



MINUTES OF COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE: Wednesday 17 February 2021 TIME: 10.00 am

VENUE: Virtual Meeting - Web ex meeting

Present

Membership:

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

Apologies: Cllr Keith Rippington, Cllr Rachel Smith and Cllr Eva Ward

24. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2020 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No additional declarations were made.

26. 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. The names of

those who had received awards were listed in the agenda papers for the meeting.

b) Constructing Excellence awards

Shire Hall had won the regional Constructing Excellence awards in December 2020 in the categories for integration and collaborative working, and value and building project of the year. At the national awards, the Council was announced as winner in the integration and collaborative working category.

The Chairman and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change congratulated and thanked all those involved, in recognition of this achievement.

c) Steve McHale

Group Leaders and other members paid personal tributes to Steve McHale, former County Councillor for Coney Hill and Matson, who had sadly passed away.

They commented on how friendly and genuine Steve was, and about his dedication to his role as a councillor. Steve McHale had been a member of the Council for Labour from 1993 to 2013, had served on a range of committees, was a member of the Gloucestershire Police Authority, and had been Leader of the Labour Group between 2009 and 2013.

They noted his personal love of running and of world travel, and his commitment to his work in care. They expressed condolences to Steve's family, and the Chairman would write to Steve's partner on behalf of the Council.

The Chairman invited members to participate in a minute's silence as a mark of respect for Steve McHale.

d) Vaccination programme

The Chairman and Group Leaders paid tribute to all those who had been involved in the vaccination rollout in Gloucestershire, noting that it had been one of the most successful in the country. The historic contributions of Gloucestershire people including Edward Jenner, who discovered vaccination in 1796 which led to the extinction of smallpox, and Frederick

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Sanger, who won his second of two Nobel prizes for Chemistry in 1980 for his work in sequencing the genome, was noted.

The efficient organisation, and dedication of the primary care networks and vaccination centres in the county was praised. Frontline workers who continued to provide essential services despite the pandemic were paid tribute to and thanked. In particular, the toll the pandemic has taken on hospital staff saving the lives of those unwell was recognised.

e) Virtual meeting protocol

Simon Harper, Head of Democratic Services, explained the virtual meeting protocol for the meeting, and provided guidance on how to use the WebEx remote meeting software.

27. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Twenty five public questions had been submitted prior to the meeting. The following supplementary questions were asked:

Question 1 – David Willingham asked on behalf of Flo Clucas, whether the cabinet member would meet with the families concerned regarding late application process for school places which was far from ideal and could restrict access to grammar schools.

Cllr Patrick Molyneux replied that he would be happy to set up a virtual meeting with the individual and families concerned. He referred to the answer to the original question noting the policies in place.

Question 3 – Helen Munro referring to the meeting with Bovis homes, asked if the member could confirm that the intention was to leave the meeting with an agreed way forward and timetable. She asked what the plan would be if they did not hold to that timetable?

Cllr Vernon Smith replied that he understood the frustration and urged the individual to contact Tewkesbury Borough Council as they would be able to take action if Bovis Homes exceeded the threshold.

Question 9 – Chloe Turner asked in what sense did the miscommunication happen and when could it be addressed?

Cllr Dave Norman replied that he had a discussion with officers on this and has asked officers to re-engage. He asked that he be copied in to any correspondence that the parish council had on this matter.

Question 10 – Dilys Neill stated that along the edges of highways lots of trees that weren't ash had been cut down. She asked could the member guarantee that no tree of whatever species had been felled that had been healthy or could have been saved by a tree surgeon.

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that advice had been taken from experts and the member trusted in that. Already a great deal of regeneration was taking place in those hedgerows.

Question 11 – Dilys Neill asked for a written response on the detail within her question and asked specifically how many trees would be planted for the period of November 2020 to March 2021. She also asked whether the Council was committed to replace those that did not survive?

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that there were details on the County Council website on the replanting programme. Between 15,000 and 20,000 trees could have been planted over that period. Across the whole of Gloucestershire when also taking into account the work with partners around 80,000 trees would be planted this year.

Question 12 – Dilys Neill asked whether the County Council was committed to preserving mature trees wherever possible.

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that this was the case. He explained that £1.2million had been put into the ash dieback programme as the safety of public was paramount.

Question 13 – Chris Chiswell asked whether the Council was now adopting a targeted yearly decrease in vehicle emissions contrary to a 15% increase detailed in the January cabinet paper.

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that he would provide a written answer but explained that this was one aspect of transport plan. There was now an overarching strategy to reduce emissions.

Question 14 – Chris Chiswell asked how many more years it would be before the County Council set a measurable ambition to save the lives of children on the roads in Gloucestershire

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that a range of options on these indicators and targets would be considered by Cabinet.

Question 15 – Alan Mossman asked why the Council had chosen to spend £27million pushing ahead with schemes that increased road capacity, so that there

were more cars on the road travelling faster. This was less than one tenth as much as was spent on projects that would encourage walking and cycling.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne explained that the County Council had a commitment to do both, to improve road infrastructure and bring forward a comprehensive cycling strategy that respected all users of the road network.

Question 16 – David Willingham asked if the Cabinet Member for Highways could provide a guaranteed timeframe for this issue to be resolved?

Cllr Vernon Smith replied that the Council was keen to move this forward. The trial had been discussed but due to the pandemic traffic volumes had been affected and it would need to be considered once it was clear what 'normal' traffic volumes were.

Question 17 – David Willingham stated that this road safety scheme had been funded in 2017-18 and that now members were blaming the pandemic for the slow progress. Something had gone wrong and he asked audit to look at this.

Cllr Nigel Robbins replied that he would ask the cabinet member for a timescale and a more satisfactory response to what the issues were.

Question 19 – David Willingham asked whether the council could review the standard reply to make it clear that they would react to residents concerns and would the Council provide gully clearing data on the website.

Cllr Vernon Smith replied that this was being considered once the technology was available.

28. CORPORATE PARENTING

Cllr Richard Boyles, Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Early Years, presented the Corporate Parenting Report.

Cllr Boyles provided members with an update on Gloucestershire County Council's Virtual School Annual Report (2019/20), outlining the educational achievements of Children in Care (CiC), and the work being done by the Virtual School to support CiC to develop and learn.

It was noted that attendance had increased to 92.6 percent for all school age children and exclusions were down to 12.1%, as a result of training and the launch of the persistent absence strategy and CiC protocols. However, there was still work to do in this area, which had been identified in the improvement plan.

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Pupil Premium Plus and Personal Education Plans (PEPs), alongside joint working had been making a difference to learning, however more needed to be done to improve educational outcomes. It was understood that PEPs would become smarter, and that this would be monitored by the new Virtual School Management Committee and the Corporate Parenting Board.

It was noted that 17 care leavers were at university, and 6 care leavers had graduated in summer 2020.

Cllr Boyles thanked all Virtual School staff for their work, particularly during these challenging times.

Members were reminded to complete their one page profiles to help identify areas where CiC can be specifically supported.

One member expressed concern regarding a recent report which raised concerns that young people in Gloucestershire had been at risk, and requested a report to understand what had been going on. Cllr Boyles responded that a meeting was due to be held to discuss the case, and he would ensure that reassurances were given.

Another member requested an update as to how the Trevone House facility was progressing.

29. PETITIONS

Cllr Stephen Davies presented Cllr Vernon Smith, Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood, with a petition relating to the roundabout road improvements at the A38 Perry Way junction, near Frampton-on-Severn.

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

The report before members included the budget recommendations, Medium Term Financial Strategy, budget consultation report, scrutiny budget report and due regard statement.

The Chief Executive explained the procedure that would be followed at the meeting. First, Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Leader of the Council, and Cllr Lynden Stowe, Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, would be asked to present the 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

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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 by the Chairman, and seconded by the Vice Chairman, at each stage of the debate.

Conservative Group

Cllr Mark Hawthorne, the Leader of the Council, and Cllr Lynden Stowe, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, presented the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 27 January 2021.

The Leader of the Council informed the meeting that in addition to the proposals agreed on 27 January 2021 the Conservative Group were also submitting three amendments: -

		Proposal	Repeating or one-off?	2021/22 Cost £000s	Funded from
1	Highways	Highways Local - £10k per Councillor	one off	£530	Rates Retention Reserve / additional CT / NNDR
2	Economy	£60k to support Nuclear South West Fusion bid at Berkeley/Old	one off	£60	Rates Retention Reserve / additional CT / NNDR

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		bury			
3	Economy	£100k to develop Apprenticeship clearing house with GFirstLEP	one off	£100	Rates Retention Reserve / additional CT / NNDR
			TOTAL	£690	

The Leader of the Council discussed the impact of Covid-19, and stated that the time to remember those lost to Covid-19 was not now, but they would be remembered. What was needed now was to focus on the recovery. He paid tribute to all those who had contributed to the work to protect people and communities during the pandemic, and highlighted the robust partnership working between the council's social care teams and the NHS. He thanked all members of council staff, in particular the Public Health Team and Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service, for stepping up to every challenge presented to them, and teachers and the wider school staff; and stated that we owed them all a huge debt of gratitude.

The Leader outlined the investment already made since the start of the pandemic. This included the provision of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), 1500 laptops to vulnerable children and young people, and support to local communities to the tune of £2.5m.

He stated the importance of everyone following the (lockdown) rules. Many people have lost their jobs, businesses were struggling with many ceasing to trade, and children and young people have had their education interrupted. He informed the meeting that it would be important for the council to lead the fight to build back better. He stated that the budget and amendments proposed today supported the front line and would help get Gloucestershire back open for business.

The Cabinet Member Finance and Change seconded the budget proposal and amendments. He drew members' attention to the due regard statements; it was important to be aware of any impact on equalities. The Cabinet Member stated that he thought that this was a good settlement but acknowledged that he would have preferred a three year settlement as this would have enabled more certainty. With regard to council reserves he informed the meeting that costs relating to the impact of the pandemic had so far been met by government and had not affected the council budget. The Chief Finance Officer has confirmed that the current reserve position was adequate.

The proposals would deliver an increase in revenue spending of just under £15m; this included significant increases in social care. The capital budget proposals included investment in improved ICT provision, and support to the climate change agenda. The proposed increase in council tax was 4.75% (1.99% on general tax, 2.76% specifically for social care). This would deliver the third lowest council tax of any local authority in the country.

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Liberal Democrat Group

Cllr Paul Hodgkinson and Cllr Nigel Robbins proposed the amendments from the Liberal Democrat Group: -

		Proposal	Repeating or one-off?	2021/22 Cost £000s	Funded from
1	Highways	20 mph speed zones	One-off	£100	Savings Contingency Fund (T&C)
2	Community	Barriers to mobility report actions reserve	One-off	£67	Savings Contingency Fund (T&C)
3	Highways	School Street pilot extension for remaining districts	One-off	£100	Savings Contingency Fund (T&C)
4	Parking	Cancelling planned increase to parking permits, with enforcement funding maintained.	One-off	£33	Savings Contingency Fund (T&C)
5	Education	Children at risk of Exclusion pilot fund	One-off	£100	Uplift to external placements budget (Childrens)
6	Education	Preparation for school / early years fund (building on previous DfE funding)	One-off	£100	Uplift to external placements budget (Childrens)
7	Community	Covid Community Recovery - £10k per councillor pa for 3 years	3 years	£530	Rates Retention Reserve

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8	Highways	Highways Local - additional £20k per councillor	One-off	£1,060	£127k revenue from drainage schemes carried to 2022/23 £933k capital from - £112.46k from Capital and Minor Work, £207.2k from reactive works, £27.95k from Unclassified Roads Structural maintenance 21/22, £159.01k from Class C structural maintenance 21/22, £95.64k from B roads structural maintenance and £330.74k from A roads structural maintenance 21/22
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Cllr Hodgkinson stated that these amendments were about keeping people safe and that communities knew what was best for their areas. The Highways Local scheme had been transformative, hence the proposal for the additional investment in this area; it was not appropriate for the Conservative group to slash this amount. He informed the meeting that all the proposed amendments had been costed and were watertight. The Liberal Democrat Group could not support the overall budget because of the lack of ambition, particularly around the climate change emergency. He stated that Gloucestershire deserved better.

Cllr Robbins stated that delaying the increase in parking permits as proposed in the amendments was eminently sensible. He reminded the meeting that Gloucestershire has a high rate of school exclusions; schools did their best but often failed. The proposal was to employ youth workers to work with these children and young people. He explained that the school readiness proposal related to early years provision.

Labour Group

Cllr Lesley Williams and Cllr Kate Haigh proposed the amendments from the Labour Group: -

	Sector	Proposal	Repeating or one-off?	2021/22 Cost £000s	Funded from

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1	Public Health	£50k for Food Projects - a fund to support initiatives for supplying food. -	one off	£50	Funded from £1.253m CTAX and NNDR uplift
2	Youth Services	£1k per councillor to support youth work / support	one off	£53	Funded from £1.253m CTAX and NNDR uplift
3	Environment	£1k per Councillor to support climate change initiatives	one off	£53	Funded from £1.253m CTAX and NNDR uplift
4	Children & Families	£50k Fund for essential ICT equipment for secondary school students	permanent	£50	Funded from £1.253m CTAX and NNDR uplift
5	Community	£150k Fund to support voluntary groups to cover core running costs	permanent	£150	Funded from £1.253m CTAX and NNDR uplift
6	Public Health	£50k to fund research into the impacts of long COVID	one off	£50	Funded from £1.253m CTAX and NNDR uplift
			TOTAL	£406	

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Cllr L Williams thanked officers for their dedication to the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. She also thanked the residents of Gloucestershire for following the guidance. She informed the committee that the Labour Group thought that this was a disappointing budget. She was concerned about young people; isolation was affecting them. The pandemic had also highlighted the inequalities in society. She questioned where the investment in supporting young people and communities was in the proposed budget. Local councillors knew their communities and should be provided with the financial support to help their local areas.

Cllr Haigh stated that now more than ever our communities needed our support. She stated that services were not always commissioned well and that this had been discussed during the scrutiny of the budget process. There was unmet need because of years of cuts. She stated that the proposed budget seemed to be a penny pinching approach.

Green Group

The Chairman of council clarified that the members of the Green Group had submitted their apologies to this meeting, and had not submitted any amendments for consideration.

Adjournment from 11.53 to 12.15 for Group Leaders to provide an opportunity for the political groups to discuss amendments and reach a common position.

Debate on decisions on the budget amendments

Following the adjournment, Cllr Hawthorne set out the position of the Conservative Group in relation to the budget amendments put forward by the Liberal Democrat and Labour Groups.

Negotiated and accepted

Party	Item	One-off	Amount
Lib Dem	20 mph speed zones	One-off	100,000
Lib Dem	Barriers to mobility report actions reserve	One-off	67,000
Lib Dem	School Street pilot extension for remaining districts	One-off	100,000
Lib Dem	Cancelling planned increase to parking permits, with enforcement funding maintained.	One-off	33,000
Lib Dem	Children at risk of Exclusion pilot fund	One-off	100,000
Lib Dem	Preparation for school / early years fund (building on previous DfE funding)	One-off	100,000

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Labour / Lib Dem	Covid Community Recovery - £5k per councillor	One off	265,000
Labour	Food projects	One off	50,000
Conservative	Highways Local	One-off	530,000
Conservative	Apprenticeships	One off	100,000
Conservative	Nuclear South West	One-off	60,000
			1,505,000

Not Accepted/Amended

Party	Item	One-off	Amount	Comment
Lib Dem	Covid Community Recovery - £10k per councillor pa for 3 years	3 years	530,000	Amended
Lib Dem	Highways Local - additional £20k per councillor	One-off	1,060,000	Amended
Labour	Laptops	One off	50,000	Refused
Labour	Covid Community Grants	One-off	150,000	Amended
Labour	Youth Grants	One-off	53,000	Amended
Labour	Climate change grants	One-off	53,000	Refused
Labour	Long Covid study	One-off	50,000	Refused
			1,946,000	

Debate then followed on the amendments that had not been accepted.

Liberal Democrat Group amendments

Some members expressed disappointment that the Highways Local proposal had not been fully supported; it was suggested that many divisions would miss out on highway schemes this year. Some members were also concerned that without these proposed amendments communities would lose out, and some local initiatives might have to close their doors.

It was stated that it could not be argued that lack of money was the reason why these amendments had not been accepted; in the case of the Covid-19 proposal it was questioned why this could not be afforded even for one year.

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In response to concerns/questions raised the Leader of the council informed the meeting that he would be happy to explain the budget proposals on the doorstep to any concerned residents. The proposed budget did not take away any funding from existing budget areas. He stated that this was a budget that allowed councillors to support their local areas.

Some members expressed concern that these amendments diverted funding away from flooding support funding streams in particular the drainage budget. This did not take into account the impact of the recent weather. Other members commented that the proposed amendment was not proposing to withdraw funding from the drainage budget.

Some members stated that the substantive proposals were taking more money from communities when the community could probably do a better job of identifying where to spend funding. It was also stated that although roads were important communities were more so.

There was a clear difference of opinion across the meeting with regard to whether the proposed amendments withdrew funding from the drainage budget, or not; and whether the partial support to the highways local scheme would be sufficient to support the community.

On being put to a recorded vote the Liberal Democrat Group's amendments which had not been accepted by the Conservative Administration were not supported.

For (20): Cllrs David Brown, Chris Coleman, Dr John Cordwell, Iain Dobie, Ben Evans, Bernie Fisher, Kate Haigh, Joe Harris, Colin Hay, Jeremy Hilton, Paul Hodgkinson, Graham Morgan, Brian Oosthuysen, Nigel Robbins, Brian Robinson, Steve Robinson, Klara Sudbury, Simon Wheeler, Lesley Williams and Suzanne Williams

Against (29): 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, Dave Norman, Shaun Parsons, Sajid Patel, Loraine Patrick, John Payne, Alan Preest, Vernon Smith, Lynden Stowe, Ray Theodoulou, Brian Tipper, Pam Tracey, Robert Vines, Kathy Williams and Will Windsor-Clive

Labour Group amendments

Some members expressed disappointment that not all the amendments, other than food banks, had been supported. The amendments had been about supporting local communities and looking to the future, building back fairer. Some members questioned why money was being taken away from communities. Small amounts of money could return huge results; why take power away from the community.

With regard to laptops the Leader of the Council stated that this was also about 4G dongles. Additional funding was already available for this equipment, although there

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was currently a national shortage of these items. This issues was already been progressed.

As to long Covid-19 the Leader of the Council informed the meeting that the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group would be opening its' long Covid-19 clinic shortly. He also stated that an additional £2.5m had been invested in communities during the previous year.

Some members reiterated their disappointment that not all of these amendments had been supported.

On being put to a recorded vote the Labour Group's amendments which had not been accepted by the Conservative Administration were not supported.

For (20): Cllrs David Brown, Chris Coleman, Dr John Cordwell, Iain Dobie, Ben Evans, Bernie Fisher, Kate Haigh, Joe Harris, Colin Hay, Jeremy Hilton, Paul Hodgkinson, Graham Morgan, Brian Oosthuysen, Nigel Robbins, Brian Robinson, Steve Robinson, Klara Sudbury, Simon Wheeler, Lesley Williams and Suzanne Williams

Against (29): 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, Dave Norman, Shaun Parsons, Sajid Patel, Loraine Patrick, John Payne, Alan Preest, Vernon Smith, Lynden Stowe, Ray Theodoulou, Brian Tipper, Pam Tracey, Robert Vines, Kathy Williams and Will Windsor-Clive

Adjournment for lunch 13.30 to 14.00

General debate on the budget

Members acknowledged the work of officers in preparing the budget and they thanked them for their efforts.

The main points raised in the budget debate were: -

- That it did not sufficiently reflect and address climate change,
- That the impact of the increase in home working was not recognised; the implications of this were profound,
- That it did not sufficiently enable councillors to support their local community,
- That the impact on residents should be recognised,
- That work to support climate change was funded within this budget,
- That there was concern that the budget for children and families would again prove to be insufficient,
- That it was disappointing that the government was not doing more with regard to funding the recovery from Covid-19,
- That the budget did invest in both adults and children (£6m and £5m respectively),
- That the overall capital budget had been increased to £100m.

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On being put to a recorded vote the substantive motion was carried:-

For (29): 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, Dave Norman, Shaun Parsons, Sajid Patel, Loraine Patrick, John Payne, Alan Preest, Vernon Smith, Lynden Stowe, Ray Theodoulou, Brian Tipper, Pam Tracey, Robert Vines, Kathy Williams and Will Windsor-Clive

Against (5): Cllrs Kate Haigh, Brian Oosthuysen, Brian Robinson, Klara Sudbury and Lesley Williams

Abstentions (14): Cllrs David Brown, Chris Coleman, Dr John Cordwell, Iain Dobie, Ben Evans, Bernie Fisher, Joe Harris, Colin Hay, Jeremy Hilton, Paul Hodgkinson, Graham Morgan, Nigel Robbins, Steve Robinson and Suzanne Williams

RESOLVED

1. To approve the following budget amendments:

Party	Item	One-off	Amount
Lib Dem	20 mph speed zones	One-off	100,000
Lib Dem	Barriers to mobility report actions reserve	One-off	67,000
Lib Dem	School Street pilot extension for remaining districts	One-off	100,000
Lib Dem	Cancelling planned increase to parking permits, with enforcement funding maintained.	One-off	33,000
Lib Dem	Children at risk of Exclusion pilot fund	One-off	100,000
Lib Dem	Preparation for school / early years fund (building on previous DfE funding)	One-off	100,000
Labour / Lib Dem	Covid Community Recovery - £5k per councillor	One off	265,000
Labour	Food projects	One off	50,000
Conservative	Highways Local	One-off	530,000
Conservative	Apprenticeships	One off	100,000
Conservative	Nuclear South West	One-off	60,000
			1,505,000

2. That, the Council Strategy for 2021/22 is approved.

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3. That, having considered the additional consultation responses and the Public Sector Equality Duty Due Regard Statement , approval is given to the MTFs and the revenue and capital budgets for 2021/22, council tax for each valuation band, and to issue precepts on each district collection fund as set out below:

a) Gloucestershire County Council 2021/22 Budget:

	£000
Original 2020/21 Budget	468,183
Removal of 2020/21 One Off Investments	-7,938
Revised 2019/20 Budget	460,245
Inflation	4,079
Cost and spending increases	25,445
Cost reductions	-6,761
Total 2021/22 Budget	483,008
Less:	
Top Up Grant	54,236
Business Rates Income	23,254
Revenue Support Grant	8,220
Public Health Grant	24,767
Improved Better Care Fund	19,436
New Homes Bonus	1,912
Social Care Grant	15,788
Other Non Ring Fenced Grants	6,119
Collection Fund Deficit	-815
Reserves	822
Budget to be met by Council Tax Payers	329,269

Total to be precepted:

	Taxbase Total	Total Precept £
Cheltenham	42,970.60	60,555,083
Cotswold	41,848.15	58,973,303
Forest of Dean	29,737.73	41,907,041
Gloucester City	38,119.80	53,719,233
Stroud	45,573.57	64,223,244
Tewkesbury	35,403.02	49,890,689
Total	233,652.87	329,268,593

- 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 Section 151 Officer to vary allocations between individual schemes in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change.
4. That the Council approves the Capital Strategy, set out in Annex 7 of the detailed MTFS, the Treasury Management Strategy and the non treasury Investment Strategy for 2021/22, set out in Annex 10 of the detailed MTFS.
 5. That approval is given to the Operational Boundary and Authorised Limits of borrowing, as set out in the Capital Strategy, at Annex 7 in the detailed MTFS as follows:

Table 8: Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt

Authorised limit and operational boundary	2019/20 Limit £m	2020/21 Limit £m	2021/22 Limit £m	2022/23 Limit £m	2023/24 Limit £m
Total Authorised Limit for External Debt and Other Liabilities	440.000	455.000	500.000	500.000	495.000
Split: External Debt	341.592	357.930	404.107	405.575	401.843
Other Liabilities	98.408	97.070	95.893	94.425	93.157
Total Operational Boundary for External Debt	420.000	435.000	480.000	480.000	475.000
Split: External Debt	321.592	337.930	384.107	385.575	381.843
Other Liabilities	98.408	97.070	95.893	94.425	93.157

- a) Noting that the authorised limit for 2021/22 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 set out in Annex 10 of the detailed MTFS for :
 - (i) the maturity structure of borrowings, and
 - (ii) the upper limit for principal sums invested for more than 364 days of £200 million.
6. That the Council approves the Schools Funding set out in section G and Annex 9 in the detailed MTFS.

31. MEMBER QUESTIONS

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

Question 3 – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson asked how many trees had been planted since the cabinet meeting on 27 January 2021.

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

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that the answer had been given and urged the member to encourage communities to bid for schemes.

Question 4 – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson clarified that he had asked how many trees had been planted, not how many would be planted.

Cllr Nigel Moor explained the difficulties due to the pandemic and that there was an opportunity to make a difference this year.

Question 5 - Cllr Paul Hodgkinson asked why the decision to not form a youth council had not been reported back to members of the council and what the reasons were for ignoring the will of Council.

Cllr Richard Boyles explained that a countywide approach was being taken to hear the voices of children. It was not called a youth council but was shared across partners and would be a more effective way of engaging with all the young people in the County.

Question 6 – Cllr Kate Haigh explained it was LGBT history month and asked what the County Council were doing to promote the availability of PrEP and what work had been done to ensure people were comfortable with the way they were asked questions and the language used by the public health team.

Cllr Tim Harman replied that he was keen to get feedback on the services.

Question 7 – Cllr Rob Bird thanked members and officers on finding an appropriate site and asked the member to maintain that commitment and asked if there was any further information to share?

Cllr Patrick Moluynoux replied that he was happy that a suitable site had been found. More information would come through in due course but 420 places would be available for the 2023/24 academic year and the aim was for 630 places to be available when fully opened in the future.

Question 9 – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson asked the Council to be more proactive in reaching out to supermarkets and food shops in the County to tell workers and bosses what was available to them in terms of support.

Cllr Tim Harman acknowledged the work that they did and informed the member that the Council had an engagement board and a lot was being done on a national level.

Question 10 – Cllr Colin Hay asked what proportion of children who needed a computer had received one as well as a 4G router. He asked how many children still needed that equipment.

Cllr Patrick Moluynoux explained that most of the equipment was delivered directly by schools and that many of the children receiving free school meals would be

classed as vulnerable and would be still attending schools. The Council was working closely with schools to identify those that needed the help. It was estimated that over 300 4G routers had been delivered.

Question 11 – Cllr Colin Hay asked if the member was confident that children in need of computers would have one before they returned to school.

Cllr Patrick Molyneux said that the Council was doing everything to provide equipment to children who needed it. He referred to those children who were home educated and explained that he had asked officers to identify all those children that needed that support. He would see what figures were available to identify any gap between those who had received equipment and those who did not yet have it.

Question 16 - Cllr Brian Robinson explained that a commercial solution for remote communities was not practical. He asked why the council persisted with this when it was unlikely a commercial solution would be put in place and why a practical solution had not been explored.

Cllr Patrick Molyneux replied that if a commercial company said they could roll out broadband the Council were then unable to provide public money to support it according to an EU directive. The Council was looking at alternative ways to deliver this.

Question 18 – Cllr Brian Robinson asked for a commitment that a solution would be delivered in his area as had been detailed in the answer.

Cllr Vernon Smith replied that he would be keen for the local councillor to talk to the flood alleviation team and local highways manager to understand what was required.

Question 19 – Cllr Colin Hay asked what additional effort was being made by alternative provision sites and schools to support excluded children during the pandemic.

Cllr Patrick Molyneux replied that all excluded children had access to education through alternative provision and that the Council would ensure that there was provision for every child.

Question 20 – Cllr Colin Hay asked for some of the detail in how alternative provision have stepped up and managed during the pandemic.

Cllr Patrick Molyneux stated that the pandemic had fast tracked remote schooling and there were a lot of lessons to be learned in how to use technology to take advantage of more flexible schooling.

Question 21 – Cllr Lesley Williams asked when the analysis of attainment and achievement of students in the county would be seen?

Cllr Richard Boyles explained that work would start when schools reopened.

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

Question 22 – Cllr Lesley Williams asked that the display of notable women in the county be made easily available and promoted.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne replied that if there were alternative ways to communicate what was in place he was welcome to suggestions.

Question 23 – Cllr Lesley Williams asked what was being done on the ethical charters and modern slavery charters.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne replied that a written response would be provided.

32. SCRUTINY

32.1 Scrutiny report

Cllr Shaun Parsons, Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, provided an update on scrutiny activities.

It was noted that members of the scrutiny committees continued to be active looking at a wide range of issues including the Director of Public Health Annual Report, the response to Covid-19, the NHS Integrated Care Strategy, the Gloucestershire Youth Offending Service, the River Severn Partnership, electric vehicles' infrastructure and governance of the GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership.

A successful budget scrutiny day was held on 7 January 2021 with involvement of members from different scrutiny committees, Cabinet members and Directors. The task group relating to public participation had reported to Cabinet, and attention was drawn to a comprehensive report on flooding which would be presented at Environment Scrutiny Committee soon.

Members were encouraged to provide their views on the scrutiny structure by responding to the email that had been circulated by Democratic Services.

There was a request for a summary report on member feedback to the scrutiny structure review at the next Council.

A member commented that the task group relating to taxi licensing had also completed its work.

32.2 Health Scrutiny Committee

Following the removal of Cllr Brian Robinson as Chair of the Health Scrutiny Committee, members were asked for nominations for this position.

RESOLVED to appoint Cllr Stephen Hirst as the Chair of Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

33. CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Chair of the Constitution Committee, presented the recommendations from the meeting held on 18 January 2021.

It was explained that a number of technical amendments had been made to the Constitution reflecting changes to job roles and responsibilities.

It was also understood that the Committee had discussed the introduction of a process for members to understand the time frame for the reporting back of responses to supplementary questions, where answers could not be given verbally at a Council meeting, and for these responses to be made available to the public. After some debate by the Committee a way forward had been agreed.

One member welcomed the change as a step in the right direction, whilst another member commented that they believed the timescale for a response should be shorter. It was acknowledged that the Constitution could be amended in the future if members felt that the proposed change wasn't working.

RESOLVED that the amendment outlined in the Constitution Committee report be made to the Constitution at standing orders 9.5.3, 9.8.3, and 8.8.3.

34. INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION STATEMENTS

RESOLVED to note the Individual Cabinet Member Decision Statements for the period 1 November 2020 to 31 January 2021.

35. CABINET DECISION STATEMENTS

RESOLVED to note the Cabinet Decision Statements for the meetings held on 16 December 2020 and 27 January 2021.

36. GLOUCESTERSHIRE LGPS 2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT

Cllr Ray Theodoulou, Chair of the Pensions Committee, presented the Gloucestershire Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) 2019-20 Annual Report.

CHAIRPERSON

Meeting concluded at 3.30 pm