

<b>CABINET</b>	<i>Gloucestershire County Council</i>
<b>22 December 2021</b>	
<b>Minutes</b>	

**PRESENT**

**MEMBERSHIP:**

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Cllr Stephen Davies        | - Cabinet Member for Children’s SafeGuarding and Early Years  |
| Cllr David Gray            | - Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning                 |
| Cllr Philip Robinson       | - Cabinet Member for Economy, Education and Skills            |
| Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE    | - Leader of Council   |
| Cllr Carole Allaway-Martin | - Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Commissioning          |
| Cllr Tim Harman            | - Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities            |
| Cllr David Norman MBE      | - Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Parking and Libraries |
| Cllr Vernon Smith          | - Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood                       |
| Cllr Lynden Stowe          | - Cabinet Member for Finance and Change                       |
| Cllr Kathy Williams        | - Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care (Delivery)             |

**Apologies:**

**1. Apologies**

Cllr David Gray joined the meeting through WebEx. He was not physically present in the room and did not vote on any of the decisions and recommendations.

**2. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting on 10 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

**4. Questions at Cabinet Meetings**

A total of 2 public questions were asked at the meeting.

Question 2 - Sarah Sawyer asked whether there was a clause or incentive to keep the number of houses at ten? She asked who the Council was planning to transfer management of the land to?

Cllr Lynden Stowe replied that he would confirm in writing, but in principle the allocation of ten was appropriate for the site and he did not envisage it going higher. With regard to facilities around recreation, he would confirm who that would be transferred to.

A total of 47 member questions were asked at the meeting.

The following supplementary questions were asked:

Question 2 - Cllr Colin Hay asked given explore potential to purchase true renewable energy would member commit to bringing back options to Cabinet for sign off rather than delegate to Directors. As it would be a key decision would this be shared with Group Leaders and would the information include the percentage of generation that was green or other.

Cllr David Gray replied that the intention was that the procurement of energy was sustainable. Whatever arrangements were made going forward would be consistent with Greener Gloucestershire.

Question 3 – Cllr Colin Hay asked whether the member agreed that .025p per kwh amounting to less than .08% of electricity bill was hugely embarrassing?

Cllr David Gray replied that this regime needed further scrutiny and that he was surprised that the green tariff was so small. The outcome would be consistent with the wider green agenda.

Question 5 – Cllr Colin Hay asked, how the Cabinet Member knew that there was a consensus for a rotating chair for the Leadership Gloucestershire Climate Leadership Group given that he had not been present. He also asked how did he know that this would not be blocked?

Cllr David Gray replied that what was needed was a consensus rather than a majority. He hoped that there would be an agreed way forward at the next meeting.

Question 7 – Cllr Colin Hay asked if the member was striving for the 80% target, why did the member say at Environment Scrutiny that ' we are not'

Cllr David Gray replied that the County Council did not have the power for 80% reduction but was committed to doing its part. He referred to the communication strategy and the impact of those messages as well as the installation of e chargers across the County and the tree planting programme.

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

Question 8 – Cllr Colin Hay asked what the member was doing to keep 80% reduction by 2030 which was the commitment made.

Cllr David Gray replied that he had answered the previous question listing a number of things the Council was doing on its own and with partners.

Question 16 – Cllr Chloe Turner asked regarding the SALIX grant what was the Council doing proactively to help those who want to access this.

Cllr David Gray replied it was a shame more had not been taken up. He would continue to promote the fund to parish and town councils in 2022 and encourage them to use the fund.

Question 17 – Cllr Chloe Turner asked about the positive 30% modal shift target and asked where the targets were that would feed into that, expressing concern about what was there. Had a gap analysis been done to identify how to meet that target?

Cllr David Gray replied that he recognised that this was an ambitious achievement and the Council believed that they were doing their bit to meet this target – noting bus improvement and the cycle way structure across the County. He mentioned the impact of Covid on individuals travel patterns.

Question 21 – Cllr John Bloxsom asked if disposal had not been progressed due to Council having a long term need for land and what was that need and when did it arise? What would be the open and transparent process on the temporary use of the site.

Cllr Lynden Stowe replied that as soon as any decisions were made this would be put in the public domain. This would follow an established pattern which was transparent and involved the local member.

Question 22 – Cllr John Bloxsom asked when the Youth Climate Panel would be re-established.

Cllr David Gray replied that the panel had suffered due to the impact of Covid with delays, the objective was to re-establish it in 2022. Creative Sustainability had been commissioned to get this active again.

Question 27 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton asked if the Cabinet Member was aware that only permit cyclists were allowed from 5pm to 10am in Southgate Street. He asked how did the member intend to resolve the conflict between pedestrians and cyclists in these areas during busy shopping days.

Cllr David Gray replied that this was something they would be looking at in detail and would come back with a more detailed response. In some incidences pedestrians and cyclists would mix but in many areas in the county looking at dedicated cycle ways.

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Question 29 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton asked how much the 3% rise in residents parking would raise in revenue for the County Council.

Cllr Lynden Stowe would provide an answer in writing.

Question 30 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton asked for a meeting to be held in the council chamber before making changes to it. He suggested that members should be better informed and he questioned if the spending on the chamber was a good use of public money.

Cllr Lynden Stowe replied that he recognised that it was a substantial sum of money but that the current chamber did not meet a number of statutory requirements and had been built nearly 60 years ago. He suggested that views and comments be fed back through Group Leaders.

Question 34 – Cllr Colin Hay referring to spending on schemes from the £1m Action Fund, asked how these actions would help others to incentivise carbon reduction actions?

Cllr David Gray replied that the million trees challenge was match funding to encourage others to put forward funding. He also pointed towards the spending on the countywide coordinator and the EV charging points which encouraged residents to make green decisions.

Question 35 – Cllr Colin Hay asked if all Cabinet Members were leading by example in reducing their carbon footprint and had used public transport to attend the meeting.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne gave the example that in driving to the meeting he would then be travelling elsewhere. Cllr David Gray replied that his Christmas present from his wife was a tree which had already been planted.

Question 38 – Cllr Ben Evans asked whether the chamber would be future proofed and whatever the make up of the council in future, would it be suitable for any increase in members?

Cllr Lynden Stowe recognised the point being made and said that this would be fed back through group leaders. He emphasised that any scheme needed to adapt to technology.

Question 44 – Cllr Ben Evans asked that revenue generation be considered in the design of the building rather than the end of the process.

Cllr Lynden Stowe replied that it was important that the chamber was fit for purpose for members and for democracy and then consider what potential there was for the asset with regards to income generation.

Question 47 – Cllr Ben Evans asked how the process was going so wrong that every year there was an overspend in Children’s budget. He asked why lessons were not being learnt.

Cllr Lynden Stowe replied that lessons were learnt and referred the member to the £11m that was being put into next years budget. He felt that some of the investments being made such as Trevone House were starting to come to fruition and that made him optimistic regarding future years budget.

A total of three urgent questions were received in advance of the meeting. Written answers were provided ahead of the meeting and were published alongside the agenda pack and minutes.

**5. Draft Council Strategy and Medium Term Financial Strategy (For Publication and Consultation)**

Cllr Mark Hawthorne and Cllr Lynden Stowe sought Cabinet approval for consultation and scrutiny of the proposed detailed revenue and capital budget for 2022/23 (including the Dedicated Schools Grant which would also be considered by the Schools Forum), the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) covering the period 2022/23 to 2025/26 and the updated Council Strategy covering the period 2022-2026.

Cllr Lynden Stowe explained that there had been a decent settlement from Central Government to ensure proper funding of Adults and Children’s Services. He outlined the investment being provided in these areas. In total the revenue budget was at £519.833 million which was a 7.6% increase on the previous year’s budget. He noted the 2.99% total Council tax increase.

He outlined the Highways Local spend £30,000 per member in the base budget providing certainty to members and to local parish and town councils. There was also another £900,000 invested into a pothole fund. In addition there was £209million (including capital) which was a significant investment in infrastructure. Referring to the capital budget Cllr Stowe outlined that there was further provision for bringing some Children’s Services in-house

£1.7million was being put into a climate action fund and that would be there to contribute towards important schemes in Gloucestershire.

The Leader emphasised the growth and investment within the budget and that he was proud to put it forward to public consultation. He detailed the theme of the Council Strategy of building back better for Gloucestershire, noting some aspirational policies within the draft.

He thanked everyone within the Children and Adults teams and across the County Council for their work over the last two years in difficult and challenging circumstances. He noted their resolve and determination to deliver to the public.

The Leader outlined some amendments to the Council Strategy under the ‘tackling climate change’ section, seconded by Cllr Lynden Stowe:

- Page 11 – first bullet point:  
*‘delivering a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan that reduces the Council’s emissions to net zero by 2030 and helps reduce Gloucestershire’s emissions to net zero by 2045, with a net countywide carbon reduction ambition of 80% by 2030.*
- Page 12 – third bullet point  
Trees on the doorstep and more woodland - replacing highway ash trees on a 2 for 1 basis, working with partner councils, community groups and the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership *who have a collective target of planting 35million trees. We will plant 360,000 trees over the next three years to hit the Council’s own target of 1 million trees by 2030*

Commenting on the draft budget, members noted the funding in Adult Services and Children’s Services and the aim to reduce the out of county costs. In addition there were increases in the Fire and Rescue Service budget and a focus on the safety of fire fighters on the ground. The £300,000 on road safety was outlined as representing an important start in developing services in this area. Further comments were made on previous investment in highways and moving this forward over the next four years.

Having considered all of the information. Cabinet noted the report and

**RESOLVED to:**

Approve for consultation and scrutiny the proposed detailed revenue and capital budget for 2022/23 (including Dedicated Schools Grant which will also be considered by the Schools Forum), the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) covering the period 2022/23 to 2025/26 and the Council Strategy.

**6. Adoption West Contract Extension**

Cllr Stephen Davies sought Cabinet approval for Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) to continue its participation in Adoption West (a company it owns jointly with Bath and Northeast Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Councils) that was created for the purpose of delivering adoption services, by extending the term of a commissioning agreement for the provision of an integrated adoption service between the Council, the other participating councils and Adoption West (the “Commissioning Agreement”), for a period of 5 years.

In line with Government policy, Gloucestershire had entered into a regional arrangement for Adoption Services (Adoption West) in March 2019. Adoption West was a public sector owned and controlled regional adoption agency.

The current commissioning agreement ended on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and included an option to continue for a further 5 years commencing 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

There was a consensus amongst the participating councils that exercising the option to extend the current agreement, for a period of 5 years, was the best approach in continuing to support children and current/prospective adopters. This reflected the good progress being made by Adoption West despite the impact of Covid.

Having considered all of the information. Cabinet noted the report and

**RESOLVED to:**

Approve

a) The exercise by GCC of an option under the Commissioning Agreement to extend its term for a period of 5 years, commencing 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and expiring 28<sup>th</sup> February 2027;

b) An amendment to the Commissioning Agreement's financial mechanism in order to reflect changes in both population and service activity levels, as described in more detail in paragraph 14 of the report; and,

c) An amendment to the Commissioning Agreement's service specification in order to reflect revised working arrangements between participating councils and Adoption West, as described in more detail in paragraph 14 of this report

**7. Mini-Competition to procure a call-off contract under Lot 3 of the Gloucestershire Framework Agreement for Domestic Abuse**

Cllr Kathy Williams sought Cabinet approval to conduct a mini-competition between all the providers on Lot 3 of the Gloucestershire Framework for Domestic Abuse (GFDA) for the procurement of a four-year contract with an initial term of three years, with the option to extend for a further year, for services to address domestic abuse perpetrator behaviour.

There were a range of national drivers for recommissioning services to address the behaviour of perpetrators of domestic abuse. The activity would support the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board (DA LPB) to fulfil the strategic vision and priorities of the Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021 – 2024

The Council would procure the contract on behalf of itself and its partner agencies. The total maximum joint funding for the proposed contract, including the potential extension period would be £640,000 which comprised of the following contributions:

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

- Gloucestershire County Council: £80,000 per annum from the Domestic Abuse Budget up to a total of £320,000 for the four-year contract
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner: £50,000 per annum up to a total of £200,000 for the four-year contract
- Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group: £30,000 per annum up to a total of £120,000 for the four-year contract

Having considered all of the information. Cabinet noted the report and

**RESOLVED to:**

Delegate authority to the Executive Director: Adult Social Care and Public Health in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adults Social Care Delivery to:

1. Conduct a mini-competition process under Lot 3 of the Gloucestershire Framework for Domestic Abuse (GFDA) in respect of a call-off contract for the supply of services to address domestic abuse perpetrator behaviour. The proposed call-off contract shall continue for an initial period of three years and include an option to extend its term for a further period of not more than one year;
2. Award such call-off contract to the preferred tenderer; and
3. Determine whether to exercise the option to extend such contract for a further period of not more than one year on the expiry of the initial three-year term.

**8. Procurement of Energy Contracts (GCC Estate and Schools))**

Cllr Lynden Stowe and Cllr David Gray sought Cabinet approval to conduct competitive tender processes for the purchase and sale of energy.

Cllr Lynden Stowe outlined that the County Council was still a customer for electricity and gas and these were difficult times for those markets. The report went into substantial detail around the requirements for the estate including schools. Government best practice was to enter into this with a Central Purchasing Body and that was detailed within the papers.

Having considered all of the information. Cabinet noted the report and

**RESOLVED to:**

1) That Cabinet authorises the Executive Director of Economy, Environment and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Resources, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change and the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning to:

i. Utilise the services of a central purchasing body (the “CPB”) (i.e. a contracting authority which provides centralised purchasing activities on behalf of other contracting authorities in accordance with public procurement law) that has been selected by the Council using a risk/benefit analysis to procure the supply of energy (electricity, gas and other fuels) on behalf of the Council, maintained schools and Academies on a commission-only basis.

ii. Enter into a commission-only contract(s) with such CPB for the supply of energy purchasing services. Such contract(s) shall continue for an initial period of 4<sup>1</sup> years and include an option to extend its/their term(s) for a further period of not more than 3 years.

iii. Determine whether to exercise the option to extend the term of such contract(s) for a further period of not more than 3 years on its/their third anniversary.

iv. Procure, subject to the financial restrictions set out in the Resourcing Implications section of this report, such number of contracts for the supply of gas and renewable electricity on behalf of the Council, maintained schools and Academies as may be required by them based on their respective energy needs from time to time, using the CPB’s range of EU compliant procurement products. Each such contract shall be co-terminous with the contracts(s) described in Recommendation ii) above.

v. Award such contracts to the preferred tenderers.

vi. Determine whether to exercise the option to extend the term of such contract(s) for a further period of not more than 3 years on its/their third anniversary.

vii. Conduct a competitive tender process in respect of a single supplier contract for the sale of electricity that has been generated by the Gloucestershire Energy from Waste Facility. The proposed contract shall continue for an initial period of 4<sup>2</sup> years and include an option to extend its term for a further period of not more than 3 years.

viii. Award such contract to the preferred tenderer.

ix. Determine whether to exercise the option to extend the term of the proposed contract for a further period of not more than 3 years on its third anniversary.

x. Regularly report to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change and the Cabinet Member Environment and Planning regarding the progress of such procurement exercises and keep them informed of any significant new risks that emerge therefrom.

**9. Glos. Climate Change Strategy Second Annual Report & Action Plan 2022/23 - 2027/28**

Cllr David Gray provided an annual update of progress with the Gloucestershire Climate Change Strategy and sought approval of the action plan 2022-2027.

The report fulfilled Cabinet's previous commitment to bring an annual update on progress delivering the Gloucestershire Climate Change Strategy and to seek approval for the next phase of the rolling five year action plan.

The Council had made significant progress across a range of fronts over the past year including putting climate at the heart of decision making so that the Council's gross carbon emissions were now 77% lower than they were in 2005. The target was 80% by 2030. He referred to the tree planting programme which was an ambitious target He also detailed investment over £1m to make new schools carbon neutral and securing external funds to enable over 60,000 trees to be planted this season as well as success in staff recruitment hiring a tree project officer.

He detailed one amendment on point 18 in the report on page 54 of the papers where the target was to be net zero by 2045 not 2050.

Members noted the work that was going on locally regarding tree planting and changing behaviour to help support the green agenda.

In relation to build back better, the Cabinet Member was seeking to invest in areas that would help to reduce carbon impact as a community.

Having considered all of the information. Cabinet noted the report and

**RESOLVED to:**

Note the overall emissions for the County Council and for Gloucestershire outlined in the report and in Annex 1;

- Note the progress and planned key actions outlined in the report and in Annex 2, 3 and 4; and
- Approve the outline five year Action Plan (Annex 4), to be reported to Leadership Gloucestershire's Countywide Climate Leadership Group.

**10. Accessibility Improvements to the Council Chamber**

Cllr Lynden Stowe sought approval for the refurbishment of the Council Chamber, Shire Hall, to improve accessibility and energy efficiency.

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

The proposed works would achieve statutory compliance and legislative requirements whilst taking advantage of updating the chamber whilst other works commence, providing cost efficiency to meet the basic needs as well as an overall refurbishment. The report outlined that the chamber required modernisation for access for people with disabilities, better seating to allow for fire evacuation, natural ventilation, improved heating and upgrades to the lift lobby within the chamber.

Cllr Stowe asked that members fed back their views and comments through Group Leaders.

The Leader outlined the importance of making the changes to the chamber including accessibility and better seating and he clarified that there were costs around the removal of asbestos. He emphasised that now was the time to make the changes to the chamber and that all members would have an opportunity to feed into the process with Group Leaders as the conduit for that.

Having considered all of the information. Cabinet noted the report and

**RESOLVED to:**

1. Agree to upgrade and refurbish the Council Chamber in Shire Hall in order to improve accessibility, to bring it into line with fire and other buildings related legislation and make it more energy efficient.
2. Delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Asset Management and Property Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change:
  - a. to conduct a competitive procurement process under the council's Major Partnering Framework in respect of a call-off contract for the supply of various new build and refurbishment works and services in relation to the Council Chamber.
  - b. to award such call-off contract to the preferred tenderer.

**11. Supplier Early Payment Programme**

Cllr Lynden Stowe sought Cabinet approval to appoint Oxygen Finance to implement and manage a Supplier Early Payment programme.

Participation in the scheme would be entirely optional. It would give suppliers the chance to opt to be paid earlier than their contracted payment terms in exchange for an agreed discount on the invoice value. The supplier would benefit from improved cash flow and the Council would benefit from a discount on the agreed price. This was an option for larger businesses.

As part of the scheme a FreePay solution would be introduced – this allowed small businesses in Gloucestershire to receive payment of invoices earlier than their contractual terms without an early payment discount being applied. The intention of the FreePay solution was to give assistance to small, local businesses especially important as such business are likely to have suffered significantly during the pandemic.

The partnership with Oxygen, who currently worked with over 50 other Councils as well as private sector organisations, would enable the Council to introduce a tried and tested system. There were further benefits in relation to the experience they brought to improve procurement processes.

Having considered all of the information. Cabinet noted the report and

**RESOLVED to:**

Approve, without further competition, the award of a call-off contract to the supplier known as Oxygen Finance Ltd for the supply of Early Payment Services under the NEPO 521 Framework Agreement (established in May 2020 by South Tyneside Council on behalf of NEPO (North East Procurement Organisation)) in accordance with the contract award criteria thereunder. The proposed call-off contract shall continue for a period of 5 years.

**12. Financial Monitoring Report 2021/22**

Cllr Lynden Stowe, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Change gave an update on the Council's forecast revenue year end position at the end of October 2021 detailing an overspend of £2.076 million all of which was non Covid-19 related.

A balanced position was forecast in relation to Covid019 expenditure and income.

The largest non-Covid-19 budget variance was the £8.302 million forecast overspend in Children and Families – this overspend was partially offset by the £6.420 million underspend in Technical and Countywide. The overspend in Children and Families reflected the continuing pressure on external placements. Social Care staffing and Disability Services were also over-spending.

The forecast outturn capital position for 2021/22 was £152.923 million against the budget of £153.180 million giving forecast in year slippage of £257,000.

Having considered all of the information. Cabinet noted the report and

**RESOLVED to:**

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

1. Note the forecast revenue year end position based on October 2021 (Period 7) forecasts for the 2021/22 financial year is an overspend of £2.076 million all of which relates to non Covid-19 expenditure, as we are forecasting a balanced position in relation to Covid-19 expenditure and income.
2. Note delivery of the £5.668 million of savings against a target of £6.761 million in 2021/22 or 83.83% of target.
3. Note the forecast capital year end position as at the end of September 2021 of £152.768 million against the current budget of £153.180 million.
4. Approve the £987,192 million virement within the AMPS capital programme outlined in Section C
5. Approve the £4.054 million increase to the capital programme - made up of £3.7m for Gloucester City Centre Cycle Spine, £37.8k for Lydney Highway Strategy, £1.5k for Easington Bus Shelter, £300k for Treescape project and £15k for GFRS Light Vehicles (see Section C).
6. Note the £9.242 million increase to the capital programme – made up of £9.122m Levelling Up grant funding towards the Gloucester SW Bypass, Llanthony Road scheme and £120k to purchase a second-hand aerial ladder platform (ALP) funded from capital receipts (see Section C).

**Leader of Council**

**Leader of Council**

Meeting concluded at 11:35