



MINUTES OF COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, 14 February 2018 at 10am

VENUE: Shire Hall, Gloucester

Present:

Cllr Phil Awford	Cllr Colin Hay	Cllr Brian Robinson
Cllr Matt Babbage	Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Cllr Rachel Smith
Cllr Robert Bird	Cllr Stephen Hirst	Cllr Vernon Smith
Cllr Richard Boyles	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Cllr Lynden Stowe
Cllr David Brown	Cllr Carole Allaway Martin	Cllr Klara Sudbury
Cllr Chris Coleman	Cllr Dr Andrew Miller	Cllr Ray Theodoulou
Cllr Dr John Cordwell	Cllr Patrick Molyneux	Cllr Brian Tipper
Cllr Kevin Cromwell	Cllr Nigel Moor	Cllr Pam Tracey MBE
Cllr Stephen Davies	Cllr Graham Morgan	Cllr Robert Vines
Cllr Iain Dobie	Cllr David Norman MBE	Cllr Eva Ward
Cllr Bernard Fisher	Cllr Brian Oosthuysen	Cllr Simon Wheeler
Cllr Andrew Gravells (Vice-Chairman)	Cllr Shaun Parsons (Chairman)	Cllr Jack Williams
Cllr Kate Haigh	Cllr Sajid Patel	Cllr Kathy Williams
Cllr Terry Hale	Cllr Loraine Patrick	Cllr Lesley Williams MBE
Cllr Tim Harman	Cllr John Payne	Cllr Suzanne Williams
Cllr Joe Harris	Cllr Alan Preest	Cllr Roger Wilson
Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	Cllr Nigel Robbins OBE	Cllr Will Windsor-Clive

Apologies: Councillors Keith Rippington and Steve Robinson

Honorary Aldermen Bill Crowther, Terry Parker, John Sewell and Gordon Shurmer

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2017 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Minutes subject to their acceptance as a correct record at the next meeting

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A copy of the declarations of interest is attached to the signed copy of the minutes.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Queen's New Year Honours

The Chairman congratulated the people living in Gloucestershire who had received awards as part of the Queen's New Year Honours. He said that he had written to the individuals included in the list attached to the agenda. He paid particular tribute to Dame Janet Trotter, the Lord Lieutenant, who had received the Royal Victoria Order for services to the Monarchy.

b) A417 'Missing Link'

The Chairman advised that Highways England was launching a consultation on the route options for the A417 'Missing Link' on 15 February 2018.

c) Women's suffrage at 100

The Chairman paid tribute to the Suffragette Movement 100 years on from the 1918 Representation of the People Act.

In paying their own tributes, Group Leaders recognised that although society had come a long way over the last 100 years there was still more to be done to ensure that all groups were represented fairly.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Fourteen public questions had been received. The following supplementary questions were asked:

Question 7 – David Willingham explained that concerned residents he represented wanted to know when plans would be brought forward to resolve parking issues in Cheltenham. He was concerned that there was no hint of a timescale for the analysis of survey results or for the rest of the work that needed to be carried out. He asked what date the survey results would be made public?

Cllr Nigel Moor explained that the information would be provided after 'race-week' as there were a number of changes the Council wished to consult on.

Question 8 – David Willingham asked why a better attempt hadn't been made to engage with the public given local residents knowledge of parking problems. He suggested an open and transparent consultation.

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that there had been considerable engagement and that he had heard from many residents in Cheltenham. The Council was aware of the concerns and issues expressed.

Question 9 – David Willingham suggested that with regards to parking in Cheltenham, the Council had no vision, no strategy, plan or timescale for delivery. He asked whether the Council would commit to consultation and implementation of a funded town wide on-street parking strategy for Cheltenham.

Cllr Nigel Moor stated that it was important to look at the intrinsic problems and what worked for individual communities rather than a Cheltenham wide approach.

Question 11 – Max Wilkinson asked whether the Leader of the Council would take the opportunity to ask which members had attended the Conservative political fund raising event?

Cllr Mark Hawthorne responded by stating that he would not and that he did not have a broader list of attendees. He spoke about the success of the fund raiser.

Question 12 – Max Wilkinson expressed concern about a Conservative Government 'starving the NHS of cash', and he suggested that the Cheltenham MP was campaigning for a downgrade to Cheltenham General Hospital. His question related to how this would be perceived by onlookers.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne replied that NHS spending in the Country had increased year on year under a Conservative government.

Question 13 - Max Wilkinson referred to a 'pot hole summit' in 2015 attended by Cllr Vernon Smith and County Council officers. He asked that Cllr Vernon Smith confirm that he is politically responsible for fixing potholes in Cheltenham.

Cllr Vernon Smith stated that there was additional investment for re-surfacing highways within the budget proposals. He encouraged members to report any defects on Highways.

5. CORPORATE PARENTING

Cllr Richard Boyles, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, referred to the issues facing children-in-care in terms of their healthcare. He provided information on the services that were in place including the introduction of dedicated children-in-care nurses from January 2018.

A member expressed concern that the recent press release on Children's Services did not reflect the concerns expressed by Ofsted. He did not believe that members were being kept informed of developments and questioned whether the Improvement Board was working as it should be.

Cllr Boyles advised that regular reports were provided in Members' Matter to ensure that all members were kept up-to-date on the latest developments. He assured the member that there was no complacency amongst the members of the Improvement Board or senior staff. He said that nothing was being hidden and the issues identified by Ofsted were being addressed.

Answering further questions, Cllr Boyles advised that all the agencies involved had signed up to a data sharing agreement. This meant there should be no delays in providing information as a result of the requirements of the Data Protection Act and related legislation. He said that efforts were being focused on the needs of individuals which followed the core principles of the NHS England pilot 'My plan, my life'. He explained that the number of children in custody was falling and the Police were aware of the need for children to be dealt with in an appropriate manner with proper representation. He stated that he did not wish to interfere with the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner but the Council was prepared to provide support where necessary.

In light of the importance of the issue, two members called for oral updates on the Ofsted Improvement Plan to be made at each full Council meeting.

Cllr Brian Robinson, the Chairman of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee, advised that the committee looked at the Improvement Plan at each meeting with members given the opportunity to ask questions of the Cabinet Member.

Cllr Boyles said that he would seek guidance on the best approach to reporting to members in future.

RESOLVED to note the report.

6. PETITIONS

Cllr Rachel Smith presented a petition from the No Monster Incinerator in Gloucestershire (NoMoinGlo) Group relating to public confidence in the Council.

Cllr Joe Harris advised that he would shortly be receiving a petition relating to gritting routes in the Cotswold area.

7. POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND THE COUNCIL STRATEGY

The report before members included the Budget recommendations, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Council Strategy, Budget consultation report, Scrutiny Budget report and Due Regard Statement.

The Chief Executive explained the procedure that would be followed at the meeting for setting the budget. First, Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Leader of the Council, and Cllr Ray Theodoulou, Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, would be asked to present the budget recommendations from the Cabinet.

Second, in order to reach a position where a substantive motion could be debated, the other political groups would be invited to propose amendments to the budget but there would be no debate at that stage. This would be a departure from the normal procedure where only one amendment could be moved and discussed at any one time. The Chairman therefore proposed that under procedure rule 23.1 the following part of procedure rule 12.5 be suspended for the duration of the budget debate:

'Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at any one time. No further amendment may be moved until the amendment under discussion has been dealt with.'

The Vice-chairman seconded the motion and, on being put to the vote, the motion was supported.

Once the amendments had been presented, the Chairman would call for an adjournment to provide an opportunity for the Group Leaders to reach a common position.

After the adjournment, the Leader of the Council would advise members of those areas where it had been possible to reach agreement. Any amendments which had not been accepted or withdrawn would then be presented by the groups, debated and voted upon.

Thereafter all members would have an opportunity to debate the budget in line with the normal rules of debate. At the end of the debate, the Leader of the Council would have the right of reply.

Finally, a recorded vote would be proposed from the Chairman on the substantive motion, seconded by the Vice-chairman.

Conservative Group

Cllr Mark Hawthorne, the Leader of the Council, and Cllr Ray Theodoulou, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, presented the recommendation from the Cabinet meeting held on 31 January 2018.

Cllr Hawthorne recognised that the financial position was challenging with reductions in grant funding at the same time that demand for services was increasing. He said that the extra income from Business Rates and additional grant funding announced by the Government in the final settlement was helping to protect the Social Care budgets. He publicly thanked members and officers for the work they had undertaken to put the building blocks in place to improve Children's Services. He believed that there had been great strides but he recognised that there was a way to go in terms of improving social work practice and ensuring that there was a consistent approach across the county. The Children's budget was being increased by 28% to allow the improvement process to continue.

Referring to the Council's commitment on roads, he stated that £150 million would be invested over five years to keep the county moving. He reiterated the Council's commitment to supporting the A417 Missing Link. He said that the Council was committed to investing in children's education with £100 million allocated for school provision over the next four years including a new secondary school for Cheltenham.

Cllr Hawthorne explained that there were two elements to the increase in Council Tax for upper tier authorities like the Council. One element was the general increase in Council Tax which could go up by 2.99% and the other was the Adult Social Care Levy which allowed the Council Tax to rise by a further 3%. The maximum increase in Council Tax for an upper tier authority was therefore 5.99%. He advised that many local authorities were doing just that but the Council was keeping the overall increase to 4.49%, one of the lowest in the South West.

Cllr Theodoulou reminded members about the Public Sector Equality Duty and the need for them all, as decision makers on the Council Strategy and the Medium Term Financial Strategy, to show 'due regard'. The Due Regard Statement formed an integral part of the Council's budget process.

He believed that the Council was in a better financial position than many local authorities but he recognised that the financial outlook remained challenging. He referred to the savings achieved over recent years and the extra income that had been generated. He said that this had allowed more investment in on-demand services such as Adult Social Care and Children's Services. He noted that the Capital Programme amounted to £500m and included investment in roads, transport links, schools and street lighting.

Liberal Democrat Group

Cllr Paul Hodgkinson, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, and Cllr Jeremy Hilton presented the Liberal Democrat Group's amendments to the Budget (see below).

Cllr Hodgkinson expressed serious concern regarding the growing funding crisis in local government with councils across the country struggling to provide core services such as Adult Social Care and Children's Services. He said that the problems with Children's Services at the Council were far worse than first thought and it was evident that significant resources were needed to put things right. He noted that the largest increase in Council Tax for many years was proposed to compensate for reductions in Government funding and to provide funds for failing Children's Services.

He confirmed that the Liberal Democrat Group were fully committed to the A417 Missing Link. He said that the Budget amendments covering highways, the environment and health, were properly funded and would not result in any further increase in Council Tax.

In seconding the Budget amendments, Cllr Hilton thanked Cllr Patrick Molyneux, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, for the one day scrutiny session undertaken with Cabinet Members and Directors. He believed that the amendments proposed would improve the Budget and were in line with the Council Strategy. He noted that they amounted to £5.4 million in total and would not affect the rate of Council Tax.

a) Highways

i) Footways and cycle ways - £1.5 million capital over 3 years

Provide additional investment of £1.5 million in Gloucestershire's footways and cycleways, for structural maintenance and construction. This is a three-year programme valued at £500,000 per year.

Funded by prioritising and ring fencing £1.5 million for Gloucestershire footways and cycleways within the £39 million roads maintenance capital budget proposal listed on page 80 of the MTFS identified for new highways schemes.

ii) Highways Local - £1.59 million revenue and £1.59 million capital, both over 3 years

Restore the Highways Local budget to £30,000 per county division from the £10,000 in the draft budget at a cost £3.18 million over three years. This proposal for a Highways Local Scheme will include £20,000 revenue and £10,000 capital spending per annum.

Funded by scrapping of the Lengthsman scheme, which will save £530,000 revenue per annum. This scheme was due to be incorporated in the highways contract in following years. This will provide £1.59 million of additional revenue over three years.

A further £530,000 capital per annum to be prioritised and ring-fenced within the proposed £39 million roads maintenance capital budget listed on page 80 of the MTFS identified for new highways schemes. This will provide £1.59 million capital over three years.

b) Environment

i) Public Rights of Way - £50,000 revenue recurring

This amendment will provide one additional permanent member of staff, boosting the staff numbers from 2.5 to 3.5. The additional member of staff will help to deal with the backlog (119) of applications for rights of way modification orders etc. We propose to allocate £50,000 per year recurring.

Funded by an additional £100,000 from income generation from enforcement activities within the Network and Traffic Management Teams to be used to fund both Traffic Regulation Order and Definitive Map Modification Order work.

ii) Air quality improvement by installing electric vehicle on-street charging points - £60,000 revenue in 2018-19

There is a 75% government (OLEV) grant available for installing on-street charging points for electric vehicles. This is a £60,000 project to develop a business case, which would draw down grant funding and may

provide a revenue income stream for the County Council. Funded by £60,000 draw down from the Invest to Save Reserve.

c) Health

i) Victims of Domestic Abuse - £300,000 revenue over 2 years

A project focusing on young people who have been either witnesses to, or victims of domestic abuse. £300,000 over two years. Funded by reprioritising and top slicing the expected £2 million surplus from the 100% Business Rates Retention Pilot currently prioritised for Adult Social Care.

ii) Self-harm Reduction - £200,000 revenue over 2 years

To expand the self-harm helpline to deliver focused support to particular groups of vulnerable people. £200,000 over two years. Funded by reprioritising and top slicing the expected £2.6 million surplus from the 100% Business Rates Retention Pilot currently prioritised for Children's Social Care.

iii) Mental Health - £96,000 revenue over 3 years

Restore the £32,000 cut in mental health support within the Public Health budget. Valued at £96,000 over three years. Funded by reprioritising and top slicing £96,000 of the Children's Social Care part of the £1.618 million additional council tax base.

Labour and Green Cooperative Alliance

Cllr Lesley Williams, Leader of the Labour and Green Cooperative Alliance, and Cllr Kate Haigh presented the Labour and Green Cooperative Alliance's amendments to the budget (see below).

Cllr Williams stated that Local Government was in a state of crisis and the funding position was simply not sustainable moving forward. She referred to the plight of Northamptonshire County Council and noted that nine out of 10 local authorities were expected to be overspent by the end of the current financial year. She said that chronic underfunding of Children's Services had resulted in serious problems for the Council. She expressed serious concern at the condition of roads across Gloucestershire. She believed that the lack of funding provided little opportunity for an innovative Budget. The amendments put forward by the Labour and Green Cooperative Alliance amounted to less than 0.1% of the total Budget but would result in real benefits for people living in the county.

In seconding the Budget amendments, Cllr Haigh believed that they would make the biggest difference to the people most in need. She stated that the chronic underfunding of services by the Government resulted in vulnerable people suffering the most. She said that local authorities were being pushed perilously close to falling over the financial edge.

- a) Period poverty - £100,000 revenue over three financial years** A two year trial from September 2018 to July 2020, to mirror academic years (undertaken over three financial years to allow scoping and procurement at the start and evaluation at the end of the pilot) to provide free sanitary provision in all schools and colleges in the county in order to alleviate 'period poverty'.

The cost of running the trial including evaluation is approximately £100,000 and the proposal is to fund this from the £2.6 million Business Rate Retention Pilot earmarked for Children's Social Care. The trial evaluation will inform whether the scheme should remain a Council priority and be funded on a recurring basis.

- b) Children and young people's mental health - £50,000 revenue over two financial years**

A tailor-made county-wide one academic year project undertaken over two financial years to tackle the issue of poor mental health in children and young people.

To be funded from the £2.6 million Business Rate Retention Pilot earmarked for Children's Social Care. The pilot will facilitate scoping, commissioning with a start date of September 2018, which will be evaluated to inform whether the scheme should remain a Council priority and be funded on a recurring basis.

- c) Youth work funding - £50,000 revenue for each District Council in 2018-19**

A one-off investment to replace the cut in youth activity programmes for 11-19 year olds previously run in each District Council area. To be funded through the £2.6 million Business Rate Retention Pilot earmarked for Children's Social Care.

The meeting was adjourned from 11.45am to 12.30pm to provide an opportunity for the political groups to discuss and agree amendments.

Debate on decisions on the budget amendments

Following the adjournment, the Leader of the Council set out the position of the Conservative Group in relation to the budget amendments put forward by the Liberal Democrat Group and the Labour and Green Cooperative Alliance.

Liberal Democrat Group

a) Highways

i) Footways and cycle ways - £1.5 million capital over 3 years

Not supported by the Conservative Group and withdrawn by the Liberal Democrat Group.

ii) Highways Local - £1.59 million revenue and £1.59 million capital, both over 3 years

The Conservative Group was supportive of increasing Highways Local by £10,000 to £20,000 per member for the 2018-19 financial year (overall additional cost £530,000). The Lengthsman Scheme to be retained. Members of the Liberal Democrat Group were asked to provide examples of where the scheme was not working.

The Liberal Democrat Group accepted this position so the Conservative Group's counter offer formed part of the Budget proposal.

b) Environment

i) Public Rights of Way - £50,000 revenue recurring

The Conservative Group did not support this amendment but the Leader of the Council accepted the challenge. He undertook to ask the Cabinet Member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure to investigate the issue and find a way of addressing the problem. The Cabinet Member would report back to the meeting of the Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 May 2018.

The Liberal Democrat Group accepted this position.

ii) Air quality improvement by installing electric vehicle on-street charging points - £60,000 revenue in 2018-19

The Conservative Group made a counter offer to invest £470,000 into an Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Delivery Programme to include

on-street charging points and the provision of Council vehicles. To be funded from the Business Rate Retention Pilot.

The Liberal Democrat Group accepted this position so the Conservative Group's counter offer formed part of the Budget proposal.

c) Health

i) Victims of Domestic Abuse - £300,000 revenue over 2 years

The Conservative Group did not support this amendment but proposed that Scrutiny should examine the issue by 30 September 2018.

The Liberal Democrat Group accepted this position.

ii) Self-harm Reduction - £200,000 revenue over 2 years

The Conservative Group did not support this amendment but proposed that Scrutiny should examine the issue by 30 September 2018.

The Liberal Democrat Group accepted this position.

iii) Mental Health - £96,000 revenue over 3 years

The Conservative Group did not support this amendment as they believed that the actual position was being misrepresented. Public Health was part of a wider partnership delivering Mental Health Services in the county. In overall terms, the level of spending was increasing with the Council working closely with Health partners.

The Liberal Democrat Group did not accept this position and requested that their budget amendment be voted upon. They said that the Public Health budget was being cut again on top of cuts in previous years. With one in three visits to GPs relating to mental health issues they believed that it was unwise to reduce spending in such a critical area.

On being put to a recorded vote, the amendment fell. The voting was as follows:

For (21): Cllrs David Brown, Chris Coleman, Dr John Cordwell, Iain Dobie, Bernard Fisher, Joe Harris, Kate Haigh, Colin Hay, Jeremy Hilton, Paul Hodgkinson, Graham Morgan, Brian Oosthuysen, John Payne, Nigel Robbins, Rachel Smith, Klara Sudbury, Eva Ward, Simon Wheeler, Jack Williams, Lesley Williams and Suzanne Williams

Against (30): Cllrs Carole Allaway Martin, Phil Awford, Matt Babbage, Rob Bird, Richard Boyles, Kevin Cromwell, Stephen Davies, Andrew Gravells, Terry Hale, Tim Harman, Mark Hawthorne, Stephen Hirst, Andrew Miller, Patrick Molyneux, Nigel Moor, David Norman, Shaun Parsons, Sajid Patel, Loraine Patrick, Alan Preest, Brian Robinson, Vernon Smith, Lynden Stowe, Ray Theodoulou, Brian Tipper, Pam Tracey, Robert Vines, Kathy Williams, Roger Wilson and Will Windsor-Clive

Labour and Green Cooperative Alliance

a) Period Poverty - £100,000 revenue in 2018-19

The Conservative Group made a counter offer of a targeted Period Poverty Programme for 2018-19 to be established by the Director of Public Health at a cost of £50,000. They questioned whether the proposal had been costed properly. They believed that a programme targeted at those most in need would deliver better outcomes than a universal offer in schools.

The Labour Group rejected the counter offer and requested that their budget amendment be voted upon. They believed that the Council should offer a universal service following the lead taken by a number of other local authorities. It was a matter of personal respect and dignity and means testing young women on whether they should receive sanitary products put them in a dreadfully embarrassing position. Menstruation should never be seen as a barrier to education. At present, young women were often faced with a stark choice of having lunch or buying a sanitary towel.

On being put to a recorded vote, the amendment fell, so the Conservative Group's counter offer formed part of the Budget proposal. The voting was as follows:

For (21): Cllrs David Brown, Chris Coleman, Dr John Cordwell, Iain Dobie, Bernard Fisher, Joe Harris, Kate Haigh, Colin Hay, Jeremy Hilton, Paul Hodgkinson, Graham Morgan, Brian Oosthuysen, John Payne, Nigel Robbins, Rachel Smith, Klara Sudbury, Eva Ward, Simon Wheeler, Jack Williams, Lesley Williams and Suzanne Williams

Against (29): Cllrs Carole Allaway Martin, Phil Awford, Matt Babbage, Rob Bird, Richard Boyles, Stephen Davies, Andrew Gravells, Terry

Hale, Tim Harman, Mark Hawthorne, Stephen Hirst, Andrew Miller, Patrick Molyneux, Nigel Moor, David Norman, Shaun Parsons, Sajid Patel, Loraine Patrick, Alan Preest, Brian Robinson, Vernon Smith, Lynden Stowe, Ray Theodoulou, Brian Tipper, Pam Tracey, Robert Vines, Kathy Williams, Roger Wilson and Will Windsor-Clive

b) Children and young people's mental health - £50,000 revenue 2018-19

The Conservative Group did not support this amendment as services were available through Children's Centres and other dedicated provision. They were unsure of what the proposal involved and questioned how the funding would be used.

The Labour Group did not accept this position and requested that their budget amendment be voted upon. They said that their proposal involved experts going into schools to talk about mental health and signposting young people to the support they needed. Early intervention allowed issues to be addressed and would save money in the longer term. It was a relatively small amount of money that could deliver real benefits to young people across the county.

On being put to a recorded vote, the amendment fell. The voting was as follows:

For (21): Cllrs David Brown, Chris Coleman, Dr John Cordwell, Iain Dobie, Bernard Fisher, Joe Harris, Kate Haigh, Colin Hay, Jeremy Hilton, Paul Hodgkinson, Graham Morgan, Brian Oosthuysen, John Payne, Nigel Robbins, Rachel Smith, Klara Sudbury, Eva Ward, Simon Wheeler, Jack Williams, Lesley Williams and Suzanne Williams

Against (29): Cllrs Carole Allaway Martin, Phil Awford, Matt Babbage, Rob Bird, Richard Boyles, Stephen Davies, Andrew Gravells, Terry Hale, Tim Harman, Mark Hawthorne, Stephen Hirst, Andrew Miller, Patrick Molyneux, Nigel Moor, David Norman, Shaun Parsons, Sajid Patel, Loraine Patrick, Alan Preest, Brian Robinson, Vernon Smith, Lynden Stowe, Ray Theodoulou, Brian Tipper, Pam Tracey, Robert Vines, Kathy Williams, Roger Wilson and Will Windsor-Clive

c) Youth work funding - £50,000 revenue for each District Council in 2018-19

The Conservative Group did not support this amendment as they believed that members could provide financial support themselves

through the new Growing Our Communities Fund of £30,000 for each member over three years. The £50,000 previously provided to the District Councils was only ever intended for a temporary period to allow schemes to be developed locally.

The Labour Group did not accept this position and requested that the budget amendment be voted upon. They noted that the funding was valued in each district and allowed a range of community schemes to be established for young people. They were concerned that some community groups might not be able to continue without funding. They believed that young people would be more likely to go off track and become involved in anti-social behaviour.

On being put to a recorded vote, the amendment fell. The voting was as follows:

For (21): Cllrs David Brown, Chris Coleman, Dr John Cordwell, Iain Dobie, Bernard Fisher, Joe Harris, Kate Haigh, Colin Hay, Jeremy Hilton, Paul Hodgkinson, Graham Morgan, Brian Oosthuysen, John Payne, Nigel Robbins, Rachel Smith, Klara Sudbury, Eva Ward, Simon Wheeler, Jack Williams, Lesley Williams and Suzanne Williams

Against (29): Cllrs Carole Allaway Martin, Phil Awford, Matt Babbage, Rob Bird, Richard Boyles, Stephen Davies, Andrew Gravells, Terry Hale, Tim Harman, Mark Hawthorne, Stephen Hirst, Andrew Miller, Patrick Molyneux, Nigel Moor, David Norman, Shaun Parsons, Sajid Patel, Loraine Patrick, Alan Preest, Brian Robinson, Vernon Smith, Lynden Stowe, Ray Theodoulou, Brian Tipper, Pam Tracey, Robert Vines, Kathy Williams, Roger Wilson and Will Windsor-Clive

General debate on the Budget

Members acknowledged the work of officers in bringing the Budget together and they thanked them for all their efforts. They welcomed the opportunity to scrutinise the budget proposals at the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and they hoped that the same approach would be followed in future years. One member believed that it would be useful to have a more detailed breakdown of the budget in future years so that members had a better understanding of the income and expenditure in particular areas. He said that this would be particularly helpful for the scrutiny process ahead of full Council.

Whilst welcoming the Budget amendments that had been agreed, some members expressed concern at the lack of funding for critical areas including mental health,

youth provision, highways and footpaths, cycling and preventing school exclusions. They believed that local government services were being torn apart by the continued reduction in funding by the Government. One member suggested that the Council should increase the Council Tax further in light of the spending pressures it was facing.

Another member felt that the Budget was a missed opportunity for the Council. She noted that the Council was trying to save money through demand management in Adult Social Care but at the same was building more roads and increasing traffic levels and pollution. She said that there was a lack of investment in the infrastructure for cycling and bus services were being cut. She believed that a new approach was required to highways planning which gave priority to walking, cycling, public transport and cleaner fuel vehicles.

The Cabinet Members advised that the Council was in a strong financial position with the Budget providing investment in critical areas including Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Highways, infrastructure and the local economy, schools, people with physical and learning disabilities and Public Health. Each Cabinet Member outlined key areas of spending within their own portfolios.

In summing up, Cllr Hawthorne believed that a sensible position had been reached on the Budget amendments. In overall terms, the Budget was £11.3 million higher than in 2017-18 with extra investment in services areas across the Council. Responding to the comments about reductions in mental health funding, he noted that Council spending was increasing not falling. He expressed disappointment at the views expressed by opposition groups on funding for Period Poverty. He said that the Conservative Group recognised this was a serious issue and they believed that a targeted approach would be more effective than a universal offering in secondary schools.

On being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED

- 1 That the Council Strategy 2018-2019 be approved.*
- 2 That, having considered the additional consultation responses and the Public Sector Equality Duty Assessment, approval is given to the MTFs and the revenue and capital budgets for 2018-19, amended to take account of a one-off contribution of £50,000 to commission the provision of community based support to distribute sanitary products to the most vulnerable women presenting for our services. This will be funded from the Active Communities Reserve.*

Minutes subject to their acceptance as a correct record at the next meeting

- 3 That the Council note the additional one-off Adult Social Care Support Grant of £1.581 million for 2018-19, announced by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- 4 That approval is given for the council tax for each valuation band, and to issue precepts on each district collection fund as set out below:

a) Gloucestershire County Council 2018-19 Budget:

	£000		
Original 2016-17 Budget	407,702		
Inflation	6,725		
Cost and spending increases	27,784		
Cost Reductions	<u>-29,261</u>		
Total	412,950		
Less:			
Settlement Funding	93,601		
Public Health Grant	24,271		
Improved Better Care Fund	6,838		
New Homes Bonus	3,388		
Other non-ring fenced grants	2,003		
Active Communities Reserve	50		
Collection Fund Surplus	5,248		
Total to be precepted (Council Tax Requirement)	277,551		
		Taxbase	Total Precept
		Total	£
<i>Cheltenham</i>		41,745.20	51,438,907
<i>Cotswold</i>		40,297.79	49,655,392
<i>Forest of Dean</i>		28,551.32	35,181,259

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Gloucester City	37,254.40	45,905,292
Stroud	43,539.30	53,649,617
Tewkesbury	33,858.60	41,720,949
Total	225,246.61	277,551,416

- b) That approval is given to the Capital programme set out in Annex 8a of the detailed MTFS, and delegated authority is given to the Strategic Finance Director to vary allocations between individual schemes in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Change.
- 5 That the Council approves the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2018-19 as set out in Annex 10 of the detailed MTFS.
- 6 That the Council notes that Gloucestershire was successful in becoming a Business Rate Retention pilot in 2018-19 and approves the priorities against additional revenue generated for the County Council being £2.6 million for Children’s Social Care, £1 million for Adult Social Care, £0.53 million for Highways and £0.47 million for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure, subject to final Cabinet confirmation once the latest Business Rates estimates have been confirmed by the District Councils in 2018-19.
- 7 That approval is given to the Operational Boundary and Authorised Limits of Borrowing, as set out in the Treasury Management Strategy, at Annex 10 in the detailed MTFS as follows:

Authorised limit for External Debt	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	
	Approved	Revised	Estimate	Estimate	
	£m	£m	£m	£m	
Total	363.000	380.000	385.000	390.000	

- a) Noting that the authorised limit for 2018-19 will be the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003.
- b) That the approval is given to the Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management as set out in Annex 10 of the MTFS:
- (i) Upper limit of fixed interest rate exposure of £320 million of net

outstanding principal sums.

(ii) Upper limit of variable rate exposure of zero of net outstanding principal sums.

(iii) The maturity structure of borrowings as set out in Annex 10.

(iv) The upper limit for principal sums invested for more than 364 days of £200 million.

- 8 *That the Council approves the schools funding set out in Section G and Annex 9 in the detailed MTFS.*
- 9 *That the Council approves the Risk Management Strategy 2018-19 as set out in Annex 11 of the detailed MTFS.*
- 10 *That the Council approves the Capital Strategy 2018-19 as set out in Annex 7 of the detailed MTFS.*
- 11 *To request the Cabinet Member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure to investigate the issues around the backlog of rights of way modification orders and report to the Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 May 2018.*
- 12 *To request that Scrutiny examine issues around the Liberal Democrat Group's amendments relating to Self-harm Reduction and victims of Domestic Abuse by 30 September 2018.*

A motion for a recorded vote had been proposed and seconded by the Chairman and Vice-chairman.

The voting on the substantive motion on the budget was as follows:

For (30): Cllrs Carole Allaway Martin, Phil Awford, Matt Babbage, Rob Bird, Richard Boyles, Stephen Davies, Andrew Gravells, Terry Hale, Tim Harman, Mark Hawthorne, Stephen Hirst, Andrew Miller, Patrick Molyneux, Nigel Moor, David Norman, Shaun Parsons, Sajid Patel, Loraine Patrick, John Payne, Alan Preest, Brian Robinson, Vernon Smith, Lynden Stowe, Ray Theodoulou, Brian Tipper, Pam Tracey, Robert Vines, Kathy Williams, Roger Wilson and Will Windsor-Clive

Against (6): Cllrs Kate Haigh, Graham Morgan, Brian Oosthuysen, Rachel Smith, Eva Ward and Lesley Williams

Abstentions (11): Cllrs David Brown, Chris Coleman, Dr John Cordwell, Iain Dobie, Joe Harris, Colin Hay, Jeremy Hilton, Paul Hodgkinson, Nigel Robbins, Klara Sudbury and Simon Wheeler

8. MEMBER QUESTIONS

Ten member questions had been received. The following supplementary questions were asked:

Question 2 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton asked, following the Emergency Services Collaboration Governance Board meeting, what new schemes were being planned with the Police and Crime Commissioner to share estates?

Cllr Nigel Moor stated that he would be happy to share with scrutiny members the collaboration arrangements that had been secured. Estates was one of the big areas to look at with a feasibility study being undertaken to identify the possibility of tri-service facilities at sites such as Cirencester.

Question 4 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton asked that a more detailed report be brought to scrutiny on prevention of drowning incidents, such as initiatives to warn people of the dangers of rivers and canals.

Cllr Nigel Moor stated that he would be happy to bring a report to scrutiny.

Question 6 - Cllr Jeremy Hilton asked, with the expected Home Office inspection of the Fire and Rescue Service in Spring 2019, would the Council be looking to take advantage of an LGA Peer Review.

In response, Cllr Nigel Moor stated that this was a sensible suggestion and it was a good opportunity to consult with the LGA prior to the inspection.

Question 9 – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson stated that he had specifically asked for the total cost to the Council of the trip to China.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne explained that this question had been previously asked and that he would ask officers to direct Cllr Hodgkinson to the previously released answer which he believed was around £12,000.

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Question 10 - Cllr Colin Hay referred to the 'appalling state' of the section of Cheltenham High Street from Rodney Road to Bath Road. He asked how much would it cost to reinstate that area of the High Street?

Cllr Vernon Smith stated that the total cost would be around £700,000 with the Council offering to put forward half the amount for the whole scheme to be delivered.

9. SCRUTINY REPORT

In presenting the report, Cllr Patrick Molyneux, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, advised that the one day budget scrutiny session had worked well. He noted that some of the issues raised had influenced the budget recommendation put forward by the Cabinet. He said that an all member briefing would be arranged on the Business Rates Retention Pilot and the allocation of funding.

Referring to changes being made to the Road Safety Team, a member asked what the position was relating to the Drive for Life Programme and support for road safety liaison groups across the county.

RESOLVED to note the report.

10. CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Cllr Mark Hawthorne, the Chairman of the Constitution Committee, presented the recommendations from the meeting held on 15 January 2018.

10.1 Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP)

RESOLVED

- a) To increase the Special Responsibility Allowance for committee chairs and group leaders to £6,000 for the 2018-19 financial year.*
- b) To increase the Basic Allowance from £10,000 to £10,100 (1%) for the 2018-19 financial year.*
- c) To increase all other special responsibility allowances by 1% in line with the recommendation for the Basic Allowance.*
- d) To note the revised Members' Allowances Scheme for 2018-19 at Annex C to the report.*

10.2 Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee

RESOLVED that the Constitution be amended, as set out in Annex D, to include the arrangement for the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee to be drawn from outside the group or groups forming the administration.

10.3 Urgent questions at Cabinet

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Procedural Rules in Section 9 of Part 4 of the Constitution be amended as indicated in Annex E to the report.

10.4 Length of speeches for motions at Council

RESOLVED that Procedural Standing Orders in Section 12 of Part 4 of the Constitution be amended as indicated in annex F to the report.

10.5 Monitoring Officer changes to the constitution

RESOLVED that the changes to the Constitution by the Monitoring Officer shown at Annexes G, H and I be ratified.

11. CABINET DECISION STATEMENT

In presenting the recommendation from the Cabinet meeting held on 31 January 2018 relating to the Minerals Local Plan, Cllr Nigel Moor, the Cabinet Member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure, explained that the plan had been through a number of stages of consultation. Changes made in response to the consultation included the removal of two mineral extraction sites. He advised that there was no specific policy relating to the extraction of oil and gas but, in the unlikely event of an application, the position would be reviewed.

A final round of consultation would be undertaken before an Examination in Public took place later in the year. The cost of the Examination in Public was expected to be around £150,000 and funds were available in a dedicated reserve that had been set up for this purpose.

RESOLVED

- a) To note the Cabinet Decision Statements from the Cabinet meetings held on 13 December 2017 and 31 January 2018.

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- b) To note the consideration given to the consultation representations made to the draft Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire 2018–2032 and the proposed changes to the plan. Details of the representations made, the responses provided and proposed changes have been made available separately and can be review via the relevant County Council web pages accessed from: - <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/planning-policy/minerals-local-plan-for-gloucestershire>*
- c) To approve the Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire 2018 –2032 (included at Appendix 1 to the report).*
- d) To authorise the Commissioning Director: Communities and Infrastructure in consultation with Cabinet Member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure to make minor amendments to the Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire 2018 – 2032 (included at Appendix 1 to the report) and any accompanying documents prior to its publication in accordance with the requirements set out under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (England) (Local Planning) Regulations 2012.*
- e) To authorise the Commissioning Director: Communities and Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure to publish for inspection the Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire 2018 – 2032 in accordance with the requirements set out under Regulations 19 and 35 of the Town and Country Planning (England) (Local Planning) Regulations 2012.*
- f) To authorise the Commissioning Director: Communities and Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure to receive any representations made to the published Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire 2018 – 2032, to make any minor corrections and clarifications as necessary, and decide whether to submit the plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination.*
- g) To authorise the Commissioning Director: Communities and Infrastructure in consultation with Cabinet Member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure to submit the Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire 2018 – 2032 and supporting information to the Secretary of State in accordance with the requirements set out under Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (England) (Local Planning) Regulations 2012.*
- h) To authorise the Commissioning Director: Communities and Infrastructure to make all necessary arrangements and preparations for the independent examination for the Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire 2018 – 2032 including the appointment of a Programme Officer, the undertaking and*

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commissioning of other work as necessary to prepare for and participate at the public examination and the appointment of officers and other commissioned experts to prepare and submit evidence to the Independent Examination and, where necessary, appear at any hearing sessions to represent the County Council.

- i) To authorise the Commissioning Director: Communities and Infrastructure in consultation with Cabinet Member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure to make any changes to the Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire 2018 – 2032 and supporting information as guided by the appointed Inspector through the independent examination process, including undertaking any consultation where necessary, in order to respond to matters raised through the examination. This may involve inviting the Inspector to recommend modifications to the plan prior to its adoption.*

12. INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION STATEMENTS

RESOLVED to note the Individual Cabinet Decision Statements for the period 1 December 2017 to 31 January 2018.

The meeting ended at 4.15pm

CHAIRMAN