



MINUTES OF COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, 27 November 2019 at 10am

Shire Hall, Gloucester

Present:

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

Apologies: Councillors Robert Vines, Suzanne Williams and Roger Wilson

Honorary Aldermen Bill Crowther, Terry Parker and Gordon Shurmer

64. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2019 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

65. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

66. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) Care Ambassadors' Tree of Life
Members were invited to visit the display on the Council Chamber landing over the lunch period.
- b) Fostering Excellence Awards
The Chairman congratulated Henry Wells, 19, one of Gloucestershire County Council's ambassadors for vulnerable children and young people, on winning the award for 'outstanding contribution by sons and daughters' at The Fostering Network's 'Fostering Excellence Awards'.
- c) Adverse weather
The Chairman thanked Council teams for keeping the highway network running, protecting properties from flooding and supporting vulnerable people during the recent periods of heavy rainfall.
- d) Council Transformation and Change Awards 2019
The Chairman congratulated staff and teams who had been nominated for awards. The Leader of the Council had attended the ceremony in the Council Chamber on 7 November 2019. 180 nominations were received covering 60 separate projects.
- e) Visit by Dean Academy
The Chairman welcomed students from the Dean Academy in Lydney who had been invited to attend the meeting by Cllr Alan Preest.
- f) Appreciation of Foster Carers
Cllr Lesley Williams advised that an event to thank foster carers was held in Cheltenham on 14 November 2019. 180 people had attended. She thanked foster carers across the county who looked after our most vulnerable young people. She asked that Council record its thanks.
- g) Gloucestershire Archives
On 15 November 2019, over 80 volunteers joined Gloucestershire Archives staff in celebrating the National Archives Volunteering Award 2019 at Llanthony Secunda Priory. The President and Chair of the Archives and Records Association had been quoted afterwards as saying "we saw

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something inspiring and transformative in the design, management and implementation of this project by Gloucestershire Archives that sets a new benchmark for the sector.”

Gloucestershire Heritage Hub was a finalist for a GloucestershireLive ‘Believe in Gloucester’ Transformation Award, hosted by Steve Knibbs at Gloucester Rugby Club on 28 November 2019.

67. CLLR ROGER WILSON

Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 required a member of a local authority to attend at least one meeting of that authority within a six month consecutive period, in order to avoid being disqualified as a councillor. This requirement could be waived if any failure to attend was due to a reason approved by the authority, in advance of the six month period expiring.

Unfortunately, due to a serious illness, Cllr Roger Wilson, who represents the Winchcombe and Woodmancote Division, had not been able to attend any formal Council meetings since Cabinet on 24 July 2019.

RESOLVED that Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, that requires a member to attend at least one meeting within six months, be suspended for Cllr Roger Wilson.

68. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Eight questions had been received. A copy of the answers was circulated and is attached to the signed copy of the minutes.

Question 5 – Referring to a particular incident with an individual passing away from pneumonia in June 2019, Steve Gower asked whether the Cabinet Member felt that the provision for those who were homeless was adequate.

Kathy Williams acknowledged that this was a sad situation and outlined that the questions had been directed to Gloucester City as their responsibilities meant that they were in a more appropriate place to respond.

Question 6 – Sebastian Field welcomed the news about Podsmead Road, Gloucester being resurfaced. He asked whether he could be informed of the cost?

Cllr Vernon Smith stated that he would ask officers to provide the figures.

Question 7 – Sebastian Field asked whether the Cabinet Member was happy with the standard of ‘dressing’ on Romney Road, Gloucester.

In response Cllr Vernon Smith explained that the team worked to national best practice and the work had been part of the £150 million investment in highways.

Question 8 – Sebastian Field asked if the Cabinet Member could provide a ‘snappy way’ of explaining the concept of a ‘data led’ approach to residents.

Cllr Vernon Smith referred to asset management, looking at the lifetime of a road, inspecting the network and deciding on priorities. He used the analogy of painting a bridge, starting at one end and working through before starting again once finished. He said that it was about continuous maintenance of the network.

69. CORPORATE PARENTING

Cllr Richard Boyles, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, presented the report which focused on why children and young people went missing and the value of return home interviews. He drew members’ attention to the display on the Council Chamber landing of the ‘Tree of Life’ with the stories of children in care. He said that officers would be present during the lunch break to answer questions on members’ role as corporate parents.

A member emphasised the importance of return to home interviews in preventing incidents recurring.

Cllr Boyles assured members that the Council recognised the issues and risks facing young people who went missing and was working closely with partners to reduce episodes of missing and provide support. He said that the complexity of the issues faced by young people meant that it was not a simple one-fix process.

Another member referred to the growing movement towards extending mental health and wellbeing care for young people from 18 to 25. He recognised that supporting young people into early adulthood was critical and enquired whether Gloucestershire was extending the age range for care.

Cllr Boyles stated that he would check to see whether this was already the position. He noted that young people across the county were engaged through the mental

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health Trail Blazer Programme with a positive response to the initiatives already undertaken.

A member said that it was important to focus on what young people needed with the most appropriate professionals engaging at the right time. They referred to the former ASTRA Project for young people who ran away from home which had been judged by Ofsted as an example of best practice.

Cllr Boyles undertook to speak to the Director of Children's Services to see if there were any other avenues the Council should be investigating to help young people who ran away from home.

RESOLVED to note the report

70. PETITIONS

No petitions were presented by members.

71. MOTIONS

Motion 848 - Tree planting

Cllr Lesley Williams, as proposer, and Cllr Graham Morgan, as seconder, indicated that they had accepted the friendly amendments from the Liberal Democrat Group highlighted below.

This Council passed a motion on 15th May 2019 recognising that there is a climate emergency.

This Council committed to an 80% reduction in the corporate carbon emissions no later than 2030, striving to 100% with carbon offset by the same date. Research now shows that planting billions of trees is the best and cheapest way to tackle climate change.

This Council resolves to request Cabinet to develop a policy of tree planting; with a target of planting ~~2 trees~~ 1 tree for each Gloucestershire resident every year up to by 2030, if not sooner, and to work with tenant farmers and encourage at least 2 trees per field for most pasture land.

I ask that a progress report is included in the annual Environmental report.

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Cllr Williams stated that trees curbed climate change by absorbing large amounts of carbon dioxide and they reduced soil degradation, diminished flood risk and yielded a renewable energy resource. It was estimated that a worldwide tree planting programme could remove two thirds of carbon dioxide emissions going into the atmosphere as a result of human activity. She noted that it was tree planting week with local bodies including parish councils committing to a tree planting programme.

Cllr Morgan expressed concern that deforestation was not just happening in other parts of the world but also locally. He said that the Forestry Commission were clearing large areas of the Forest of Dean at a time they should be looking to increase tree coverage.

Cllr Paul Hodgkinson, who had put forward the friendly amendment, referred to the Liberal Democrat motion considered at the last meeting. He said that planting billions of trees across the World was the cheapest and best way to address climate change. He believed that planting one tree per year for each resident of the county by 2030 was a realistic ambition.

Cllr Nigel Moor proposed and Cllr Mark Hawthorne seconded a motion without notice under procedural rule 11.1.13 of part 4 of the constitution, to refer the subject of the debate to the Cabinet. He said that he supported the principle of the motion and noted that the Council was already working with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and the Woodland Trust to identify sites for tree planting. Opportunities would be taken to promote biodiversity and tree planting on the County Council estate. He noted that changes would be proposed to the Gloucestershire Streets' Manual to encourage more tree planting on new housing sites. The Climate Change Strategy would be presented to the Cabinet on 20 December 2019.

There was a short adjournment to allow Group Leaders to agree how the motion without notice should be dealt with.

On reconvening, a member expressed concern that referring the motion to the Cabinet would close down debate. They said that members would not be given the opportunity to raise important issues such as the benefits of tree planting in an urban environment.

Cllr Hawthorne stated that Gloucestershire needed to play its part in the national programme of tree planting that would follow the General Election whichever party was elected. He noted the benefits not only to the environment but also in terms of flood management.

Another member welcomed the sentiment of the original motion with the friendly amendment. They said, though, that it should be seen as a minimum and much

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more was required. They noted the importance of street trees and expressed concern that developers were currently being charged £600 for each new tree planted. Alongside planting new trees, steps needed to be taken to preserve existing trees and hedgerows. As part of its engagement plan, the Council should engage with climate change emergency groups and parish and town councils.

A member said that one of the most important aspects of tree planting was that it engaged the public in the debate on climate change. They noted that new trees did not become fully effective in absorbing carbon dioxide for 15-20 years. It was important to reduce carbon dioxide emissions now and not simply take steps to mitigate emissions.

In summing up as the mover of the original motion, Cllr Williams said that tree planting had to be a national priority following the General Election. She noted that in Ethiopia 350 million trees had been planted in a single day so great things could be achieved if there was the political will.

On being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED to refer the following motion to the Cabinet:

This Council passed a motion on 15th May 2019 recognising that there is a climate emergency.

This Council committed to an 80% reduction in the corporate carbon emissions no later than 2030, striving to 100% with carbon offset by the same date. Research now shows that planting billions of trees is the best and cheapest way to tackle climate change.

This Council resolves to request Cabinet to develop a policy of tree planting; with a target of planting 1 tree for each Gloucestershire resident every year up to 2030, if not sooner, and to work with tenant farmers and encourage at least 2 trees per field for most pasture land.

A progress report is included in the annual Environmental report.

Motion 849 – Responsible investment policy

Cllr Colin Hay, as proposer, and Cllr Rachel Smith, as seconder, indicated that they wished to amend the motion as indicated below:

This Council notes that:

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- *A 'Climate Emergency' was declared by Gloucestershire County Council in May 2019, along with five of the six district councils.*
- *Burning fossil fuels poses a serious risk to the stability of the climate upon which our well-being and economy depend.*
- *Research demonstrates that up to 80% world's proven fossil fuel reserves will have to remain unburnt if we are to have a reasonable chance of keeping global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius, the globally agreed target for climate change mitigation.*
- *Since 80% of fossil fuels must remain in the ground, the reserves of the fossil fuel industry risk becoming 'stranded assets' with little or no value – representing a substantial financial risk for those that invest in them.*

This Council further notes that:

- *Gloucestershire Pension Fund currently has over £140 million invested in the oil, coal and gas industries – nearly 7 per cent of the total pension investments.*
- *To date, over 1,100 institutions representing nearly \$11.5 trillion in assets have committed to divest from fossil fuel companies.*
- *Over a dozen UK councils have committed to disinvestment, including Stroud District Council and nearby Oxford City Council.*
- *Divesting from fossil-fuel industries is both environmentally and financially responsible, with fossil-free portfolios outperforming non-divested equivalents in recent years.*

This Council commits to:

- *Review its Investment Strategy and develop and implement a Responsible Investment Policy, which rules out new investments in Fossil fuel companies.*
- *Call on Gloucestershire Pension Fund to divest from fossil fuels by requesting its representative on the Pension Fund Committee to call for the development and adoption of responsible investment policies which:*
 - 1 *Immediately freeze any new investment in the top 200 publicly-traded fossil fuel companies.*
 - 2 *Divest from direct ownership and any commingled funds that include fossil fuel public equities and corporate bonds within three years.*
 - 3 *Set out an approach to quantify and address climate change risks affecting all other investments.*
 - 4 *~~Focus future investments on areas that minimise climate change risk.~~ Actively seek to invest in companies that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and minimise climate change risk.*

Cllr Hay stated that the Council needed to react to the climate change emergency and could not just continue with business as usual. Its impact was being felt across the UK now with homes uninhabitable in the north west of England following heavy rainfall and severe flooding in recent weeks. He noted that 7% of the total pension fund investment was in fossil fuel industries. The core business of these companies related to fossil fuels and on average they diverted just 1% of their activity to green fuel. He said that it was evident that engagement with these firms to encourage them to change was not working and the only approach was divestment. He referred to the success of divestment in South Africa which had resulted in political change. The right approach was to invest in low carbon investments and green technology companies, who were not only addressing climate change but also providing stronger returns for investors.

Cllr Rachel Smith believed that engaging with fossil fuel firms in an effort to change their working practices simply did not work and divestment was the only way forward. She expressed concern that some firms had poured investors' money into public relations activities to argue against climate change. She noted that other financial institutions were already taking action whilst protecting the interests of investors and pensioners by switching to high performing green industries.

Cllr Lynden Stowe proposed and Cllr Nigel Moor seconded the following amendment to the motion (see highlighted text).

This Council notes that:

- *A 'Climate Emergency' was declared by Gloucestershire County Council in May 2019, along with five of the six district councils.*
- *Burning fossil fuels poses a serious risk to the stability of the climate upon which our well-being and economy depend.*
- *Research demonstrates that up to 80% world's proven fossil fuel reserves will have to remain unburnt if we are to have a reasonable chance of keeping global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius, the globally agreed target for climate change mitigation.*
- *Since 80% of fossil fuels must remain in the ground, the reserves of the fossil fuel industry risk becoming 'stranded assets' with little or no value – representing a substantial financial risk for those that invest in them.*

This Council further notes that:

- *Gloucestershire Pension Fund currently has over £140 million invested in the oil, coal and gas industries – nearly 7 per cent of the total pension investments.*

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- Gloucestershire Pension Fund has invested £50m in low carbon investments, and has committed to invest a further £75m in sustainable equities.
- To date, over 1,100 institutions representing nearly \$11.5 trillion in assets have committed to divest from fossil fuel companies.
- Over a dozen UK councils have committed to divestment, including Stroud District Council and nearby Oxford City Council.
- The Brunel Pension Partnership, of which Gloucestershire is part has already made a commitment to decarbonisation, and is fully committed to the United Nations Principles of Responsible Investment.
- The Brunel approach is to track and publish carbon emissions of the entire fund, and using the strength of its investments to encourage companies to firstly be transparent about their carbon footprint, and then to reduce it, with an aim of decarbonising all of its investments.
- Disinvestment by responsible investors leads to shares being owned by investors who don't care about carbon emissions and have no interest in cutting them. In contrast, the Brunel approach provides a real incentive for companies to decarbonise.
- ~~Divesting from fossil-fuel industries is both environmentally and financially responsible, with fossil-free portfolios outperforming non-divested equivalents in recent years.~~

This Council commits to:

- Review its ~~Investment~~ Treasury Management Strategy and develop and implement a Responsible Investment Policy, which rules out new investments in Fossil fuel companies.
- Welcome the public, documented, steps already taken by the Brunel Pension Partnership to decarbonise its investments and supports Brunel's moves to quantify the carbon costs of all its investments, and use the strength of its investments to encourage all companies it invests in to decarbonise, with disinvestment as a sanction for companies that do not do so.
- Call on the Gloucestershire Pension Fund Committee to continue to scrutinise Brunel's progress on an ongoing basis, and to ensure monitoring the fund's carbon performance over time is given similar priority to monitoring the fund's financial performance.
- ~~Call on Gloucestershire Pension Fund to divest from fossil fuels by requesting its representative on the Pension Fund Committee to call for the development and adoption of responsible investment policies which:~~

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- ~~1. Immediately freeze any new investment in the top 200 publicly-traded fossil fuel companies.~~
- ~~2. Divest from direct ownership and any commingled funds that include fossil fuel public equities and corporate bonds within three years.~~
- ~~3. Set out an approach to quantify and address climate change risks affecting all other investments.~~
- ~~4. Actively seek to invest in companies that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and minimise climate change risk.~~

Cllr Stowe explained that the assets of the Gloucestershire Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) were entirely separate from the County Council. The Council was the administering authority with around 200 other organisations as members. There were 60,000 pensioners and staff contributing to the Gloucestershire LGPS. He said that the funds were under the management of the Brunel Pension Partnership and he assured members that it took its environmental stewardship responsibilities very seriously. A review of the investment strategy was due to be undertaken in 2020 and this had been the subject of a presentation to the Pensions Committee in September 2019. The independent pension adviser recommended that the best approach was to engage with fossil fuel companies to change their approach. He noted that some of the firms were huge multi-national companies with a large number of investors and millions of employees.

Cllr Moor stated that he was a member of the Pension Board that scrutinised the activities of the Pension Committee and he supported the approach being undertaken. He believed that the current policy of engagement to encourage firms to change their behaviour was the right one.

A member of the Pensions Committee noted that the Brunel Pension Partnership had already withdrawn funds from companies who did not have a carbon management policy in place.

Another member supported the approach of the Brunel Pension Partnership to use shareholder power to influence companies to change for the better and become more environmentally friendly. They said that by divesting in fossil fuel firms by selling the shares meant that any influence over the firms was lost. Referring to the Council's treasury management policy, they noted that the Council already had a robust policy in terms of investment in fossil fuel industries.

A member stated that the consumer had huge power and divestment showed that the Council was serious about tackling climate change. They believed that if local authorities and pension funds across the country did this then the fossil fuel industry

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would take steps to change quickly. They noted that there were opportunities to invest in other industries that would provide good returns for pensioners.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was supported and became the substantive motion.

Cllr Stowe explained that one of the major benefits of the Brunel Pension Partnership was that it gave shareholders clout and allowed firms to be held to account. The situation would be monitored and if fossil fuel firms did not make sufficient progress then steps could be taken to withdraw investments.

In summing up as the mover of the original motion, Cllr Hay recognised that the Brunel Pension Partnership was doing an excellent job of managing the pension fund but he said that action needed to be taken now to divest from fossil fuel industries. This would make firms listen and change would happen more quickly. The future was low carbon and carbon neutral industries and this was where returns were likely to be higher. He noted that in 2020 the Council and the Gloucestershire LGPS would be legally required to report on environmental, social and corporate governance and taking steps to disinvest in fossil fuels would support this.

On being put to the vote, it was

RESOLVED that

This Council notes that:

- *A 'Climate Emergency' was declared by Gloucestershire County Council in May 2019, along with five of the six district councils.*
- *Burning fossil fuels poses a serious risk to the stability of the climate upon which our well-being and economy depend.*
- *Research demonstrates that up to 80% world's proven fossil fuel reserves will have to remain unburnt if we are to have a reasonable chance of keeping global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius, the globally agreed target for climate change mitigation.*
- *Since 80% of fossil fuels must remain in the ground, the reserves of the fossil fuel industry risk becoming 'stranded assets' with little or no value – representing a substantial financial risk for those that invest in them.*

This Council further notes that:

- *Gloucestershire Pension Fund currently has over £140 million invested in the oil, coal and gas industries – nearly 7 per cent of the total pension investments.*

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- *Gloucestershire Pension Fund has invested £50m in low carbon investments, and has committed to invest a further £75m in sustainable equities.*
- *To date, over 1,100 institutions representing nearly \$11.5 trillion in assets have committed to divest from fossil fuel companies.*
- *Over a dozen UK councils have committed to divestment, including Stroud District Council and nearby Oxford City Council.*
- *The Brunel Pension Partnership, of which Gloucestershire is part has already made a commitment to decarbonisation, and is fully committed to the United Nations Principles of Responsible Investment.*
- *The Brunel approach is to track and publish carbon emissions of the entire fund, and using the strength of its investments to encourage companies to firstly be transparent about their carbon footprint, and then to reduce it, with an aim of decarbonising all of its investments.*
- *Disinvestment by responsible investors leads to shares being owned by investors who don't care about carbon emissions and have no interest in cutting them. In contrast, the Brunel approach provides a real incentive for companies to decarbonise.*

This Council commits to:

- *Review its Treasury Management Strategy and develop and implement a Responsible Investment Policy, which rules out new investments in Fossil fuel companies.*
- *Welcome the public, documented, steps already taken by the Brunel Pension Partnership to decarbonise its investments and supports Brunel's moves to quantify the carbon costs of all its investments, and use the strength of its investments to encourage all companies it invests in to decarbonise, with disinvestment as a sanction for companies that do not do so.*
- *Call on the Gloucestershire Pension Fund Committee to continue to scrutinise Brunel's progress on an ongoing basis, and to ensure monitoring the fund's carbon performance over time is given similar priority to monitoring the fund's financial performance.*

Motion 853 – Opposing a Cotswold National Park

Cllr Joe Harris proposed and Cllr Mark Hawthorne seconded the motion included on the agenda.

Cllr Harris recognised that the Cotswolds were a national treasure with tourism valued at close to £1 billion each year and 10% of the working population involved in the tourism industry. He said that 150,000 people lived in the Cotswolds and

there were 40 large employment sites. He welcomed the Glover Review but he did not support the Cotswolds becoming a National Park. As a result of high house prices, social mobility was already amongst the worst in the UK and National Park status would simply exacerbate the housing affordability crisis. He was concerned that local authority planning powers, which could be used to address housing issues, would be lost to an appointed body. None of the democratic bodies covering the Cotswolds were supportive of a National Park. He believed the local authorities should work with the Cotswold AONB Conservation Board to take advantage of the opportunities highlighted in the Glover review.

Cllr Hawthorne said that he had spoken to council leaders both inside and outside Gloucestershire and none of them supported a National Park. The Cotswolds, with a population of 150,000 people, was very different to existing National Park areas where the average population was just 31,000. It was a working community and National Park status would damage the local economy and impact on the future viability of the area. He noted the Cotswold AONB Conservation Board was an appointed body without proper democratic accountability. He expressed concern that despite support from across Gloucestershire, the board had opposed the A417 Missing Link.

A number of other members spoke in support of the motion. Concerns were raised around the impact of a National Park on social mobility, affordable housing, house prices, job creation, democratic accountability and tourism. They noted that in some parts of the Cotswolds 'over-tourism' through excessive numbers of day visitors was becoming a real problem for local communities. The gap between house prices and average salary in the Cotswolds was the highest anywhere in the country other than London. Increased planning controls brought by National Park status would act as a deterrent to creating new jobs and affordable housing.

On being put to the vote, the motion received unanimous support.

RESOLVED that

This Council notes that

- *The Government recently commissioned a review of National Parks and AONB sites in England, led by Julian Glover. The findings of the review (Landscapes Review) were published in September.*
- *The Cotswolds, which already has Conservation Board Status as an AONB, receives approximately 23 million visitor days each year, with tourism worth around £900m to the local economy.*
- *The Landscapes Review identifies the Cotswolds as a 'strong candidate, to be considered for National Park status', suggesting Natural England and Ministers consider the case for this designation.*

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- *While 44% of the AONB is in Cotswold District and 64% is in Gloucestershire, only a 10th of the current AONB board are elected members in Cotswold District and less than 40% of the councillors on the board come from Gloucestershire.*

This Council further notes, however, that:

- *The Cotswolds is not reliant upon just its landscapes and tourism for its economy, it is also a thriving area for a wide range of businesses and technologies with more than 40 established employment sites, many of which are located within the AONB.*
- *A National Park designation would greatly restrict the ability of Cotswold District Council and Gloucestershire County Council to pursue its economic and wider social priorities, and the Council would lose a raft of planning powers to a largely appointed body.*
- *There is already a housing affordability crisis in the Cotswolds and a National Park designation could further exacerbate this as there is often a 'price premium' applied to National Park areas designation. A National Park designation would reduce democratic accountability across significant parts of Cotswold and Stroud districts, as well as parts of Tewkesbury and Cheltenham.*

This Council resolves to write to Natural England and relevant Ministers:

- *To support aspects of the Landscape Review, including the underlying thrust of promoting and supporting national landscapes for our nation's wellbeing while protecting and enhancing our countryside.*
- *But to reject the notion of a National Park designation for the Cotswolds, noting that tourism is already thriving in the areas and that no evidence has been provided to show how the costs to the wider economic future outweigh the smaller benefits that would come from a change in designation.*
- *To work with other local authorities within the AONB and the Cotswolds Conservation Board to address the challenges and opportunities highlighted in the Landscapes Review.*

Motion 851 – County Council Planning Policy: achieving the highest environmental standards

Cllr Lesley Williams withdrew the following motion:

This Council passed a motion on 15 May 2019 recognising that there is a climate emergency.

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This Council is committed to an 80% reduction in the corporate carbon emissions no later than 2030, striving to 100% with carbon offset by the same date.

This Council should implement a planning policy that ensures all new developments that are being sponsored by GCC are built to the highest environmental standards. This policy should include the use of heat source pumps, solar panelling, recycled grey water and any other measures that would mitigate against climate change.

These measures should be included in all buildings and in the considerable school building programme that this Council is now undertaking. The Council to change its planning policy to mandate these standards for all new schools, including free schools, and to work with planning authorities in the District Councils to ensure that this standard is adopted for all other buildings sponsored by GCC.

Motion 852 – Private schools in Gloucestershire

Cllr Mark Hawthorne, as proposer, and Cllr Patrick Molyneux, as seconder, indicated that they wished to amend the motion as indicated below:

This Council notes the Labour Party proposes conference agreed to abolish all private schools. This Council notes the Labour Manifesto commitment to ‘ask the Social Justice Commission to advise on integrating private schools and creating a comprehensive education system.’ This Council notes there are 8,123 students in 25 private schools in Gloucestershire.

This Council further notes it would cost in excess of £35 million per annum, more than 10% of the total schools budget every year, to transfer these students to the state system, and this would be the equivalent of cutting £83,388 per annum from the average Gloucestershire primary school and £415,759 per annum from the average Gloucestershire secondary school. As a result, the average Gloucestershire primary school would lose the equivalent of almost 3 teachers, and the average secondary over 14 teachers. This is simply on the basis of providing average per pupil state funding for each private school student, and includes no provision for one-off redundancy and compensation costs, which would potentially be very significant.

This Council further notes Labour’s national commitment to a ‘comprehensive education system’ once again places Gloucestershire’s state grammar and special schools in the firing line. This Council recalls the Labour Party’s efforts in the 1990s and 2000s to close special and grammar schools in Gloucestershire, and the damage this did. This Council puts on record its support for Gloucestershire’s grammar, state and comprehensive schools, and its opposition to any ideologically driven campaign against parent choice.

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This Council believes that the proposal would do massive and unjustified damage to Gloucestershire state schools and deny parental choice, for no reason other than the politics of envy and division. This Council resolves to oppose the Labour Party's proposals, and to write to all county MPs setting out our opposition.

Cllr Hawthorne stated that he was proud of the comprehensive education he had received but he believed that parents should have the right to choose how their children were educated. He expressed concern that grammar schools and special schools might be at risk too. Referring to private schools in Gloucestershire, he noted that it would cost around £35 million to transfer more than 8,000 students into the state education system. Nationally the cost was likely to be around £3 billion. He said that the Conservative Party were committed to improving education for children wherever they went to school.

After seeking advice from the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, the Chairman did not allow the following amendment proposed by Cllr Kate Haigh. The amendment changed the original motion to such an extent that it did not meet the definition of an amendment included at procedure rule 12.5 of part 4 of the constitution.

This Council notes the Labour Party proposes to close the tax loopholes enjoyed by elite private schools and use that money to improve the lives of all children, and to ask the Social Justice Commission to advise on integrating private schools and creating a comprehensive system.

This Council notes there are 87055 children attending state schools in Gloucestershire and that the Labour manifesto is fully costed.

This Council believes that the proposal would bring social and educational benefits to Gloucestershire state schools as students, their parents and the staff transferring into the state sector will bring their social and educational capital for the many. The possibility of building a fairer society is at the heart of this policy and the people of Gloucestershire will all benefit.

This Council resolves to be open minded about the Labour Party's proposals, and to write to the incoming Secretary of State for Education calling for greater investment in our schools and greater opportunities for all our children.

Cllr Haigh explained that she had concerns regarding the accuracy of the amended motion that had been put forward by Cllr Hawthorne. She clarified the position in terms of Labour Party policy and made reference to the commitment to schools and education included in the party's manifesto.

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Some members questioned the accuracy of the figures presented and spoke about the importance of providing the best possible education for children in Gloucestershire, whichever school they attended. Whilst educational attainment was amongst the best in the country in some schools, there were a significant number of others that were failing children and were rated by Ofsted as poor or inadequate. There was also concern around the poor structural condition of some schools with a particular reference made to Forest High School in Cinderford.

A member questioned how specialist private schools like the Star College could continue. Another member asked what arrangements would be made to educate the children of armed forces personnel if private boarding schools no longer existed.

The Liberal Democrat Group members said that nothing was more important than education and they were on the side of teachers and parents. They noted that their party had committed to restore funding to 2015 levels.

In seconding the motion, Cllr Molyneux reiterated Cllr Hawthorne's comments about parental choice and noted the burden that would fall on the taxpayer if students in private schools were transferred to the state system.

On being put to the vote, it was

RESOLVED that

This Council notes the Labour Party conference agreed to abolish all private schools. This Council notes the Labour Manifesto commitment to 'ask the Social Justice Commission to advise on integrating private schools and creating a comprehensive education system.' This Council notes there are 8,123 students in 25 private schools in Gloucestershire.

This Council further notes it would cost in excess of £35 million per annum, more than 10% of the total schools budget every year, to transfer these students to the state system, and this would be the equivalent of cutting £83,388 per annum from the average Gloucestershire primary school and £415,759 per annum from the average Gloucestershire secondary school. As a result, the average Gloucestershire primary school would lose the equivalent of almost 3 teachers, and the average secondary over 14 teachers. This is simply on the basis of providing average per pupil state funding for each private school student, and includes no provision for one-off redundancy and compensation costs, which would potentially be very significant.

This Council further notes Labour's national commitment to a 'comprehensive education system' once again places Gloucestershire's state grammar and special

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schools in the firing line. This Council recalls the Labour Party's efforts in the 1990s and 2000s to close special and grammar schools in Gloucestershire, and the damage this did. This Council puts on record its support for Gloucestershire's grammar, state and comprehensive schools, and its opposition to any ideologically driven campaign against parent choice.

This Council believes that the proposal would do massive and unjustified damage to Gloucestershire state schools and deny parental choice, for no reason other than the politics of envy and division. This Council resolves to oppose the Labour Party's proposals, and to write to all county MPs setting out our opposition.

72. MEMBER QUESTIONS

Thirty six questions had been received. A copy of the answers was circulated and is attached to the signed copy of the minutes.

Question 1 – Cllr Bernie Fisher asked when the transition to alternative arrangements of the two young people in unregistered care homes would be carried out?

Cllr Richard Boules replied that the aim was not to place young people into unregistered homes but the market was not mature enough so on occasions this had happened. The Cabinet Member referred to Trevone House and the options that it would provide when placing young people into care.

Question 2 – Cllr Iain Dobie asked whether the County Council should take a more active role in promoting the take up of pension credits.

In response Cllr Mark Hawthorne stated that he was open to any suggestions the member had but stated that it was no more the County Council's responsibility than Cheltenham Borough Council and suggested the member ask his question there as the more promotion the better.

Question 3 – Cllr Kate Haigh informed members that any activities undertaken by the County Council in relation to Holocaust Memorial Day should be submitted to the Memorial Day website so that it could be added to the map. She asked if there would be an opportunity for members to not only be involved in events but to lead on them.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne replied that he was happy to ensure that councillors were involved and would discuss with Group Leaders.

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Question 4 – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson stated that the benches obstructing the pavement in Bourton-on-the-Water should not be taking 19 months to be dealt with. He asked whether when meeting with officers shortly on the issue a definite timescale for resolving this could be drawn up.

Cllr Vernon Smith explained that as this was a legal dispute he could not provide those assurances but was hopeful that they could discuss a way forward with officers.

Question 6 – Cllr Lesley Williams asked whether a list of places could be provided where children placed out of county were based. She emphasised the importance of corporate parents being reassured those children were being cared for appropriately.

Cllr Richard Boyles replied that the previous week there had been 2 children in unregulated places out of county and this week there were none. The position changed daily. When placed out of county, a risk assessment was carried out and if a child required it then more visits were carried out. He said that he would be happy to meet with the member and the director to discuss further.

Question 8 – Cllr Lesley Williams asked when a section of road was patched, how long did the Cabinet Member expect it to last? With regards to question 9, she asked whether she should expect a patch to crack and need resurfacing after 4 weeks.

In response Cllr Vernon Smith said that the length of time would be determined by the method and material used to patch. He referred to the major resurfacing that would take place starting in January 2020.

Question 14 – Cllr Lesley Williams replied that she would like to see a report detailing who had benefitted from the money to address holiday hunger including how much had been spent.

Cllr Richard Boyles replied that overall the scheme had cost £2.15 per meal and £20 per family box. Lots of work had been carried out to deliver the project at short notice. A final report would be produced at the end of the programme and shared with members.

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Question 15 – Cllr Joe Harris stated that Gloucestershire roads were a disgrace and asked why residents should vote for the Conservatives when they had failed to maintain them.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne referred the member to the £150m investment in roads stating that the Conservatives were delivering locally the biggest investment in roads in a generation.

Question 16 – Cllr Iain Dobie asked if the Leader would commit to report back to the Council on the second campaign of Operation Close Pass.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne replied that he would be happy to report back on this vital piece of work on road safety but that the member could also ask for details from the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Question 17 – Cllr Klara Sudbury explained that the purpose of her motion on Type 1 Diabetes was to raise awareness of the issues, including motor neurone disease. She asked if the Leader would agree to the Council being active on social media on this issue on national diabetes day. In addition she highlighted the use of continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) and asked whether the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group had revised their policy as a result of the motion.

Cllr Mark Hawthorne replied that a comprehensive answer had been provided to the question, but if anything had been missed he would discuss with officers. Officers would explore what impact the motion had made with regards to the policies.

Question 18 – Cllr Joe Harris referred to concerns about downgrading of services at Cirencester Hospital and Cheltenham General Hospital. He asked how the public could trust the Conservatives on the issue of health.

In response, Cllr Mark Hawthorne referred to comments made in response to questions from the Cheltenham MP regarding the future of Cheltenham Accident and Emergency being saved and described the question as cynical 'politicking'.

Question 19 – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson asked that given that the figures confirmed that 83% of schools would be worse off as a result of the funding in place since 2015, what was the Leader of the Council doing about it?

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Cllr Mark Hawthorne stated that Gloucestershire County Council has been campaigning long and hard to see fairer funding and part of the Conservative Party manifesto included additional funding which would benefit Gloucestershire.

Question 20 – Cllr Iain Dobie asked if the Cabinet Member would be reporting back on the commitments made as result of the Council motion on the climate emergency.

Cllr Nigel Moor replied that the strategy document being presented to the Cabinet on 20 December 2019 would address this.

Question 22 – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson asked if the Leader could provide more information on the formation of a Gloucestershire Youth Council.

In response Cllr Mark Hawthorne replied that every single partner was committed to ongoing engagement with young people. It was felt that the Youth Council might not be the best option for those who do not have a voice. Further work was ongoing on the best approach to take.

Question 35 – Cllr Rachel Smith asked why information relating to disposal of assets was still produced as a confidential paper when other local authorities were publishing that information.

Cllr Lynden Stowe replied that the advice from officers had been that buyers names should not be included on the publically published papers, but if other authorities were publishing that information then he would look into it further.

Question 36 – Cllr Eva Ward asked what plans there were to share the results of assessments made regarding the disposal of the two residential care homes that had been closed in Stroud with Stroud District Council and Stroud Town Council.

Cllr Tim Harman replied that this was still at an early stage and he was aware of some ideas from the councils. They would be included in the process.

73. SCRUTINY REPORT

Cllr Shaun Parsons, Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented the report on recent scrutiny activities. He said that the new scrutiny

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structure continued to bed-in well with non-executive members active on committees and task groups. A cross-party public participation task group had just started meeting.

On 29 November 2019, the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be receiving a context-setting presentation on equalities and diversity following the recent motion at Council. Cllr Parsons drew members' attention to the budget scrutiny day on 9 January 2020.

RESOLVED to note the report

74. CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Chair of the Constitution Committee, presented the report from the meeting held on 14 October 2019.

Cllr Iain Dobie requested that consideration be given to making detailed changes to the terms of reference of the Health and Wellbeing Board which he believed would improve democratic accountability. Cllr Hawthorne stated that this would need to be considered by the Constitution Committee and, if necessary, recommendations would come back to Council. He asked that Cllr Dobie send an email to him following the meeting.

Cllr Nigel Robbins, Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, recognised that training for members of the committee could not be made mandatory but he encouraged members to attend. He said that he found the sessions run by officers most informative and he noted the value of longstanding members attending to provide information on their experiences.

A member expressed concern at any move to change the procedure for Council motions involving the pre-assessment of financial, environmental and equality implications. He believed that the current practice had worked well for years with the opportunity for political groups to propose amendments as necessary. Cllr Hawthorne explained that no decisions had been made and the issue would be looked at in more detail at the next meeting of the Constitution Committee.

Another member suggested that it would be useful for the Constitution Committee to consider the process for motions, in particular the operation of motions moved without notice. He believed that it might be useful to draw up a flow chart setting out a clear pathway to ensure that matters were reported back to the Council as appropriate.

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RESOLVED to ratify the changes to the Constitution included in the report relating to:

- a) *The terms of reference of the Audit and Governance Committee (shown at Annex A).*
- b) *The scheme of delegation (Annex B)*
- c) *Those made by the Monitoring Officer (Annex C)*

75. CABINET

A member asked if the decision relating to the dynamic purchasing system reflected the Council motion on using low emission and electric vehicles.

Councillor Nigel Moor, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning, advised that it was part of the procurement process for contracts. He undertook to speak to officers to ask them to provide more information on the process.

RESOLVED to note the Cabinet Decision Statement for the meeting held on 24 July 2019.

75.1 Cabinet 9 October 2019

Cllr Richard Boyles, the Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Early Years, presented the recommendation relating to the Youth Justice Management Plan which formed part of the Council's policy framework. He explained that the Youth Offending Service in Gloucestershire rated well in comparison with other local authority areas.

RESOLVED

- a) *To approve the Youth Justice Management Plan*
- b) *To note the Cabinet Decision Statement for the meeting held on 9 October 2019.*

75.2 Cabinet 13 November 2019

RESOLVED to note the Cabinet Decision Statement for the meeting held on 13 November 2019.

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75.3 Cabinet Member Decision Statements

RESOLVED to note the Cabinet Member Decision Statements for the period 29 August to 7 November 2019.

76. COTSWOLD AONB CONSERVATION BOARD

RESOLVED that Cllr Shaun Parsons be appointed to replace Cllr Roger Wilson on the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Conservation Board.

77. GLOUCESTERSHIRE LGPS ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

Cllr Ray Theodoulou, Chair of the Pensions Committee, presented the Gloucestershire Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) 2018-19 Annual Report.

The meeting ended at 2.45pm

CHAIRMAN

Signed

Date

CHAIRMAN