



MINUTES OF COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE: Wednesday 16 February 2022 TIME: 10.00 am

VENUE:

Present

Membership:

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Cllr Carole Allaway-Martin | Cllr Tim Harman | Cllr Alan Preest (Chair) |
| Cllr Phil Awford | Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE | Cllr Philip Robinson |
| Cllr Matt Babbage | Cllr Colin Hay | Cllr Steve Robinson |
| Cllr Paul Baker | Cllr Alex Hegenbarth | Cllr Vernon Smith |
| Cllr John Bloxsom | Cllr Jeremy Hilton | Cllr Lisa Spivey |
| Cllr David Brown | Cllr Stephen Hirst (Vice-Chair) | Cllr Lynden Stowe |
| Cllr Alastair Chambers | Cllr Paul Hodgkinson | Cllr Wendy Thomas |
| Cllr Cate Cody | Cllr Nick Housden | Cllr Brian Tipper |
| Cllr Linda Cohen | Cllr Beki Hoyland | Cllr Pam Tracey MBE |
| Cllr Stephen Davies | Cllr Mark Mackenzie-Charrington | Cllr Chloe Turner |
| Cllr Dr David Drew | Cllr Chris McFarling | Cllr Robert Vines |
| Cllr Ben Evans | Cllr Dr Andrew Miller | Cllr Roger Whyborn |
| Cllr Stephan Fifield | Cllr Graham Morgan | Cllr Kathy Williams |
| Cllr Andrew Gravells MBE | Cllr Dominic Morris | Cllr Susan Williams |
| Cllr David Gray | Cllr Gill Moseley | Cllr Suzanne Williams |
| Cllr Terry Hale | Cllr Emma Nelson | |
| Cllr Rebecca Halifax | Cllr David Norman MBE | |

Honorary Aldermen

Apologies: Cllr Bernard Fisher, Cllr Joe Harris, Cllr Sajid Patel and Cllr Dr David Willingham

50. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

51. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

52. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Queen's New Year Honours

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The Chairman congratulated the people living in Gloucestershire who had received awards as part of the Queen's New Year Honours.

b) Roy Birch

The Chairman and other members paid personal tributes to former County Councillor Roy Birch who sadly passed away in November 2021.

Roy had served on the County Council from 1993 to 2001, representing the Division of Tidenham, near Chepstow, for the Liberal Democrats. He was also a member of the Forest of Dean District Council for 24 years and served on Tidenham Parish Council for 33 years.

Members commented on his great character, his commitment to the community of Tidenham, and his astute knowledge of financial and budgetary issues.

c) Major Tom Hancock

The Chairman and other members paid tribute to Major Tom Hancock, well known former Deputy Lieutenant, who sadly passed away on 8 February 2022, aged 94.

Members commented on Major Tom's outstanding contribution to local communities as a Tewkesbury Borough Councillor and Honorary Alderman, and as President and Chairman of the Royal British Legion Winchcombe Branch, the Diocesan and Deanery Synods and the Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association.

A private funeral and a memorial service would be held at St Peter's, Winchcombe on 23 April 2022 at 2.30pm.

d) Dr James Hodson FSA

The Chairman paid tribute to Dr James Hodson, notable local historian, who passed away suddenly on 20 January 2022, aged 74.

James was a dedicated volunteer and a former chair of the Friends of Gloucestershire Archives. He was a key member of the fundraising group for the For the Record archives transformation project. His contribution to archives and local history in Gloucestershire was enormous and he would be missed.

The Chairman invited members to participate in a minute's silence as a mark of respect for Roy Birch, Major Tom Hancock and Dr James Hodson.

e) Andrea Clarke

The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, wished Andrea Clarke, Democratic Services, all the best for the future as she would shortly be retiring from the Council after more than 20 years.

She was well known to members having supported a range of committees and other bodies including Health Scrutiny, Children and Families Scrutiny and the Health and Wellbeing Board. Andrea's grasp of the scrutiny process, including constructively challenging council officers and partner organisations, had been a significant part of the success of scrutiny at the Council.

53. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

Question 11 – Clare Stone stated, while she could see that the figures outlined by the Cabinet Member would feed into a passenger needs assessment, she did not believe that this constituted a proper assessment. She suggested that it hadn't taken into account equality issues and asked that a proper needs assessment be carried out. In addition, she asked whether the Council could also publish the assessment that had been carried out so far. She pointed out that a £1.3m trial on demand responsive transport showed that money was available for public transport.

Cllr Philip Robinson outlined that there was a specific grant to provide the trial and this wasn't money that could be put into community transport. In relation to the assessment, a personal travel plan service with an outside agency would be in place and they would speak to the residents affected as to what their needs were. He noted that a large number of the residents effected lived in Herefordshire.

Question 13 – Clare Stone asked how could it be that the issue of a County border was being allowed to make such an impression on services provided.

Cllr Philip Robinson replied that the County Council should not be supporting the transport needs of people that resided in Herefordshire. There had been suggestions of some support being provided by Herefordshire Council but currently there were no options on the table that Herefordshire Council felt was affordable in order to work in partnership. He emphasised that this was a commercial service operated by Stagecoach and they had chosen to withdraw it.

54. CORPORATE PARENTING

Cllr Stephen Davies, Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Early Years, presented the Corporate Parenting report.

Members were advised that the Council's Ofsted inspection would be completed this week. The Cabinet Member remarked on a notable increase in morale amongst officers in children's services the day the inspection was announced, and thanked officers for their hard work over the last few weeks. He also thanked members for not submitting questions to Council on children's services which had allowed officers to focus on the inspection.

Members noted that the date of the next Corporate Parenting meeting had been detailed incorrectly in the Corporate Parenting report and would take place on 24 March 2022. New mentors had been recruited from the ambassador programme, with regular challenging meetings held with the Cabinet Member.

One member queried what the expected timescale was for verbal feedback and the formal written report from Ofsted. Cllr Davies replied that whilst they would be given some indication on the outcome of the inspection when it finished this week, they could not talk about it until the formal written report had been produced, which could take a matter of weeks.

One member took the opportunity to thank officers in children's services for their efforts during this challenging time.

Another member asked whether the Cabinet Member thought the number of children in care would surpass 1000 by 2025 or whether he thought numbers had reached their peak and would start to reduce? Cllr Davies responded that there were several factors contributing to the numbers of children in care, however he hoped with the introduction of family hubs, youth support services, and early intervention, that numbers would not continue to increase. However, it was noted that the number of children in care was increasing nationally, with local authorities still grappling with the impact of Covid.

There was a further question as to whether the Council had eyes on those care leavers residing in accommodation deemed unsuitable? In response, Cllr Davies explained that the Council had an obligation to reach out to care leavers; however, the difficulty was that care leavers did not have an obligation to respond.

55. PETITIONS

Cllr Dr David Drew presented a petition relating to permit parking in the Horns Road area of Stroud to Cllr Dave Norman, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Parking and Libraries.

Cllr Ben Evans presented a petition relating to a road junction in Churchdown to Cllr Vernon Smith, Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood.

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Cllr Gill Moseley presented a petition relating to bus services from Ross-on-Wye and Ledbury through Newent to Gloucester to Cllr Philip Robinson, Cabinet Member for Economy, Education and Skills.

Cllr Paul Baker presented a petition relating to the lack of any safe crossing points on the Old Bath Road in Cheltenham to Cllr Dave Norman, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Parking and Libraries.

56. COUNCIL STRATEGY

The Chief Executive, Pete Bungard, explained the proposed procedure for the Council Strategy debate.

Initially, Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Leader of the Council, and Cllr Lynden Stowe, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, would present the recommendations from the Cabinet.

In order to reach a position where a substantive motion could be debated, other political groups would then be invited to propose amendments to the Council Strategy. These would be moved and seconded but not debated at this stage. This was a departure from the normal procedure where only one amendment could be moved and discussed at any one time.

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

After the adjournment, the Leader of the Council would advise members where it had been possible to reach agreement – these would be treated as friendly amendments to the strategy. Any amendments which had not been accepted or withdrawn would be presented by the political groups, debated, and voted upon. Each group would present their unsupported amendments on bloc.

Thereafter all members would have an opportunity to debate the Council Strategy in accordance with the normal rules of debate.

At the end of the debate, the Leader of the Council would have the right of reply. The vote would then be taken. This would not need to be a recorded vote.

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 Council Strategy debate:

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'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.

Conservative Group

Cllr Mark Hawthorne, the Leader of the Council, and Cllr Lynden Stowe, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Change, presented the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 26 January 2022.

Before introducing the Strategy, the Leader wanted to put on record his thanks to GCC staff who had continued, despite the difficult circumstances of the pandemic over the last 2 years, to deliver to and support local communities, ensuring the most vulnerable were protected.

He continued by stating that now was the time to consider how to lead the journey of recovery, to build back better. It was an opportunity to build back greener, giving people the opportunities to lead greener and healthier lives, by investing in 1000 electric vehicle charging points, commencing construction of the £20m Arle Court Transport Hub, and investing £1m into the Climate Change Action Fund.

The Leader outlined the ambition for Gloucestershire to be home to the UK's first Nuclear Fusion Power Plant, as well as to become a new city region as part of the Western Gateway Powerhouse.

Members were informed that the Strategy set out how investment for Gloucestershire would be secured, including to fund improvements for M5 Junctions 9 and 10, to improve rail connectivity across the County, and to explore options for a mass transit solution. Members were also informed that the Council had helped hundreds of local events to be organised, signalling that Gloucestershire was back open for business.

The Leader explained that the Strategy focused on levelling up across the County, helping market towns reach their potential; raising educational attainment and upskilling; and working with communities and residents to deliver long lasting change.

Furthermore, the Leader stated that the Strategy outlined the continued transformation of the Council's own services, including transforming Children's Services and Adult Social Care, and investing to improve the County's roads.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Change seconded the proposed Council Strategy. He highlighted the Council's ambition to improve customer experience to ensure everyone was dealt with in a timely and fair manner. He emphasised the importance of striving to resolve issues in the first instance, in the best way for the individual, or providing an explanation when this could not be

done. This transformation of the customer experience would be supported through the ongoing investment in ICT, and ensuring staff were fully trained.

Liberal Democrat Group

Cllr Paul Hodgkinson and Cllr Ben Evans proposed and seconded the amendments to the Council Strategy from the Liberal Democrat Group:

| Council Strategy Page Number | Proposed Liberal Democrat Amendment |
|------------------------------|---|
| Page 12 | “The 10 11 key areas we will focus on over the next four years of the Council Strategy are:” |
| Page 13 | Under ‘Our Priorities for Gloucestershire: Tackling Climate Change’, insert additional bullet point: <u>“11. End the policy of selling off your publicly owned rural estate, introducing a proactive “acre-for-acre” policy and using this to train more farmers in environmentally friendly farming practices. This ambition will be strengthened to reversing the losses and increasing the size of the rural estate where due diligence confirms it as a safe use of your money.”</u> |
| Page 13 | Under ‘Our Priorities for Gloucestershire: Tackling Climate Change’, amend Point 1 to “Reducing our Carbon Footprint – coordinated action to reduce the county council’s emissions to net zero by 2030, put climate change at the heart of all our decisions, and publish our progress in an annual report. <u>Incentivise all staff and councillors to make greener choices to travel to work, with the aim of increasing the number journeys by active travel, public transport or car sharing to help deliver a zero-carbon council by 2030.”</u> |
| Page 13 | Under ‘Our Priorities for Gloucestershire: Tackling Climate Change’, amend Point 2 to “Greener buildings, greener energy – investing in solar power and green energy solutions for all new county council buildings <u>and on our rural estate where appropriate;</u> enabling households to switch to renewable electricity and lower carbon heating.” |
| N/A | Move the ‘Transforming Children’s Services’ section to the top of the Corporate Strategy, rather than as the sixth priority. |
| Page 13 | Under ‘Our Priorities for Gloucestershire: Tackling Climate Change’, amend Point 4 to “Cycling for all – creating a separated cycle route connecting Gloucester and Cheltenham by 2023, part of a 26-mile continuous cycle route across the centre of the county by 2026; <u>become an exemplar county for urban cycling, working with communities and districts to create safe cycling neighbourhoods in our towns and city to make active travel the default choice of travel for short journeys connecting communities with convenient, safe routes to increase cycling in line with national</u> |

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| | <u>targets.”</u> |
| Page 13 | Under ‘Our Priorities for Gloucestershire: Tackling Climate Change’, amend Point 6 to “Making the switch to electric – installing 1000 electric vehicle charge points in communities across the county by 2025; <u>consulting the public on expanding e-scooter hire to communities across the county in 2023 and for all new council cars and vans to be ultra-low or zero emissions by 2024.”</u> |
| Page 9 | Under the ‘Improving our Roads’ section, add the following: <u>“In consultation with our communities, make 20mph the usual speed limit in places where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix.”</u> |
| Page 15 | Under the ‘We will’ section, amend final bullet point to the following: <u>“Refresh our road safety policy and review speed limits where there is an evidenced safety concern in consultation with communities, with the aim of making 20mph the usual speed limit where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix, and to install safety measures proactively, to prevent accidents before they happen.”</u> |
| Page 15 | Amend Paragraph 4 to the following: “On road safety, we want to deliver safer roads, healthier streets; <u>consulting with communities to make 20mph the usual speed limit lowering speed limits</u> where <u>vulnerable road users and vehicles mix people live</u> and building more crossing points to achieve the Vision Zero road safety ambition by 2050 and enable 50% of all urban trips to be walking and cycling by 2045” |
| Page 24 | Add the following to the end of Paragraph 1: “However, our ambition to offer good quality intervention leading to positive outcomes for Children and their families remains paramount, <u>as does our desire to house more vulnerable children in county. We will target having out of county placements at net zero by May 2025 – taking in at least as many children from other authorities as the number we need to send out of Gloucestershire for their own safety.</u> |
| Page 25 | Amend the first sentence of Paragraph 5 to the following: “The development of <u>Learning from mistakes of the past, where preventative services were dramatically cut, we will develop a</u> Family Hub model, centred around our Children and Family Centres, <u>which</u> will be a key element in our future early intervention and early help offer <u>and include youth workers based in communities.”</u> |
| Page 29 | Under the ‘We will’ section, insert the following bullet point: <u>“Rebuild our Trading Standards department to allow for an enhancement of enforcement and advisory services to protect our residents from fraud and unacceptable services.”</u> |

Cllr Hodgkinson echoed his thanks to staff and councillors for their hard work during the pandemic, as well as to the residents of Gloucestershire for doing the right thing throughout the past two years.

Cllr Hodgkinson explained that the amendments proposed by the Liberal Democrats were focused on protecting the environment, residents, and children in care. He hoped that members would agree that these targeted amendments were well considered and hoped to see them incorporated within the Council Strategy.

Cllr Evans, in seconding the proposed Liberal Democrat amendments, pressed the importance of protecting and working with communities, as well as in being proactive in areas such as the environment, road safety and trading standards. He stated that these amendments aimed to improve the Strategy and hoped members would support them.

Labour Group

Cllr John Bloxson and Cllr Wendy Thomas proposed and seconded the amendments to the Council Strategy from the Labour Group:

| Council Strategy Page Number | Proposed Labour Amendment |
|------------------------------|--|
| Page 1 | Add the following under Paragraph 4: “As we build out of the pandemic, we must do so with a greener, healthier economy. In order to create a Greener Gloucestershire, everyone must have the opportunity to make greener choices. It may be driving an electric vehicle that uses one of the 1000 EV charging points we are installing across the county, or cycling along our <u>network of cycling routes including</u> a 26 mile cycle spine that stretches from Stroud to Bishop’s Cleeve.” |
| Page 13 | Under ‘Our Priorities for Gloucestershire: Tackling Climate Change’, amend Point 4 to: “Cycling for all – creating a separated cycle route connecting Gloucester and Cheltenham by 2023, part of a 26-mile continuous cycle route across the centre of the county by 2026; <u>a network of local cycling routes</u> connecting communities with convenient, safe routes to increase cycling in line with national targets.” |
| Page 1 | Add the following under Paragraph 4: “£20 million is being invested into the Arle Court Transport Hub to enable more journeys to central Cheltenham, Gloucester, <u>all the county’s railway stations and the hospitals by sustainable modes of travel</u> including by providing e-scooters, cycling routes, buses, electric charging points and park and ride.” |
| Page 6 | Amend the paragraph under ‘Rural Isolation’ to: “As well as being one of our best assets, the rural nature of the county makes it difficult for some people to access the services they need. This is a particular challenge for the three out of every twenty Gloucestershire households that have no access to a |

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| | car or van. <u>Access to reliable and affordable public transport is critical to combatting rural isolation.</u> The roll-out of high-speed broadband has already reached nearly all addresses across the county, but we need to continue to work towards full coverage so that all households and businesses benefit.” |
| Pages 9 and 15 | Under ‘Our Priorities: Improving Our Roads’, amend the last bullet point to: “Refresh our road safety policy and review speed limits where there is an evidenced safety concern <u>across a range of measures together with public concern and community support.</u> ” |
| Page 15 | Amend Paragraph 1 following the ‘We Will’ section to: “Well maintained local roads allow for <u>faster safer</u> and more reliable journeys, boosting local businesses and serving all road users. High quality local roads are also central to the future of transport, playing an important role in people taking up greener forms of transport such as cycling and buses.” |
| Pages 10 and 24 | Under ‘Our Priorities: Transforming Children’s Services’, add the following bullet point: <u>“Turn around children’s services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers by prioritising improved social work, resourcing, and leadership.”</u> |
| Pages 10 and 27 | Under ‘Our Priorities: Transforming Social Care’, amend the final bullet points by deleting <u>“will begin”</u> and inserting <u>“has a stated intention to begin”</u> . |
| Pages 11 and 30 | Under ‘Our Priorities: Improving Customer Experience’, add the following bullet point: <u>“Maintaining ways for customers to get help and information by phone and in person, including those that lack digital skills and online access.”</u> |
| Page 17 | Under ‘Our Priorities: Sustainable Growth’, amend the final sentence of the first paragraph following the ‘We Will’ section to: “Employment land, <u>market housing, affordable housing, infrastructure</u> and the associated new jobs are required to enable the continued economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.” |

Cllr Bloxsom also echoed his thanks to GCC staff, the people of Gloucestershire, and active volunteers who worked throughout the pandemic and for their continued efforts.

He stated that the Labour Group would not be supporting the Council Strategy as it was felt that it was an extended version of the Conservative election manifesto; it offered the same approach to problems despite the use of the word transformation; and failed to address the deep-rooted causes of issues such as poverty, injustice, and discrimination. However, whilst the Strategy was not one that the Labour Group

could support, Cllr Bloxsom explained that the Labour Group had attempted to engage with the process by submitting their proposed amendments.

Cllr Thomas, in seconding the proposed Labour amendments to the Council Strategy, highlighted those focussed on Children’s Services, emphasising that children in care must be a priority, and highlighting the importance of recruiting and retaining social workers.

Green Group

Cllr Cate Cody informed members that the Green Group had not submitted any proposed amendments to the Council Strategy. She stated that whilst her Group agreed with much of the Strategy’s vision, they felt it could go further. As such, they would be abstaining from the substantive vote on the Strategy, rather than voting against.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting until 11.30am for Group Leaders to discuss the proposed amendments and identify areas of agreement.

Debate on the Council Strategy Amendments

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

The following were accepted as friendly amendments:

| Party | Amendment | Accepted/ Changed |
|---------|---|--|
| Lib Dem | Page 13 - Under ‘Our Priorities for Gloucestershire: Tackling Climate Change’, amend Point 1 to “Reducing our Carbon Footprint – coordinated action to reduce the county council’s emissions to net zero by 2030, put climate change at the heart of all our decisions, and publish our progress in an annual report. <u>Incentivise all staff and councillors to make greener choices to travel to work, with the aim of increasing the number journeys by active travel, public transport or car sharing to help deliver a zero-carbon council by 2030.</u> ” | Amendment changed to the following and accepted: “Reducing our Carbon Footprint – coordinated action to reduce the county council’s emissions to net zero by 2030, put climate change at the heart of all our decisions, and publish our progress in an annual report. <u>Incentivise all staff and councillors</u> <u>Look to use staff remuneration and benefits scheme to enable staff to make greener choices to travel to work, with the aim of increasing the number journeys by active travel, public transport or car sharing to help deliver a zero-carbon council by</u> |

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| | | <u>2030.”</u> |
| Lib Dem | Page 13 - Under ‘Our Priorities for Gloucestershire: Tackling Climate Change’, amend Point 2 to “Greener buildings, greener energy – investing in solar power and green energy solutions for all new county council buildings <u>and on our rural estate where appropriate;</u> enabling households to switch to renewable electricity and lower carbon heating.” | Accepted |
| Lib Dem | Page 13 - Under ‘Our Priorities for Gloucestershire: Tackling Climate Change’, amend Point 4 to “Cycling for all – creating a separated cycle route connecting Gloucester and Cheltenham by 2023, part of a 26-mile continuous cycle route across the centre of the county by 2026; <u>become an exemplar county for urban cycling, working with communities and districts to create safe cycling neighbourhoods in our towns and city to make active travel the default choice of travel for short journeys connecting communities with convenient, safe routes to increase cycling in line with national targets.”</u> | Amendment changed to the following and accepted: “Cycling for all – creating a separated cycle route connecting Gloucester and Cheltenham by 2023, part of a 26-mile continuous cycle route across the centre of the county by 2026; <u>become an exemplar county for urban cycling, by creating safe cycling neighbourhoods in our towns and city to enable more people to choose active travel as their preferred choice for short journeys working with communities and districts to create safe cycling neighbourhoods in our towns and city to make active travel the default choice of travel for short journeys connecting communities with convenient, safe routes to increase cycling in line with national targets.”</u> |
| Lib Dem | Page 13 – Under ‘Our Priorities for Gloucestershire: Tackling Climate Change’, amend Point 6 to “Making the switch to electric – installing 1000 electric vehicle charge points in communities across the county by 2025; <u>consulting the public on</u> expanding e-scooter hire to communities across the county in 2023 and for all new council cars | Amendment changed to the following and accepted: “Making the switch to electric – installing 1000 electric vehicle charge points in communities across the county by 2025; <u>(subject to legislation) consulting the public on</u> expanding e-scooter hire to communities |

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| | and vans to be ultra-low or zero emissions by 2024.” | across the county in 2023 and for all new council cars and vans to be ultra-low or zero emissions by 2024.” |
| Lib Dem | Page 25 - Amend the first sentence of Paragraph 5 to the following: “ The development of <u>Learning from mistakes of the past, where preventative services were dramatically cut, we will develop a</u> Family Hub model, centred around our Children and Family Centres, <u>which</u> will be a key element in our future early intervention and early help offer <u>and include youth workers based in communities.</u> ” | Amendment part accepted as follows: “The development of a Family Hub model, centred around our Children and Family Centres, will be a key element in our future early intervention and early help offer <u>and include youth workers based in communities.</u> ” |
| Labour | Page 1 - Add the following under Paragraph 4: “As we build out of the pandemic, we must do so with a greener, healthier economy. In order to create a Greener Gloucestershire, everyone must have the opportunity to make greener choices. It may be driving an electric vehicle that uses one of the 1000 EV charging points we are installing across the county, or cycling along our <u>network of cycling routes including</u> a 26 mile cycle spine that stretches from Stroud to Bishop’s Cleeve.” | Accepted |
| Labour | Page 13 - Under ‘Our Priorities for Gloucestershire: Tackling Climate Change’, amend Point 4 to: “Cycling for all – creating a separated cycle route connecting Gloucester and Cheltenham by 2023, part of a 26-mile continuous cycle route across the centre of the county by 2026; <u>a network of local cycling</u> routes connecting communities with convenient, safe routes to increase cycling in line with national targets.” | Accepted |
| Labour | Page 6 - Amend the paragraph under ‘Rural Isolation’ to: “As well as being one of our best assets, the rural nature of the county makes it difficult for some people to access the services they need. This is a particular challenge for the three out | Amendment changed to the following and accepted: “As well as being one of our best assets, the rural nature of the county makes it difficult for some people to access the services they need. This is a |

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| | of every twenty Gloucestershire households that have no access to a car or van. <u>Access to reliable and affordable public transport is critical to combatting rural isolation.</u> The roll-out of high-speed broadband has already reached nearly all addresses across the county, but we need to continue to work towards full coverage so that all households and businesses benefit.” | particular challenge for the three out of every twenty Gloucestershire households that have no access to a car or van. <u>Access to reliable and affordable public and community transport is critical to combatting rural isolation.</u> The roll-out of high-speed broadband has already reached nearly all addresses across the county, but we need to continue to work towards full coverage so that all households and businesses benefit.” |
| Labour | Pages 9 and 15 - Under ‘Our Priorities: Improving Our Roads’, amend the last bullet point to: “Refresh our road safety policy and review speed limits where there is an evidenced safety concern <u>across a range of measures together with public concern and community support.</u> ” | Accepted |
| Labour | Page 15 - Amend Paragraph 1 following the ‘We Will’ section to: “Well maintained local roads allow for <u>faster safer</u> and more reliable journeys, boosting local businesses and serving all road users. High quality local roads are also central to the future of transport, playing an important role in people taking up greener forms of transport such as cycling and buses.” | Accepted |
| Labour | Pages 11 and 30 - Under ‘Our Priorities: Improving Customer Experience’, add the following bullet point: <u>“Maintaining ways for customers to get help and information by phone and in person, including those that lack digital skills and online access.”</u> | Accepted |

The following amendments were not accepted:

| Party | Amendment | Reason for rejection |
|---------|---|----------------------------|
| Lib Dem | Page 12 - “The <u>10 11</u> key areas we | The Conservative Group did |

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| | <p>will focus on over the next four years of the Council Strategy are:"</p> <p>Page 13 - Under 'Our Priorities for Gloucestershire: Tackling Climate Change', insert additional bullet point: <u>"11. End the policy of selling off your publicly owned rural estate, introducing a proactive "acre-for-acre" policy and using this to train more farmers in environmentally friendly farming practices. This ambition will be strengthened to reversing the losses and increasing the size of the rural estate where due diligence confirms it as a safe use of your money."</u></p> | <p>not agree that the Council has the skills or knowledge to 'train' farmers.</p> |
| <p>Lib Dem</p> | <p>Move "Transforming Children's Services" section to the top of the Corporate Strategy, rather than as the sixth priority.</p> | <p>The Conservative Group rejected this amendment on the basis that the bullet points were in no particular order, so to accept this amendment would give the wrong impression that they were.</p> |
| <p>Lib Dem</p> | <p>Page 9 - Under the 'Improving our Roads' section, add the following: <u>"In consultation with our communities, make 20mph the usual speed limit in places where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix."</u></p> <p>Page 15 - Under the 'We will' section, amend final bullet point to the following: <u>"Refresh our road safety policy and review speed limits where there is an evidenced safety concern in consultation with communities, with the aim of making 20mph the usual speed limit where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix, and to install safety measures proactively, to prevent accidents before they happen."</u></p> <p>Page 15 - Amend Paragraph 4 to the</p> | <p>The Conservative Group rejected these amendments on the basis that it does not support the imposing of blanket 20mph speed limits.</p> |

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| | <p>following: “On road safety, we want to deliver safer roads, healthier streets; <u>consulting with communities to make 20mph the usual speed limit lowering speed limits</u> where <u>vulnerable road users and vehicles mix people live</u> and building more crossing points to achieve the Vision Zero road safety ambition by 2050 and enable 50% of all urban trips to be walking and cycling by 2045”</p> | |
| Lib Dem | <p>Page 24 - Add the following to the end of Paragraph 1: “However, our ambition to offer good quality intervention leading to positive outcomes for Children and their families remains paramount, <u>as does our desire to house more vulnerable children in county. We will target having out of county placements at net zero by May 2025 – taking in at least as many children from other authorities as the number we need to send out of Gloucestershire for their own safety.</u>”</p> | <p>This was rejected as the Council was already at 25%, and there were clear cases where it was better to place a child at risk in an out of county place.</p> |
| Lib Dem | <p>Page 25 - Amend the first sentence of Paragraph 5 to the following: “The development of <u>Learning from mistakes of the past, where preventative services were dramatically cut, we will develop a Family Hub model, centred around our Children and Family Centres, which</u> will be a key element in our future early intervention and early help offer <u>and include youth workers based in communities.</u>”</p> | <p>Part accepted as detailed in the table above.</p> |
| Lib Dem | <p>Page 29 - Under the ‘We will’ section, insert the following bullet point: <u>“Rebuild our Trading Standards department to allow for an enhancement of enforcement and advisory services to protect our residents from fraud and unacceptable services.”</u></p> | <p>This was rejected as any changes or growth bids for Trading Standards would need to be made through the MTFS process.</p> |
| Labour | <p>Pages 10 and 24 - Under ‘Our Priorities: Transforming Children’s</p> | <p>This amendment was rejected as it was seen to be a repeat</p> |

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| | | |
|--------|--|--|
| | Services', add the following bullet point: <u>“Turn around children’s services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers by prioritising improved social work, resourcing, and leadership.”</u> | of previous bullet points. |
| Labour | Pages 10 and 27 - Under ‘Our Priorities: Transforming Social Care’, amend the final bullet points by deleting <u>“will begin”</u> and inserting <u>“has a stated intention to begin”</u> . | This amendment was rejected as it was felt to add no value to the sentence. |
| Labour | Page 17 - Under ‘Our Priorities: Sustainable Growth’, amend the final sentence of the first paragraph following the ‘We Will’ section to: “Employment land, <u>market housing, affordable housing, infrastructure</u> and the associated new jobs are required to enable the continued economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.” | This amendment was rejected because housing was a district council function, and the County Council had no strategic housing powers. It was felt that it would look odd to district colleagues to include this as a strategic objective. |

The following amendment was withdrawn:

| Party | Amendment | Reason for withdrawal |
|--------------|---|--|
| Labour | Page 1 - Add the following under Paragraph 4: “£20 million is being invested into the Arle Court Transport Hub to enable more journeys to central Cheltenham, Gloucester, <u>all the county’s railway stations and the hospitals by sustainable modes of travel</u> including by providing e-scooters, cycling routes, buses, electric charging points and park and ride.” | The paragraph was specifically about the Arle Court Scheme, and the amendment made no sense when included. |

The debate on the amendments that had not been accepted then followed.

Remaining Liberal Democrat Group amendments

Several members expressed their disappointment that the amendment relating to the rural estate had not been accepted and felt that it had been misinterpreted. They highlighted the leadership opportunities the rural estate presented in using tenant farmers and the rural estate team to help peers develop environmentally sound practices. One member stated that the Council could also profit financially, as well as environmentally, from the running of the rural estate if it invested wisely.

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One member commented that farmers needed support and humility, not people telling them how to farm.

Several members also spoke of their shock that the proposed amendment to move the section on Children's Services to the top of the Council Strategy had been rejected. They commented on the importance the order of the sections had on the perception by the public of the Council's priorities.

One member also commented that they didn't understand why the amendment relating to learning from the past in Children's Services had been rejected as this was something that should happen.

Another member added that moving the section on Children's Services to the top of the Strategy could provide a boost to officers who wanted to deliver an outstanding service. It was stated that Ofsted was looking for good leadership that accepted when things hadn't gone well, had learnt from it, and had moved forward.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Early Years stated that whilst some of the Liberal Democrat amendments on Children's Services had been reasonable, he believed that some had been nonsense, claiming that the ordering of the document was irrelevant, and that significant work to move forward in Children's Services was already being undertaken. With regards to the amendment on keeping children in care in county, the Cabinet Member emphasised that whilst the sentiment was reasonable, it was not in the interests of children's safety to have a net zero policy on placements out of county.

Several members spoke in support of the amendment relating to 20mph speed limits and believed that the amendment had been misinterpreted. Several members commented that the amendment was not about introducing blanket 20mph speed limits, but about being proactive and working with communities that supported such a proposal to make their roads safer for all users.

One member spoke in support of the amendment to rebuild trading services, noting that the service's budget had been cut by over 60 percent since the mid-2000s. They expressed concern that the service would not be able to cope should there be a crisis, such as foot and mouth.

One member expressed concern that there had been a missed opportunity to help vulnerable people by not accepting the proposed amendments.

Another member commented that the Strategy itself was flawed, stating that it was a wish list as it did not include measurable targets that could be used to assess progress.

On being put to a vote, the Liberal Democrat Group amendments to the Council Strategy that had not been accepted as friendly amendments by the Conservative Administration were not supported: For (18), Against (27), Abstentions (4).

Remaining Labour Group amendments

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Some members expressed confusion as to why the amendment on housing had been rejected, pressing the need for affordable housing to support economic growth. It was felt that the district councils would welcome the County Council's acknowledgement of the strategic importance of housing.

In response, the Leader of the Council stated that whilst it was clear housing was important, the County Council did not currently have any strategic housing responsibilities, and that the Strategy should focus on what the Council could deliver.

Several members also spoke in support of the amendment relating to Children's Services, highlighting the importance of explicitly referencing leadership and on turning the Service around.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Early Years expressed the view that the addition of the amendment would be inappropriate, given the improvement journey that was already being undertaken by Children's Services.

On being put to a vote, the Labour Group amendments to the Council Strategy that had not been accepted by the Conservative Administration as friendly amendments were not supported: For (18), Against (27), Abstentions (4).

Vote on the Council Strategy

On being put to a vote the substantive motion was carried: For (27), Against (5), Abstentions (17).

RESOLVED

That the adoption of the Council Strategy 2022-2026: Building Back Better in Gloucestershire be approved as amended.

57. POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The report before members included the budget report and recommendations, Medium Term Financial Strategy, budget consultation report, scrutiny budget report, and Equality Impact Assessment.

The Chief Executive explained the procedure for this item, which would be the same process as used for the Council Strategy, except that a recorded vote would be proposed by the Chairman, and seconded by the Vice-Chairman, at each stage of the debate.

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 Council Strategy debate:

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'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.

Conservative Group

Cllr Stowe and Cllr Hawthorne presented the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 26 January 2022.

Cllr Stowe explained that the recommendation detailed in the report had since been updated because of changes in grant funding. Thanking members for their involvement in the budget scrutiny process, he stated his view that the budget proposals were the most positive for a generation based on the most positive statement from government for a generation. He stated that the budget formed the basis for investing in today, as well as investing in building back better for tomorrow.

Cllr Stowe explained that they would be asking taxpayers to pay an extra 1.99 percent, plus an extra 1 percent that was ringfenced for adult social care, but that this remained one of the lowest county council taxes in the Country.

Emphasising that the most vulnerable people in the County would always be the top priority, Cllr Stowe highlighted the extra £14million in this year's budget for Children's Services and £9million for Adults Social Care and for those living with disabilities. An extra £2million would be pumped into Community Safety to ensure that the County's firefighters were equipped and trained to the highest standards; an extra £2.7 million would go towards highways maintenance; and £1million would go towards combatting climate change. Additionally, Highways Local had been firmly embedded within the budget.

Continuing to the capital programme, it was iterated that a further £100million would be invested into roads; £150million into new schools and refurbishments; and £20million into cycle routes. It was also noted that the general reserve position of just short of £22million was considered to be at the appropriate level.

Members were informed that the public had indicated its support for the proposed budget, as evidenced by the results of the public consultation.

Cllr Hawthorne, in seconding the proposed budget recommendations, endorsed the budget that would deliver for Gloucestershire and build back better over the coming 12 months.

Liberal Democrat Group

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

Cllr Hodgkinson and Cllr Colin Hay proposed the amendments from the Liberal Democrat Group:

| | Proposal | One off or ongoing? | 2022/23 Cost £000s | Revenue or Capital | Funded from |
|---|---|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| 1 | Reserve to fund shovel-ready 20mph schemes in 22/23 | One off | 450 | Capital | £100k from cancelling council chamber upgrades + £350k from Council Tax (CT) & National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) growth |
| 2 | TRO reserve | One off | 100 | Revenue | £94k from General Reserves + £6k from CT and NNDR growth |
| 3 | Reserve to fund initiatives coming out of the Levelling Up Conference | One off | 120 | Revenue | £88k of unspent money from the Growing our Communities Reserve + £32k from CT & NNDR growth |
| 4 | Trading standards | One off | 40 | Revenue | £40k from CT & NNDR growth |
| 5 | Scrapping resident parking fee increase for all households for one year | One off | 33 | Revenue | £33k from CT and NNDR growth |
| 6 | Additional funding for EV charging points targeted at rural communities | One off | 88 | Capital | £88k from CT & NNDR growth |

Cllr Hodgkinson stated that he was pleased to share these fully funded amendments, which were focused on protecting the public, helping struggling communities burdened by the highest inflation rate for 30 years, and protecting the environment, particularly in light of one of the warmest winters in history.

Cllr Hay seconded these amendments, stating that they were trying to make a difference to the lives of residents now. He expressed concern that the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change was proud that the Council had one of the lowest council taxes in the Country, suggesting that the Council was underfunded to the extent that it could not deliver some of the services it wanted to. He also thanked officers for their support when working up these budget amendments.

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Labour Group

Cllr Bloxsom and Cllr Thomas proposed the amendments from the Labour Group:

| | Proposal | One off or ongoing? | 2022/23 Cost £000s | Revenue or Capital | Funded from |
|---|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Children's Social Care Services - resilience and improvement action | One off | 220 | Revenue | CT/NNDR Growth |
| 2 | Bus Services - increased subsidy in particular for towns and rural areas | One off | 300 | Revenue | CT/NNDR Growth |
| 3 | Climate Emergency Jury - set up of a cross generational group | One off | 25 | Revenue | CT/NNDR Growth |

Cllr Bloxsom explained that the amendment for funding for Children's Social Care Services was to help tackle the staff turnover problem in this area by encouraging workforce retention. Additionally, he explained that the amendment to subsidise bus services in towns and rural areas would help those services struggling during this period of crisis. He expressed concern that the Bus Service Improvement Plan might not prove to be 'the cavalry' it was claimed to be.

Cllr Thomas, in seconding these amendments, added that there was little in the budget to tackle the needs of communities in relation to bus services, and that their amendment could help to address the issue.

Green Group

Cllr Cody and Cllr Chloe Turner proposed the amendments from the Green Group. It was noted that they had intended to propose 3 amendments but had decided to withdraw one:

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| | Proposal | One off or ongoing? | 2022/23 Cost £000s | Revenue or Capital | Funded from |
|---|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 1 | Resource for county wide biodiversity management officer, to identify opportunities on GCC land, and on other public estate in partnership with CLG members | One off | 45 | Revenue | Additional council tax receipts (within Technical & Countywide) |
| 2 | Circular economy project: establishment of pilot “tip shop” reuse outlet at one of the HRCs | One off | 90 | Capital | From Unallocated £90k within ‘Waste Disposal – schemes under £250k 21/22 onwards’ |
| 3 | Withdrawn: Two-year pilot post of Farm Environment Adviser in each of Cotswolds, Stroud and Forest of Dean (our most rural districts), £135k per year | 22/23 and 23/24 | 270 | Revenue | Additional council tax receipts (within Technical & Countywide) |

Cllr Cody explained that she hoped the two amendments would support the recommended budget by working to address climate change. Cllr Cody emphasised the inextricable link between nature and the climate emergency, as well as the importance of nature in supporting wellbeing and the economy. By introducing a countywide biodiversity management officer, the Council would also ensure that it fulfilled its new duties under the Environment Act.

Cllr Cody continued to explain the benefits of the amendment for a pilot ‘tip shop’ in that it would support the Council’s ambition to reduce waste and increase recycling, whilst also providing learning, financial and health opportunities for residents and supporting the economy.

Cllr Turner seconded the amendments, reiterating that they would help to further progress the Council’s ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions, and that these amendments reflected the urgency needed in the Council’s response to the climate emergency. She emphasised the opportunity to show real leadership in this area by providing support to local partners and setting an example to local businesses.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting until 2.15pm for Group Leaders to discuss the proposed amendments and identify areas of agreement.

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Debate 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, Labour and Green Groups.

The following were accepted as friendly amendments to the budget proposal:

| Political Group | Proposal | 2022/23 Cost £000s | Revenue or Capital | Approved or Revised | Approved/ Revised Figure |
|-----------------|---|--------------------|--------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Lib Dem | Reserve to fund shovel-ready 20mph schemes in 22/23 | 450 | Capital | Revised to add £250k to Community Speedwatch funded from CT / NNDR | 250 |
| Lib Dem | TRO reserve | 100 | Revenue | Revised funded from CT / NNDR | 100 |
| Lib Dem | Scrapping resident parking fee increase for all households for one year. | 33 | Revenue | Agreed | 33 |
| Green | Resource for county wide biodiversity management officer, to identify opportunities on GCC land, and on other public estate in partnership with CLG members | 45 | Revenue | Agreed | 45 |
| Green | Circular economy project: establishment of pilot "tip shop" reuse outlet at one of the HRCs | 90 | Capital | Revised to £120k funded from CT / NNDR | 120 |

The following amendments were not accepted:

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| Political Group | Proposal | 2022/23 Cost £000s | Revenue or Capital | Rejected |
|-----------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|---|
| Lib Dem | Trading standards | 40 | Revenue | VOTE Rejected - but MTFS bid expected for next financial year |
| Lib Dem | Additional funding for EV charging points targeted at rural communities | 88 | Capital | VOTE Rejected |
| Labour | Bus Services - increased subsidy in particular for towns and rural areas | 300 | Revenue | VOTE Rejected |

The following amendments were withdrawn:

| Political Group | Proposal | 2022/23 Cost £000s | Revenue or Capital |
|-----------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Lib Dem | Reserve to fund initiatives coming out of the Levelling Up Conference | 120 | Revenue |
| Green | Two-year pilot post of Farm Environment Adviser in each of Cotswolds, Stroud and Forest of Dean (our most rural districts), £135k per year | 270 | Revenue |
| Labour | Children's Social Care Services - resilience and improvement action | 220 | Revenue |
| Labour | Climate Emergency Jury - set up of a cross generational group | 25 | Revenue |

The debate on the amendments that had not been accepted then followed.

Liberal Democrat Group amendments

Some members spoke in support of the proposed amendment for additional funding for EV charging points targeted at rural communities, highlighting that this reserve would fill the gap in the Council's EV strategy. They stressed that all chargers currently in the strategy would only be implemented if the Government felt they were necessary, which could affect rural communities, and a concern was raised that chargers might only be established in Cheltenham and Gloucester. It was also highlighted that the sooner these charging points were funded, the sooner residents might choose to change their mode of transport to electric.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning responded to the concerns raised. Whilst he acknowledged that the proposed amendment was well intentioned, he expressed his view that there was not a gap in the current strategy and explained that certain rural areas would receive EV charging points. He

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advised that the suggestion that government funding would only be available for large towns was inaccurate and stressed that the Council was actively looking at rural locations as part of the scheme. He added that he was open to conversations with parishes and communities on the issue.

A few members also spoke in support of the proposed amendment for Trading Standards. They stressed the need for funding to retain an agency staff worker within the team to provide continuity of service whilst junior staff members were fully trained. Concern was raised over the continued cuts to funding for this team, and that to refuse this proposed funding would be to put communities at an increased risk of rogue traders.

The Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Parking and Libraries responded to the concerns raised by stating that he regularly met with the Trading Standards team to discuss the issues of the team's budget, staffing and future work. He explained that the team had underspent its budget for the last two years, but should the need arise, he would submit an MTFS bid to ensure the team could meet the needs of residents.

On being put to a recorded vote, those Liberal Democrat Group amendments which had not been accepted by the Conservative Administration as friendly amendments were not supported.

For (18): Cllrs Paul Baker, John Bloxsom, David Brown, Linda Cohen, David Drew, Ben Evans, Rebecca Halifax, Colin Hay, Alex Hegenbarth, Jeremy Hilton, Paul Hodgkinson, Graham Morgan, Gill Moseley, Steve Robinson, Lisa Spivey, Wendy Thomas, Roger Whyborn and Suzanne Williams.

Against (25): Cllrs Carole Allaway-Martin, Phil Awford, Matt Babbage, Alastair Chambers, Stephen Davies, Stephan Fifield, Andrew Gravells, David Gray, Terry Hale, Tim Harman, Mark Hawthorne, Stephen Hirst, Nick Housden, Mark Mackenzie-Charrington, Andrew Miller, Dominic Morris, Emma Nelson, Dave Norman, Alan Preest, Philip Robinson, Vernon Smith, Lynden Stowe, Brian Tipper, Kathy Williams and Susan Williams.

Abstained (4): Cllrs Cate Cody, Beki Hoyland, Chris McFarling and Chloe Turner.

Labour Group amendments

Several members spoke in support of the proposed amendment for bus services. Whilst recognising additional funds had been made available for highways and cycle routes, they argued that little, apart from funding for demand responsive services, had been set aside to address the gap in the bus service network. They highlighted the importance of this proposed subsidy in supporting struggling bus services which had been hit hard by the pandemic, as well as supporting residents commuting to work and school.

The Cabinet Member for Economy, Education and Skills explained that the proposed sum of £300k to fund the amendment would at best subsidise two routes

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and did not compare to the amount the Council already provided as subsidies for public and community transport. He advised that he would make a representation to the Chancellor regarding continued support for bus services affected by the pandemic, and stated that the Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan reflected the Council's commitment to changing the bus service landscape across Gloucestershire.

The Leader of the Council also echoed that the figure proposed by the Labour Group was not sufficient to achieve what the amendment was proposing, and that was why it had been rejected by the Conservative Administration.

Some members restated their view that the figure proposed would make a difference in helping to encourage a few more people to take the bus and in providing a lifeline to those individuals who may otherwise be isolated.

On being put to a recorded vote, the Labour Group amendment which had not been accepted by the Conservative Administration as friendly amendments was not supported.

For (18): Cllrs Paul Baker, John Bloxsom, David Brown, Linda Cohen, David Drew, Ben Evans, Rebecca Halifax, Colin Hay, Alex Hegenbarth, Jeremy Hilton, Paul Hodgkinson, Graham Morgan, Gill Moseley, Steve Robinson, Lisa Spivey, Wendy Thomas, Roger Whyborn and Suzanne Williams.

Against (25): Cllrs Carole Allaway-Martin, Phil Awford, Matt Babbage, Alastair Chambers, Stephen Davies, Stephan Fifield, Andrew Gravells, David Gray, Terry Hale, Tim Harman, Mark Hawthorne, Stephen Hirst, Nick Housden, Mark Mackenzie-Charrington, Andrew Miller, Dominic Morris, Emma Nelson, Dave Norman, Alan Preest, Philip Robinson, Vernon Smith, Lynden Stowe, Brian Tipper, Kathy Williams and Susan Williams.

Abstained (4): Cllrs Cate Cody, Beki Hoyland, Chris McFarling and Chloe Turner.

Vote on the budget

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

For (29): Cllrs Carole Allaway-Martin, Phil Awford, Matt Babbage, Alastair Chambers, Cate Cody, Stephen Davies, Stephan Fifield, Andrew Gravells, David Gray, Terry Hale, Tim Harman, Mark Hawthorne, Stephen Hirst, Nick Housden, Beki Hoyland, Mark Mackenzie-Charrington, Chris McFarling, Andrew Miller, Dominic Morris, Emma Nelson, Dave Norman, Alan Preest, Philip Robinson, Vernon Smith, Lynden Stowe, Brian Tipper, Chloe Turner, Kathy Williams and Susan Williams.

Against (2): Cllrs David Drew and Graham Morgan.

Abstained (16): Cllrs Paul Baker, John Bloxsom, David Brown, Linda Cohen, Ben Evans, Rebecca Halifax, Colin Hay, Alex Hegenbarth, Jeremy Hilton, Paul

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Hodgkinson, Gill Moseley, Steve Robinson, Lisa Spivey, Wendy Thomas, Roger Whyborn and Suzanne Williams.

RESOLVED

1. That the Council Strategy for 2022/23 be approved.
2. 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 2022/23, council tax for each valuation band, and to issue precepts on each district collection fund as set out below:
 - a) Gloucestershire County Council 2022/23 Budget:

| | £'000 |
|---|-----------------------|
| Original 2021/22 Budget | <u>483,008</u> |
| Removal of 2021/22 One off Investments | -2,075 |
| Revised 2021/22 Base Budget | <u>480,933</u> |
| 2022/23 Proposed Pay Inflation | 4,323 |
| 2022/23 Proposed Cost and Spending Pressures | 47,061 |
| 2022/23 Proposed Cost Reductions | -10,987 |
| Total 2022/23 Budget | <u>521,330</u> |
| less: | |
| Top Up Grant | 54,236 |
| Business Rates Income | 21,949 |
| Revenue Support Grant | 8,482 |
| Public Health Grant | 25,263 |
| Improved Better Care Fund | 20,024 |
| New Homes Bonus | 1,391 |
| Social Care Grant | 23,688 |
| Other Non Ring Fenced Grants | 16,425 |
| Collection Fund Surplus | 841 |
| Strategic Waste Reserve | 1,663 |
| Invest to Save Reserve | 1,100 |
| Capital Fund Reserve | 1,000 |
| EE&I Reserve (Permits) | 972 |
| General Fund Reserve | 1,046 |
| Budget to be met by Council Tax Payers | <u>343,251</u> |

Total to be precepted:

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| | Taxbase Total | Total Precept £ |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Cheltenham | 43,423.80 | 63,023,435 |
| Cotswold | 42,192.93 | 61,237,004 |
| Forest of Dean | 30,180.18 | 43,802,215 |
| Gloucester City | 38,453.80 | 55,810,191 |
| Stroud | 46,441.54 | 67,403,253 |
| Tewkesbury | 35,811.22 | 51,974,864 |
| Total | 236,503.47 | 343,250,962 |

- 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.
3. 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 2022/23, set out in Annex 10 of the detailed MTFS.
4. 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 | 2020/21 Limit £m | 2021/22 Limit £m | 2022/23 Limit £m | 2023/24 Limit £m | 2024/25 Limit £m |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Total Authorised Limit for Debt and Other Liabilities | 510.000 | 540.000 | 570.000 | 595.000 | 605.000 |
| Split: Debt | 353.299 | 380.460 | 414.933 | 443.945 | 458.278 |
| Other Liabilities | 156.701 | 159.540 | 155.067 | 151.055 | 146.722 |
| Total Operational Boundary for Debt | 490.000 | 520.000 | 550.000 | 575.000 | 585.000 |
| Split: Debt | 333.299 | 360.460 | 394.933 | 423.945 | 438.278 |
| Other Liabilities | 156.701 | 159.540 | 155.067 | 151.055 | 146.722 |

- a) Noting that the authorised limit for 2022/23 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

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

5. That the Council approves the Schools Funding set out in section I and Annex 9 in the detailed MTFS.

6. That the following amendments to the draft budget be approved:

| Political Group | Item | Amount (£000s) | One-Off |
|-----------------|---|----------------|---------|
| Lib Dem | Reserve to fund shovel-ready 20mph schemes in 22/23 | 250 | One-Off |
| Lib Dem | TRO reserve | 100 | One-Off |
| Lib Dem | Scrapping resident parking fee increase for all households for one year. | 33 | One-Off |
| Green | Resource for county wide biodiversity management officer, to identify opportunities on GCC land, and on other public estate in partnership with CLG members | 45 | One-Off |
| Green | Circular economy project: establishment of pilot "tip shop" reuse outlet at one of the HRCs | 120 | One-Off |

58. MEMBER QUESTIONS

Thirty-nine member questions had been received. The following supplementary questions were asked:

Question 1 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton explained the ICT issues and implications arising from the recent cyber attack on Gloucester City Council. The County Council was the only public body blocking City Council email addresses. He looked for assurances that from 1 March 2022 this would be resolved.

Cllr Lynden Stowe replied that this was subject to work with the City Council and that it was important not to compromise the County Council systems.

Question 3 – Cllr Jeremy Hilton stated that elected members lived in the County, he asked if that same criteria should be applied to senior officers at the Council earning over £100,000.

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Cllr Lynden Stowe did not agree and stated it was important to have the best individuals in the roles.

Question 7 – Cllr Colin Hay asked for assurances that the Cabinet Member would work with other road safety users to get the campaign off the ground to alert people of the changes to the Highway Code.

Cllr Dave Norman replied that the Council had a role and responsibility with regards to road safety. He felt that there was information available and it was everyone's responsibility when using the highway to understand the code.

Question 8 – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson asked whether, in circumstances where Covid measures were being retained, it would be wrong for Gloucestershire County Council to retain them without asking the public.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne informed that member that if Cllr Hodgkinson had specific issues around powers relating to Covid then he should raise those as specific questions.

Question 9 – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson asked if the member would be looking to run a wider consultation as to whether the HRC booking system would be retained?

Cllr David Gray stated that there would be a broader consultation in the coming months and he suggested that the booking system had been a big success.

Question 10 – Cllr Lisa Spivey asked for reassurance that when the Pension Committee carried out its comprehensive review this year that best practice was considered as not just being a financial return.

Cllr Lynden Stowe replied that he understood the points made and part of the partnership with Brunel allowed an ability to influence with regards to ESG policies. The Committee did not pick individual shares to invest in.

Question 12 - Cllr Roger Whyborn asked if the cabinet member understood the extreme sense of disempowerment felt by communities over speeding and did he have any plans to do anything about that.

Cllr Dave Norman replied that the Council was committed to investing in this area and were working with the Police and Crime Commissioner. Consultation was the way forward.

Question 13 – Cllr Roger Whyborn asked where and when did the member propose to plant the 500 trees at the Arle Court Transport Hub.

Cllr David Gray replied that everything would be done by 2024 on the site.

Question 14 – Cllr Gill Moseley asked whether the Cabinet Member had learnt about the cuts to the bus service through Facebook. In addition, did he feel

regardless of whether subsidised, there was a need for a more comprehensive protocol for informing the public? In addition, would he not agree that the sudden appearance of posters announcing changes, following her email to Stagecoach, was too much of a coincidence.?

Cllr Philip Robinson replied that he had learnt about the reduction of the routes via Facebook. The Integrated Transport Unit were looking to set up a stakeholder alert system. The Council was looking at finding a package that respected the passengers but was also fair. Personal Travel Planning was the main component in helping to support those small numbers, as this was a cost effective solution.

Question 31 – Cllr Roger Whyborn expressed his concerns around near misses on the highways network and suggested that these were ignored with members of the public told that this did not represent a safety hazard.

Cllr Dave Norman replied that there were more near misses than actual accidents. A draft policy was being worked up and he would be happy to meet with the member to discuss the progress being made.

Question 36 – Cllr Gill Moseley asked, given the commitment to sustainable transport and transformative change, would the cabinet member agree that the cuts represented a shocking start to the Bus Service Improvement Plan. No effort had been made to run a service to even half the frequency of the most in demand times. She asked for a possible campaign to get people on the buses.

Cllr Philip Robinson replied that the Bus Service Improvement Plan had not started yet, it was a proposal that had gone to government. It was essential to get more people on public transport to help meet climate change targets. He stated that solutions to these issues would be seen. In relation to the possibility of providing a 'skeleton service' this didn't relate to a linear reduction in cost and so was not viable.

59. SCRUTINY REPORT

Cllr Phil Awford, Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented the report which provided a summary of recent scrutiny activities.

The report highlighted the breadth of scrutiny activity that had been undertaken by non-executive members over the past few months. Attention was drawn to the budget scrutiny session which was held on 6 January and members and officers involved in that process were thanked. It was also noted that the Police and Crime Panel had considered the Commissioner's budget and the Restoring our Rivers task group continued to meet and would be looking to make recommendations.

60. CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Richard Blamey, Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), presented the Panel's recommendations regarding members' allowances. It was understood that the Panel was recommending an increase to the basic allowance of £250, and

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to maintain the Special Responsibility Allowances at their current levels. Consideration had also been given to the introduction of a cycling allowance for members to incentivise travel by cycle, however further enquiries relating to the cycling rate for staff would need to be made.

On being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED to

- a) Increase the Basic Allowance from £10,500 to £10,750 for the financial year 2022-23.**
- b) Maintain Special Responsibility Allowances at their current level**
- c) Note the revised Members' Allowances Scheme for 2022-23 at Appendix B of the report presented to the Constitution Committee.**

Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Chair of the Constitution Committee, presented the rest of the report which set out proposed changes to the Council's Constitution.

One member requested that it be made clear, in reference to the proposed amendment for public and member questions, that it would still be possible to ask questions of reports that had been published late. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that was the intention and agreed to take on board the principle.

RESOLVED that the recommendations in the report relating to public and member questions, Pension Committee, and Contract Procedure Rules be approved.

61. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

Cllr Colin Hay, Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, presented the report on the appointment of external auditors.

On being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED that the Council accepts Public Sector Audit Appointments' invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors for the five financial years from 1 April 2023.

62. GLOUCESTERSHIRE LGPS 2020-21 ANNUAL REPORT

Cllr Lynden Stowe, Chair of the Pension Committee, presented the 2020-21 Annual Report for the Gloucestershire Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

Thanking present and past members of the Committee, particularly Ray Theodoulou who had chaired the Committee previously, Cllr Stowe explained that the scheme was in a good position, highlighting that the membership of the Brunel Partnership was increasing; there had been a significant rise in the value of the Fund; and the Fund was in the top quartile of local government pension schemes.

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One member echoed the view that the scheme was in a good position.

The report was noted.

CHAIRPERSON

Meeting concluded at 4.05 pm