included for debate, or a selection process could also be established to decide which motions would be debated and/or in what order.
 - (ii) A limit on the time available for debating motions, with a suggested limit of two hours, and any motion not discussed within the time limit deemed void. Motions could be taken in the order of receipt or a selection process could also be established to decide the order.
- 3.13 General Purposes Committee resolved to recommend to Council that a limit be introduced to limit the number of motions that a single Member can move or second with the suggested limited of three.
- 3.14 Rule 13(5), which provides for the automatic reference to the relevant alternative decision-making body, any motion that comes within the province of a Cabinet portfolio or Committee, is also not utilised in practice, with any motion submitted within the relevant timescales being placed on the agenda and debated. Members of the General Purposes Committee were invited to consider whether this rule should be retained and, if so, whether greater consideration should be given to whether a motion is appropriate for Council consideration or should be referred elsewhere. The General Purposes Committee resolved to recommend to Council that this rule be deleted.
- 3.15 At General Purposes Committee there was also a discussion about Rule 24 (Disturbance by Public) and Rule 25 (Recordings of Meetings) and the changes set out in paragraph 3.16 and 3.17 are recommended to Council.
- 3.16 Rule 24 sets out the rules in relation to disturbance by members of the public. It is proposed that Rule 24. 1 is updated to clarify what action will be taken by the Chair of a meeting in the event that a member of the public interrupts a meeting.
- 3.17 Following the introduction of webcasting Rule 25 (Recordings of Meetings) has been up dated to reflect that the Council will now be recording for broadcast live on the internet meetings of the Council except when meetings are discussing confidential items which need to be considered in the absence of the press and public.

4.0 Social Value Considerations

4.1 Not applicable.

5.0 Environmental Implications

5.1 Not applicable.

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

6.1 Council could decide not to adopt the updated documents as part of the Constitution. This is not recommended as it is considered that the proposed updated Officer Code of Conduct, Planning Committee Functions and amendments to the Council Procedure Rules reflect good practice and will support effective and efficient decision making within the Council and support high standards of behaviour both of which underpin good governance.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 The adoption of the documents at Appendix 1A and Appendix 2A and the changes set out in Appendix 3 is considered to be good practice as they take into consideration experience and guidance published since these parts of the Council's constitution were last reviewed and revised.

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

8.1 It is proposed that if the revised documents are adopted, they shall take effect at the close of the Council meeting. The changes will be made to the Constitution, which will be republished on the Council's website as soon as reasonably practicable.

9.0 Financial Implications

9.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

10.0 Legal Implications

10.1 The Council must have a constitution and the requirements of the constitution are set by statute. It is considered good practice to keep the Constitution under review and update is as appropriate to reflect changing legislation, practice and to ensure that is supports the efficient functioning of the Council.

10.2 There are no legal implications arising from the proposed amendments to Part 4 and 5 of the Constitution.

(The Monitoring Officer has been consulted in the preparation this report.)

11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

11.1 Not Applicable

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:

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

13.0 Community Safety Implications

13.1 Not applicable

14.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications

14.1 Not applicable

Potential Media Interest – to be completed for SMT/Cabinet Briefing purposes. Remove prior to publication of report. Draft report to be sent pressoff@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

Background Documents: None

OFFICER CODE OF CONDUCT FOR GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL

Gloucester City Council (“the Council”) adopted this code of conduct on []2024 to come into force on [] 2024. The Code sets out the conduct that is expected of you when acting as an Officer of Gloucester City Council and conducting council business including full-time and part time staff, permanent, temporary, casual or agency staff, secondees, work placements, apprentices and trainees.

The Code does not seek to regulate Officers’ private or personal lives, but care must be taken to ensure that nothing is done that would bring council work and private interests into conflict or bring the Officer or the Council into disrepute.

Purpose of this Code of Conduct

The people of Gloucester are entitled to expect conduct of the highest standard from all the Council’s Officers. All Officers are expected to act in accordance with this Code, it forms part of the terms and conditions of employment, and failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

The Code of Conduct is based upon the seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Officer’s responsibilities

Officers serve the whole Council and are expected to provide the same level of support for all functions of the Council.

Officers are expected to:

1. Maintain conduct of the highest standard so public confidence in their integrity and the Council as a whole is sustained
2. Ask for clarification from your line manager or the Monitoring Officer on any aspects of the Code that are not clear
3. Incorporate and promote equality in all that they do
4. Keep up to date with the latest version of the Code and follow it at all times.

1 Public funds

- 1.1 All Officers must act with probity, financial control and honesty and adhere to arrangements for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption.
- 1.2 All Officers must comply with the Council’s Financial, Contract and Procurement Regulations, the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, Anti Bribery Policy, Anti Money Laundering and Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policies.
- 1.3 Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders and no special favour should be shown in the tendering process to businesses operated or controlled by friends, partners or relatives.

2 Customers

- 2.1 All Officers should be courteous, efficient and impartial. Staff who work with customers who behave aggressively should familiarise themselves with the best practise for dealing with violence and aggression and the Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy.

3 Other Employees

- 3.1 All Officers must treat colleagues, including those not directly employed by the council, with courtesy and respect, and must not abuse them verbally or physically.

Staff must not harass or bully or be insubordinate to colleagues and must comply with the standards set out in this Code in relation to equalities.

- 3.2 Officers who are in a partner, family or emotional relationship may at some time work together. Such personal relationships seldom interfere with work and the presumption will be that the relationship will not affect performance. However, there are situations when a personal relationship between Officers or between an Officer and Member becomes a management concern and may unintentionally impair operational efficiency or affect the integrity of service delivery. Officers must declare any personal relationship with another Officer or with a Member, where the relationship could affect, or could be perceived to affect performance.

- 3.3 In any situation where Officers in a personal relationship work in close proximity, the council reserves the right (without breach of contract) to require one or both Officers to change their roles or duties. In circumstances where an Officer is in a close personal relationship with a Member the council reserves the right (without breach of contract) to require the Officer to change their role or duties. This is intended to avoid the Officers in a relationship finding themselves in a potentially difficult situation and avoid perceptions of undue influence or unfairness (whether real or imagined).

4 Equalities

- 4.1 All members of the local community, customers, Members and colleagues have a right to be treated with fairness and equity and be confident that they will not be discriminated against because of their age, gender, gender reassignment, disability, pregnancy/maternity status, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, their economic and social background, those with responsibilities as a carer, those who are married or in a civil partnership, or any other ground that cannot be shown to be justified.

- 4.2 All Officers must take care to do nothing that may cause them or the Council to breach any equality enactment.

5 Alcohol and Drugs

- 5.1 All Officers will be expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or drugs (used other than as prescribed) or have their work performance adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs. Any associated inappropriate behaviour or conduct may be considered misconduct and may be considered under the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

- 5.2 Where involvement with illegal or illicit drugs, use of prescription drugs other than as prescribed or excessive use of alcohol by an Officer takes place outside of working hours, the Council will consider the impact this may have on their employment, including consideration of any implications for the Council's reputation or public confidence.

6. Health and Safety

- 6.1 All Officers shall comply with the Council's Health and Safety policies and procedures and must ensure that they do not act wilfully or intentionally in a manner liable to place the public, colleagues, themselves or the Council at risk.

7. Conflicts of Interest

- 7.1 All Officers must avoid creating a conflict of interests between their private life and their public duties. The council reserves the right to bring action against an Officer where their conduct outside work conflicts with their public duties, for example where conduct outside of work could undermine the council's reputation or public confidence.
- 7.2 Officers who are involved with granting permissions, approvals, consents or benefits, must take no part in considering any application made by the Officer or their relative, friend or neighbour.
- 7.3 All staff appointments will be made on merit. In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, Officers should not be involved in an appointment, either on an Appointment Panel or as a referee, if they are related to an applicant, or have a close personal relationship with them outside work. Officers should not be involved in decisions relating to discipline or other sanction, or in decisions relating to pay, where they are related to, or have a close personal relationship with, the Officer who is subject to that decision.
- 7.4 Officers must declare any financial or other interest - whether direct or indirect - in any existing or proposed contract with the Council or any other interest or association with any council activity, which could cause a potential conflict of interest. These include but are not limited to decision-making, the management of contracts and giving policy advice.
- 7.5 All declarations must be made in writing to the Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer can also provide advice to ensure compliance with this requirement.

8 Arrest or Conviction on Civil or Criminal Charges

- 8.1 You must, as soon as practicable, inform (and keep informed) your line manager if you are arrested, charged, convicted or sentenced for any civil or criminal offence that could result if convicted in a term of imprisonment of at least three (3) months.
- 8.2 In relation to traffic offences you do not need to inform your line manager of a matter unless it involves the transport of service users, involves an official vehicle or could result in a term of imprisonment of at least 6 months or a disqualification from driving.
- 8.3 Failure to inform will be considered an act of gross misconduct.

9 Secondary Employment

- 9.1 Officers may undertake secondary employment such as: work on a voluntary, fee-paying or recognition-in-kind basis; or engaging in any other business; as well as secondary employment within the council itself.
- 9.2 Officers [~~on or above Grade F (Scale Point 29)]~~ must obtain the express consent of the Managing Director or Head of Service prior to engaging in any other business or taking up any secondary employment. Officers must subsequently keep their line manager advised of any changes to their secondary employment.

- 9.3 Secondary employment outside the council must not conflict with the council's interests or bring it into disrepute. You are not permitted to undertake secondary employment during your working hours, use council property, equipment or associated documents or communications.
- 9.4 The Council reserves the right to take action if secondary employment is deemed to be detrimental to the interests or reputation of the council, or where it affects an Officer's work performance.
- 9.5 Officers may not become a trustee or board member of any organisation which receives any form of funding from the council except with the express consent of the Managing Director or Head of Service, after consultation with the Monitoring Officer.
- 9.6 Officers must not engage in secondary employment which is set up in competition with the Council or compete with the Council for a contract while still employed by the Council or canvass other Council Officers to induce them to join a business which is set up in competition with the Council.

10. Gifts, Hospitality and Inducements

- 10.1 It is a criminal offence for an Officer to accept money or reward other than their proper pay.
- 10.2 Small gifts may only be accepted when they are low cost (less than twenty five pounds (£25)), functional items suitable for business use, rather than personal use, e.g. diaries, calendars, pens. Any other gifts should be returned officially with a suitable letter of explanation. If they cannot be returned, they should be given to the Head of Paid Service for donation to the Mayor's Charity
- 10.3 Visits by Officers to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals, and social functions, in connection with their official duties shall be at the council's expense.
- 10.4 Hospitality, in the form of meals and drinks, offered by a third party, is only acceptable where it forms a minor part of normal business meetings/discussions held during the normal working day.
- 10.5 Other offers of hospitality, e.g. invitations to dinners, cultural performances, sporting events, awards ceremonies etc, should only be accepted if there is a clear and demonstrable benefit to the council, and the hospitality would not expose the council to criticism that the provider of the hospitality was achieving undue influence or creating the perception of an obligation. Attendance must have the Head of Paid Service's approval in advance and must be recorded in the register of gifts and hospitality.
- 10.6 Informal social contact e.g. drinks in a public house, with representatives of organisations, which supply, or hope to supply, goods or services to the council must always be avoided. Where such instances do occasionally take place, i.e. after late working, Officers should ensure that the other party does not meet the costs of such contact in full. Officers should record such events in the register of gifts and hospitality.
- 10.7 The register of gifts and hospitality is held by the Monitoring Officer and is subject to regular Audit inspection.
- 10.8 Officers should not engage the services of contractors commissioned by the council when acquiring materials, labour or plant at cost, trade or discount prices. Whilst such an

arrangement may constitute a saving it puts Officers in a compromising situation which may bring them and the council into disrepute.

- 10.9 Customers may seek to express their thanks to Officers by offering gifts, money etc. Officers must refuse such 'gifts' politely and explain why you cannot accept them before reporting this matter to their line manager.
- 10.10 The prevention, detection and reporting of bribery is the responsibility of all Officers and all staff are required to avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, a breach of the Bribery Act 2010.

11. Political Neutrality

- 11.1 All Officers serve the council as a whole and not just the controlling group - and must ensure the individual rights of all councillors are respected.
- 11.2 All Officers must follow the lawfully expressed policies of the Council and must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.
- 11.3 Officers in politically restricted posts must comply with the statutory restrictions on their political activities.
- 11.4 Whilst engaged in council business, Officers must not wear or display any objects indicating support for or opposition to any political party or view. This applies to private vehicles used whilst undertaking council business.

12. The Media

- 12.1 All communications with the media relating to the activities of the council should be handled through the communications team at communications@gloucestershire.gov.uk.
- 12.2 No Officers should communicate with the media on matters relating to the activities of the council without prior authorisation from the communications team and journalists should be referred to the communications team.
- 12.3 Officers with ideas for positive stories about the council should contact the communications team.
- 12.4 Any Officer that wishes to write material for a publication which does not refer to the council but relates to their profession (e.g. an article in a professional journal), should advise their line manager before publication. The article should also contain a disclaimer, which states that the views are those of the individual and not of the council.

13. Use of Council Facilities and Systems

- 13.1 The council's property and facilities are provided for official council business. All council owned portable equipment and devices must be returned on leaving council employment and any council-owned or supplied data must be deleted. Access to systems used for council purposes must be terminated permanently.
- 13.2 Any property, equipment or devices provided to Officers for business use must be used in compliance with the terms, conditions and use policies provided at the time the equipment was issued (or as they may be updated from time to time).

- 13.3 The council has the right to access and monitor communication systems provided to you and will monitor usage of its communication systems e.g. telephone, email and Internet access, to ensure their proper use and will run reports detailing usage levels of staff.
- 13.4 Systems may be accessed when the council suspects an Officer has been misusing council facilities, or, for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity. In addition, where service delivery reasons exist, an Officers' senior officer, may approve access to emails when an Officer is absent. Access to facilities may be temporarily suspended whilst an investigation is on-going and may be permanently withdrawn where misuse is detected. Cases of 'misuse' may result in disciplinary action being taken - this may include dismissal.
- 13.5 Email and the Internet are available for work use and provisions apply as part of agile working. External email is not secure, Officers must only use work email addresses to communicate with third parties as part of their job role. . Good practice guidelines for the use of council resources are available on GlosNet.
- 13.7 Officers are to be aware that contracts formed by email or over the Internet might be legally binding. Any contractual agreement, offer or acceptance must only be made electronically if you have explicit written authority to enter into the contract.

14. Social networking websites

- 14.1 All Officers are encouraged to exercise discretion and use social media appropriately and have regard to their employment with the Council at all times to protect the council's operations, confidential information and reputation. Officers are expected to:-
- 1) Avoid making any social media communications that could damage the council's business, operations or reputation, even indirectly.
 - 2) Not use social media to:
 - defame or disparage the council, staff or any third party;
 - harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against staff or third parties;
 - make false or misleading statements; or
 - impersonate colleagues or third parties
 - 3) Not express opinions on the council's behalf, unless expressly authorised to do so by your Head of Service: you may be required to undergo training in order to obtain such authorisation.
 - 4) Not post comments about sensitive council business-related topics, such as draft proposals or information belonging to any organisation (or person) with which the council works in partnership.
 - 5) Not do anything to jeopardise the council's confidential information and intellectual property.
 - 6) Never include our logos or other trademarks connected to the council's work in any social media posting or in your profile on any social media unless expressly authorised to do so by your Head of Service.

15. Handling Information

- 15.1 All Officers must comply with the Data Protection legislation and the council's Data Protection Policy.
- 15.2 Officers may be required by law to disclose certain types of information to Members, auditors, government departments, service users and the public. Information should be disclosed unless there is a good reason for not doing so.
- 15.3 Information which must be kept confidential includes:
 - a) Commercially sensitive information
 - b) Personal details of colleagues
 - c) Reports and Minutes which are Confidential or Exempt from publication
 - d) The council's internal documents (unless the law says that the information must be made public or as instructed by a Manager)
- 15.4 Officers must not reveal any information to anyone else unless they have a legal responsibility to provide it, or where the Officer, client, contractor, debtor or creditor concerned gives them written permission to do so.
- 15.5 Officers must not use information obtained through their council role for their personal benefit or gain, nor may they pass it on to anyone else who might use it in such a way.
- 15.6 All Officers should exercise reasonable judgement in communicating information, particularly information which may bring the council into disrepute or cause it harm, to any person or organisation outside the Council.

16. Whistleblowing

- 16.1 The council does not tolerate any form of malpractice. Every Officer has an important part to play in reporting any concerns, and all staff are expected to cooperate with investigations. Although it is often difficult for Officers to report legitimate concerns through fear of victimisation or reprisal, please be assured that in raising concerns you will be supported. Please refer to the Whistleblowing policy for more information.

17 Compliance with the Code

- 17.1 This Code is part of every Officer's contract of employment. An extract of the Code is issued to every Officer as part of their terms and conditions of employment, together with advice on how to access the full document.
- 17.2 Failure to comply with any of the provisions included in this Code may result in disciplinary action being taken under the Disciplinary policy, or legal action if necessary.

18 Additional guidance and support

- 18.1 This policy provides an overview of the purpose of the policy and the roles and responsibilities of those for whom it is intended. There are other documents which provide more detail and helpful guidance that should be read in conjunction with this Code and these are listed below:-

Responsibility for Functions (Scheme of Delegation - Constitution Part 3)
Financial Regulations (Constitution Part 4)

Contract Rules (Constitution Part 4)
Officer Employment Procedure Rules (Constitution Part 4)
Protocol on Councillor/Officer Relations (Constitution Part 5)
Data Protection Policy (GlosNet GDPR)
Information Security Policy and Procedures (GlosNet GDPR)
Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy Statement (GlosNet Policies and Procedures)
Ordering Goods and Paying For Them (GlosNet Procurement)
Agile Working Policy (GlosNet HR)
Disciplinary Policy (GlosNet HR)
Secondary Employment Policy (GlosNet HR)
Fairness, Diversity and Equality at Work Policies (GlosNet HR)
Gifts and Hospitality Guidance (GlosNet HR)
Safety Health and Well-being (GlosNet HR)
Whistleblowing Policy (Glosnet HR)
Code of Practice for Planning
Code of Practice for Licensing

OFFICER CODE OF CONDUCT FOR GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL

Gloucester City Council (“the Council”) adopted this code of conduct on [] 30 January 2020 2024 to come into force on 30 January [] 2020 2024. The Code sets out the conduct that is expected of you when acting as an Employee Officer of Gloucester City Council and conducting council business including full-time and part time staff, permanent, temporary, casual or agency staff, secondees, work placements, apprentices and trainees.

The Code does not seek to regulate employee Officers’ private or personal lives, but care must be taken to ensure that nothing is done that would bring council work and private interests into conflict or bring the employee Officer or the Council into disrepute.

Purpose of this Code of Conduct

The people of Gloucester are entitled to expect conduct of the highest standard from all the Council’s employee Officers. All employee Officers are expected to act in accordance with this Code, it forms part of the terms and conditions of employment, and failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

The Code of Conduct is based upon the seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Employee Officer’s responsibilities

Officers serve the whole Council and are expected to provide the same level of support for all functions of the Council.

You Officers are expected to:

1. Maintain conduct of the highest standard so public confidence in your-their integrity and the Council as a whole is sustained
2. Ask for clarification from your line manager or the Monitoring Officer on any aspects of the Code that are not clear
3. Incorporate and promote equality in all that you-they do
4. Keep up to date with the latest version of the Code and follow it at all times.

Manager’s responsibilities

Your manager is responsible for the application of this policy in their work area and will

1. Set a positive personal model of behaviour
2. Ensure standards in the Code are established and communicated
3. Provide clarification, where required, to improve employee understanding
4. Take proper action at the earliest opportunity to manage non-compliance with the standards set out in this Code

1 Public funds

- 1.1 All employee Officers must act with probity, financial control and honesty and adhere to arrangements for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption.

1.2 All [employeeOfficers](#) must comply with the Council’s Financial, Contract and Procurement Regulations, the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, Anti Bribery Policy, Anti Money Laundering and Confidential Reporting (Whistle**B**-Blowing) Policies.

1.3 Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders and no special favour should be shown in the tendering process to businesses operated or controlled by friends, partners or relatives.

2 Customers

2.1 All [employeeOfficers](#) should be courteous, efficient and impartial. Staff who work with customers- who behave aggressively should familiarise themselves with the best practise for dealing with violence and aggression [and the Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy](#).

3 Other Employees

3.1 All [employeeOfficers](#) must treat colleagues, including those not directly employed by the council, with courtesy and respect, and must not abuse them verbally or physically.

Staff must not harass or bully or be insubordinate to colleagues and must comply with the standards set out in this Code in relation to equalities.

3.2 [EmployeeOfficers](#) who are in a partner, family or emotional relationship may at some time work together. Such personal relationships seldom interfere with work and the presumption will be that the relationship will not affect performance. However, there are situations when a personal relationship between [employeeOfficers](#) or [between an Officer and Member](#) becomes a management concern and may unintentionally impair operational efficiency or affect the integrity of service delivery. [EmployeeOfficers](#) must declare any personal relationship with another [employeeOfficer or with a Member](#), where the relationship could affect, or could be perceived to affect performance.

3.3 In any situation where [employeeOfficers](#) in a personal relationship work in close proximity, the council reserves the right (without breach of contract) to require one or both [employeeOfficers](#) to change their roles or duties. [In circumstances where an Officer is in a close personal relationship with a Member the council reserves the right \(without breach of contract\) to require the Officer to change their role or duties](#). This is intended to avoid the [employeeOfficers](#) in a relationship finding themselves in a potentially difficult situation and avoid perceptions of undue influence or unfairness (whether real or imagined).

4 Equalities

4.1 All members of the local community, customers, [councillors-Members](#) and colleagues have a right to be treated with fairness and equity and be confident that they will not be discriminated against because of their age, gender, gender reassignment, disability, pregnancy/maternity status, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, their economic and social background, those with responsibilities as a carer, those who are married or in a civil partnership, or any other ground that cannot be shown to be justified.

4.2 All [employeeOfficer](#)s must take care to do nothing that may cause them or the Council to breach any equality enactment.

5 [Alcohol and Drugs](#)

5.1 ~~All Officers will be expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or drugs (used other than as prescribed) or have their work performance adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs. Any associated inappropriate behaviour or conduct may be considered misconduct and may be considered under the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.~~

5.2 ~~Where involvement with illegal or illicit drugs, use of prescription drugs other than as prescribed or excessive use of alcohol by an Officer takes place outside of working hours, the Council will consider the impact this may have on their employment, including consideration of any implications for the Council's reputation or public confidence.~~

6. Health and Safety

65.1 All employeeOfficers shall comply with the Council's Health and Safety policies and procedures and must ensure that they do not act wilfully or intentionally in a manner liable to place the public, colleagues, themselves or the Council at risk.

~~5.2 Smoking is not allowed in any of the Council's premises and any employee who is identified as having an alcohol related or substance abuse problem will be treated in accordance with the guidance notes on alcohol and substance abuse.~~

7.6 Conflicts of Interest

76.1 All employeeOfficers must avoid creating a conflict of interests between their private life and their public duties. The council reserves the right to bring action against an employeeOfficer where their conduct outside work conflicts with their public duties, for example where conduct outside of work could undermine the council's reputation or public confidence.

67.2 EmployeeOfficers who are involved with granting permissions, approvals, consents or benefits, ~~just~~must take no part in considering any application made by the employeeOfficer or their relative, friend or neighbour.

67.3 All staff appointments will be made on merit. In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, employeeOfficers should not be involved in an appointment, either on an Appointment Panel or as a referee, if they are related to an applicant, or have a close personal relationship with them outside work. EmployeeOfficers should not be involved in decisions relating to discipline or other sanction, or in decisions relating to pay, where they are related to, or have a close personal relationship with, the employeeOfficer who is subject to that decision.

67.4 EmployeeOfficers must declare any financial or other interest - whether direct or indirect - in any existing or proposed contract with the Council or any other interest or association with any council activity, which could cause a potential conflict of interest. ~~these~~These include but are not limited to decision-making, the management of contracts and giving policy advice.

67.5 All declarations must be made in writing to the Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer can also provide advice to ensure compliance with this requirement.

7-8 Arrest or Conviction on Civil or Criminal Charges

78.1 You must, as soon as practicable, inform (and keep informed) your line manager if you are arrested, charged, convicted or sentenced for any civil or criminal offence that could result if convicted in a term of imprisonment of at least ~~6~~three (3) months.

~~78.2~~ In relation to traffic offences you do not need to inform your line manager of a matter unless it involves the transport of service users, involves an official vehicle or could result in a term of imprisonment of at least 6 months or a disqualification from driving.

~~78.3~~ Failure to inform will be considered an act of gross misconduct.

~~8-9~~ Secondary Employment

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~~98.2~~ EmployeeOfficers [~~on or above Grade F (Scale Point 29)~~] must obtain the express consent of the Managing eir ——— Director or Head of Service prior to engaging in any other business or taking up any secondary employment. EmployeeOfficers must subsequently keep their Chief Officer/line manager advised of any changes to their secondary employment.

~~98.3~~ Secondary employment outside the council must not conflict with the council's interests or bring it into disrepute. You are not permitted to undertake secondary employment during your working hours, use council property, equipment or associated documents or communications.

~~89.4~~ The Council reserves the right to take action if secondary employment is deemed to be detrimental to the interests or reputation of the council, or where it affects an employeeOfficer's work performance.

~~89.5~~ EmployeeOfficers may not become a trustee or board member of any organisation which receives any form of funding from the council except with the express consent of the Managing # Director or Head of Service, after consultation with the Monitoring Officer.

~~98.6~~ EmployeeOfficers must not engage in secondary employment which is set up in competition with the Council or compete with the Council for a contract while still employed by the Council or canvass other Council employeeOfficers to induce them to join a business which is set up in competition with the Council.

~~9-10.~~ Gifts, Hospitality and Inducements

~~109.1~~ It is a criminal offence for an employeeOfficer to accept money or reward other than their proper pay.

~~109.2~~ Small gifts may only be accepted when they are low cost (less than twenty five pounds (£25)), functional items suitable for business use, rather than personal use, e.g. diaries, calendars, pens. Any other gifts should be returned officially with a suitable letter of explanation. If they cannot be returned, they should be given to the Head of Paid Service for donation to the Mayor's Charity

~~109.3~~ Visits by employeeOfficers to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals, and social functions, in connection with their official duties shall be at the council's expense.

~~109.4~~ Hospitality, in the form of meals and drinks, offered by a third party, is only acceptable ——— acceptable where it forms a minor part of normal business meetings/discussions held during the normal working day.

[910.5](#) Other offers of hospitality, e.g. invitations to dinners, cultural performances, sporting events, awards ceremonies etc, should only be accepted if there is a clear and demonstrable benefit to the council, and the hospitality would not expose the council to criticism that the provider of the hospitality was achieving undue influence or creating the perception of an obligation. Attendance must have the Head of Paid Service's approval in advance and must be recorded in the register of gifts and hospitality.

[910.6](#) Informal social contact e.g. drinks in a public house, with representatives of organisations, which supply, or hope to supply, goods or services to the council must always be avoided. Where such instances do occasionally take place, i.e. after late working, [employeeOfficers](#) should ensure that the other party does not meet the costs of such contact in full. [EmployeeOfficers](#) should record such events in the register of gifts and hospitality.

[910.7](#) The register of gifts and hospitality is held by the Monitoring Officer and is subject to regular Audit inspection.

[910.8](#) [EmployeeOfficers](#) should not engage the services of contractors commissioned by the council when acquiring materials, labour or plant at cost, trade or discount prices. Whilst such an arrangement may constitute a saving it puts [employeeOfficers](#) in a compromising situation which may bring them and the council into disrepute.

[910.9](#) Customers may seek to express their thanks to [employeeOfficers](#) by offering gifts, money etc. [EmployeeOfficers](#) ~~should~~ **must** refuse such 'gifts' politely and explain why you cannot accept them before reporting this matter to their line manager.

[910.10](#) The prevention, detection and reporting of bribery is the responsibility of all [employeeOfficers](#) and all staff are required to avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, a breach of the Bribery Act 2010.

[11.0](#) Political Neutrality

[110.1](#) All [employeeOfficers](#) serve the council ~~as~~ a whole and not just the controlling group - and must ensure the individual rights of all councillors are respected.

[110.2](#) All [employeeOfficers](#) must follow the lawfully expressed policies of the Council and must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their [workwork](#).

[110.3](#) [EmployeeOfficers](#) in politically restricted posts must comply with the statutory restrictions ~~on~~ **on** their political activities.

~~[1011.4](#)~~ [1011.4](#) Whilst engaged in council business, [employeeOfficers](#) must not wear or display any objects indicating support for or opposition to any political party or view. This applies to private vehicles used whilst undertaking council business.

~~[10.5](#)~~ [10.5](#) ~~Employees must declare any personal relationship with a Councillor. Where the relationship could present a conflict of interest, your manager will need to consider how this will be effectively managed.~~

[11-12](#) The Media

~~[1112.1](#)~~ [1112.1](#) All communications with the media relating to the activities of the council should ~~be~~ **be** handled through the communications team at communications@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

121.2 No [employeeOfficers](#) should communicate with the media on matters relating to the activities of the council without [prior](#) authorisation from the communications team and journalists should be referred to the communications team.

121.3 [EmployeeOfficers](#) with ideas for positive stories about the council should contact the communications team.

1112.4 Any [employeeOfficer](#) that wishes to write material for a publication which does not refer to the council but relates to their profession (e.g. an article in a professional journal), should advise their [line](#) manager before publication. The article should also contain a disclaimer, which states that the views are those of the individual and not of the council.

12-13. Use of Council Facilities and Systems

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1213.2 Any property, equipment or devices provided to [employeeOfficers](#) for business use must be used in compliance with the terms, conditions and use policies provided at the time the equipment was issued (or as they may be updated from time to time).

1213.3 The council has the right to access and monitor communication systems provided to ~~you,~~ [and you and](#) will monitor usage of its communication systems e.g. telephone, email and Internet access, to ensure their proper use and will run reports detailing usage levels of staff.

1213.4 Systems may be accessed when the council suspects an [employeeOfficer](#) has been misusing council facilities, or, for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity. In addition, where service delivery reasons exist, an [employeeOfficers'](#) senior officer, may approve access to emails when an [employeeOfficer](#) is absent. Access to facilities may be temporarily suspended whilst an investigation is on-going and may be permanently withdrawn where misuse is detected. Cases of 'misuse' may result in disciplinary action being taken - this may include dismissal.

132.5 Email and the Internet are available for work use and provisions apply as part of [agile](#) ~~agile~~ working. External email is not secure, [employeeOfficers](#) must [only use work email addresses to communicate with third parties as part of their job role. take this into account when choosing how personal and confidential information is communicated.](#) Good practice guidelines for [the use of council resources](#) ~~the use of email and the Internet~~ are available on GlosNet.

1213.6 ~~Never send inappropriate comments by email.~~

132.7 ~~Officers are to be~~ Be aware [that](#) contracts formed by email or over the Internet might be legally binding. Any contractual agreement, offer or acceptance must only be made electronically if you have [explicit written](#) authority to [enter into the contract do this or where specific management authorisation has been given.](#)

14.3 Social networking websites

143.1 All [employeeOfficers](#) are encouraged to exercise discretion and use social media [appropriately and have regard to their employment with the Council responsibly](#) at all times ~~this is to~~ protect the ~~c~~Council's operations, confidential information and reputation. [Officers are expected](#)

~~The following applies to all employees who use social networking websites for work or in their private life:-~~

- 1) Avoid making any social media communications that could damage the council's business, operations or reputation, even indirectly.
- 2) ~~Not~~ use social media to:
 - defame or disparage the council, staff or any third party;
 - harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against staff or third parties;
 - make false or misleading statements; or
 - impersonate colleagues or third parties
- 3) ~~Don't~~ express opinions on the ~~c~~Council's behalf, unless expressly authorised to do so by your ~~Head of Service~~manager: you may be required to undergo training in order to obtain such authorisation.
- 4) ~~Don't~~ post comments about sensitive ~~council~~ business-related topics, such as draft proposals or information belonging to any organisation (or person) with which the council works in partnership.
- 5) ~~Don't~~ do anything to jeopardise the ~~c~~Council's confidential information and intellectual property.
- 6) Never include our logos or other trademarks connected to the council's work in any social media posting or in your profile on any social media ~~unless expressly authorised to do so by your Head of Service~~.

15.4 Handling Information

154.1 All ~~employee~~Officers must comply with the Data Protection legislation and the ~~c~~Council's Data Protection Policy.

154.2 ~~Employee~~Officers may be required by law to disclose certain types of information to ~~Members~~Councillors, auditors, government departments, service users and the public. Information should be disclosed unless there is a good reason for not doing so.

154.3 Information which must be kept confidential includes:

- a) Commercially sensitive information
- b) Personal details of colleagues
- c) Reports and Minutes which are Confidential or Exempt from publication
- d) The ~~c~~Council's internal documents (unless the law says that the information must be made public or as instructed by a Manager)

154.4 ~~Employee~~Officers must not reveal any information to anyone else unless they have a legal responsibility to provide it, or where the ~~employee~~Officer, client, contractor, debtor or creditor concerned gives them written permission to do so.

154.5 ~~Employee~~Officers must not use information obtained through ~~their council role~~ work for their personal benefit or gain, nor may they pass it on to anyone else who might use it in such a way.

154.6 All [employeeOfficers](#) should exercise reasonable judgement in communicating information, particularly information which may bring the [cCouncil in teinto](#) disrepute or cause it harm, to any person or organisation outside the Council.

15-16. Whistleblowing

165.1 The council does not tolerate any form of malpractice. Every [employeeOfficer](#) has an important part to play in reporting any concerns, and all staff are expected to cooperate with investigations. Although it is often difficult for [employeeOfficers](#) to report legitimate concerns through fear of victimisation or reprisal, please be assured that in raising concerns you will be supported. Please refer to the Whistleblowing policy for more information.

176 Compliance with the Code

176.1 This Code is part of [every Officer's your](#) contract of employment. An extract of the Code is issued to every [employeeOfficer](#) as part of their terms and conditions of employment, together with advice on how to access the full document.

176.2 Failure to comply with any of the provisions included in this Code may result in disciplinary action being taken under the Disciplinary policy, or legal action if necessary.

17-18 Additional guidance and support

187.1 This policy provides an overview of the purpose of the policy and the roles and responsibilities of those for whom it is intended. There are other documents which provide more detail and helpful guidance that should be read in conjunction with this Code and these are listed below:-

Responsibility for Functions (Scheme of Delegation - Constitution Part 3)
Financial Regulations (Constitution Part 4)
Contract Rules (Constitution Part 4)
Officer Employment Procedure Rules (Constitution Part 4)
Protocol on Councillor/Officer Relations (Constitution Part 5)
Data Protection Policy (GlosNet GDPR)
Information Security Policy and Procedures (GlosNet GDPR)
Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy Statement (GlosNet Policies and Procedures)
Ordering Goods and Paying For Them (GlosNet Procurement)
Agile Working Policy (GlosNet HR)
Disciplinary Policy (GlosNet HR)
Secondary Employment Policy (GlosNet HR)
Fairness, Diversity and Equality at Work Policies (GlosNet HR)
Gifts and Hospitality Guidance (GlosNet HR)
Safety Health and Well-being (GlosNet HR)
Whistleblowing Policy (Glosnet HR)
Code of Practice for Planning
Code of Practice for Licensing

PART 3C: Committee Functions

- 3C.1 Council has established the Committees set out in Table 2 below to discharge certain functions. Council retains the right to a concurrent and overriding exercise of all functions in Table 2.
- 3C.2 The Council must have at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3C.3 A Committee may establish such Sub-Committee(s) as it sees fit to undertake certain of its functions and the Table below include such Sub-Committees.
- 3C.4 Unless otherwise required by law, a Committee or Sub-Committee in Table 2 may determine not to exercise a function delegated to it and refer that function upwards for determination by respectively Council or the parent Committee.

Table 2- Functions of Committees

Overview and Scrutiny	
1	Co-ordinate, champion and lead on the scrutiny of Council and Executive decisions.
2	Have all of the functions, powers and duties conferred by Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended).
3	Determine the allocation of work in the event that the scope of the subject matter of a scrutiny study or investigation overlaps the role of more than one Sub-Committee or Task and Finish Group.
4	Review the operation of the scrutiny process and work programmes of the Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committees and Task and Finish Groups and inform and advise Council in relation to priorities and the allocation of resources.
5	Oversee and review the resources, support, training and development of Overview and Scrutiny Members.
6	Develop a positive “critical friend” approach to the role of scrutiny of the Council and Community issues.
7	Provide and co-ordinate the input to an annual report to Full Council on such issues or topics as the Committee sees fit.
8	Give consideration to the management of matters called in for review under paragraph 14 of the Overview and Scrutiny Rules.
9	Give consideration to matters referred to it by the Councillors’ Call for Action.
10	Review and scrutinise the work of the Executive.
11	Review and scrutinise the content of the Forward Plan.
12	Review and scrutinise the policies of the Council.
13	Consider any matters which affect the authority, the City of Gloucester (or part of it) or its inhabitants (or some of them).
Planning Committee	
1	To determine planning applications, the terms of planning agreements and such other matters as are considered appropriate from time to time, excluding matters relating to policy.
2	To determine the Council’s response to major planning applications in neighbouring districts where the Council is a consultee.
3	To deal with all matters arising under the building regulation code and associated legislation except matters expressly delegated to the relevant Head of Service.
4	To determine matters relating to planning as a District Planning Authority excluding strategic planning matters, such as:

	<p>(a) The preparation, adoption and review of the Council's statutory Local Development Plan and</p> <p>(b) Representation of the District Planning Authority's view to other bodies as appropriate on strategic planning matters.</p>
5	To determine all matters relating to the Section 106 process - determining Council priorities for Developer contributions.
6	Without prejudice to the above roles and the Council's Scheme of Delegation the Planning Committee shall be responsible for those matters set out in Part A (Functions relating to Town and Country Planning and Development Control) of Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000.
7	To approve the Planning Enforcement Plan.
8	To determine Neighbourhood Planning applications.
9	To determine all future matters regarding the making of Local Development Orders.
10	<p>To determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications submitted by or on behalf of the Council, or for development on Council owned land or where the Council has a direct interest, except where no objections are received. • Applications submitted by a serving Member or Officer of the Council; or submitted by an immediate relative to either of the above. • Applications, which constitute a significant departure from the most up to date Local Plan that is formally approved or adopted by the Council for Development Control purposes. • Planning applications for 50 or more new houses/flats. • Applications which entail more than 2000 square metres of new non-residential gross floor space. • New buildings or structures which exceed 20 metres in height. • Applications where Officers are recommending an agreement under S.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 with the exception of Agreements which relate to (i) only relate to the delivery of on-site affordable housing in accordance with policy; or (ii) the collection and administration of contributions for open space which accord with Local Plan policy and associated Supplementary Planning Guidance; Unilateral Undertakings; and Deeds of Variation. • Applications which are accompanied by an Environmental Statement. Applications for change of use to hot food takeaway, where the Officer recommendation is for approval, except where no objections are received. • Applications for a change of use to a pay-day loan shop or betting office, where the Officer recommendation is for approval. • Applications for the demolition of a listed building (other than minor associated buildings within the curtilage). • Applications for development that significantly affects the setting of a grade 1 or 2* Listed Building or a Scheduled Monument. • Applications for the removal of trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (except where exempted by the Act) and not associated with an application for planning permission, where there are objections received. <p>PROVISOs:</p> <p>(a) Only the relevant Ward Members where the application site is located plus Members in adjacent Wards where the application might have an impact, the Chair or Vice Chair of the Planning Committee or the Party Spokespersons are able to refer an application to Committee.</p> <p>(b) Any Councillor wishing to refer a planning application to Committee must submit a request in writing within 28 days of the consultation period commencing. If the</p>

	<p>request is not submitted within this timescale then the application cannot be referred to Committee except in exceptional circumstances (for example, an application is particularly controversial or significant) and where it is agreed by one of the following; the relevant Director , the Head of Place, the Chair of the Planning Committee or Party Spokespersons.</p> <p>(c) The relevant Director and/or the Head of Place will use their discretion to refer any matter to the Planning Committee which would raise sensitive issues, or where it would be otherwise be beneficial for the decision to be made by Members.</p> <p>(d) An application may not be referred to the Planning Committee if it concerns a matter of technical appraisal, fact or legal opinion; or is an application with fixed determination periods (e.g. notifications, prior approvals, approval to discharge conditions and minor amendments)</p>
Licensing and Enforcement Committee	
1	<p>To undertake all matters in relation to the statutory licensing and registration functions of the Council (save to the extent that such responsibility has been delegated to another Committee or Officer by the Council) such duties to include liquor, entertainment and late night refreshment licensing and the Gambling Act 2005. The Committee's role includes the formulation and approval of policy guidelines with the exception of the following which are dealt with by the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex Establishment Licensing Policy • Licensing Policy Statement - Licensing Act 2003 • Gambling Policy - Statement of Principles - Gambling Act 2005.
2	To receive information from the County Council and other relevant bodies on matters relating to the Council's licensing functions.
3	To hear and determine licence applications that are contentious and/or where objections have been lodged by statutory consultees, residents, other third parties or where officers have reservations about the appropriateness of an application or the suitability of an applicant.
4	Without prejudice to the above roles and the Council's Scheme of Delegation the Licensing and Enforcement Committee shall be responsible for those matters set out in Parts B and C (Licensing and Registration functions) of Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005.
5	The Licensing and Enforcement Committee shall be empowered to set up a sub-committee or sub-committees to discharge functions and act in accordance with powers delegated by the Committee. In the context of the Committee's powers under the Gambling Act 2005 sub delegation may extend to the permitted discharge of functions by an officer.
6	To receive reports and determine policy in relation to street trading.
7	To approve policy and to determine fees in relation to scrap metal dealer licensing.
Licensing and Enforcement Sub-Committee (Licensing and Gambling)	
1	To undertake all matters relating to the discharge of functions in accordance with the powers delegated by the Parent Committee.
2	The Sub-Committee will meet to hear appeals relating to the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005.
Licensing and Enforcement Sub-Committee (Enforcement)	
1	To undertake all matters relating to the discharge of functions in accordance with the powers delegated by the Parent Committee.

2	To hear Hackney Carriage and Private Hire disciplinary matters in accordance with the provisions of the Council's adopted General Conditions for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing.
3	To hear appeals against refusals of applications for, or conditions applied to, street trading consents.
4	To consider contentious applications for scrap metal dealer licences and to hear appeals against refusals of applications for scrap metal dealer licences.
Audit and Governance Committee	
Governance, risk and control	
1	<p>Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring the effectiveness of the Chief Officer's responsibility for ensuring an adequate internal control environment; • Monitoring the arrangements for the identification, monitoring and control of strategic and operational risk within the Council; • Monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of the arrangements in place for combating fraud and corruption; • Providing an annual report to Council that its systems of governance are operating effectively, which includes the Committee's performance in relation to the terms of reference; • Reviewing and approving the annual Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and its associated assurance framework; • Considering the Council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements; • Ensuring that the Chief Internal Auditor has the right of independent access to the Committee and its Chair; • Reviewing and monitoring treasury management arrangements in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice; • Considering and advising changes to the Council's Constitution in respect of Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations; • Formulating and keeping under review a Code of Conduct to promote high ethical standards amongst Officers and doing anything that is considered to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Officers; • Formulating and keeping under review the Council's 'whistle-blowing' policy; and • Formulating and keeping under review the Council's arrangements for handling complaints and investigations by the Local Government Ombudsman.
Ethics and Behaviours	
2	<p>To promote, maintain and assist the achievement of high standards of conduct by Councillors and co-opted members in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct for Members; • To advise the Council on any amendment or revision of the Code; • To secure adequate and appropriate training of Councillors and co-opted Members on the Code of Conduct for Members;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To give general guidance and advice to Councillors on Members' interests and keep under review the Register of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer; and • To give general guidance and advice to Councillors and employees on gifts and hospitality.
External Audit	
3	<p>Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's external audit service and respond to its findings. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering the appointment, nature and scope of the external audit of the Council's services and functions; • Receiving and considering all external audit reports including the annual plan, annual audit letter and governance report; and • Monitoring management's response to the external auditor's findings and the implementation of external audit recommendations.
Internal Audit	
4	<p>Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the Internal Audit service. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approving the internal audit charter; • Approving the annual risk based internal audit plan; • Receiving communications from the Chief Internal Auditor on the internal audit activity's performance relative to its plan and other matters, including the annual report and opinion; • Receiving and considering major Internal Audit findings and recommendations; • Monitoring management's response to Internal Audit findings and the implementation of the recommendations; • Making appropriate enquiries of management and the Chief Internal Auditor to determine whether there are inappropriate scope and resource limitations; • Agreeing the scope and form of the external assessment as part of the quality assurance and improvement plan; • Receiving the results of internal and external assessments of the quality assurance and improvement programme, including areas of non-conformance with professional standards; and • Approving significant consulting services not already included in the audit plan, prior to acceptance of the engagement, if this materially impacts on core assurance activity.
Constitution	
5	<p>To grant dispensations to Councillors and co-opted Members related to interests specified in the Code of Conduct for Members following written requests to the proper officer (Monitoring Officer) by a Member or Co-opted Member under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011, when the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers that granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area; • Considers that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers appeals against decisions made by the Monitoring Officer in exercise of their dispensation powers.
Hearings Panel	
6	<p>To establish a Hearings Panel to make recommendations to Council on the appointment of an Independent Person to hear allegations that Members have failed to comply with the Member's Code of Conduct. Specifically to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and review allegations of Member misconduct; and • Determine allegations of Member misconduct.
Powers	
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee has the right to require the attendance of any Council officers and/or members in order to respond directly to any issue under consideration; • To review any issues referred to it by the Head of Paid Service, a Director or any Council body; and • The power to call expert witnesses from outside the Council to give advice on matters under review or discussion.
General Purposes Committee	
1	<p>To make recommendations to Council on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) changes to the Constitution (excluding changes within the remit of the Audit and Governance Committee) (b) polling district and polling place arrangements (c) proposals to change the name of the electoral area (d) any functions in relation to parishes, parish meetings and parish councils, including changing the name of a parish (e) community governance matters, including the outcome of any community governance review (f) the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel in respect of the Scheme of Members' Allowances.
2	To make recommendations to the Returning Officer in respect of elections matters.
3	To make recommendations to the Electoral Registration Officer in respect of electoral registration matters.
4	To make, amend or revoke bylaws.
5	To approve changes to staff terms and conditions and policies relating to employee remuneration.
6	To consider the Pay Policy Statement and refer it to Council for approval
7	To determine policies relating to local government pensions and discretionary compensation
8	To deal with any matter which, by virtue of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 as amended or any other statutory provision, cannot be the responsibility of the Cabinet and does not fall within the terms of reference of any other Committee or within the Scheme of Officer Delegations.
9	To deal, where legally permissible, with any matter, including the authorisation of legal proceedings, which requires a decision of the Council and which cannot reasonably be dealt with in the normal cycle of meetings.
Senior Appointments Committee	
1	To be responsible for the appointment of the Managing Director and Directors.
2	To refer the appointment of the Head of Paid Service to Council for approval.

3	To recommend to Council, on a permanent, temporary or acting up basis, a person to be designated as the S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer.
4	To determine the conditions on which the Managing Director and Directors hold office, including deciding on matters of early retirement.
5	To suspend the Managing Director, Directors and Statutory Officers whilst an investigation takes place into alleged misconduct.
6	To manage and consider any disciplinary and/or capability and any grievance matters arising in relation to the Managing Director, Directors and the Statutory Officers
7	To consider allegations concerning the conduct or capability of the Managing Director, Directors and the Statutory Officers in order to establish whether or not they are sufficiently well-founded and serious in content to justify investigation.
8	To carry out the function of an Investigating & Disciplinary Committee as set out in the JNC Conditions of Service for Chief Executives and the JNC Conditions of Service for Chief Officers.
9	<p>In respect of Statutory Officers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) decide whether the issues requires no formal action or (b) whether the issue should be referred to an Independent Person (c) be responsible for the appointment and terms of reference of the Independent Person (d) receive and consider the report of the Independent Person (e) hold a capability or disciplinary hearing <p>Following receipt of any Independent Person report, to determine a course of action (up to and including dismissal) within the Council's powers under law and in accordance with the Council's procedures including the procedures set out in the Officer Employment Procedure Rules. Council must approve any dismissal of Statutory Officers.</p>
10	<p>In respect of the Managing Director and Directors to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) appoint, if appropriate, an investigator on behalf of the Committee (which power may be delegated to an officer) (b) receive and consider any report of an investigator (c) hold a capability and/or disciplinary hearing <p>Following any capability and/or disciplinary hearing, determine a course of action (up to and including dismissal) within the Council's powers under law and in accordance with the Council's procedures including the procedures set out in the Officer Employment Procedure Rules.</p>
Appeals Committee	
1	To hear and determine appeals against decisions of the Senior Appointments Committee in respect of action taken against the Managing Director or Director (other than a Statutory Officer).
2	To hear and determine appeals against any action short of dismissal taken by the Senior Appointments Committee against a Statutory Officer.

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PART 3C: Committee Functions

- 3C.1 Council has established the Committees set out in Table 2 below to discharge certain functions. Council retains the right to a concurrent and overriding exercise of all functions in Table 2.
- 3C.2 The Council must have at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3C.3 A Committee may establish such Sub-Committee(s) as it sees fit to undertake certain of its functions and the Table below include such Sub-Committees.
- 3C.4 Unless otherwise required by law, a Committee or Sub-Committee in Table 2 may determine not to exercise a function delegated to it and refer that function upwards for determination by respectively Council or the parent Committee.

Table 2- Functions of Committees

Overview and Scrutiny	
1	Co-ordinate, champion and lead on the scrutiny of Council and Executive decisions.
2	Have all of the functions, powers and duties conferred by Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended).
3	Determine the allocation of work in the event that the scope of the subject matter of a scrutiny study or investigation overlaps the role of more than one Sub-Committee or Task and Finish Group.
4	Review the operation of the scrutiny process and work programmes of the Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committees and Task and Finish Groups and inform and advise Council in relation to priorities and the allocation of resources.
5	Oversee and review the resources, support, training and development of Overview and Scrutiny Members.
6	Develop a positive "critical friend" approach to the role of scrutiny of the Council and Community issues.
7	Provide and co-ordinate the input to an annual report to Full Council on such issues or topics as the Committee sees fit.
8	Give consideration to the management of matters called in for review under paragraph 14 of the Overview and Scrutiny Rules.
9	Give consideration to matters referred to it by the Councillors' Call for Action.
10	Review and scrutinise the work of the Executive.
11	Review and scrutinise the content of the Forward Plan.
12	Review and scrutinise the policies of the Council.
13	Consider any matters which affect the authority, the City of Gloucester (or part of it) or its inhabitants (or some of them).
Planning Committee	
1	To determine planning applications, the terms of planning agreements and such other matters as are considered appropriate from time to time, excluding matters relating to policy.
2	To determine the Council's response to major planning applications in neighbouring districts where the Council is a consultee.
3	To deal with all matters arising under the building regulation code and associated legislation except matters expressly delegated to the relevant Head of Service Director.

4	To determine matters relating to planning as a District Planning Authority excluding strategic planning matters, such as: (a) The preparation, adoption and review of the Council's statutory Local Development Plan and (b) Representation of the District Planning Authority's view to other bodies as appropriate on strategic planning matters.
5	To determine all matters relating to the Section 106 process - determining Council priorities for Developer contributions.
6	Without prejudice to the above roles and the Council's Scheme of Delegation the Planning Committee shall be responsible for those matters set out in Part A (Functions relating to Town and Country Planning and Development Control) of Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000.
7	To approve the Planning Enforcement Plan.
8	To determine Neighbourhood Planning applications.
9	To determine all future matters regarding the making of Local Development Orders.
10	<p>To determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications submitted by or on behalf of the City Council, or for development on Council owned land or where the Council has a direct interest, except where no objections are received. • Applications submitted by a serving Member or Officer of the Council; or submitted by an immediate relative to either of the above. • Applications, which constitute a significant departure from the most up to date Local Plan that is formally approved or adopted by the Council for Development Control purposes. • Planning applications for 50 or more new houses/flats. • Applications which entail more than 2000 square metres of new non-residential gross floor space. • New buildings or structures which exceed 20 metres in height. • Applications where Officers are recommending an agreement under S.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 with the exception of Agreements which relate to <u>(i) only relate to the delivery of on-site affordable housing in accordance with policy; or (ii) the collection and administration of contributions for open space which accord with Local Plan policy and associated Supplementary Planning Guidance; Unilateral Undertakings; and Deeds of Variation.</u> • Applications which are accompanied by an Environmental Statement. • Applications for change of use to hot food takeaway, <u>where the Officer recommendation is for approval, except where no objections are received.</u> • Applications for a change of use to a pay-day loan shop or betting office, where the Officer recommendation is for approval. • Applications for the demolition of a listed building (other than minor associated buildings within the curtilage). • Applications for development that significantly affects the setting of a grade 1 or 2* Listed Building or a Scheduled Monument. • Applications for the removal of trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (except where exempted by the Act) and not associated with an application for planning permission, where there are objections received. <p>PROVISOs:</p> <p>(a) Only the relevant Ward Members where the application site is located plus Members in adjacent Wards where the application might have an impact, the</p>

	<p>Chair or Vice Chair of the Planning Committee or the Party Spokespersons are able to refer an application to Committee.</p> <p>(b) Any Councillor wishing to refer a planning application to Committee must submit a pre-forma request <u>in writing slip</u> within 28 days of the consultation period commencing. If the request slip is not submitted within this timescale then the application cannot be referred to Committee except in exceptional circumstances (for example, an application is particularly controversial or significant) and where it is agreed by one of the following; the relevant Director , the Head of Place, the Chair of the Planning Committee or Party Spokespersons.</p> <p><u>(c)</u> The relevant Director <u>and/or</u> , the Head of Place will use their discretion to refer any matter to the Planning Committee which would raise sensitive issues, or where it would be otherwise be beneficial for the decision to be made by Members.</p> <p>(e)<u>(d)</u> <u>An application may not be referred to the Planning Committee if it concerns a matter of technical appraisal, fact or legal opinion; or is an application with fixed determination periods (e.g. notifications, prior approvals, approval to discharge conditions and minor amendments)</u></p>
Licensing and Enforcement Committee	
1	<p>To undertake all matters in relation to the statutory licensing and registration functions of the Council (save to the extent that such responsibility has been delegated to another Committee or Officer by the Council) such duties to include liquor, entertainment and late night refreshment licensing and the Gambling Act 2005. The Committee's role includes the formulation and approval of policy guidelines with the exception of the following which are dealt with by the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex Establishment Licensing Policy • Licensing Policy Statement - Licensing Act 2003 • Gambling Policy - Statement of Principles - Gambling Act 2005.
2	To receive information from the County Council and other relevant bodies on matters relating to the Council's licensing functions.
3	To hear and determine licence applications that are contentious and/or where objections have been lodged by statutory consultees, residents, other third parties or where officers have reservations about the appropriateness of an application or the suitability of an applicant.
4	Without prejudice to the above roles and the Council's Scheme of Delegation the Licensing and Enforcement Committee shall be responsible for those matters set out in Parts B and C (Licensing and Registration functions) of Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005.
5	The Licensing and Enforcement Committee shall be empowered to set up a sub-committee or sub-committees to discharge functions and act in accordance with powers delegated by the Committee. In the context of the Committee's powers under the Gambling Act 2005 sub delegation may extend to the permitted discharge of functions by an officer.
6	To receive reports and determine policy in relation to street trading.
7	To approve policy and to determine fees in relation to scrap metal dealer licensing.
Licensing and Enforcement Sub-Committee (Licensing and Gambling)	
1	To undertake all matters relating to the discharge of functions in accordance with the powers delegated by the Parent Committee.
2	The Sub-Committee will meet to hear appeals relating to the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005.
Licensing and Enforcement Sub-Committee (Enforcement)	

1	To undertake all matters relating to the discharge of functions in accordance with the powers delegated by the Parent Committee.
2	To hear Hackney Carriage and Private Hire disciplinary matters in accordance with the provisions of the Council's adopted General Conditions for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing.
3	To hear appeals against refusals of applications for, or conditions applied to, street trading consents.
4	To consider contentious applications for scrap metal dealer licences and to hear appeals against refusals of applications for scrap metal dealer licences.
Audit and Governance Committee	
Governance, risk and control	
1	<p>Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring the effectiveness of the Chief Officer's responsibility for ensuring an adequate internal control environment; • Monitoring the arrangements for the identification, monitoring and control of strategic and operational risk within the Council; • Monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of the arrangements in place for combating fraud and corruption; • Providing an annual report to Council that its systems of governance are operating effectively, which includes the Committee's performance in relation to the terms of reference; • Reviewing and approving the annual Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and its associated assurance framework; • Considering the Council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements; • Ensuring that the Chief Internal Auditor has the right of independent access to the Committee and its Chair; • Reviewing and monitoring treasury management arrangements in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice; • Considering and advising changes to the Council's Constitution in respect of Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations; • Formulating and keeping under review a Code of Conduct to promote high ethical standards amongst Officers and doing anything that is considered to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Officers; • Formulating and keeping under review the Council's 'whistle-blowing' policy; and • Formulating and keeping under review the Council's arrangements for handling complaints and investigations by the Local Government Ombudsman.
Ethics and Behaviours	
2	<p>To promote, maintain and assist the achievement of high standards of conduct by Councillors and co-opted members in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct for Members; • To advise the Council on any amendment or revision of the Code;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To secure adequate and appropriate training of Councillors and co-opted Members on the Code of Conduct for Members; • To give general guidance and advice to Councillors on Members' interests and keep under review the Register of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer; and • To give general guidance and advice to Councillors and employees on gifts and hospitality.
External Audit	
3	<p>Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's external audit service and respond to its findings. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering the appointment, nature and scope of the external audit of the Council's services and functions; • Receiving and considering all external audit reports including the annual plan, annual audit letter and governance report; and • Monitoring management's response to the external auditor's findings and the implementation of external audit recommendations.
Internal Audit	
4	<p>Monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the Internal Audit service. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approving the internal audit charter; • Approving the annual risk based internal audit plan; • Receiving communications from the Chief Internal Auditor on the internal audit activity's performance relative to its plan and other matters, including the annual report and opinion; • Receiving and considering major Internal Audit findings and recommendations; • Monitoring management's response to Internal Audit findings and the implementation of the recommendations; • Making appropriate enquiries of management and the Chief Internal Auditor to determine whether there are inappropriate scope and resource limitations; • Agreeing the scope and form of the external assessment as part of the quality assurance and improvement plan; • Receiving the results of internal and external assessments of the quality assurance and improvement programme, including areas of non-conformance with professional standards; and • Approving significant consulting services not already included in the audit plan, prior to acceptance of the engagement, if this materially impacts on core assurance activity.
Constitution	
5	<p>To grant dispensations to Councillors and co-opted Members related to interests specified in the Code of Conduct for Members following written requests to the proper officer (Monitoring Officer) by a Member or Co-opted Member under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011, when the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers that granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation; and • Considers appeals against decisions made by the Monitoring Officer in exercise of their dispensation powers.
Hearings Panel	
6	<p>To establish a Hearings Panel to make recommendations to Council on the appointment of an Independent Person to hear allegations that Members have failed to comply with the Member's Code of Conduct. Specifically to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and review allegations of Member misconduct; and • Determine allegations of Member misconduct.
Powers	
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee has the right to require the attendance of any Council officers and/or members in order to respond directly to any issue under consideration; • To review any issues referred to it by the Head of Paid Service, a Director or any Council body; and • The power to call expert witnesses from outside the Council to give advice on matters under review or discussion.
General Purposes Committee	
1	<p>To make recommendations to Council on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) changes to the Constitution (excluding changes within the remit of the Audit and Governance Committee) (b) polling district and polling place arrangements (c) proposals to change the name of the electoral area (d) any functions in relation to parishes, parish meetings and parish councils, including changing the name of a parish (e) community governance matters, including the outcome of any community governance review (f) the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel in respect of the Scheme of Members' Allowances.
2	To make recommendations to the Returning Officer in respect of elections matters.
3	To make recommendations to the Electoral Registration Officer in respect of electoral registration matters.
4	To make, amend or revoke bylaws.
5	To approve changes to staff terms and conditions and policies relating to employee remuneration.
6	To consider the Pay Policy Statement and refer it to Council for approval
7	To determine policies relating to local government pensions and discretionary compensation
8	To deal with any matter which, by virtue of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 as amended or any other statutory provision, cannot be the responsibility of the Cabinet and does not fall within the terms of reference of any other Committee or within the Scheme of Officer Delegations.
9	To deal, where legally permissible, with any matter, including the authorisation of legal proceedings, which requires a decision of the Council and which cannot reasonably be dealt with in the normal cycle of meetings.
Senior Appointments Committee	
1	To be responsible for the appointment of the Managing Director and Directors.

2	To refer the appointment of the Head of Paid Service to Council for approval.
3	To recommend to Council, on a permanent, temporary or acting up basis, a person to be designated as the S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer.
4	To determine the conditions on which the Managing Director and Directors hold office, including deciding on matters of early retirement.
5	To suspend the Managing Director, Directors and Statutory Officers whilst an investigation takes place into alleged misconduct.
6	To manage and consider any disciplinary and/or capability and any grievance matters arising in relation to the Managing Director, Directors and the Statutory Officers
7	To consider allegations concerning the conduct or capability of the Managing Director, Directors and the Statutory Officers in order to establish whether or not they are sufficiently well-founded and serious in content to justify investigation.
8	To carry out the function of an Investigating & Disciplinary Committee as set out in the JNC Conditions of Service for Chief Executives and the JNC Conditions of Service for Chief Officers.
9	<p>In respect of Statutory Officers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) decide whether the issues requires no formal action or (b) whether the issue should be referred to an Independent Person (c) be responsible for the appointment and terms of reference of the Independent Person (d) receive and consider the report of the Independent Person (e) hold a capability or disciplinary hearing <p>Following receipt of any Independent Person report, to determine a course of action (up to and including dismissal) within the Council's powers under law and in accordance with the Council's procedures including the procedures set out in the Officer Employment Procedure Rules. Council must approve any dismissal of Statutory Officers.</p>
10	<p>In respect of the Managing Director and Directors to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) appoint, if appropriate, an investigator on behalf of the Committee (which power may be delegated to an officer) (b) receive and consider any report of an investigator (c) hold a capability and/or disciplinary hearing <p>Following any capability and/or disciplinary hearing, determine a course of action (up to and including dismissal) within the Council's powers under law and in accordance with the Council's procedures including the procedures set out in the Officer Employment Procedure Rules.</p>
Appeals Committee	
1	To hear and determine appeals against decisions of the Senior Appointments Committee in respect of action taken against the Managing Director or Director (other than a Statutory Officer).
2	To hear and determine appeals against any action short of dismissal taken by the Senior Appointments Committee against a Statutory Officer.

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COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

Introduction

The Council Procedure Rules (Democratic Standing Orders) deal with the operation, procedures and practices related to Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings. These rules include both statutory requirements and locally agreed procedures.

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1. ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

1.01 Timing and Business

In a year when there is an ordinary election of Councillors, the annual meeting shall take place within 21 days of the retirement of the outgoing Councillors. In any other year, the annual meeting shall take place in May.

The annual meeting shall:

- (i) elect a person to preside if the Mayor (Chair) or Sheriff and Deputy Mayor (Vice-Chair) of Council are not present;
- (ii) elect the Mayor (Chair) of Council;
- (iii) elect the Sheriff and Deputy Mayor (Vice-Chair) of Council;
- (iv) approve the minutes of the last meeting;
- (v) receive any announcements from the Mayor and/or the Head of Paid Service;
- (vi) receive any declarations of interests from Members;
- (vii) elect the Leader in years when an election has taken place;
- (viii) appoint at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee and such other Committees as the Council considers appropriate to deal with matters which are neither reserved to the Council nor are Executive functions (as set out in Part 3, Table 1 of this Constitution);
- ~~(ix) agree the scheme of delegation or such part of it as the Constitution determines it is for the Council to agree functions (as set out in Part 3, Table 1 of this Constitution); and~~
- ~~(x)~~(ix) consider any business set out in the notice convening the meeting.

1.02 Selection of Councillors on Committees and Outside Bodies

At the annual meeting, the Council meeting shall:

- (i) decide which Committees to establish for the municipal year;
- (ii) decide the size and terms of reference for those Committees;
- (iii) decide the allocation of seats [and substitutes] to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules;
- (iv) receive nominations of Councillors to serve on each Committee; and
- (v) appoint to those Committees and outside bodies except where appointment to those bodies has been delegated by the Council or is exercisable only by the Executive.

2. ORDINARY MEETINGS ORDER OF BUSINESS

2.01 Programme of ordinary meetings

The programme of ordinary meetings of the Council will be agreed at an ordinary meeting of Council on an annual basis.

[Note: The programme of ordinary meetings of the Council will normally cover at least an 18 month period]

2.02 Ordinary meetings shall:

- (i) elect a person to preside if the Mayor (Chair) and Sheriff and Deputy Mayor (Vice-Chair) are not present;
- (ii) approve the minutes of the last meeting;
- (iii) deal with any business from the last Council meeting;
- (iv) receive any declarations of interest from Members;
- (v) receive oral supplementary questions from, and provide answers to, the public in ~~relation to matters which in the opinion of the person presiding at the meeting are relevant to the functions of the Council meeting who have submitted written questions in accordance with Rule 10 (Question by the Public);~~

- (vi) receive petitions and deputations from the public that have been notified in accordance with Rule 11 (Petitions and Deputations from the Public);
- (vii) receive any announcements from the Mayor, Leader, Members of the Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair, Licensing and Enforcement Committee Chair, Planning Committee Chair, Audit and Governance Committee Chair or the Head of Paid Service (time limit 10 minutes in total);
- (viii) receive oral supplementary questions from, and provide answers to, Members who have submitted written questions in accordance with Rule 12 (Question By Members), including Leader and Cabinet Members' Question Time and Questions to Chairs of Meetings;
- ~~(ix) determine which items of business set out in the summons to the meeting shall be approved without discussion and which items require discussion: after which the Council shall approve those items that can be approved without discussion and then consider the matters reserved for discussion in the following order~~
- ~~(x) proposals from the Cabinet in relation to the Council's budget and policy framework~~
- ~~(xi) reports from the Cabinet~~
- ~~(xii) reports from the Council's Committees~~
- ~~(xiii)(ix) reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;~~
- ~~(xiv)(x)~~ an exception to the above rules will apply to the budget meeting of Council by the omission of Leader and Cabinet Members' Question Time, and Questions to Chairs of Meetings.

3. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS

3.01 Calling Extraordinary Meetings:

Those listed below may request the Head of Paid Service to call Council meetings in addition to ordinary meetings:

- (i) the Council by resolution;
- (ii) the Mayor of the Council;
- (iii) the Monitoring Officer; and
- (iv) any five Members of the Council if they have signed a requisition presented to the Mayor of the Council and he/she has refused to call a meeting or has failed to call a meeting within seven days of the presentation of the requisition.

The business transacted at an extraordinary meeting shall be restricted to the purpose for which the meeting has been called and shall not consider any other business.

4. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND FORUMS

The Council shall, at the Annual Meeting (with the exception of the Cabinet, Licensing and Enforcement Committee, and Planning Committee) appoint such Members as deputies as it feels necessary, subject to the following:-

- (i) one appointed deputy may attend a meeting in place of a Member of that meeting;
- (ii) for the Planning Committee, any named Member from each party group may receive training on planning matters in accordance with the Planning and Development Code of Practice and may attend a meeting in place of a Planning Committee Member who is unable to attend;
- (iii) for the Licensing and Enforcement Committee, any named Member from each party group may receive training on licensing and enforcement matters in accordance with the Probity in Licensing Code of Practice and may attend a meeting in place of a Licensing and Enforcement Committee Member who is unable to attend;
- (iv) a deputy attending a meeting in the place of a Member of that meeting shall:
 - (a) be regarded as a Member of that meeting;

- (b) be entitled to speak and vote on any matter before the meeting (subject to the requirements relating to Declarations of Interest);
- (v) that the Member or political group shall advise the Head of Paid Service of the name of the appointed deputy by 12 noon two clear working days prior to that meeting (to ensure the relevant papers are supplied to the substitute Member), provided that in the event of genuine emergencies, the Chair of the relevant meeting, after consultation with the Head of Paid Service, may approve a Member attending as a deputy without such notice being given.

5. TIME AND PLACE OF MEETINGS

Ordinary meetings of Council shall commence at 18.30 hours.

The time and place of other meetings shall be determined by the Head of Paid Service and notified in the Summons.

6. DURATION OF MEETINGS

The length of time of Council meetings shall be limited to three hours, but shall only be closed after three hours if a two-thirds majority of those Members in attendance vote to close the meeting.

The length of time of other meetings (excluding Planning Committee, Licensing and Enforcement Committee and Audit and Governance Committee) shall be limited to two hours unless extended by a two-thirds majority of those Members in attendance.

7. NOTICE OF AND SUMMONS TO MEETINGS

The Head of Paid Service shall give notice to the public of the time and place of any meeting in accordance with the Access to Information Rules. At least five *clear* working days before a meeting, the Head of Paid Service will send a Summons authenticated by him or her to every Member of the Council. The Summons will give the date, time and place of each meeting and specify the business to be transacted, and will be accompanied by such reports as are available.

8. CHAIR OF MEETING

The person presiding at the meeting may exercise any power or duty of the Chair. Where these rules apply to Committee and Sub-Committee meetings, references to the Chair also include the Chair of Committees and Sub-Committees.

9. QUORUM

The quorum of a meeting will be one quarter of the whole number of Members (unless specifically provided for in the terms of reference/constitution of a committee, etc.). During any meeting if the Chair counts the number of Members present and declares there is not a quorum present, then the meeting will adjourn immediately. Remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chair. If he/she does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the next ordinary meeting.

10. QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

- 10.01** Subject to the provisions of Rule 2 (Order of Business), at or as soon as reasonably possible after the commencement of business at ordinary meetings of the Council (except the annual meeting), the Cabinet, a Committee, (except the Planning Committee) or a Forum, a period of 15 minutes shall be provided for members of the public who live, work or study in Gloucester to put a maximum of three questions to the meeting.

The Head of Paid Service/Managing Director, in consultation with the Mayor, may reject a question 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.
- Questions may be edited as necessary by the ~~Managing Director~~[Head of Paid Service](#), in consultation with the Mayor, to bring them into proper form and brevity.

Questions will ordinarily be added to the schedule in the order they are received, however, the order may be amended as necessary by the ~~Managing Director~~[Head of Paid Service](#), in consultation with the Mayor, to group questions by subject.

10.02 Notice of Questions

Member of the public may not ask questions unless a written copy of the question Notice of questions must be given by no later than 12 noon, three clear working days before the day of the meeting. Such notice must be in writing or by electronic mail to has been delivered to the Head of Paid Service, c/o Democratic Services, PO Box 2017, Pershore, WR10 9BJ (e-mail, democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk) by 12 noon, three clear working days before the meeting. Each question must be supported by the name and address of the questioner.

10.03 Response

Responses to submitted questions will be published in a schedule at least 24 hours prior to the meeting and a copy sent to the member of the public who submitted the question.

Submitted questions and their responses shall normally be taken as read and not read out at the meeting, but a member of the public may ask one supplementary question to the same person as the original question.

10.04 Supplementary Questions

Supplementary questions shall be invited in accordance with the order in the published schedule of questions. No notice has to be given for the supplementary question, but it must arise directly out of the original question or the reply given to that question. Supplementary questions must comply with the criteria set out in 10.01 and any that do not will not be answered.

If a member of the public who has submitted a question is unable to be present at the meeting, the original question and response shall be included in the minutes of the meeting and no supplementary question will be asked.

- ~~(3) Questions will be dealt with in the order they were received. However priority will be given to Gloucester City Council residents.~~
- ~~(4) Members of the public shall be allowed to ask one question each. Where not all the time set aside for questions by the public is used, members of the public shall be allowed to ask a second question.~~
- ~~(5) If a member of the public who has submitted a question is unable to be present at the meeting, the question will be put on their behalf by the Mayor or a Council officer.~~

- ~~(6) All public questions shall be put to the relevant Cabinet Member or Chair to respond.~~
- ~~(7) Only one answer shall be given in response to an individual question at a meeting and no debate shall be allowed on the question or the response given.~~
- ~~(8) The Mayor or Chair shall not allow the same question, or substantially the same question, to that put at a previous meeting of the Council, a Committee, or a Forum within the preceding six months, unless circumstances relating thereto have materially changed.~~

11. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

11.01 All petitions received, including e-petitions, shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's published petitions scheme (Part 5 – Codes and Protocols). The provisions of this Rule do not apply to petitions that meet the threshold for a Council debate.

Subject to the provisions of Rule 2, after the period set aside for public questions as provided in Rule 10, at all ordinary meetings of the Council (except the annual meeting) the Cabinet, a Committee, (except the Planning Committee) or a Forum, a period of 15 minutes shall be ~~set aside~~provided for members of the public to present petitions or make deputations to the meeting **PROVIDED** that no such petitions or deputations shall be allowed in relation to:

- (i) matters relating to individual Council Officers; or
- (ii) matters relating to current or pending legal proceedings

Where any petition is presented or any deputation is made, the Mayor or the Chair shall allow only one ~~member of the public to person~~ speak on the matter for a ~~reasonable~~ period not exceeding 3 minutes. Petitions may be presented by a local ward Member if the lead organiser/s prefer and the ward Member agrees, but deputations must be presented by a member of the public.

11.02 Notice of Petitions and Deputations

A petition or deputation may not be presented at a meeting unless the subject matter and, in the case of a petition, number of signatories, has been provided to the [Head of Paid Service](#), c/o Democratic Services, PO Box 2017, Pershore, WR10 9BJ (e-mail, democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk) by 12 noon, three clear working days before the meeting. Petitions and deputations must be supported by the name and address of at least one lead organiser.

The Mayor or Chair shall not allow a petition to be presented or a deputation made on the same issue, or substantially the same issue, to that presented or made at a previous meeting of the Council, the Cabinet, a Committee, or a Forum within the preceding six months, unless circumstances relating thereto have materially changed.

11.03 Response

Where a petition is presented or a deputation is made:

- (i) at a Council meeting, the Mayor shall refer the matter to the appropriate Cabinet Member or Committee Chair to respond on behalf of the Council;
- (ii) at a Committee, or Forum meeting, the Chair shall respond.

Only one response shall be given to a petition or deputation and no debate shall be allowed on the petition, deputation or response.

At the discretion of the responding Cabinet Member or Committee Chair, the subject matter of the petition or deputation may be referred to a future meeting of the Council, the Cabinet, appropriate Committee, or Forum for consideration.

12. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

12.01 Leader and Cabinet Members' Question Time

That a period of forty-five minutes be set aside so that any Member of Council may ask the Leader of the Council or any Cabinet Member any question, up to a maximum of 5 questions per Member, upon:

- any matters relating to the Council's administration;
- relating to any report of the Cabinet appearing on the Council's summons;
- a matter coming within their portfolio of responsibilities.

The ~~Managing Director~~[Head of Paid Service](#), in consultation with the Mayor, may reject a question 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 related to confidential staffing matters; or
- (iv) Is relating to the personal affairs or conduct of individual Members or Officers.

~~Where there is one opposition Group, the opposition group leader shall have the opportunity to ask the first two questions and where there are two opposition groups, the opposition group leaders shall have the opportunity to ask the first four questions, two questions each respectively. Group Leaders will have priority, with the first two questions they submit added to the schedule first and the order determined by Group size.~~ Thereafter, questions will ordinarily be added to a schedule in the order they are received, however, the order may be amended as necessary by the [Managing Director/Head of Paid Service](#), in consultation with the Mayor, to ensure that all Members have the opportunity to ask supplementary questions within the time available. The schedule of questions (without responses) will be circulated to all Members when the order of questions has been determined.

12.02 Questions To Chairs of Meetings

That a period of 15 minutes be set aside so that any Member of the Council may ask the Chair of a Committee any question up to a maximum of 3 questions per Member, upon any issue in respect of that Committee or in respect of an item shown in the minutes of the Committee after they have been approved by the relevant Committee. Questions will ordinarily be added to a schedule in the order they are received, however, the order may be amended as necessary by the [Managing Director/Head of Paid Service](#), in consultation with the Mayor, to ensure that all members have the opportunity to ask supplementary questions within the time available. The schedule of questions (without responses) will be circulated to all Members when the order of questions has been determined.

12.03 Notice of Questions

Members may not ask questions unless a written copy of the question has been delivered to the [Managing Director/Head of Paid Service](#), c/o Democratic Services, PO Box 2017, Pershore, WR10 9BJ (e-mail, democratic.services@gloucester.gov.uk) by 12 noon five clear working days before the meeting; or

The question relates to:

- A matter which the Chair decides is urgent;
- The Member to whom the question is addressed, has agreed; and
- Notification of the question has been given to the Head of Paid Service at least half an hour before the scheduled start of the meeting.

12.04 Exempt or Confidential Information

Unless a Member has first complied with 12.03, they shall not ask any questions or make any statement relating to any decision made by the Cabinet or other Council body, if the statement or decision relates to confidential or exempt information.

Before such a question is asked, the Mayor shall consider inviting the Council to resolve that the meeting, or part of it, shall not be open to members of the public.

12.05 Response

Responses to submitted questions will be published in a schedule at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Submitted questions and their responses shall normally be taken as read and not read out at the meeting, but a Member may ask one supplementary question to the same person as the original question.

12.06 Supplementary Questions

Supplementary questions shall be invited in accordance with the order in the published schedule of questions. No notice has to be given for the supplementary question, but it must arise directly out of the original question or the reply given to that question. Supplementary questions must comply with the criteria set out in 12.01 and any that do not will not be answered. If the supplementary question relates to any decision that relates to confidential or exempt information, then before asking the supplementary question, the Member shall inform the Mayor that is the case. Before the supplementary question is asked, the Mayor of the meeting shall consider inviting the full Council to resolve that the meeting, or part of it, shall not be open to members of the public.

13. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

- (1) Notice of every motion, other than a motion which under Rule 14 may be moved without notice, shall be given in writing, signed by the Member or Members of the Council giving the notice (or alternatively by electronic form, provided that the Head of Paid Service is satisfied with proof of identity), and delivered, by noon at least eight clear working days before the next meeting of the Council, to the Head of Paid Service by whom it shall be dated, numbered in the order in which it is received. No Member may either propose or second more than three (3) motions at a single meeting, and entered in a book which shall be open to the inspection of every Member of the Council.

Motions To Be Set Out in Summons

- (2) The Head of Paid Service shall set out in the summons for every meeting of the Council all Motions of which notice has been duly given in the order in which they have been received, unless the Member giving such a notice intimated in writing, when giving it, that they propose to move it at some later meeting, or has since withdrawn it in writing.

~~Selection of Motions~~

- ~~(3) Before the start of the Council meeting, Party Leaders will select, by a simple majority vote, which motions listed in the summons will be called for debate.~~

Motion Not Moved

- (3) If a motion set out in the Summons is not moved either by a Member who gave notice thereof or by some other Member it shall, unless postponed by the consent of the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

Automatic Reference to the Cabinet or Appropriate Committee

- (4) [A motion which purports to take or which has the effect of taking an executive decision which cannot be taken by Council shall, if passed, be of no effect and shall be referred to the Cabinet for consideration.](#)

Scope of Motions

- (5) Every motion shall be relevant to some matter in relation to which the Council have powers or duties or which affects the City.

Motions Out of Order

- (7) If it shall appear to the Head of Paid Service that a motion, notice of which has been received, is not relevant to some matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the City, or is otherwise objectionable, the Head of Paid Service shall take the direction of the Chair as to whether or not it shall be placed on the Council summons, and the decision of the Chair thereon shall be final; but a Member may give oral notice of any motion which has been so ruled out of order, at the meeting at which it would have been submitted had it been on the Council summons, and, if the Council so direct, it shall be placed on the Council summons for the next meeting.

14. MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

The following motions may be moved without notice:

- (a) to appoint a Chair of the meeting at which the motion is moved;
- (b) in relation to the accuracy of the minutes;
- (c) to change the order of business in the agenda;
- (d) to refer something to an appropriate body or individual;
- (e) to appoint a Committee or Member arising from an item on the Summons for the meeting;
- (f) to receive reports or adoption of recommendations of Committees or officers and any resolutions following from them;
- (g) to withdraw a motion;
- (h) to extend the time limit for speeches;
- (i) to amend a motion;
- (j) to proceed to the next business;
- (k) that the question be now put;
- (l) to adjourn a debate;
- (m) to adjourn a meeting;
- (n) to suspend a particular Council procedure rule;
- (o) to exclude the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Rules
- (p) to not hear further a Member named under Rule 22.03 or to exclude them from the meeting under Rule 22.04; and
- (q) to give the consent of the Council where its consent is required by this Constitution.

15. RULES OF DEBATE

15.01 Motions and Amendments

A motion or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded and, unless notice has already been given in accordance with Rule 13, it has been put into writing and handed to the Chair before it is further discussed or put

to the meeting. Provided that an amendment to Committee minutes shall be moved only after questions under Rule 12.05 have been answered and before Members speak to the minutes.

In respect of Minutes of a Committee which are before the Council for consideration and which contain resolutions which have been taken under delegated powers, a Councillor may move that a particular Minute is referred back to the Committee for further consideration, provided that any resolution referred to in the Minutes has not already been implemented, and further provided that subsequent debate on the referral back be in accordance with these rules for debate at Council.

15.02 Secunder's Speech

A Member when seconding a motion or amendment may, when doing so, state an intention to reserve the seconding speech until a later period of the debate.

15.03 Only One Member to Stand at a Time

A Member shall rise and speak only when called upon so to do by the Chair. While a Member is speaking the other Members shall remain seated unless rising to a point of order or in personal explanation.

15.04 Content and Length of Speeches and Questions

Speeches of Members or questions shall be directed to the matter under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a point of order. No speech or question shall exceed three minutes in length except

- (i) with the consent of the Council
- (ii) the proposer and seconder of a motion or amendment (limited to five minutes)
- (iii) the mover of a motion or the response by an opposition group leader regarding the annual budget statement or the annual work programme (no time limit).
- (iv) other speeches regarding the annual budget statement or the annual work programme (limited to five minutes)

15.05 When a Member May Speak Again

A Member who has spoken on any motion (save only to ask a question or questions) shall not speak again whilst it is the subject of debate, except:

- (a) to speak once on an amendment moved by another Member;
- (b) if the motion has been amended since they last spoke, to move a further amendment;
- (c) if the Member's first speech was on an amendment moved by another Member, to speak on the main issue, whether or not the amendment on which they spoke was carried;
- (d) in exercise of a right of reply given by paragraph (15.11) or (15.13);
- (e) on a point of order;
- (f) by way of personal explanation.

15.06 Amendments to Motions

An amendment shall be relevant to the motion and shall be either:

- (a) to refer a subject of debate to the Cabinet or a Committee for consideration or reconsideration; or
- (b) to leave out words; or
- (c) to leave out words and insert or add others; or
- (d) to insert or add words;

but an amendment shall not have the effect of negating the motion before Council by being directly contradictory, or contrary to it, or by introducing a new motion. Where

some parts of an amendment are negatory and others are not, provided that the spirit of the motion has not been changed by the deletion of the negatory element of the amendment, the remainder of the amendment shall be allowed to stand.

Amendments to Motions on Notice shall be given in writing, signed by the Member proposing the amendment (or alternatively by electronic form, provided that the Head of Paid Service is satisfied with proof of identity), and delivered, by noon on the day of the relevant Council meeting, to the Head of Paid Service who will circulate all amendments received to Group Leaders no later than 3.00pm the same day.

15.07 Amendments to be Dealt with Singly

Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at a time and no further amendment shall be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of.

Provided that the Chair may permit two or more amendments to be discussed (but not voted on) together if circumstances suggest that this course would facilitate the proper conduct of the Council's business.

15.08 Effect of Amendment if Carried or Lost

If an amendment be lost, other amendments may be moved on the original motion, provided that no amendment shall be moved which is of the same, or substantially similar effect, to the amendment which has been lost. If an amendment be carried, the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the motion upon which any further amendment may be moved, provided such further amendment is not inconsistent, or incompatible, with the alteration of the original motion made by the amendment which has been carried.

15.09 Alteration of Motion

A Member may with the consent of the Council signify without discussion:

- (a) alteration of a motion of which they have given notice; or
- (b) with the further consent of the seconder alter a motion which the Member has moved;

if (in either case) the alteration is one which could be made as an amendment thereto.

15.10 Withdrawal of Motion

A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the mover with the consent of the Member's seconder and of the Council, which shall be signified without discussion and no Member may speak upon it after the mover has asked permission for its withdrawal, unless such permission shall have been refused.

15.11 Right of Reply

The mover of a motion has a right to reply at the close of the debate on the motion, immediately before it is put to the vote. If an amendment is moved, the mover of the original motion shall also have a right of reply at the close of the debate on the amendment, and shall not otherwise speak on the amendment. The mover of the amendment shall have no right of reply to the debate on the amendment which has been moved.

15.12 Motions which may be Moved During Debate

When a motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except the following:

- (a) to amend the motion under Rule 15.06;
- (b) to proceed to next business under Rule 15.13(a) below;
- (c) that the question be now put under Rule 15.13(b) below;

- (d) to adjourn the debate or the meeting under Rule 15.13(c) below;
- (e) that the Member named be not further heard on the particular amendment or motion or at the meeting under Rule 22.03;
- (f) by the Chair that a Member do leave the meeting either generally or during consideration of the amendment or Motion before the meeting under Rule 22.04;
- (g) a motion under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, to exclude the public.

15.13 Closure Motions

A Member may move without comment at the conclusion of a speech of another Member, 'That the Council proceed to the next business', 'That the question be now put', 'That the debate be now adjourned', or 'that the Council do now adjourn', on the seconding of which the Chair shall proceed as follows:

- (a) on a motion to proceed to next business: unless in the Chair's opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed, the Chair shall first give the mover of the original motion a right of reply, and then put to the vote the Motion to proceed to next business (no vote on the issue under debate);
- (b) on a motion that the question be now put: unless in the Chair's opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed, the Chair shall first put to the vote the motion that the question be now put, and if it is passed then give the mover of the original motion his right of reply under paragraph 11 of this Rule before putting that Member's motion to the vote;
- (c) on a motion to adjourn the debate or the meeting: if in the Chair's opinion the matter before the meeting has not been sufficiently discussed and cannot reasonably be sufficiently discussed on that occasion the Chair shall put the adjournment motion to the vote without giving the mover of the original motion a right of reply on that occasion. The meeting shall stand adjourned until recalled under the Constitution.

15.14 Points of Order or Personal Explanation

A Member may, with the consent of the Chair, rise on a point of order or in personal explanation, and shall be entitled to be heard forthwith. A point of order shall relate only to an alleged breach of these Rules or statutory provisions and the Member shall specify the Rule or statutory provision and the way in which it is considered it has been broken. A personal explanation shall be confined to correcting an incorrect statement about themselves or about what the Member has or is reported to have said.

15.15 Chair's Ruling on Point of Order or Explanation to be Final

The ruling of Chair on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall be final and not open to question.

15.16 Respect for Chair

Whenever the Chair rises during a debate a Member or Members then standing shall resume their seat(s) and the Council shall be silent.

15.17 Powers of Chair

At the Chair's discretion, such steps shall be taken as is considered necessary to ensure the proper and orderly conduct of the meeting and the efficient dispatch of business without infringing Members' democratic rights or freedom of speech.

16. PREVIOUS DECISIONS AND MOTIONS

16.01 Motion to Rescind a Previous Decision

A motion or amendment to rescind a decision made at a meeting of Council within the past six months cannot be moved unless the notice of motion is signed by at least ten

Members or unless the motion arises from a recommendation to the Council from the Cabinet or a Committee.

16.02 Motion similar to one previously rejected

A motion or amendment in similar terms to one that has been rejected at a meeting of Council in the past six months cannot be moved unless the notice of motion or amendment is signed by at least ten Members. Once the motion or amendment is dealt with, no one can propose a similar motion or amendment for six months.

17. URGENT ITEMS

Where there is a need to consider items of urgent business which are not specified in the summons to meeting, the Member or Officer wishing to raise the same shall before the commencement of the meeting discuss the matter with the Mayor, the Group Leaders, the Head of Paid Service and the Monitoring Officer and the Mayor's decision as to whether to consider the item shall be conclusive.

18. VOTING

18.01 Majority

Unless this Constitution provides otherwise, any matter will be decided by a simple majority of those Members voting and present in the room at the time the question was put.

18.02 Chair's Casting Vote

If there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the Chair will have a second or casting vote.

18.03 Show of Hands

Unless a recorded vote is demanded under Rule 18.04, the Chair will take the vote by show of hands, or if there is no dissent, by the affirmation of the meeting.

18.04 Recorded Vote

If five Members present at the meeting demand it, the names for and against the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting will be taken down in writing and entered into the Minutes.

18.05 Recorded Votes at Budget Council Meetings

A recorded vote shall take place when the Council makes a calculation of the budget requirement or issues a Council tax precept under relevant sections of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. Such a vote shall be undertaken in accordance with Procedure Rule 18.04.

18.06 Right to Require Individual Vote to be Recorded

Where any Member requests it immediately after a vote is taken, their vote will be so recorded in the Minutes to show whether they voted for or against the motion or abstained from voting.

18.07 Voting on Appointments

If there are more than two people nominated for any position to be filled and there is not a clear majority of votes in favour of one person, then the name of the person with the least number of votes will be taken off the list and a new vote taken. The process will continue until there is a majority of votes for one person.

19. MINUTES

19.01 Signing the Minutes

The Chair will sign the Minutes of the proceedings at the next suitable meeting. The Chair will move that the Minutes of the previous meeting be signed as a correct record. The only part of the Minutes that can be discussed is their accuracy.

19.02 No Requirement to Sign Minutes of Previous Meeting at Extraordinary Meeting

The business transacted at an extraordinary meeting is restricted to the purpose for which the meeting has been called (Rule 3.01 above). An extraordinary meeting is not, therefore, a suitable meeting for the purposes of Rule 19.01 and the signing of the minutes of the preceding meeting will be deferred to the following suitable meeting.

19.03 Form of Minutes

Minutes will contain all motions and amendments in the exact form and order the Chair put them.

19.04 No Protest Recorded in Minutes

No protest or expression of dissent shall be entered in the Minutes of the Council.

20. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

The Policy and Governance Manager will record the names of all Members present during the whole or part of a meeting on the attendance sheets to assist with the record of attendance.

21. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

Members of the public and press may only be excluded either in accordance with the Access to Information Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution or Rule 24 (Disturbance by Public).

22. MEMBERS' CONDUCT

22.01 Standing to Speak

When a Member speaks at Full Council they must stand and address the meeting through the Chair. If more than one Member stands, the Chair will ask one to speak and the others must sit. Other Members must remain seated whilst a Member is speaking unless they wish to make a point of order or a point of personal explanation.

22.02 Chair Standing

Whenever the Chair rises during a debate a Member or Members then standing shall resume their seat(s) and the Council shall be silent.

22.03 Member not to be Heard Further

If a Member persistently disregards the ruling of the Chair by behaving improperly or offensively or deliberately obstructs business, the Chair may move that the Member be not heard further. If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.

22.04 Member to Leave the Meeting

If the Member continues to behave improperly after such a motion is carried, the Chair may move that either the Member leaves the meeting or that the meeting is adjourned for a specified period. If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.

22.05 General Disturbance

If there is a general disturbance making orderly business impossible, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for as long as he/she thinks necessary.

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

23.01 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Where a Member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest as defined by Regulations under the Localism Act 2011 or an “other” as described in paragraph 18 of the Councillor Code of Conduct, they will be required to declare that interest and remove themselves to the public gallery during discussion and voting on the item in which they have an interest. The Chair of any meeting at which such an interest is disclosed shall have discretion to exclude the Member from the meeting during the discussion and voting on the item in which the Member has an interest if the Member’s behaviour is considered by the Chair to be having an undue influence on or attempting to put pressure on the Members voting on that item.

24. DISTURBANCE BY PUBLIC

24.01 Removal of a Member of the Public

If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chair will warn the person concerned. If they continue to interrupt, the Chair will order ~~their removal from them to leave~~ the meeting room. If the person concerned refuses to leave the room, the Chair will adjourn the meeting until proceedings are able to continue without further interruption.

24.02 Clearance of Part of Meeting Room

If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chair may call for that part to be cleared.

25. RECORDINGS OF MEETINGS

25.01 Proceedings of the Council, the Cabinet and Committees may be recorded for broadcast live on the internet via the Council’s website. Such meetings will be broadcast in full, excluding any confidential items which may need to be considered in the absence of the press and public.

25.02 The Council supports the principles of openness and transparency and allows filming and recording at its meetings that are open to the public. These arrangements will operate in accordance with ~~the~~ a protocol agreed by the Council and which is set out in Part 5 of the Constitution.

26. SUSPENSION AND AMENDMENT OF COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

26.01 Suspension

All of these Council Rules of Procedure except Rule 18.02 and 18.04 may be suspended by motion on notice or without notice if at least one half of the whole number of Members of the Council are present. Suspension can only be for the duration of the meeting or for that part of the meeting identified in the motion.

26.02 Amendment

Any motion to add to, vary or revoke these Council Rules of Procedure will, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

27. APPLICATION TO COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

All of the Council Rules of Procedure apply to meetings of Full Council. Only Rules 5-11, 14, 18-26 (but not Rule 22.01) apply to meetings of the Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees, Forums and Working Parties.

Rule 12 (but not Rule 12.02) also applies to meetings of the Cabinet as follows:

- (a) a period of fifteen minutes is allocated for Leader and Cabinet Members’ Question Time

- (b) notice of questions must be given by 12 noon three clear working days before the meeting
- (c) responses to submitted questions will be published by 12 noon on the day of the meeting.

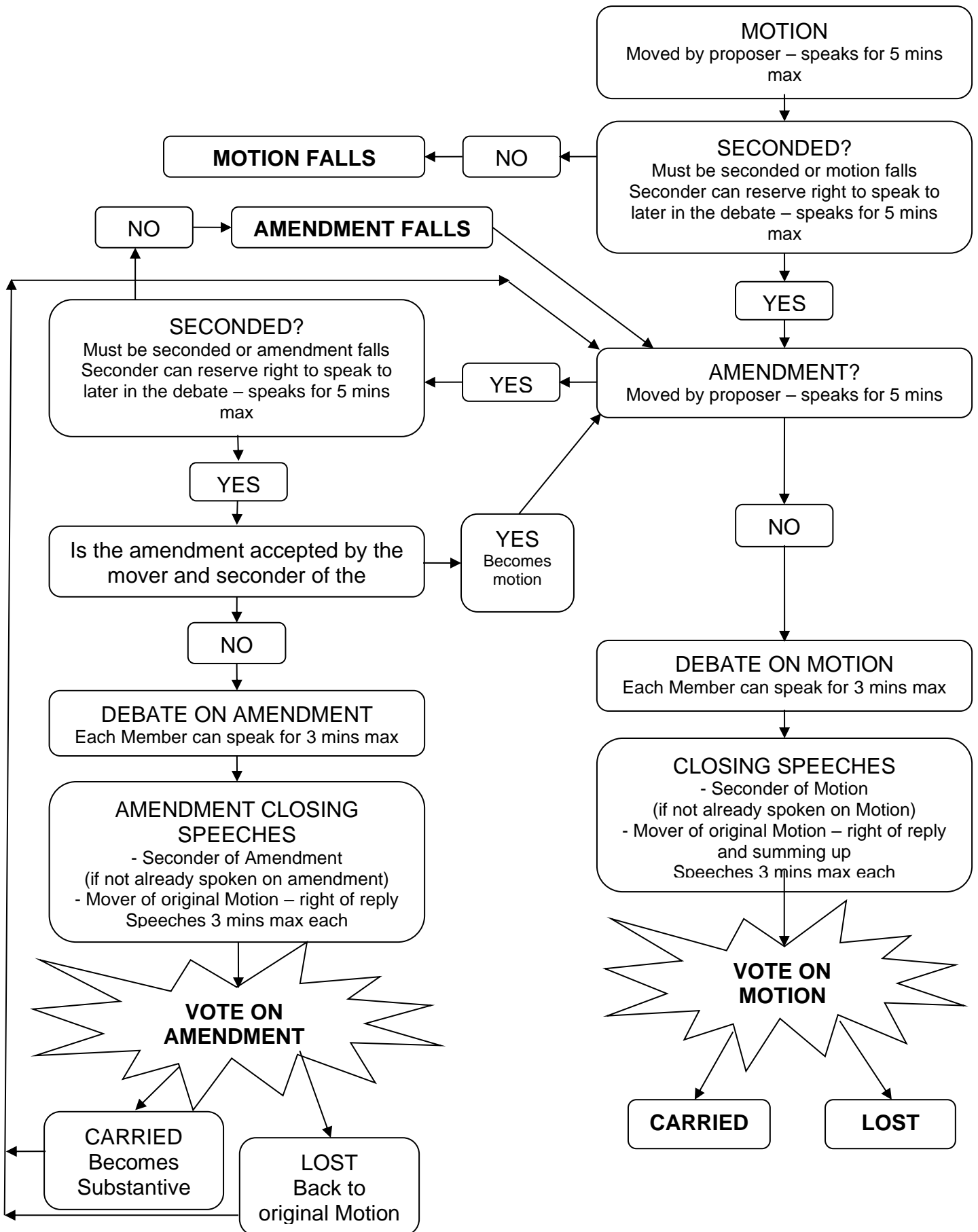
28. ORDER OF SENIORITY OF MEMBERS

28.01 Members of the Council shall rank in order of seniority as follows:

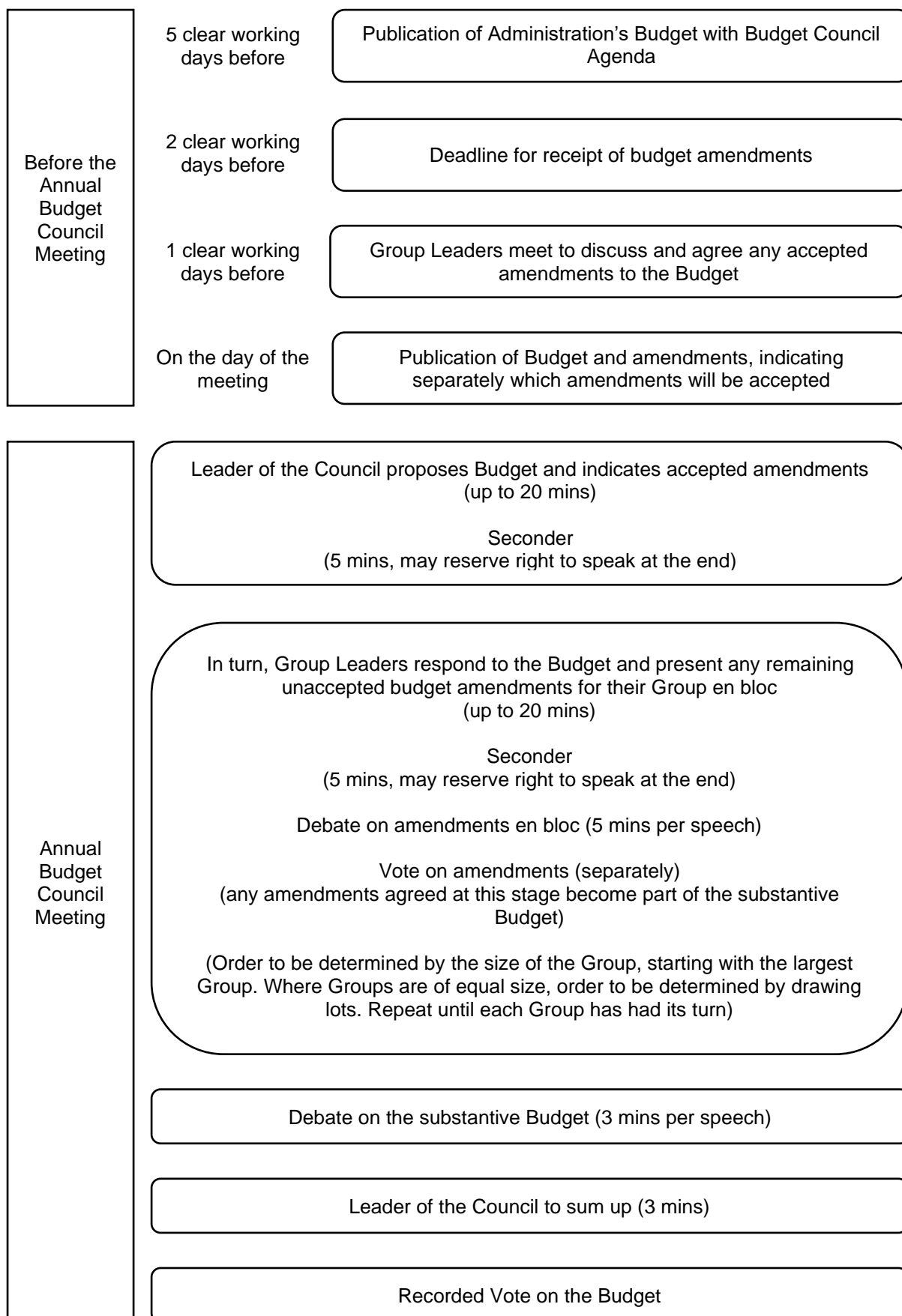
- The Mayor
- The Sheriff and Deputy Mayor
- The Leader of the Council
- The Deputy Leader of the Council
- Cabinet Members (in alphabetical order)
- The Leaders of political groups

Thereafter according to the length of service with the Council (those with the same length of service being ranked in alphabetical order).

29. Council Debate Flowchart



30. Council Budget Flowchart



Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	General Purposes Committee Council	Date:	11 January 2024 25 January 2024
Subject:	Review of Polling District and Polling Places		
Report Of:	Returning Officer		
Wards Affected:	All Wards		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Tanya Davies, Policy and Governance Manager		
	Email: tanya.davies@gloucester.gov.uk	Tel:	396125
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notice of Review 2. List of consultees 3. Revised ARO Recommendations 4. Maps of Polling Districts where changes are recommended 		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To outline the recommendations for the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places, which aimed to ensure that:
- electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
 - as far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places are accessible to all electors and, when considering the designation of a polling place, the Council has regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The General Purposes Committee is asked to

- (1) Consider the proposals for the Review of Polling District and Polling Places and, subject to any amendments, **RECOMMEND** the proposals to Council for approval.
- (2) **RECOMMEND** to Council a preferred option for the polling station for
 - a. BT3.
 - b. E3 and KW3
 - c. H1 and H2
 - d. M3 and M4
 - e. W2

- (3) **RECOMMEND** to Council that, where a decision is required at short notice and it is not possible to await a decision of Council, power to designate polling places in accordance with section 18 and 18B of the Representation of the People Act 1983 be delegated to the Managing Director following consultation with Group Leaders and the relevant Ward Councillors.

2.3 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- (1) The following proposals from the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places Review be approved:
- a. That the polling station BT3 be moved to the Ukrainian Association.
 - b. That the polling station E3 and KW3 be moved to Gloucester Old Boys RFC.
 - c. That the polling station H1 and H2 be moved to St Philip and St James' Church.
 - d. That the polling station M3 and M4 be moved to The Chapel, Seymour Road.
 - e. That the polling station W2 be moved to St Mary's Congregational Church.
- (2) Where a decision is required at short notice and it is not possible to await a decision of Council, power to designate polling places in accordance with section 18 and 18B of the Representation of the People Act 1983 be delegated to the Managing Director following consultation with Group Leaders and the relevant Ward Councillors.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, the council has a duty to divide its area into polling districts and to designate a polling place for each district. The following definitions may be helpful:
- 'Polling districts' are geographical electoral areas into which wards and constituencies may be sub-divided.
 - 'Polling places' are the buildings or areas designated by the council where electors in a polling district go to vote in person.
 - 'Polling stations' are the number of issuing desks in the building or area that is the designated polling place.
- 3.2 The Electoral Administration Act 2006, as amended, introduced a duty on all local authorities in Great Britain to review their polling districts and polling places at least once every five years and, under section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983, Councils must undertake a compulsory review within a 16-month window between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025.
- 3.3 The intention of the legislation was reviews would be completed by the January before a UK parliamentary general election. However, since the repeal of the Fixed Term Parliaments Act 2011, there is no longer any certainty as to when the next general election will be, except that it must take place before Tuesday 28 January 2025.
- 3.4 In addition, the Boundary Commission for England has undertaken a review of Parliamentary constituency boundaries. The final recommendations have been

published and once the Orders for new parliamentary constituencies have been made, the new boundaries will be used for the next general election. If a parliamentary by-election is called in the meantime, it would be run on existing boundaries.

- 3.5 These issues meant that it was important that the review of polling districts and places was carried out as early as possible, so that the Council has agreed polling districts and places to be used for the next Parliamentary election, as well as the scheduled local elections and Police and Crime Commissioner elections in May 2024, and has a polling scheme in place which reflects the new constituencies. A further interim review will be required to deal with any impact resulting from the review of Gloucestershire County Council divisions that is due to conclude soon and come into force for their next elections in May 2025.

Review timetable

- 3.6 Although the review could not commence prior to 1 October 2023, preparatory work began earlier. This report does not currently propose any changes to the boundaries of polling districts, but if any are proposed, the register of electors will be republished by 1 March 2024 to implement those changes ahead of the nomination period for the May 2024 elections. The timetable for the review is set out below:

September 2023	Preparatory work
2 October 2023	Notice of formal review and commencement of public consultation
By 20 October 2023	Publication of AROs' comments
12 November 2023	End of public consultation period
11 January 2024	General Purposes Committee consider proposals and make recommendations to Council
25 January 2024	Council to consider and approve final proposals
No later than 1 March 2024	Publish revised register of electors (only if boundary changes are proposed)

Review process

- 3.7 The process for a polling district and places review is set out in Schedule A1, Representation of the People Act 1983.

- 3.8 The Council must:

- publish a notice of the holding of a review
- consult the (Acting) Returning Officer ((A)RO) for every Parliamentary constituency which is wholly or partly in its area
- publish all representations made by an (A)RO within 30 days of receipt by posting a copy of them at the local authority's office and in at least one conspicuous place in their area and, if the authority maintains a website, by placing a copy on the authority's website
- seek representations from such persons as it thinks have particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability. Such persons must have an opportunity to make representations and to comment on the representations made by the (A)RO(s).

- On completion of the review, publish details of the designation of polling districts and polling places within the local authority area as a result of the review, giving reasons, and publish all correspondence and representations received.
- 3.9 In preparing the ARO for Gloucester's submission, electorate projections and information from the Planning Policy Team on anticipated development was considered. This information did not result in any proposals to increase the number or change the boundaries of any polling districts. As such, the ARO's initial proposals focused on polling places and stations and more specifically:
- Ensuring that polling places can support the requirements of the Elections Act, for example with sufficient space to undertake Voter ID checks, whether privately or in view of others, and to accommodate equipment to assist disabled voters.
 - Identifying alternative polling places in polling districts where schools are currently used.
- 3.10 Visits to all existing and all suggested alternative polling places took place from September to November, with a full assessment carried out to ensure suitability. Some suggested alternatives were included in the ARO for Gloucester's initial proposals and others were identified or visited later.
- 3.11 The proposals of the ARO for Gloucester was published on 20 October. The ARO for Tewkesbury confirmed that they support the proposals put forward by the ARO for Gloucester in respect of the area that falls within the Tewkesbury Constituency.

Consultation

- 3.12 The public consultation ran from 2 October to 12 November 2023. This was publicised via the Council's social media channels and via a dedicated page on the Council's website and direct communications with the consultees listed at Appendix 2. Despite the large number of individuals and organisations directly contacted, the only consultation responses received were from Councillors regarding polling places in specific wards and most of these were as a result of requests for comments on suggested alternatives in some polling districts.
- 3.13 During the consultation the Council was contacted by Gloucestershire Sight Loss Council. Officers met with their representative, who provided valuable feedback on the voting process for a blind or visually impaired person. Of particular significance was information on the best methods for raising awareness amongst these voters of Voter ID requirements and the availability of free Voter Authority Certificates (VAC) for those without another acceptable form of ID. As a result, the Council will be creating adverts for talking newspapers that are circulated in Gloucester, which will also publicise the availability of appointments for anyone who would like assistance with completing the VAC application process, including taking photographs.

Proposals

- 3.14 The ARO's original proposals contained several suggestions for alternative polling places and additional alternatives have been identified since. In every case, the current ward Councillors have been asked for their views on moving the polling place to the alternative location.

- 3.15 **BT3** (Appendix 4a) – Successive reviews have failed to identify suitable alternatives to the schools used as polling places in Barton and Tredworth ward, however, on this occasion the Ukrainian Association was identified as a possible alternative to Hatherley Infant School in BT3. A visit was conducted and the Ukrainian Association was deemed to be suitably accessible for all voters and with the necessary facilities. While it is located at the opposite end of the polling district to the current polling place, it is also at the more highly populated end and, crucially, its use would mean that the school would not have to close to accommodate elections, which is currently has to do.

The current Barton and Tredworth ward Councillors were consulted and two indicated that they would be content with moving the polling place to the Ukrainian Association. Members of the General Purposes Committee are asked to recommend one of the following options to Council:

1. Remain at Hatherley Infant School
2. Move to the Ukrainian Association

Recommendation: The General Purposes Committee resolved to recommend that the polling station moves to the Ukrainian Association the ARO's proposals have been revised to reflect this.

- 3.16 **E3 and KW3** (Appendix 4b) – Gloucester Old Boys RFC was initially suggested as a possible alternative to St Peters Under 5s by one of the Elmbridge ward Councillors. St Peters Under 5s is located in Elmbridge ward, but due to the fact that there is no suitable location in KW3, voters from parts of both Elmbridge and Kingsholm and Wotton wards currently vote there. A visit was conducted and Gloucester Old Boys RFC was deemed suitably accessible for all voters and with the necessary facilities, including the availability of adequate parking. Its use would prevent the preschool setting from having to close, which it currently has to do and avoid issues on the congested road outside the current polling place.

The other current ward Councillors for both Elmbridge and Kingsholm and Wotton were consulted and all indicated that they would be content with moving the polling place to Gloucester Old Boys RFC. Members of the General Purposes Committee are asked to recommend one of the following options to Council:

1. Remain at St Peters Under 5s
2. Move to Gloucester Old Boys RFC

Recommendation: The General Purposes Committee resolved to recommend that the polling station moves to Gloucester Old Boys RFC the ARO's proposals have been revised to reflect this.

- 3.17 **H1 and H2** (Appendix 4c) – In an effort not to close the whole school, the current polling place for H1 and H2, Hillview Primary School, has allocated a separate and relatively small building for use as a polling station. This has proved a challenge during recent elections therefore, with the requirement for polling places to have sufficient space to undertake Voter ID checks, it is considered that this venue is no longer suitable. To avoid closing the school, alternative venues have been explored and St Philip and St James Church, which is a four minute walk from the current polling place, has been identified as a possible alternative. A visit was conducted

and it was deemed suitably accessible for all voters and with the necessary facilities, including the availability of adequate parking.

The current Hucclecote ward Councillors were consulted and both indicated that they would be content with moving the polling place to St Philip and St James' Church. Members of the General Purposes Committee are asked to recommend one of the following options to Council:

1. Remain at Hillview Primary School – not recommended due to insufficient space.
2. Move to St Philip and St James' Church

Recommendation: The General Purposes Committee resolved to recommend that the polling station moves to St Philip and St James' Church the ARO's proposals reflect this.

- 3.18 **M3 and M4** (Appendix 4d) – When making arrangements for the May 2021 elections, which took place during the Covid-19 pandemic, the usual M3 and M4 polling place, Linden Primary, expressed significant concerns about being used as a polling place while trying to adhere to social distancing requirements and keep staff and pupils safe because the school doesn't typically close for elections. To prevent the school from having to close entirely, the polling place was relocated to The Chapel on Seymour Road, which was deemed to be a suitable replacement and only a five minute walk from Linden Primary School. As this was a successful change, and in order to prevent the disruption caused to the school, it is proposed that the polling place for M3 and M4 be moved to The Chapel permanently. This venue also benefits from having a car park, which the current polling place does not have.

The current Moreland ward Councillors were consulted and two indicated that they would be content with moving the polling place to The Chapel. Members of the General Purposes Committee are asked to recommend one of the following options to Council:

1. Remain at Linden Primary School
2. Move to The Chapel, Seymour Road

Recommendation: The General Purposes Committee resolved to recommend that the polling station moves to The Chapel, Seymour Road the ARO's proposals reflect this.

- 3.19 **W2** (Appendix 4e) – When making arrangements for the March 2023 Westgate By-Election the usual W2 polling place, St Mary de Lode Church, was not available due to works being carried out. The polling place was relocated to the nearby St Mary's Congregational Church, which was deemed to be a suitable replacement and only a two minute walk from St Mary de Lode. As this was a successful change, and due to the higher cost of St Mary de Lode, it is proposed that the polling place for W2 be moved to St Mary's Congregational Church permanently. This venue also benefits from having a modest car park, though many of the voters in this polling district walk, which they will still be able to do.

The current ward Westgate Councillors were consulted and one indicated that they would be content with moving the polling place to St Mary's Congregational Church.

Members of the General Purposes Committee are asked to recommend one of the following options to Council:

1. Remain at St Mary de Lode Church
2. Move to St Mary's Congregational Church.

Recommendation: The General Purposes Committee resolved to recommend that the polling station moves to the St Mary's Congregational Church and the ARO's proposals reflect this.

4.0 Social Value Considerations

- 4.1 The Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places seeks to obtain the views of the community on the best arrangements for voting and relies on the availability of community buildings for use as polling stations.

5.0 Environmental Implications

- 5.1 It is always preferable for electors to be able to walk to their polling station and access arrangements are a key consideration during the review; however, it is not always possible to provide a polling station within walking distance.

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 Details of the alternative options considered are outlined in the main body of the report.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 The review of polling districts and polling places is a statutory requirement. The recommendations made seek to ensure that electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances and that the arrangements meet the legislative requirements.

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 8.1 If the Council agrees the proposals, the new polling places will take effect immediately will be made available to the public on the council's website, along with all documents that the Council is required to publish.
- 8.2 Unless polling district boundary reviews are approved, it will not be necessary to republish the register of electors, but if any such proposals are approved the register will be re-published by 1 March 2024 so that the changes are in place ahead of the nomination period for the May 2024 elections. If possible, poll cards for electors whose polling station has changed will include a note highlighting the change.
- 8.3 A further interim review will take place after the May 2024 elections to deal with any changes required as a result of the Gloucester County Council boundary review.

9.0 Financial Implications

- 9.1 If the proposals are approved there may be some fluctuation in polling station costs as some new venues have been proposed, but at least one alternative location costs significantly less than the current venue.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report)

10.0 Legal Implications

- 10.1 The Council has a statutory duty to review its polling districts, polling places and polling stations to ensure that the polling stations are accessible to all electors including those with special needs. A consultation has been completed and consideration has been given to the views put forward.

- 10.2 Any changes to the polling districts, polling places and polling stations must be made in accordance with the provisions of the Representation of People Act 1983 (as amended), Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 and Equalities Act 2010.

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

11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 11.1 There is a risk that electors whose polling station has moved will go to the wrong location. The risk is mitigated by publicising the changes and printing the polling station details on the poll card, which is done as a matter of course. If possible, the poll cards will specifically highlight that there has been a change.

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

- 12.1 As part of the review process, local authorities must have regard to accessibility issues and must take measures to ensure that, where possible, polling stations are accessible to disabled electors.

- 12.2 All new polling station locations have been assessed for their accessibility to disabled voters and found to be suitable.

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

13.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

- 13.1 There are no community safety implications resulting from this report.

Staffing & Trade Union

- 13.2 There are no issues relating to trade unions arising from this report.

Background Documents: None



NOTICE OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW

Notice is hereby given that, in accordance with Section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983, Gloucester City Council (the Council) is to carry out a review of its polling districts and polling places.

Relevant information and mapping regarding the current arrangements and proposals for changes can be found on the Council's [website](#) or can be inspected at the Council offices by appointment.

The (Acting) Returning Officer (ARO) for the Parliamentary constituencies of Gloucester and Tewkesbury will comment on the proposals. Those representations will be published on the Council's website and will be available for inspection at the Council offices by appointment in accordance with the timetable set out below.

Electors within the Council area or within a UK Parliamentary constituency which has any part in the authority may make a representation. We invite comments from all electors regarding the convenience of voting at polling stations currently used for elections and would welcome suggestions for alternative sites.

The Council would also welcome the views of all residents, particularly disabled residents, or any person or body with expertise in access for persons with any type of disability, on the proposals, ARO's representations or any other related matters.

Anybody making representations should, if possible, give alternative places that may be used as polling places.

Comments and representations may be submitted as follows:

By post:	Polling District Review, Democratic and Electoral Services, Gloucester City Council, PO Box 2017 Pershore, WR10 9BJ
By email:	elections@gloucester.gov.uk

All representations must be made no later than 12 November 2023

Timetable for Review	
2 October 2023	Notice of formal review and commencement of public consultation
By 20 October 2023	Publication of AROs' comments
12 November 2023	End of public consultation period
Date to be confirmed	General Purposes Committee consider proposals and make recommendations to Council
25 January 2024	Council to consider and approve final proposals
No later than 1 March 2024	Publish revised register of electors

The outcome of the review will be published by the Council no later than March 2024 and will be available for inspection on the Council's [website](#).

Anybody making representations should be aware that, upon completion of the review, all correspondence and representations received must, by law, also be published.

Dated: 2 October 2023
Jon McGinty
Managing Director
Gloucester City Council

List of Consultees

- The Returning Officer, Gloucester City Council
- The (Acting) Returning Officer, Gloucester City Council (Gloucester Constituency)
- The (Acting) Returning Officer, Tewkesbury Borough Council (Tewkesbury Constituency)
- Richard Graham MP (Gloucester Constituency)
- Laurence Robertson MP (Tewkesbury Constituency)
- Gloucester City Councillors
- Gloucestershire County Councillors (Gloucester Divisions)
- Conservative Party
- Labour Party
- Liberal Democrats
- Green Party
- Reform UK
- Disability and other Community Groups via the Council's Community Wellbeing Team
- All current polling stations

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(Acting) Returning Officer Comments

Ward	Polling District (PD)	County Division	Current Polling Station	2023 Electors to Polling Station (01/10/23)	2023 Electors to Polling Station Excluding Postal Voters (01/10/23)	Comments
Abbeydale	AD1	Abbey	Abbeydale Sports & Community Centre	2,182	1,685	Satisfactory
	AD2	Abbey	Heron Primary School	2,003	1,636	Satisfactory - no alternative to school identified
	AD3	Coney Hill & Matson	Heron Primary School	868	698	Satisfactory - no alternative to school identified
Abbeymead	AM1	Abbey	Abbeymead Primary School	2,316	1,888	Satisfactory - no alternative to school identified
	AM2	Abbey	Abbeymead Primary School	2,286	1,806	Satisfactory - no alternative to school identified
Barnwood	B1	Barnwood & Hucclecote	Wotton Hall Club Limited	1,496	1,251	Satisfactory
	B2	Barnwood & Hucclecote	St Lawrence Church Centre	1,564	1,199	Satisfactory
	B3	Barnwood & Hucclecote	The Trefoil Centre	1,283	940	Satisfactory
	B4	Abbey	St Lawrence Church Centre	665	502	Satisfactory
Barton & Tredworth	BT1	Barton & Tredworth	Colwell Arts Centre	2,271	1,892	Satisfactory
	BT2	Barton & Tredworth	St James Church of England Junior School	1,441	1,096	Satisfactory - no alternative to school identified
	BT3	Barton & Tredworth	Hatherley Infant School	2,038	1,584	Move the polling station to the Ukrainian Association - the possibility of moving the polling station away from a school location should be welcomed and this a suitable and accessible alternative within the polling district.
	BT4	Barton & Tredworth	Tredworth Junior School	1,622	1,388	Satisfactory - no alternative to school identified
Coney Hill	CH1	Coney Hill & Matson	St Oswalds Church Hall	1,611	1,403	Satisfactory
	CH2	Coney Hill & Matson	St Oswalds Church Hall	874	761	Satisfactory

Elmbridge	E1	Longlevens	Old Richians R.F.C. Sports & Social Club	2,019	1,669	Satisfactory
	E2	Kingsholm & Wotton	Methodist Church Hall, Lonsdale Road	2,300	1,840	Satisfactory
	E3	Kingsholm & Wotton	St Peters under 5s, St Peters Primary School	446	344	Move the polling station to Gloucester Old Boys Rugby Club - this was suggested by the Elmbridge Ward Councillors to avoid use of the school. The rugby club has its own parking and disabled access.
Grange	G1	Grange & Kingsway	Tuffley Community Association	1,364	1,066	Satisfactory
	G2	Grange & Kingsway	Gloucester District Scout H.Q., Murray Hall	934	808	Satisfactory
	G3	Grange & Kingsway	St Georges Church Centre	880	740	Satisfactory
	G4	Grange & Kingsway	Tuffley Community Association	1,122	841	Satisfactory
	G5	Grange & Kingsway	Gloucester District Scout H.Q., Murray Hall	768	665	Satisfactory
Hucclecote	H1	Barnwood & Hucclecote	Hillview Primary School	1,409	1,045	Move the polling station to St Philip and St James Church - the space currently allocated at Hillview Primary School is no longer sufficient, therefore, to avoid the school having to close entirely, this suitable and accessible alternative is recommended.
	H2	Barnwood & Hucclecote	Hillview Primary School	1,573	1,211	Move the polling station to St Philip and St James Church - the space currently allocated at Hillview Primary School is no longer sufficient, therefore, to avoid the school having to close entirely, this suitable and accessible alternative is recommended.
	H3	Barnwood & Hucclecote	Hucclecote Community Centre	2,054	1,525	Satisfactory
Kingsway	K1	Grange & Kingsway	Kingsway Community Centre	2,210	1,945	Satisfactory
	K2	Grange & Kingsway	Kingsway Community Centre	2,011	1,712	Satisfactory
Kingsholm & Wotton	KW1	Kingsholm & Wotton	The Lion's Den, Gloucester Rugby Club	2,204	1,795	Satisfactory
	KW2	Kingsholm & Wotton	The Lion's Den, Gloucester Rugby Club	1,858	1,619	Satisfactory
	KW3	Kingsholm & Wotton	St Peters under 5s, St Peters Primary School	764	651	Move the polling station to Gloucester Old Boys Rugby Club - this was suggested for voters in E3 by the Elmbridge Ward Councillors to avoid use of the school and would mean that KW3 voters would also vote here. The rugby club has its own parking and disabled access. Electors in KW3 already vote outside their polling district, so while this is further away from the ward boundary, voters are already used to travelling outside the polling district to vote.

Longlevens	L1	Longlevens	Longlevens Rugby Football Club	1,573	1,277	Satisfactory
	L2	Longlevens	Holy Trinity Church Hall	2,440	1,954	Satisfactory
	L3	Longlevens	Holy Trinity Church Hall	1,182	958	Satisfactory
	L4	Longlevens	Longlevens Rugby Football Club	1,314	996	Satisfactory
	L5	Longlevens	The Gala Club	806	614	Satisfactory
Moreland	M1	Barton & Tredworth	St Paul and St Stephen Church	636	582	Satisfactory
	M2	Hempsted & Westgate	St Paul and St Stephen Church	773	675	Satisfactory
	M3	Hempsted & Westgate	Linden Primary School	1,707	1,450	Move the polling station to The Chapel, Seymour Road (used during 2021 elections) - while a non-religious building has previously been preferred in this area, there was no difference in overall turnout for Moreland between the 2016 and 2021 elections, indicating that it was unlikely that voters were put off by the alternative location. The possibility of moving the polling station away from a school location should be welcomed.
	M4	Tuffley	Linden Primary School	2,456	2,101	Move the polling station to The Chapel, Seymour Road (used during 2021 elections) - while a non-religious building has previously been preferred in this area, there was no difference in overall turnout for Moreland between the 2016 and 2021 elections, indicating that it was unlikely that voters were put off by the alternative location. The possibility of moving the polling station away from a school location should be welcomed.
	M5	Barton & Tredworth	Parry Hall	1,236	1,028	Satisfactory
Matson, Robinswood & White City	MRW1	Coney Hill & Matson	St Aldates Church	1,676	1,362	Satisfactory
	MRW2	Coney Hill & Matson	The Phoenix Centre	1,863	1,539	Satisfactory
	MRW3	Coney Hill & Matson	Red Well Centre	1,573	1,322	Satisfactory
	MRW4	Tuffley	St Aldates Church	1,413	1,100	Satisfactory
Podsmead	P1	Hempsted & Westgate	Podsmead Community Association, (Ramblers Centre)	1,262	1,080	Satisfactory
	P2	Tuffley	Podsmead Community Association, (Ramblers Centre)	1,181	890	Satisfactory
Quedgeley Fieldcourt	QFC1	Quedgeley	Quedgeley Community Centre	1,985	1,560	Satisfactory
	QFC2	Quedgeley	Quedgeley Community Centre	2,093	1,736	Satisfactory
	QFC3	Grange & Kingsway	Waterwells Sports Centre	1,370	1,184	Satisfactory
Quedgeley Severn Vale	QSV1	Quedgeley	Little Meadows	2,512	2,051	Satisfactory
	QSV2	Quedgeley	Quedgeley Village Hall	2,209	1,796	Satisfactory
Tuffley	T1	Tuffley	St Barnabas Parish Hall	2,323	1,817	Satisfactory
	T2	Tuffley	Court Community Association	2,284	1,868	Satisfactory

Westgate	W1	Hempsted & Westgate	Hempsted Village Hall	2,175	1,789	Satisfactory
	W2	Hempsted & Westgate	St Mary De Lode Church Hall	1,423	1,181	Move the polling station to St Mary's Congregational Church (used during Westgate by-election) - St Mary's Congregational Church is a proven suitable polling station that is very close to the current polling station. It has improved accessibility due to having its own car park and the hire costs also offer better value for money.
	W3	Kingsholm & Wotton	Resource Centre, 123 St Oswald's Village	705	541	Satisfactory
	W4	Hempsted & Westgate	Montpellier Community Hall	2,415	2,141	Satisfactory

Barton & Tredworth Ward

Polling Station Status

- Existing
- Proposed



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Elmbridge Ward and Kingsholm & Wotton Ward

Page 173

Polling Station Status

- Existing
- Proposed

Gloucester Rugby Club

KW1

KW2

KW3

St Peters Primary School

E3

Gloucester Old Boys Rugby Club

Methodist Church Hall

Old Richians R.F.C. Sports & Social Club

E1

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Hucclecote Ward



Polling Station Status

- Existing
- Proposed

Gloucester City Council
Transforming Your City

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Moreland Ward



Polling Station Status

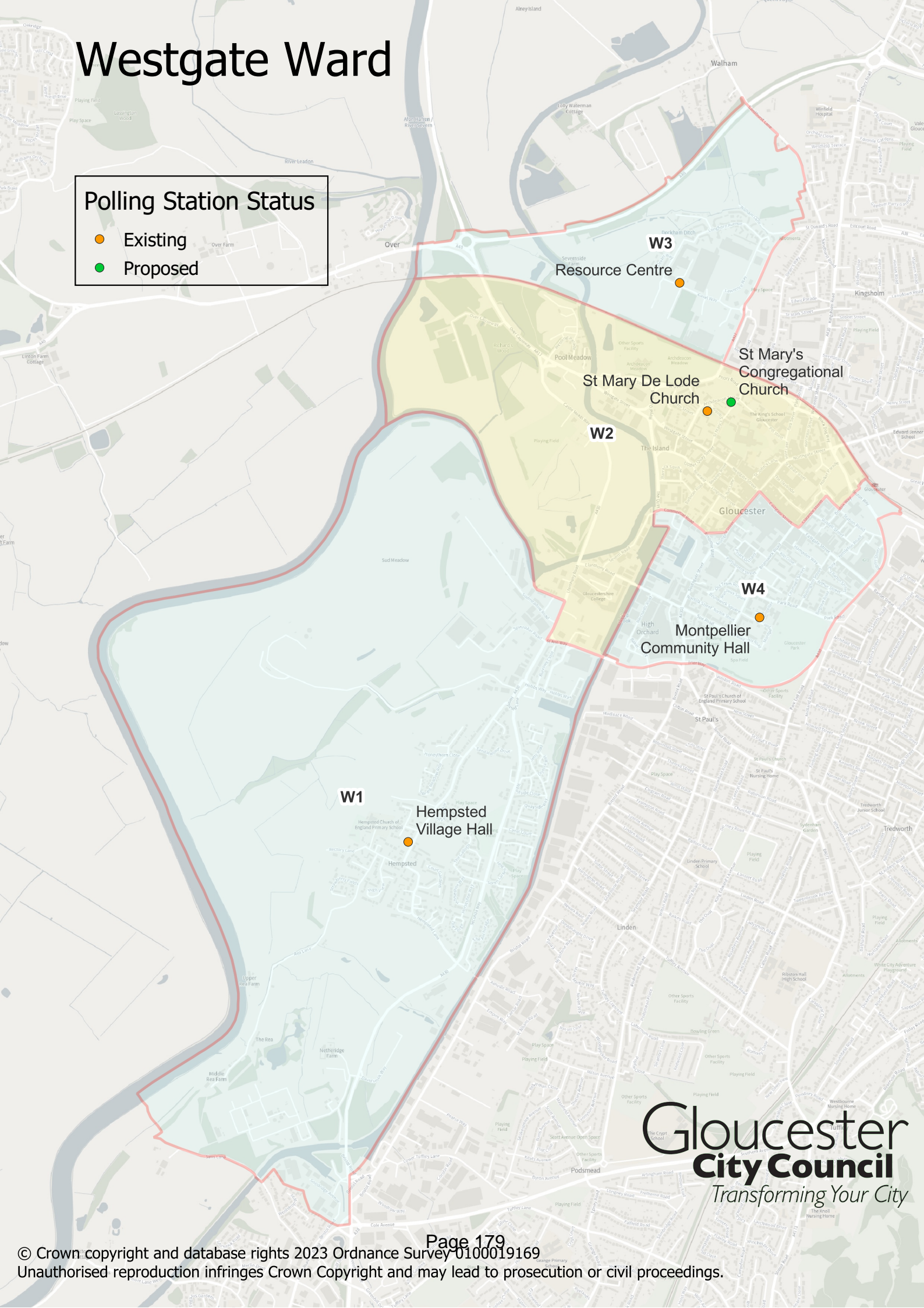
- Existing
- Proposed

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Westgate Ward

Polling Station Status

- Existing
- Proposed



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Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Council	Date:	25 January 2024
Subject:	Designation of Monitoring Officer		
Report Of:	Head of Paid Service		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Jon McGinty, Managing Director		
	Email: jon.mcginty@gloucester.gov.uk	Tel:	39-6200
Appendices:	None		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To designate a Monitoring Officer

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- (1) It be noted that Alice McAlpine has given notice of her resignation from Tewkesbury Borough Council and as Gloucester City Council's Monitoring Officer with effect from 28 January 2024.
- (2) Tom Clark be designated Monitoring Officer for the City Council in accordance with section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 with effect from 29 January for an interim period of up to 6 months but no more than 12 months.
- (3) To enter into an agreement to second the above-mentioned officer from Tewkesbury Borough Council to Gloucester City Council on terms to be agreed between Tewkesbury Borough Council, Gloucester City Council and the officer.
- (4) To delegate authority to the Managing Director to agree the terms of the secondment and to sign the secondment agreement on behalf of Gloucester City Council and to make any necessary consequential amendments to the Council's Constitution arising from the agreed terms and any re-assignment of the current Monitoring Officer functions.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

3.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989, Section 5, requires all local authorities to designate one of their officers as the "Monitoring Officer". The Act specifically excludes the Head of Paid Service and the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer)

from being the Monitoring Officer, although any other officer of the Council can be appointed.

- 3.2 The Act imposes a duty on the Monitoring Officer, if at any time there appears to the Monitoring Officer that any proposal, decision or omission of the Council, or Committee etc. either has given rise to, or is likely to give rise to, a breach of any law, or any maladministration as would be dealt with by the Ombudsman, to prepare a report to the Council specifying the contravention.
- 3.3 The Monitoring Officer also has a number of responsibilities arising from the Localism Act 2011 relating to Councillor conduct (City and its Parish Council). These responsibilities include dealing with complaints on the Code of Conduct, as well as providing training for Members thereon. There is a close connection with the S151 Officer and Internal Audit and the Monitoring Officer is a member of the Corporate Governance Group.
- 3.4 The current functions of the Monitoring Officer are specified in the Constitution, including the Monitoring Officer's Protocol although some of these may be assigned to other officers by the Managing Director. There is no statutory requirement for the Monitoring Officer to be a Solicitor, although the majority are given a Solicitor's training and role within a Council.
- 3.5 Council resolved on 26th January 2023 to designate Alice McAlpine as Monitoring Officer. Ms McAlpine has successfully undertaken this role since then, however she has now resigned from both One Legal and as the City Council's Monitoring Officer, to take effect from 28th January 2024. The Managing Director has consulted the Director of One Legal and they have identified Tom Clark as a suitable replacement for Ms McAlpine on an interim basis. Mr Clark is a highly experienced solicitor with over 37 years' experience as a solicitor in private practice and in the public sector and has been a Council Monitoring Officer for over 20 years in four different councils. He is currently also Monitoring Officer at Tewkesbury Borough Council.
- 3.6 Having considered the current resource requirement for a Monitoring Officer in Gloucester City Council, it is proposed to contract with Mr Clark on a 2.5 day/week basis (he would continue to work for Tewkesbury Borough Council for 2.5 days/week). It is proposed to contract with Mr Clark for an initial period of 6 months, but no more than 12 months. This is in order to enable the Head of Paid Service to consider post May 2024 elections the future requirements from a Monitoring Officer post.

4.0 Social Value Considerations

- 4.1 Not applicable

5.0 Environmental Implications

- 5.1 Not applicable

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 The option of designating an officer already within the Council was considered but discounted on the basis of capacity pressures.

6.2 There is insufficient time to go out to external direct recruitment and appoint by the end of January 2024. Equally, an appointment of an existing One Legal officer is considered better value for money than recruiting an interim Monitoring Officer via a third-party recruitment agency.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 It is a legal requirement that the Council designates one of their officers as Monitoring Officer. The Head of Paid Service advises that designating Tom Clark as Monitoring Officer in the terms detailed within this report will provide a better solution for the Council than other options.

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

8.1 The recommended designation will be an interim one, subject to review within the next twelve months, to enable the Head of Paid Service to consider post May 2024 elections the future requirements from a Monitoring Officer post.

9.0 Financial Implications

9.1 It is proposed to contract with Mr Clark for an average of 2.5 days per week (the intention is that MO support would be available at any time during the working week as needed), initially for six months. This is the same quantum of resource as currently provided by Ms McAlpine who has also been seconded for 2.5 days per week, and reflects the best assessment of the current resource requirement for this post.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

10.0 Legal Implications

10.1 These are contained in the main body of the report.

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

11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

11.1 If a Monitoring Officer is not in post, the Council would be in breach of Section 5 Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:

12.1 None.

13.0 Community Safety Implications

13.1 None

14.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications

14.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 effectively requires the person designated as Monitoring Officer to be employed by the Council. There will therefore

be a need to second Tom Clark to the City Council on terms to be agreed between the parties in order to undertake this aspect of his work for the Council.

Background Documents: 26th January 2023 Council Report: Designation of Monitoring Officer



Meeting:	Council	Date:	25 January 2024
Subject:	Programme of Meetings, May 2024-April 2026		
Report Of:	Policy and Governance Manager		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Tanya Davies, Policy and Governance Manager		
	Email: tanya.davies@gloucester.gov.uk	Tel:	39-6125
Appendices:	1. Draft Programme of Meetings, May 2024-April 2026		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To approve a two-year programme of ordinary meetings of Council and other meetings for the period of May 2024 to April 2026.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that, subject to any further changes, the two-year programme of ordinary meetings of Council and other meetings for the period of May 2024 to April 2026 be approved.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

3.1 The Council is required to agree a programme of meetings on an annual basis and the draft programme is attached an Appendix 1.

3.2 The Council approves a two-year programme each year in order to provide the Council and Councillors with adequate notice of meetings. As such, this programme contains 12 months of dates that have previously been approved and 12 months of new dates.

3.4 It is important to retain the flexibility to amend the first year of a two year-programme, because dates for events and meetings of other organisations that impact on the Council’s own programme are often not available until 12 months in advance. The only change proposed for the first 12 months of the programme is to remove the Cabinet Briefing/Overview and Scrutiny Committee/Cabinet cycle at the end of April 2025 to reflect the pre-election period for the 2025 County Council elections as has become standard practice.

4.0 Social Value Considerations

4.1 There are no social value considerations.

5.0 Environmental Implications

5.1 There are no environmental implications.

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

6.1 All available options for the scheduling of meetings were considered when compiling the programme.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 To agree the programme of ordinary meetings of Council and other meetings for the period of May 2024 to April 2026.

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

8.1 By approving a two-year programme of ordinary meetings several months in advance of the start of the timetable, Members and other interested parties can plan ahead and the business of the Council can be transacted more efficiently and effectively.

8.2 Following approval, the dates of meetings will be added to the Council's website. Invitations to the first 12 months of meetings will be sent to Members after Annual Council in May to take account of any changes following the City Council elections.

9.0 Financial Implications

9.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

10.0 Legal Implications

10.1 By approving the programme of ordinary meetings the Council is fulfilling a constitutional requirement.

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

11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

11.1 There are no risks arising from this report.

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:

12.1 Not applicable.

13.0 Community Safety

13.1 There are no community safety implications.

14.0 Staffing & Trade Union

14.1 There are no staffing or trade union implications.

Background Documents: None

Gloucester **City Council**

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS

1 MAY 2024-30 APRIL 2026

MAY 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1	2 PCC, CITY COUNCIL AND QTC ELECTIONS	3
6 BH	7	8	9	10
13 Page 1888	14	15	16	17
20 3.00pm Annual Council	21	22 4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*	23	24
27 BH	28 SH	29 SH	30 SH	31 SH

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

JUNE 2024				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	4 6.00pm Planning Committee	5	6	7
10	11 6.30pm Licensing and Enforcement Committee	12 6.00pm Cabinet	13	14
17 Page 189	18	19 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

JULY 2024				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	2 <i>LGA Conference</i> 6.00pm Planning Committee	3 <i>LGA Conference</i>	4 <i>LGA Conference</i>	5
8	9	10 6.00pm Cabinet	11 6.30pm Council	12
15 6.30 pm Audit and Governance Committee	16	17	18	19
22	23 SH	24 SH	25 SH	26 SH
29 SH	30 SH	31 SH		

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

AUGUST 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1 SH	2 SH
5 SH	6 SH 6.00pm Planning Committee	7 SH	8 SH	9 SH
12 SH Page 191	13 SH	14 SH	15 SH	16 SH
19 SH	20 SH	21 SH 4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*	22 SH	23 SH
26 BH	27 SH	28 SH	29 SH	30 SH

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

SEPTEMBER 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	3 6.00pm Planning Committee	4	5	6
9 6.30 pm Audit and Governance Committee	10 6.30pm Licensing and Enforcement Committee	11 6.00pm Cabinet	12	13
16 Page 192	17	18	19 6.30pm Council	20
23	24	25 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	26	27
30				

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

OCTOBER 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	1 6.00pm Planning Committee	2	3	4
7 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	8	9	10	11
14 Page 193	15	16 6.00pm Cabinet	17	18
21	22	23 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	24	25
28 SH	29 SH	30 SH	31 SH	

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

NOVEMBER 2024				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1 SH
4 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	5 6.00pm Planning Committee	6	7	8
11 6.30 pm Audit and Governance Committee Page 194	12	13 6.00pm Cabinet	14	15
18	19	20 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	21 6.30pm Council	22
25	26	27	28	29

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

DECEMBER 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	3 6.00pm Planning Committee	4	5	6
9	10 6.30pm Licensing and Enforcement Committee	11 6.00pm Cabinet	12	13
16 Page 195	17	18 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	19	20
23 SH	24 SH	25 BH	26 BH	27 SH
30 SH	31 SH			

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

JANUARY 2025				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1 BH	2 SH	3 SH
6 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	7 6.00pm Planning Committee	8	9	10
13 6.30 pm Audit and Governance Committee	14	15 6.00pm Cabinet	16 6.00 pm General Purposes Committee	17
20 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Budget)	21	22 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	23	24
27	28	29	30 6.30pm Council	31

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

FEBRUARY 2025				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	4 6.00pm Planning Committee	5	6	7
10	11	12 6.00pm Cabinet	13	14
Page 197 SH	18 SH	19 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i> SH	20 SH	21 SH
24	25	26	27 6.00pm Budget Council	28 <i>Ramadan starts</i>

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

MARCH 2025				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	4 6.00pm Planning Committee	5	6	7
10 6.30 pm Audit and Governance Committee	11 6.30pm Licensing and Enforcement Committee	12 6.00pm Cabinet	13	14
17 Page 198	18	19 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	20	21
24	25	26	27 6.30pm Council	28
31 <i>Ramadan ends 29/03/25</i> 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee				

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

APRIL 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	1 6.00pm Planning Committee	2	3	4
7	8	9 6.00pm Cabinet	10	11
14 SH	15 SH	16 SH	17 SH	18 BH
21 BH	22 SH	23 SH	24 SH	25 SH
28	29	30		

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

MAY 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1 COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS	2
5 BH	6 6.00pm Planning Committee	7	8	9
12 Page 200	13	14 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	15	16
19 3.00pm Annual Council	20	21	22	23
26 BH	27	28	29	30

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

JUNE 2025				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	3 6.00pm Planning Committee	4	5	6
9	10 6.30pm Licensing and Enforcement Committee	11 6.00pm Cabinet	12	13
16 Page 201	17	18 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee				

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

JULY 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	1 6.00pm Planning Committee	2	3	4
7	8	9 6.00pm Cabinet	10 6.30pm Council	11
14 2025 6.30 pm Audit and Governance Committee	15	16	17	18
21	22 SH	23 SH	24 SH	25 SH
28 SH	29 SH	30 SH	31 SH	

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

AUGUST 2025				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1 SH
4 SH	5 SH 6.00pm Planning Committee	6 SH	7 SH	8 SH
11 SH Page 203	12 SH	13 SH	14 SH	15 SH
18 SH	19 SH	20 SH 4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*	21 SH	22 SH
25 BH	26 SH	27 SH	28 SH	29 SH

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

SEPTEMBER 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	2 6.00pm Planning Committee	3	4	5
8 6.30 pm Audit and Governance Committee	9 6.30pm Licensing and Enforcement Committee	10 6.00pm Cabinet	11	12
15 Page 204	16	17	18 6.30pm Council	19
22	23	24 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	25	26
29	30			

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

OCTOBER 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1	2	3
6 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	7 6.00pm Planning Committee	8	9	10
13 Page 205	14	15 6.00pm Cabinet	16	17
20	21	22 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	23	24
27 SH	28 SH	29 SH	30 SH	31 SH

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

NOVEMBER 2025				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	4 6.00pm Planning Committee	5	6	7
10 6.30 pm Audit and Governance Committee	11	12 6.00pm Cabinet	13	14
Page 206	18	19 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	20 6.30pm Council	21
24	25	26	27	28

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

DECEMBER 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	2 6.00pm Planning Committee	3	4	5
8	9 6.30pm Licensing and Enforcement Committee	10 6.00pm Cabinet	11	12
15 Page 207	16	17 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	18	19
22 SH	23 SH	24 SH	25 BH	26 BH
29 SH	30 SH	31 SH		

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

JANUARY 2026				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1 BH	2 SH
5 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6 6.00pm Planning Committee	7	8	9
12 Page 208 6.30 pm Audit and Governance Committee	13	14 6.00pm Cabinet	15 6.00 pm General Purposes Committee	16
19 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Budget)	20	21 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	22	23
26	27	28	29 6.30pm Council	30

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

FEBRUARY 2026				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	3 6.00pm Planning Committee	4	5	6
9	10	11 6.00pm Cabinet	12	13
16 Page 209 SH	17 <i>Ramadan starts</i> SH	18 <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i> SH	19 SH	20 SH
23	24	25	26 6.00pm Budget Council	27

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

MARCH 2026				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	3 6.00pm Planning Committee	4	5	6
9 6.30 pm Audit and Governance Committee	10 6.30pm Licensing and Enforcement Committee	11 6.00pm Cabinet	12	13
16 Page 210	17	18 <i>Ramadan ends</i> <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	19	20
23	24	25	26 6.30pm Council	27
30 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	31			

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

APRIL 2026				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1	2	3 BH
6 BH	7 SH 6.00pm Planning Committee	8 SH 6.00pm Cabinet	9 SH	10 SH
13 SH Page 211	14 SH	15 SH <i>4.30pm Cabinet Briefing*</i>	16 SH	17 SH
20	21	22	23	24
27 6.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee	28	29	30	

*not open to the public

**Outside Body meeting, by invitation only

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CONSERVATIVE GROUP AMENDMENT ITEM 9 – PETITION – SAINTBRIDGE POND AND NATURE RESERVE

Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that:

- (1) The contents of the petition be noted **and the petitioner be thanked for raising this issue and for her work in collecting this record number of names, which is a demonstration of local community action at its best.**
- (2) **The Council's thanks be given to the members of the Friends of Saintbridge Pond (FOSP), the men and women who turn out regularly to enhance, improve and maintain the large area of City Council land, saving the council thousands and thousands of pounds every year.**
- ~~(2)~~**(3)** The contents of this report be noted.
- ~~(3)~~**(4)** **It be noted that the management plan for Saintbridge Pond Nature Reserve, that already exists and which has been shared with partners is noted addresses the silting up issue and notes the strong view amongst local residents that the pond should be restored to open water and should funding become available in the future for the de-silting of the pond, in part or in whole, it would be considered.**
- ~~(4)~~**(5)** **It is noted that the Council will not plan to carry out dredging at this time, for the reasons set out in this report, but will keep this position under review will continue to review the issue of removing the silt and will work with the FOSP to set up a local FOSP Community Group to meet periodically, composed of four members of the FOSP, the relevant City Council staff (if available), the relevant Environment Agency staff (if available) and the Abbeydale City Councillors, to keep the silt issue under review, and to continue to talk to other partners and agencies to find funding to do the desilting work.**
- ~~(6)~~ **(6)** **It is noted that the Council will work with partners to manage the perimeter vegetation and foliage at the site.**

**COMMUNITY INDEPENDENT GROUP AMENDMENT
ITEM 9 – PETITION – SAINTBRIDGE POND AND NATURE RESERVE**

Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- (1) The contents of the petition be noted.
- (2) The contents of this report be noted.
- (3) The management plan for Saintbridge Pond Nature Reserve that already exists and has been shared with partners is noted.
- (4) It is noted that the Council will not plan to carry out dredging at this time, for the reasons set out in this report, but will keep this position under review.
- (5) It is noted that the Council will work with partners to manage the perimeter vegetation and foliage at the site.
- (6) **It is noted that that to obtain correct costings for de-silting the Saintbridge Pond, the protection of wildlife and the safe guarding of our local environment the following should take place:**
 - a. **A contamination report for the site should be carried out at a minimum of 10 trial pit sites. This will enable tests to determine if the site contains contaminated earth or not.**
 - b. **Water tests carried out to determine if the water is of good quality.**
 - c. **3 x De-silting quotes undertaken following the contamination report from local contractors.**
 - d. **Water improvement works following the water quality tests should any contaminants are found.**
 - e. **Funding for the above works and the protection of our environment is critical to the nature and well being of our city residents and wildlife.**

**CONSERVATIVE GROUP AMENDMENT
ITEM 18(1) NOTICE OF MOTION FROM THE LABOUR GROUP**

“In 2021, across England and Wales the proportion of disabled people was 17.8%, **with 8% of those who are registered as disabled requiring the use of a wheelchair.** Therefore, ~~so in the~~ **to drive for equality** this council needs to make sure that ~~17.8% of the~~ **licenced taxis and private hire vehicles and drivers** available during all operating hours **are suitable for the needs of our disabled population including Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs).**

Currently, whilst there are WAVs licensed by the council most only operate during daytime hours and many of those concentrate on providing specialist services to schools, colleges and other day time projects. This means that **wheelchair users disabled people** struggle and are often limited when needing a taxi to go shopping, get to work or go the railway station etc.

The situation in the evening and at weekends is worsened as there are very few taxis and operators ~~prepared or~~ available to take **wheelchair users disabled people** for a night out to the cinema, pub, restaurant, nightclub or simply to visit friends. ~~Whilst acknowledging the Councils licensing team are making changes to increase the number of WAVs,~~ Taxi and private hire operators need further encouragement to ensure that **WAVs are available for more operating hours, including evenings and weekends.** ~~at least 17.8% are WAVs.~~

This council notes that:

- **in September 2023 the Licensing and Enforcement Committee approved a policy exempting WAVs from the age and euro omission standards that apply to saloon vehicles.**
- **any new Hackney Carriage vehicle licences must be wheelchair accessible.**
- **most of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers in Gloucester are self-employed and therefore can choose which hours to work.**
- **There is currently no national legislation which mandates the requirement to have a WAV available 24/7.**

This council therefore resolves to:

- ~~Provide business rate discounts to taxi operators who can ensure 17.8% of their vehicles are WAVs and operate them at all times of the day.~~
- **Subject to consultation with the trade, offer an operator licence registration 50% rebate to operators who can evidence provide at least one WAVs available for bookings during all evenings and during weekends**
- **Promote alongside the required safeguarding training Provide free, quality disability awareness training to operators and drivers to enable them to safely transport disabled people and understand the needs of all disabled passengers, including those who may have hidden disabilities.**
- Consider other incentives for operators, **learning from best practice within other authorities.**
- **Continue to review and aim to increase the percentage of WAVs available for public use (to 10% of the Gloucester fleet), and promote with Hackney**

Carriage, Private Hire Drivers and Operators the importance of them providing their service particularly during the evenings and at weekends.

- **Write to the Secretary of State for Transport and the Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work to ask them to consider a change to legislation to give local authorities powers to mandate operating hours of WAVs.”**

**COMMUNITY INDEPENDENT GROUP AMENDMENT
ITEM 18(1) NOTICE OF MOTION FROM THE LABOUR GROUP**

“In 2021, across England and Wales the proportion of disabled people was 17.8% so in the drive for equality this council needs to make sure 17.8% of licenced taxis and private hire vehicles available during all operating hours are Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs).

Currently, whilst there are WAVs licensed by the council most only operate during daytime hours and many of those concentrate on providing specialist services to schools, colleges and other day time projects. This means that disabled people struggle and are often limited when needing a taxi to go shopping, get to work or go the railway station etc.

The situation in the evening and at weekends is worsened as there are very few taxis and operators prepared or available to take disabled people for a night out to the cinema, pub, restaurant, nightclub or simply to visit friends.

Whilst acknowledging the Councils licensing team are making changes to increase the number of WAVs, taxi and private hire operators need further encouragement to ensure that at least 17.8% are WAVs.

This council therefore resolves to:

- Provide business rate discounts to taxi operators who can ensure 17.8% of their vehicles are WAVs and operate them at all times of the day.
- Offer a registration rebate to operators who provide WAVs in the evenings and during weekends.
- Provide free, quality disability awareness training to operators and drivers to enable them to safely transport disabled people.
- Consider other incentives for operators.
- Review and increase the percentage of WAVs available for public use, particularly during the evenings and at weekends.
- **as well any new Hackney Carriage vehicle licences, any new private hire vehicle licences must be wheelchair accessible.**
- **meet with Gloucester city taxi providers and look at ways to adapt current digital taxi applications which are already in use to enable disabled blue badge holders priority collection over able bodied customers.”**

**COMMUNITY INDEPENDENT GROUP AMENDMENT
ITEM 18(2) NOTICE OF MOTION FROM THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP**

“This Councils notes;

A motion to this council on spiking in 2021 has helped progress the work by the Council and offers thanks to Gloucestershire Constabulary, GCC Licensing team, Nightsafe partners, and the individual licensed premises in Gloucester who have put extra measures in place to prevent and detect incidents of spiking in Gloucester.

The measures include drink testing kits, educational campaigns, the introduction of quiet areas for potential victims, spiking training, urine testing kits, and the successful street medic scheme who are medically trained to help those who may have been spiked and feel unwell.

This Councils supports the continuation and expansion of all these measures to ensure ALL licensed pubs, nightclubs and restaurants in Gloucester are aware of spiking and have provision to prevent and detect incidents in the day and night time economy including knowing how to support potential victims to get help and stay safe.

The Council resolves:

- To explore whether conditions on licenced premises can be included through the Council’s licencing regime whether voluntarily or mandatory to ensure venues have appropriate security and staff training in place to improve safety including the search for spiking paraphernalia and recognising signs that someone could be perpetrating this offence;
- To commit to work with key stakeholders, particularly those in the night-time economy, to review existing practices in use and implement all possible safety options as a matter of urgency, including training for staff on how to administer the kits, what to do in the event of a positive result, and promotional material promoting how customers can access the kits;
- To commit to working in partnership with all key stakeholders, to renew Gloucester’s Purple Flag status, a benchmark of safety in the night-time economy;
- To work in partnership with all key stakeholders (including The Gloucester BID and OPCC), to determine a funding stream to restart the Best Bar None accreditation scheme which aims to improve and monitor standards of licensed premises.

This council also notes that many licensed premises in Gloucester allow drinking to excess to maximise profit. The recent police documentary along Eastgate street in Gloucester, highlighted several licensed premises allowing young adults to leave their premises extremely intoxicated which led to several assaults and arrests. This shows a blatant disregard for the safety of customers of these licences premises along with that of the public. The cost to Gloucester Police is significant with many resources spent each week policing this on going alcoholic abuse. Therefore this council will undertake closer monitoring of the public community safety by checking alcoholic abuse at Eastgate street licences premises to help reduce crime in the area and ensure public safety.”

**COMMUNITY INDEPENDENT GROUP AMENDMENT
ITEM 18(3) NOTICE OF MOTION FROM THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP**

"This council notes the increase in graffiti that is appearing on private and public buildings across the city.

This council recognises the negative impact that graffiti has on a particular area that is suffering from this anti-social crime.

This council agrees to review its current policy on dealing with the removal of graffiti from both public and private buildings.

This council agrees that it must strengthen its arrangements with key stakeholders to ensure more is done to catch and prosecute the perpetrators in a timely manner.

This council agrees to find a COMMUNITY GRAFFITI WALL / area in this city to enable. The community wall will be in an area that does not offend or upset residents but enables youth artistic freedom and expression.

A community graffiti wall fosters artistic expression, cultivates a sense of local identity, and provides a creative outlet for residents. It can also serve as a platform for community engagement, encouraging collaboration and communication among diverse individuals.

The wall will be able to be painted on and over by graffiti artists. There will be rules of the community wall adjacent. These rules for example will explain that nothing can be painted which would cause upset or alarm on the community wall and will be removed if painted.

This community wall will help reduce graffiti on public buildings/ bus stops/ private buildings and statues."

CONSERVATIVE GROUP AMENDMENT
ITEM 18(4) NOTICE OF MOTION FROM THE COMMUNITY INDEPENDENT
GROUP

“Gloucester City Council notes that **parts of** the city centre **could be described** as is looking empty and bland. The city scene is **not to the same** below standard **when** compared to that of the Gloucester Docks area. And **parts of** the city centre is a grey space that needs uplifting.

Gloucester City Councils mission is to get more people outside and green the grey in our city. We know adding beautiful planters and softening an urban landscape are great ways to achieve this. They create colourful and welcoming spaces for communities that people want to spend time in and enjoy.

Here are five reasons why improvements should be considered to you this City Council motion should be accepted to enable all city councillors **to help the city go** to green the grey.

Improved air quality

Did you know plants absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen into the air? This is the process known as photosynthesis and as humans breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide plants do the opposite making the surrounding air quality better. Trees and plants also act as filters for urban pollutants and fine particulates by trapping the nasties in their leaves and bark. That’s why the more plants we have in our Gloucester City environment the better, they not only help us breathe better and cleaner air they form an essential part of our surrounding atmosphere. ~~City council to add a minimum of 20 planters to the city centre 5 North/ 5 South/ 5 East and 5 West streets. Planters to include colour and greenery.~~

Good for mental and physical health

Studies have proven that seeing and being close to plants helps reduce anxiety and stress levels in human beings. Gloucester City is dominated by the hospital tower block some older 1960s apartment blocks that don’t have any outside space, that can have a negative effect on adults and children including decreased concentration levels and increased psychological stress. Providing planters in Gloucester will help bring people closer to nature, they will create inviting greener spaces and people are more likely to leave their homes, go outside and exercise if there are attractive spaces filled with colourful plants to enjoy. ~~Gloucester City Council to include in the planters, plants that give good scents and aromatic smells to the public.~~

Sustainable communities

The fact is we all want to contribute to living in a more sustainable world, in cities there are a number of ways we can use plants to contribute to our sustainable development. Rooftop allotments are a great way of growing fruit and vegetables in a sustainable way, it has long term environmental benefits; saves money and is much more nutritious than shop bought produce. The community benefits are also greater as urban gardening connects the community together over common sustainable purposes. ~~There are several roof top spaces on City Council buildings around the city that are not being used. These would make the perfect place for these allotments. City Council to review places for allotments.~~

Economic benefits

In towns and shopping centres the addition of simple landscaping and planters by businesses can be largely effective in attracting more customers and boosting sales. The addition of plants, flowers and shrubs help to cultivate a positive environment where people can thrive. Greenery can also provide economic benefits to property owners; investing in landscaping can potentially boost property values and attract a wealthier market. Planting can reinforce a sense of identity amongst neighbourhoods providing potential jobs or hobbies for the community. Initiatives like rooftop allotments are a great example of this – they encourage residents to get involved in their communities through allotment rentals all the while providing fresh produce for the locals. ~~City Council to look into a Greener Gloucester City Centre business Competition. Where businesses make the outside of their premises greener with plants and hanging baskets. The mayor will then pick a winner, second place and runner up.~~

Defining spaces & pedestrian movement

Planters, when used strategically, provide the ability to divide spaces and manage pedestrian movement to aid with meeting social distancing requirements; pathways can be clearly separated from other areas. They can also be used to hide unsightly areas, to act as subtle visual and physical access barriers, or simply to enhance dead space between commercial buildings and roads. ~~Gloucester City Council Centre to look at defining spaces movement with 50 additional planters to be included. These 50 are additional to the 20 planters the City Council are providing. These planters will be sponsored by local businesses. The cost of the planter/ soil/ plants and small advertising badge and QR code to the business website would be covered by the local Gloucester business. This would raised income for the 50 additional sponsored planters as well as help to cover the cost of the watering of the planter. Businesses sponsorships will be for 1 year, and other businesses can take on the sponsorship of planters in following years. This would be a self funding green scheme.~~

~~This motion is a fairly simple motion to make happen, which could be actioned with plan and locations before the 30.03.2024 and implemented with planters on the streets of Gloucester before 30.04.2024 deadline.~~

This Council notes that:

- any additional street furniture or planters should be considered in detail, to ensure the correct positioning and funding requirements.
- that the HSHAZ planned public realm works will include 30 planters of varying size, 11 with seating attached and 12 trees being planted in the area, in the first quarter of 2024.

This Council resolves to:

- To look into a Greener Gloucester City Centre business Competition. Where businesses make the outside of their premises greener with plants and hanging baskets. The Mayor will then pick a winner, second place and runner up.
- To look into the feasibility of using several roof top spaces on City Council buildings around the city that are not being used for another purpose for urban allotments.
- To look into the possibility of business sponsorship of any new street furniture in the gate streets, prior to installation.”

**CONSERVATIVE GROUP AMENDMENT
ITEM 18(6) NOTICE OF MOTION FROM THE COMMUNITY INDEPENDENT
GROUP**

“Council members,

I rise today to propose a motion that addresses a critical issue within our community – the urgent need for emergency accommodation. It is no secret that our city is facing a growing crisis of homelessness and displacement, exacerbated by a lack of affordable housing options. In light of this, I propose that we explore the possibility of converting empty properties into emergency accommodation to provide immediate relief to those in need.

Empty properties, whether they be vacant homes, ~~or~~ abandoned buildings, ~~or unused commercial spaces~~, **can** present an unique opportunity to address the pressing issue of emergency housing. By repurposing these properties, we can swiftly provide safe and secure ~~shelter~~ **accommodation** to individuals and families who find themselves without a home due to unforeseen circumstances.

This motion aims to achieve several key objectives:

1. ~~Utilizing Existing Resources:~~ Empty properties represent an underutilised resource within our community. By converting them into emergency accommodation, we ~~can~~ **could** make the most of these existing structures and ensure that they serve a purpose in addressing the urgent needs of our most vulnerable residents.
2. ~~Swift Response to Emergencies:~~ Converting empty properties into emergency accommodation **could provide additional accommodation, along with other rest centers** ~~allows us to help us to~~ respond quickly to crises such as natural disasters, economic downturns, or sudden displacement. This immediate response ~~is crucial in ensuring~~ **could add another element to ensure** that individuals and families have a safe place to stay during times of uncertainty.
3. ~~Cost-Effective Solution:~~ ~~Converting empty properties into emergency accommodation can be a cost-effective approach compared to constructing new facilities from scratch.~~ By ~~r~~Repurposing existing structures, ~~we can minimize expenses while still providing~~ **provide** essential shelter and support services to those in need **quickly**.
4. ~~Community Engagement and Revitalisation:~~ This motion also presents an opportunity for community engagement and revitalisation. By converting empty properties, we can breathe new life into neglected areas, fostering a sense of pride and community ownership. This approach not only addresses the immediate need for emergency accommodation but also contributes to the long-term development of our city.

To achieve these objectives, I propose the following actions:

1. ~~Conduct Update~~ an inventory: ~~Initiate Update~~ a comprehensive survey to identify and assess all empty properties within our jurisdiction that have the potential to be converted into emergency accommodation.

2. Establish partnerships: **Continue to** ~~C~~collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including property owners, community organizations, and housing agencies, to develop a ~~framework~~ **solutions** for converting empty properties into emergency accommodation. This partnership will ensure the efficient utilization of resources and expertise.
3. Streamline regulations: **To continue to** ~~R~~review and amend existing regulations, if necessary, to facilitate the conversion process. This may include expedited planning permissions, zoning adjustments, and financial incentives **local policy** to encourage property owners to participate in this initiative.
4. Allocate funding: ~~Allocate a dedicated budget~~ **To continue with identifying and acquiring property** to support ~~support~~ **consider** the conversion of empty properties into emergency accommodation. ~~This funding can be sourced from various channels, including government grants, public-private partnerships, and community fundraising efforts.~~
5. Monitor and evaluate: Establish a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the effectiveness of the converted emergency accommodation and make necessary adjustments to ensure optimal outcomes for the residents.

In conclusion, converting empty properties into emergency accommodation **may** presents a viable and practical solution to address the pressing issue of homelessness and displacement within our community. By repurposing these properties, we ~~can~~ **could** provide ~~immediate~~ relief to those in need, ~~utilize~~ existing resources, and foster community engagement and revitalization. I urge all council members to support this motion and work together to make a positive impact on the lives of our most vulnerable residents.”

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