

## Council

**Monday, 25th March, 2019**  
**2.30 - 5.55 pm**

<b>Attendees</b>	
<b>Councillors:</b>	Bernard Fisher (Chair), Roger Whyborn (Vice-Chair), Victoria Atherstone, Matt Babbage, Paul Baker, Dilys Barrell, Angie Boyes, Nigel Britter, Jonny Brownstein, Flo Clucas, Chris Coleman, Mike Collins, Stephen Cooke, Iain Dobie, Tim Harman, Steve Harvey, Rowena Hay, Alex Hegenbarth, Karl Hobley, Sandra Holliday, Peter Jeffries, Steve Jordan, Chris Mason, Paul McCloskey, Andrew McKinlay, Tony Oliver, Dennis Parsons, John Payne, Louis Savage, Diggory Seacome, Malcolm Stennett, Jo Stafford, Klara Sudbury, Simon Wheeler, Max Wilkinson, Suzanne Williams and David Willingham

## Minutes

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Flynn, Horwood and Barnes.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2019 were signed and approved as a correct record.

**4. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR**

The Mayor briefed Members on the events he had attended and made particular reference to the opening of the new crematorium which had been an exciting project for the council.

**5. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

The Leader informed Members that a bid had been submitted to the Future High Street Fund which included reference to the proposed box park at Cheltenham Minster. He also informed that the County Council with CBC and Tewkesbury had submitted a bid to the Housing Infrastructure Fund for an all ways junction at junction 10.

**6. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS**

There were none.

**7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

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| <b>1.</b> | <b>Question from Andrew Riley to the Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</b> |
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	<p>Serious accidents that have occurred in the town since the commencement of phase 4 have not been considered in the decision to extend the trial even though they were on roads which have been directly affected by traffic increases, on one short stretch of All Saints Road there have been 3 accidents in as many months during phase 4, yet only 1 has reached the accident map that was considered when deciding to extend phase 4, local residents cannot previously recall any crashes on his stretch of road. So why were all 3 crashes not taken into account when deliberation was taken over this trial. How will all accidents be considered when it comes to the final consideration of the CTP.</p>
	<p><b>Response from Cabinet Member</b></p>
	<p>Section 170 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 requires drivers involved in traffic accidents involving personal injury on the road or other public place to report the accident in person at a police station, or to a constable. All road accidents involving human death or personal injury occurring on the Highway ('road' in Scotland) and notified to the police within 30 days of occurrence, and in which one or more vehicles are involved, are to be reported.</p> <p>Severity of injury is specifically set out. A Serious injury includes (but is not limited to): fracture, internal injury, severe cuts, crushing, burns, concussion and fatalities occurring 30 or more days after the crash. Serious casualties are often (although not necessarily) detained in hospital for treatment.</p> <p>All injury collisions (as defined above) are shared with both the County Council and the Department of Transport. The County Council collect collision data following the national standard across the Country (called Stats 19 and Stats 20) which specifically excludes reporting of 'damage only' collisions.</p> <p>The up-to-date collision data available for the whole of the County is located on the following link;  <a href="https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/road-safety/collision-and-camera-map/">https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/road-safety/collision-and-camera-map/</a></p> <p>The trial restriction of Boots Corner to general traffic is being undertaken by an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO). Once started, ETROs run for 18 months, to allow for changes to be made during the experiment. The current trial started on 28th June 2018 and can run until 28th December 2019.</p> <p>Due to these small sample numbers of injury collisions, the highway authority usually average over more than one year to increase the reliability of the data. Collision data will be analysed as part of the Traffic Regulation Order report at the end of the trial.</p>
<p><b>2.</b></p>	<p><b>Question from Andrew Riley to the Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</b></p>
	<p>Within 2 weeks of the completion CTP phase 2 works a young man was killed in an RTA when walking to work at the junction of Clarence street and Crescent Place. Phase 2 made the north side of imperial square 2 way, enabling a new west of town to East route into Rodney road and the Regent Arcade, a route that includes this junction. What</p>

	<p>investigation has been done into the increased traffic at this junction as a result of the phase 2 changes ? What consideration was given to this investigation prior to the implementation of phase 3 and when hailing phase 2 as being a success.</p>
	<p><b>Response from Cabinet Member</b></p>
	<p>I believe this refers to the tragic incident in April 2017 where a 34 year old woman was knocked down. The driver was subsequently charged with causing death by dangerous driving and convicted for driving without due care.</p> <p>No changes were made to the highway in the vicinity of the incident during 2017 as part of the Cheltenham Transport Plan.</p> <p>Data collected as part of the CTP monitoring is set out below.  <a href="https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/47/cheltenham_development_task_force/1452/boots_corner_trial_closure_data">https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/47/cheltenham_development_task_force/1452/boots_corner_trial_closure_data</a>  Information is also available on the Gloucestershire County Council webpages  <a href="https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/major-projects-list/cheltenham-transport-plan/">https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/major-projects-list/cheltenham-transport-plan/</a>  The GCC pages includes traffic flows  <a href="https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/major-projects-list/cheltenham-transport-plan/cheltenham-traffic-plan-traffic-data/traffic-data/">https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/major-projects-list/cheltenham-transport-plan/cheltenham-traffic-plan-traffic-data/traffic-data/</a></p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Question from Tom Bowhill to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</b></p>
	<p>It is stated in official documents that the Boots Corner one way system would be reviewed before <u>final implementation</u> (or words to that effect).</p> <p>Attempts to find out who, what and when this review would be performed have not been forthcoming. I am repeatedly passed between Cheltenham and Gloucestershire councils and various departments to no effect. My question is-who, what and when will this review take place and be published ?</p> <p>By now a full specification for this analysis should be available ? E.g. air quality was a significant quoted important factor. So where are the original measurement sites ? Weather conditions, dates etc ? Also comparable readings during and at the completion of the trial ?</p>
	<p><b>Response from Cabinet Member</b></p>
	<p>The final decision concerning the Boots Corner trial rests with the GCC Traffic Regulation Order Committee.</p> <p>CBC considered the wider impacts at the Council meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019 and the papers and minutes of that meeting are publicly available, as is access to air quality monitoring data.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Mr Bowhill asked the Cabinet Member to supply him with the name of the person would provide him with the information requested. In response the Cabinet Member explained this would be County Councillor Nigel Moor, Cabinet Member Environment and Planning, Gloucestershire County Council. Mr Bowhill asked what was being done to resolve the 20 areas of criticism in respect of the adjudication report on claim versus conviction ? In response the</p>

	Cabinet Member said that there were challenges to the County Council with regard to the issuing of fines and again was referred to the Cabinet Member at the County Council.
<b>4.</b>	<b>Question from Tom Bowhill to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</b>
	<p>Similar questions must also be asked and critically analysed for footfall at Boots Corner and other affected areas of the town. The effect on small businesses and large businesses in the town. One shop has informed me of significant loss of revenues. There is also the question of what has been the effect on other areas of the town from the diverted traffic ?</p> <p>Previous attempts to obtain information have been met with obstruction, deflection, denial and generally 'not my job' (is it Gloucester's or Cheltenham's job and reverse). Only one department and its staff come out well, "The Freedom of Information Department". But they are only as good as the information they are given. I am not "deluded" as has been suggested but a very experienced "troubleshooter".</p>
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member</b>
	<p>CBC appointed independent specialists to undertake before and during trial footfall counts. That data is publicly available and has been reported in the press.</p> <p>The data and methodology is publically available at <a href="https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/47/cheltenham_development_task_force/1452/boots_corner_trial_closure_data">https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/47/cheltenham_development_task_force/1452/boots_corner_trial_closure_data</a></p> <p>The dates for which data has been collected are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Week 1 commencing 11th June</li> <li>- Week 2 commencing 2nd July</li> <li>- Week 3 commencing 8th October</li> <li>- Week 4 commencing 14th November</li> </ul> <p>Inevitably there were events taking place during all of these weeks, that's the nature of life in Cheltenham:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Week 1: food and drink festival 15-17th June</li> <li>- Week 2: Music festival, Midsummer fiesta on 7th July,</li> <li>- Week 3: Literature festival, Promenade market on 12th October,</li> <li>- Week 4: November Races 16-18th November.</li> </ul> <p>In all cases, it's difficult to know the full impact of the events on Boots Corner at the times sampled (the hours beginning 8 a.m., 12.30 p.m. and 5 p.m.). For example, with the Literature Festival focussed on Montpelier gardens, would that lead to a positive or negative impact on the footfall around Boots Corner?</p> <p>There are many other 'external' factors which impact the counts, e.g. the World Cup was taking place during the second week and there is evidence of drops in footfall coinciding with England games; the weather, whilst generally good, deteriorated markedly during the last days of the third week.</p> <p>So, in order to try to provide a balanced view we commissioned</p>

	<p>surveys covering a number of weeks and averaged out post-closure data across all the weeks sampled. And that's also why we have sampled three periods during the day and looked at individual periods separately to look for inconsistencies in the data.</p> <p>Whilst the economic performance of any town centre is a function of a myriad of factors, CBC considered the wider town centre impact at their meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019 and the papers and minutes of that meeting are publicly available.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Mr Bowhill asked why there were road crews burning off the white arrows at Albion Street. In response the Cabinet Member said this had been undertaken by a subcontractor working for Amey and he had no knowledge that this was being done.</p>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Question from Adam Lillywhite to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</b>
	<p>Boots Corner, Given that the 'environmental argument' failed to convince the TRO committee or the GCC Cabinet that they should allow this scheme to proceed, the Cheltenham development Taskforce has had to resort to behind the scenes intervention and a letter to plead the case to give the scheme a lifeline. Even then they only managed to get this scheme trialed, of which only one of the three options recommended to be trialed is being trialed. I think that we can safely say that the traffic removal has not been 'embraced'. How can it be possible that such an important economic factor as the development of the Municipal offices, which is recently been cited by the Civic Society as generating over £20 million pounds plus for the public purse, is not worth flagging to the public or publicly to the members of this Council who were at an extraordinary meeting called specifically to make a decision on this matter. Why was this given the highest priority of any risk in the Task Force, the body that was created principally to facilitate this scheme and yet CBC have gone to such lengths to hide this intention from the public of Cheltenham and not inform them of this world Class public space?</p>
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member</b>
	<p>I think it is important to clarify several points.</p> <p>The Task Force did engage in the GCC cabinet process, along with many members of the public and wrote in 2015 in support of the Cheltenham Transport Plan phased scheme; a copy of that letter has been provided to Mr Lillywhite so hardly 'behind the scenes'.</p> <p>The Task Force was not established principally to facilitate a Municipal Offices redevelopment scheme; its purpose was to address the work previously badged Civic Pride and critically to bring forward a host of schemes, of which Royal Well was one. The fact that the Brewery Quarter, John Lewis store, Regency Place have all been delivered and that the railway station, Quadrangle, Honeybourne Place and transport plan to name a few are all in progress would attest that there have been other priorities.</p> <p>The Civic Society is an independent body and I suggest that any</p>

	<p>reference to their analysis is posed to them, as I have seen no financial assessment to validate the statement. Interestingly the document you cite was produced after the CBC meeting held on 21st January 2019. The reason that no mention was made in the report simply reflects that there is no clear plan beyond that ambition for a world class space. The Task Force flagged that it would not be possible to comprehensively redevelop or upgrade either the Municipal Offices or Royal Well until there was clarity over the Cheltenham Transport Plan; a situation that remains at this moment as a final decision will not be taken until later this year by the GCC traffic regulation order committee.</p>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Question from Adam Lillywhite to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</b></p>
	<p>Detailed traffic volume data has now been released but is not present for Old Bath Rd, Gloucester Rd, or Princess Elizabeth Way, it is not feasible to determine the impact of this scheme without understanding traffic changes on these, the three alternate trunk routes to which traffic is supposed to be disbursed. Data is unreadable for Ambrose street and many of the other permanent collection sites. Any discussion over the viability of restriction of Rodney rd should have been informed by this data, but it was not released in time despite many requests and promises. The Road most likely to suffer from this further restriction, All Saints Road, has already seen the largest traffic increase in any reported route, this is both in real and percentage terms of 25%, yet this was not presented to the Councillors for consideration. All Saints Rd was only mentioned for its 'surprising' and unexplained 15% increase Southbound which was due to be monitored, yet no information was given to the Councillors on the Northbound increase, which will be compounded by the changes agreed at that meeting.</p> <p>With regard to the pollution map, it is misleading to present this data when it is for before the changes occurred, the 2018 data will only be relevant if it is entirely post 28/6/2018, can you assure that this will be the case? The GCC Lead cabinet member did not identify any serious detrimental impacts in residential areas. Perhaps if he did not sit on the Cheltenham Development Task Force, the body which has been created principally to facilitate this scheme, despite its previous rejection by GCC in 2008 and at the two statutory consultations in the town, then his report may have been less constrained on its impact on residential areas.</p> <p>The development in question has long been completed so it is misleading to the Councillors and Public to attempt to claim that these figures are any longer dependent on the closure.</p>
	<p><b>Response from Cabinet Member</b></p>
	<p>The sites used to collect traffic flow data for CTP monitoring are a combination of GCC's in-situ fixed Automatic Traffic Counters (ATCs) and additional sites on routes which were flagged as potential residential routes which may experience displacement effects.</p> <p>I am not quite sure why Mr Lillywhite has made an assertion that the information was not given to the councillors, as the traffic data is clearly presented in the Jan 21st 2019 council papers. The report</p>

<p>provides the average hourly flow for each direction on All Saints Road and also goes on to note “The Northbound data shows reductions in the peak hours between September and November, with slight increases during the interpeak hours”.</p> <p>Given that the funding for the Cheltenham Transport Plan was secured by GCC with support from CBC from the DfT Local Sustainable Transport Fund, with a Treasury Green Book analysis as the underpinning evidence, it seems entirely reasonable to make an assessment against that initial base, which was what was presented to full Council. The document was debated and endorsed by Council.</p>
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**8. MEMBER QUESTIONS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Jonny Brownsteen to Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Coleman</b>
	<p>The litter tally from a recent litter pick in St Paul's shows 4,522 items of litter collected, of which 2,655 were cigarette butts. Many of the cigarette butts were in the surrounds of the various shops and takeaways along St Paul's Road. Is the council able to make wall-mounted ash trays a requirement for businesses in residential areas? And what can we do to make businesses responsible for keeping the area outside their premises free of litter?</p>
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member</b>
	<p>As Cabinet member for Clean and Green Environment, I would take this opportunity to place on record my appreciation for the community effort in St Paul's and other people engaged in litter picking, which sets a great example to others and in particular, those that show a disregard for our precious environment.</p> <p>I am really pleased community groups are helping keep our neighbourhoods clean. The Council is supporting Keep Britain Tidy's Spring Clean which runs from 22 March to 23 April this year and details of the litter picks arranged by community groups can be found on our website.</p> <p>Cigarette butts contain plastic and are adding to the toll on wildlife caused by unnecessary pollution, as they wash into drains, streams, rivers and ultimately the sea.</p> <p>The Council is currently reviewing its street cleansing service and we are actively engaging with the Cheltenham Business Improvement District (BID) and other organisations like Ubico, The Cheltenham Trust, Cheltenham Borough Homes and @plasticfreecheltenham, to help tackle the issue of plastic and other littering.</p> <p>Keep Britain Tidy are promoting a High Street Clean Up day and the Council will be supporting this initiative not only for our main High Street but also 'high street' areas around town. Additional government funding just announced will help support the provision of equipment for the Council and community groups.</p> <p>The feedback from all the community groups will be valuable in</p>

	<p>understanding what we need to do to improve the cleanliness of our streets and clearly the work in St Paul's demonstrates the need to look at how cigarette butts are disposed of. Our review of litter bins on streets and in parks and gardens will incorporate this issue as most of our bins already allow for the safe disposal of cigarette butts.</p> <p>Decisions about wall-mounted ash trays are ultimately a matter for individual businesses and the Council does not have the power to enforce this, but we would encourage shops and takeaways to consider what measures they can reasonably take to help tackle the issue. We would also welcome proactive co-operation from businesses in helping to keep their own frontages clear of litter, ensuring that this is disposed of responsibly.</p> <p>In a supplementary question queried whether businesses could do anything more to ensure the streets were kept free of litter i.e. by providing ash trays?</p> <p>The Cabinet Member thanked Cllr Brownsteen for all the work he was doing in St Pauls ward and he advised he would undertake further discussions with the relevant officers on the matter.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Tim Harman to Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Chris Coleman</b>
	<p>Reflecting on the Motion on Climate change at the last Council meeting and my previous question, will the Cabinet Member update the Council on plans to install Electric vehicle charging points in Council owned Car Parks.</p> <p>Can he also outline any plans that the Council may have to convert any vehicles in its fleet to low emission energy sources.</p>
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member</b>
	<p>You can see the current locations of charging points in Cheltenham via this link:-</p> <p><a href="https://www.zap-map.com/live/">https://www.zap-map.com/live/</a></p> <p>CBC already has a total of 4 EV charging points (provided via a government grant funded scheme), in its Regent Arcade and Town Centre East car parks which are in use approximately 50% of the time. The authority does not currently charge users for the electricity consumed, which can cost up to £6 per charge for some vehicles. This is not considered to be a scalable situation and is effectively a subsidy for personal car use, which is inherently unsustainable.</p> <p>GCC also has some on-street charging points (e.g. in Montpellier) and is looking at rolling out a wider programme.</p> <p>The carbon footprint of a new car: 6 tonnes CO2e: <a href="#">Citroen C1</a>, basic spec. 17 tonnes CO2e: <a href="#">Ford Mondeo</a>, medium spec. 35 tonnes CO2e: <a href="#">Land Rover Discovery</a>, top of the range. The carbon footprint of making a car is immensely complex. Ores have to be dug out of the ground and the metals extracted.</p>

	<p>Note: Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e) “Carbon dioxide equivalent” or “CO2e” is a term for describing different greenhouse gases in a common unit. For any quantity and type of greenhouse gas, CO2e signifies the amount of CO2 which would have the equivalent global warming impact.</p> <p>See interesting Guardian article here:</p> <p><a href="https://www.theguardian.com/environment/green-living-blog/2010/sep/23/carbon-footprint-new-car">https://www.theguardian.com/environment/green-living-blog/2010/sep/23/carbon-footprint-new-car</a></p> <p>Providing support for car clubs or providing dedicated on-street spaces for communal vehicles may be the way to go in the shorter term, alongside more support for walking and cycling for shorter journeys – our consultant Systra estimates that 70% of journeys within Cheltenham are less than 2km.</p> <p>In 2017, our parking strategy consultants advised against installing more EV charging points, on the basis that battery technology and home charging arrangements would cater for much of the potential future market.</p> <p>The Council will actively consider the purchase of low emission or electric vehicles when replacing its own small fleet and will encourage staff, members, key partners and those in the Council’s supply chain to do the same. Whilst there may be cost and other practical considerations relating to some of these decisions, the Council recognises that it has a community leadership role in setting a best practice example to other organisations.</p> <p>Officers from GCC and CBC met recently to discuss the potential for the authorities to co-operate in the provision of electric pool cars for use by CBC and GCC staff and members on Council business. The preferable location for the vehicles and associated charging points, would be the rear of the Municipal Offices, which would involve the displacement of some existing member parking spaces, as well as the installation of associated charging points. This investment would need to take account of future accommodation options for CBC as a whole.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Harman asked if the Cabinet Member agreed that the Members parking to the rear of the Municipal Officer should not represent an obstacle to progress.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member explained that the points needed further investigation with the County Council, it was early days and the project was ongoing.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Chris Mason to Cabinet Member Corporate Services, Councillor Alex Hegenbarth</b>
	With regard to gas and electricity consumption. Does the Borough Council calculate the CO2 emission from its use of these energy sources? If so please confirm last year’s figures for gas and electricity?
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member</b>

	While the Borough Council does not currently calculate CO2 emissions from its use of gas and electricity, this is something the Council will do as part of the action plan that will be developed towards making the Council carbon neutral.
<b>4.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Chris Mason to Cabinet Member Corporate Services, Councillor Alex Hegenbarth</b>
	With regard to the climate emergency motion passed at February's Council Meeting. Could the Cabinet Member please confirm the amount of "Officer hours" and money spent on work relating to the 6 points under "Full Council calls on the Cabinet to:"?
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member</b>
	I have recently met with Officers and have asked them to draw up an outline plan for delivering the work brought forward as a result of the Motion, so until that is in place the officer time and money that had currently been spent on the work referenced by the Member has and will be minimal.  In a supplementary question Councillor Mason stated that a report was due to be submitted to Council in 5 months to outline CBCs plan to make the council carbon neutral in 2030. He requested that measurable goals be set with clear objectives and he further suggested that the report be reviewed by O&S. The Cabinet Member agreed to do this.
<b>5.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Chris Mason to Cabinet Member Corporate, Councillor Alex Hegenbarth</b>
	What resources in terms of money and Officer hours have been allocated to achieving the target to make Cheltenham carbon neutral by 2030?
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member</b>
	A report will be brought to Council within the next six months setting out the actions the Council will take to address the climate emergency. This will include identifying the resources required to work towards achieving the target of making Cheltenham carbon neutral by 2030.  As a first step towards helping us achieve that target, I would urge all Members to sign up for paperless council tax billing if they haven't done so already.
<b>6.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor Max Wilkinson to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay</b>
	The latest independent footfall figures published by the BID indicate a marked increase in footfall in the town centre. How can this be explained?
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member</b>
	Following access to a new footfall camera installed by national data analysts, Springboard, the BID was able to look afresh at footfall figures for the town centre. This showed that in 2018 Nov and Dec saw an increase compared to 2017 – Nov up 2% and Dec 1.8%. During the same period decreases of 5% and 5.7% respectively were recorded nationally. The Boots Corner trial with longer visitor dwell times and the new openings in the town centre were undoubtedly factors.  Whilst Jan 2019 saw a decrease of 3% year on year, Feb 2019 saw an unprecedented 15% increase. Clearly a complex situation but the

	<p>promotion work undertaken by the BID with its 'lighting up Cheltenham' programme which achieved 10,000 fare paying passengers on the observation wheel over 3 weeks was a major factor.</p>
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>Question from Councillor Max Wilkinson to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</b></p>
	<p>The council's stated ambition is to create a new public square at Boots Corner, but the majority of local people I speak to think that the long-term vision for Boots Corner is fake grass, benches and a few bike racks. When will the council publish its ambitious proposals for the area? Will people be consulted on the favoured options and, if so, what consultation activities are planned?</p>
	<p><b>Response from Cabinet Member</b></p>
	<p>I share your frustration which has been impacted by the phased approach to the wider Cheltenham Transport Plan and extension to the trial. This has been a delicate balance as releasing any long term aspirations has the risk of accusations of pre-determination so we have been keen to establish greater use of the area by the public before promoting any proposed concepts. The current works at Boots Corner are temporary, and whilst I concur that 'astro turf' may not be to everyone's taste, the temporary works have demonstrated that by removing through traffic and creating more public space more people are using the space and staying longer. This has been validated by independent data releases that support our efforts to "reclaim" highway for the benefit of people as dwell times have increased.</p> <p>We aim to commence engagement with the public in more detail about aspirations and options for Boots Corner in April as part of a communications exercise.</p> <p>Any proposed changes are, of course entirely dependent upon the approval of the GCC traffic regulation order committee to the outcome of the trial and GCC highways colleagues to the design proposals themselves, including standard road safety audits.</p>
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>Question from Councillor Max Wilkinson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan</b></p>
	<p>The long-awaited ambition to extend the Honeybourne Line to Lansdown Road was cut out of the railway station upgrade plans due to national level budgetary difficulties, we are told. However, I understand that the council has been working hard behind the scenes to secure the completion of this project. Can the Leader provide an update to inform the cycling and walking group's discussion in early April?</p>
	<p><b>Response from Cabinet Member</b></p>
	<p>I am pleased to report that a "solution" has been found to ensure that this crucial project is delivered. This is thanks to the tenacity of the Task Force and other stakeholders, including GCC. The first stage of the extension of the Honeybourne line sits within the area under the GWR franchise and will be constructed as part of the forecourt improvement which includes 300 extra cycle racks and 70 additional car park spaces. It will extend the route south from its current terminus to the Trimnasium building.</p> <p>The second stage which will be on land under the direct control of Network Rail has been agreed in principle and is now the subject of</p>

	<p>detailed discussion and negotiation. This will take the route from the Trimnasium building up to the Lansdown bridge. There are technical complexities, such as securing access without damaging the structural integrity of the bridge traffic barrier but colleagues at GWR, NR and GCC (highways) are committed to finding a solution.</p> <p>The prize is definitely worth the effort as this connection will not only provide safe access for cyclists from the south but also enable pedestrians to access the station via a short walk from the 94 bus service. All of which will help support our longer term aim to encourage effective sustainable transport options.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Wilkinson queried whether ahead of the cycling a walking group's meeting, the Leader had any tips to ensure the right representations were being made to the right people, in order to ensure there was pressure on Network Rail.</p> <p>The Leader reported that they had a stakeholder meeting scheduled the next day and subsequent to that he would be better placed to advise on who to make the right representations to.</p>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor David Willingham to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan</b>
	Would the Leader of the council join with me in thanking the council staff and contractors who worked tirelessly during race week to keep people safe and to keep our town clean?
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member</b>
	Gold Cup Week involves year round preparation as well as many unsociable hours during the week itself to make sure everything runs smoothly. The event is very important to the town and I would certainly like to thank all those involved in making it a success. That covers not only CBC staff and contractors but also our partners from the racecourse, Police, Gloucestershire Highways, Solace, the BID and neighbouring district councils who help provide cover for the CBC Enforcement Team.
<b>10.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor David Willingham to the Chair of Planning Committee, Councillor Garth Barnes</b>
	Does the Chairman of the Planning Committee share my concerns that following the adoption of the JCS there is now an almost unfathomable quantity of documents that the public need to read to try to understand this council's planning policies, including, but not limited to the JCS, the Local Plan 2nd Review, - June 2006, the list of policies in the Local Plan superseded by the JCS, the NPPF, as well as various supplementary planning documents and supplementary planning guidance?
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member</b>
	The nature of town planning means that several individual documents are required to make up a complete development framework. The new Cheltenham Plan will form a major part of the framework once it is adopted. Officers will work on clarifying the planning policy position in due course. Members of the public are welcome to ask the council questions about specific planning issues to get the most up to date information.
<b>11.</b>	<b>Question from Councillor David Willingham to the Chair of Planning Committee, Councillor Garth Barnes</b>
	In light of the significant and potential confusion that is caused by having

	<p>a partially superseded Local Plan available online, would he ask officers to urgently produce a single document detailing the Local Plan policies that are currently valid and ensure that this is available on the website so that the public can clearly see what policies are valid, and ensure that any documents that are no longer current are moved away from the Planning Policy section of the website and clearly identified as not current archive material?</p>
	<p><b>Response from Cabinet Member</b></p> <p>Once the new Cheltenham Plan is adopted officers intend to produce a document which combines all extant local policies. This will also include links to relevant national level policy. This will provide a more user friendly gateway to the development framework.</p> <p>Councillor Willingham hoped that the Council would learn from this in order to better serve the public in the future. Councillor Baker, the Vice Chair of Planning Committee, agreed that simplifying the process to better serve the public was a good idea.</p>
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>Question from Councillor David Willingham to the Chair of Planning Committee, Councillor Garth Barnes</b></p> <p>In light of the deletion of policy HS 8 (Houses of Multiple Occupation), seemingly without any adequate replacement in the JCS, and the clear harm to communities that can be caused by excessive concentrations of HMOs, would he ask officers to look at applying planning controls on HMO conversions in a much larger part of the borough?</p>
	<p><b>Response from Cabinet Member</b></p> <p>Policy HS8 was deleted because its function was replaced by JCS Policy SD4 which protects local amenity. Conversion of dwellings to HMOs of less than 6 beds now benefit from permitted development rights and so do not require planning permission. These rights can be removed through an Article 4 Direction. The NPPF says that “There should be a particularly strong justification for the withdrawal of permitted development rights relating to a wide area (eg those covering the entire area of a local planning authority, National Park or Area of Outstanding National Beauty).”</p> <p>There is a high bar for evidence which must be passed otherwise the Secretary of State has the power to reverse the direction. The evidence which underpins the Article 4 in St Paul’s was prepared at significant cost in officer time and resource. Similar evidence will be required for each additional ward which is covered by an Article 4 Direction.</p> <p>The Council does not currently have the evidence to prove that other wards should be subject to these restrictions.</p> <p>In a supplementary question, Council Willingham suggested that the council should look at the learning from parking zones in that there was a risk that the problem would be displaced in to neighbouring wards. He suggested a plan to manage this displacement be put in place. Councillor Baker agreed that a more holistic approach was required.</p>

**9. CAPITAL, INVESTMENT, TREASURY AND MRP STRATEGIES AND STATEMENTS 2019/20**

The Cabinet Member Finance introduced the report. Her introduction is reproduced in full in the appendix to these minutes.

The following questions were raised and responses given :

- Was the LGA peer review recommendation on reviewing inherent financial risk being addressed? In response the Leader explained that financial risk was an ongoing conversation with the Section 151 Officer and reviewed through the MTFs process.
- It was asked whether the risk of default on rents and risk of void periods be included in the risk register- in response the Cabinet Member explained that it was a conscious decision to include full detail of risk within the relevant section of each report.
- In terms of the table on proportionality it was suggested that in order to give more meaning to the numbers there should be a reflection of the level of council tax.
- Were the labels on tables 5, 8 and 9 in appendix 2 correct ? The Chief Finance Officer apologised for the errors which were due to the fact that government guidance had been published late. The errors would be rectified in the published documents.

In the debate that ensued Members recognised that these were important documents for the council and reflected the significant investment the council was making in the town. The major projects such as the cyber park and housing investment were something the town should be proud of as these were setting the agenda for the future, for which the outlook looked bright.

The council's finance officers and the Cabinet Member Finance were thanked for their significant and prudent work in leading and delivering this investment in Cheltenham. Recognition was also given to Arlingclose, the council's treasury advisor.

Finally, the Cabinet Member Finance wished to personally thank officers and in particular the Executive Director Finance and Assets, Paul Jones.

**RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT the following be approved :**

- The Capital Strategy 2019/20 at Appendix 2
- The Investment Strategy 2019/20 at Appendix 3
- The Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2019/20 at Appendix 4
- The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement 2019/20 at Appendix 5

## **10. DRAFT CORPORATE STRATEGY 2019-2023**

The Leader introduced the report. He thanked all the officers involved for their hard work in preparing the corporate strategy and in particular the Strategy and Engagement team. He highlighted that it was a short, informative and easy to understand document. He noted that this had previously been agreed on an annual basis in anticipation of the Place Vision. The Place Vision had now been established and the corporate strategy built on the issues outlined within it, it had also been developed in parallel with the budget so was aligned to the Medium Term Financial Strategy. As per the outcome of the recent peer review, he advised that key resources were being focussed on the most important priorities. He confirmed that O&S had reviewed the document in February and they would conduct a 6 monthly review and the strategy would be reviewed by Council again in June. He highlighted that the departmental service plans were running in parallel to the corporate strategy.

The Leader cited the 5 key priorities and highlighted that the priority to make Cheltenham the cyber capital of the UK was an extremely important and exciting project for Cheltenham and the surrounding areas. With regards to the improvements to the town centre and public spaces they were continuing to ensure the CTP was rolled out and worked effectively. He confirmed that phase 1 of the High Street works had been completed and that the BID had reported an increase in footfall. Waste and recycling continued to be developed and work on making Cheltenham carbon neutral as per the Council motion adopted in February, was ongoing. He noted that the lack of affordable housing was one of the biggest issues facing the town and the council was committed to delivering the £100m housing investment plan.

In the debate that followed, Members made the following comments:

- One Member sought assurance that the resources were in place to be able to deliver on the corporate strategy. They were also grateful that a section on how success would be measured had been included. They also queried how we ensure the wider public are made aware of the programme and what the priorities are.
- Councillor Harman, speaking on behalf of the conservative group highlighted that at the recent Council meeting they had voted against the continuation of the Boots Corner trial. He explained that they were in support of the corporate strategy, however, their stance on Boots Corner had not changed as this was just one element of the Cheltenham Transport Plan.
- Councillor Sudbury also advised that whilst she was in support of the corporate strategy she still had reservations about the transport plan.

The Leader acknowledged that as a Council and given the limited resources we are not able to achieve everything. However, once the action list had been devised they could better identify how each action would be resourced.

**RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT**

**the draft corporate strategy 2019-23 (appendix 2) be approved and be used as a basis for monitoring the Council's performance over the next three years.**

**11. THE PREPARATION OF A STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND FOR GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

The Leader introduced the report, he explained that The Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) had been established by the National Planning Policy Framework. He advised that the intention of the (SoCG) was to provide a more coordinated approach by all the authorities in the borough to long term spatial planning in Gloucestershire. He highlighted that it was particularly important given developments in the planning process with regards to the transport plan and adoption of the JCS2. Similarly, they were expecting the local plan report back from the inspector imminently.

He advised that Gloucestershire County Council had recently recruited a strategic planning coordinator and this would hopefully streamline the planning process going forward. He advised that they were establishing how best to use the SoCG to put the Gloucestershire 2050 vision in place and ensure the vision could be shared across the County. He highlighted that the SoCG would need to be produced and agreed between the six local planning authorities, the County Council, the GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership and other key parties as appropriate, including Severn Trent, Highways England and Homes England. He highlighted that if they were to agree the SoCG in principle today they would aim to have the final version back within 12 months.

In the debate that followed, Members made the following comments:

- One Member had reservations about the terminology used on the Glos 2050 website with regards to the concept of a 'supercity' and whilst they were happy to support the recommendations they requested this terminology be amended.

The Leader agreed that the reference to the supercity needed to be challenged and amended.

A Member asked whether CBC could encourage others, such as the County Council, to sign up to the initiatives which CBC were committing to. In response the Leader explained that 3 out of the 6 districts had now declared a climate emergency.

**RESOLVED (with one abstention) THAT**

**The council work in partnership with the five other Local Planning Authorities, Gloucestershire County Council and the GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership to develop a Strategic Planning Framework for Gloucestershire, to 2050 and beyond, via the preparation of a 'Statement of Common Ground'.**

**12. APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR ELECT AND DEPUTY MAYOR**

The Managing Director for Place and Growth introduced the report. He explained that Councillor Roger Whyborn had served as Deputy Mayor since last year's Annual Council Meeting and Members would be asked to elect him as Mayor at this year's Annual Meeting. He confirmed that Members had been

approached as per the Order of Precedence outlined at Appendix 2 of the report to ascertain if they were willing to act as Deputy Mayor for 2019-2020. He advised that Councillor Sandra Holliday had indicated a willingness to put her name forward as Deputy Mayor.

**RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT**

- i. **The Order of Precedence in Appendix 2 be noted.**
- ii. **That Councillor Roger Whyborn and Councillor Sandra Holliday be put to the Annual Council Meeting for election as Mayor and Deputy Mayor respectively for the Municipal year 2019 - 2020.**

**13. NOMINATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Managing Director for Place and Growth introduced the report. He explained that Councillor Flynn had resigned from her post on the Publica board as a Non-Executive Director, and two nominations had been received from Councillor Babbage and Councillor McCloskey as her replacement. As consensus was not achieved between the political groups the appointment was referred to Council for determination.

The Mayor requested a vote by a show of hands.

Councillor McCloskey (20)  
Councillor Babbage (8)

**RESOLVED THAT**

**Councillor McCloskey be appointed as the Council's Non-Executive Director on the Publica Board.**

**14. COUNCIL DIARY 2019-20**

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the report. He explained that the corporate diary followed a similar rationale to that adopted in previous years with evening meetings scheduled for 6pm. He advised that Councillors and Officers had been consulted on the diary and any proposed amendments had been incorporated wherever possible. As outlined in section 2 of the report, consideration had been given to the political party conferences and meetings avoided on these dates.

Members made the following comments during the debate:

- They requested that meetings be avoided during the school holidays and in particular the budget Council meeting scheduled in February half term be moved. In response, the Cabinet Member Finance advised that there was a very narrow window in which they could hold the budget Council due to the budget setting process. They also had to work collaboratively with the County, police and other organisations and as such there was a lesser degree of flexibility with this date. She highlighted that if they were to hold it earlier

they would need to convene an additional meeting to set the Council tax. One Member suggested it be held at 6pm to allow those who have issues with childcare to attend.

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services endeavoured to take Members points on board regarding meetings during the holidays and explore alternative times where this was possible.

**RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT**

**The draft Council Diary of meetings for September 2019 –August 2020 be approved.**

**15. NOTICES OF MOTION  
Motion A**

**Proposed by Councillor Whyborn  
Seconded by Councillor Clucas**

*1) In the light of recent published StageCoach data showing modal shift from private to public transport, and also greater emphasis on cycling and walking, now would seem the right time to be exploring further potential for public transport usage.*

*2) It is essential for Cheltenham to have attractive, safe, and practical facilities to encourage use of buses and coaches. For too long, the people of Cheltenham and the surrounding area have put up with very poor public transport connectivity, and very poor facilities when waiting for buses and coaches. This is in marked contrast to other towns and cities in the UK and beyond, where money has been invested and facilities are good. Four main nodal points exist for bus and coach termination and the walk between some is more than enough to deter usage, for many.*

*3) The size and location of any central transport hub should take into account how the road and public transport networks, and the public realm, are likely to develop. Good connectivity to the rail station and key locations, such as the hospital, P&R, and main workplaces, should inform the plans, as should access to any prospective rapid transport link to Gloucester and beyond.*

*4) Recognising that CBC is neither a transport operator nor a transport authority, but IS very much a place shaping agency:*

***it is recommended that CBC officers and the Cabinet Member work with all the relevant agencies to study and determine the appropriate size, scope, and location of a properly equipped transport hub for Cheltenham, and how good connectivity can be delivered. This is particularly timely given the GCC Local Transport plan review currently being initiated.***

In proposing the motion, Councillor Whyborn explained that there were two main strands, the first was for better transport facilities in Cheltenham to ensure

the facilities were attractive, safe and practical. He noted that the Royal Well bus station was just a shack and not in keeping with a town like Cheltenham and that residents had complained about the lack of a coffee shop and minimal toilet facilities which was a marked contrast to other towns and cities. The second strand was improving the transport routes to better connect the town, including improving the connection between the Prom, the High Street and Pittville Street which at present were inadequate and acted as a deterrent. He acknowledged that bus usage was up, however, noted that the majority of trips were for leisure and not users travelling to work and that the percentage of those using the bus service within the borough were no higher than those coming from outside the borough. The objective was not to just improve the bus connections but also the coaches, cycling and walking facilities to and from train station and other key locations. He suggested locating Shopmobility nearer to the bus interchange and providing high quality and smaller facilities for coaches and longer distance buses with local buses stopping nearby.

Councillor Whyborn acknowledged that it would require working in consensus with Stagecoach, Systra and the County Council in order to fashion the right interchanges and develop a more holistic approach to the transport network. One of the key objective was to join up Kingsditch with the train station, hospital and other key areas.

He stressed that a proper study was required in order to determine the correct size, scope and location of a transport hub. He advised that the LEP had never had a proposal for a bus interchange in Cheltenham, however, they would gladly evaluate one if it was received. It was also important to get it on the public agenda with the relevant bodies and determine where the best access point to the town centre would be.

He stressed the importance of building on recent improvements in modal shift and that the future development of Cheltenham should not be restricted by poor transport links. Furthermore, the wider improvements in air quality and environment should be considered.

Finally, Councillor Whyborn emphasised the holistic approach which was required and the need to get this right first time. All sites should be considered before committing sites to other uses.

Councillor Babbage wished to propose a friendly amendment to the motion, this was seconded by Councillor Harman and read as follows:

*In addition for CBC Officers and the Cabinet Member to work with the LEP and explore other funding streams to provide financing where appropriate.*

He explained that he was fully supportive of the motion but it would be even better if t a transport hub could be fully or partially funded. He highlighted that Gloucester had received £6.5 million of funding towards their £7.5 million scheme.

The amendment was accepted by Councillor Whyborn.

In the debate that followed Members made the following comments:

- They welcomed the motion and agreed they needed to talk more about sustainable transport as a whole, including further discussions about a cycling hub. There was also the wider issue of improving the park and ride service, particularly given the increase in parking in residential areas.
- Members acknowledged that the location of the railway station was one of the greatest problems regarding the transport network and it was important to first determine what sites would work best and provide the best connectivity to the train station.
- One of the key elements of the CTP was modal shift and altering the town centre to make it much more effective and functional.
- It was established that there were 4 key bus nodes – Pittville Street, High Street, The Promenade and Royal Well and that the development to the rear of Municipal Office was an extremely important piece of work.
- Members acknowledged that traffic would not be reduced unless there was a viable alternative for the public and concerns were raised about the cost of buses in the town.
- One Member noted that there were not many viable options for the location of the transport hub outside of Royal Well and reasoned that Royal Well was reasonably well positioned with regards to its proximity to the town centre.
- It was further noted that modal shift could have an impact on the council's finances as it would effectively reduce car park usage. However, if fewer car parks were required then this space could potentially be used for a transport hub.
- One Member stressed the importance of working with partners to establish where people were commuting from in order to promote more sustainable modes of transport.
- Cheltenham had again been awarded its purple flag status in recognition of its night time economy and they needed to ensure that people were able to safely travel home after a night out.
- A central transport hub was potentially not the solution as they also needed to factor in the North West extension and wider areas.
- How the requirements of the public with regards to public transport would evolve in 20 and 30 years time also needed to be considered.

Councillor Hobley formally proposed that Council move to the vote, this was seconded by Councillor Wilkinson.

**Motion carried to proceed to the vote**

22 For  
11 Against

In summing up Councillor Whyborn thanked colleagues for their support. He reiterated that he was not advocating that the bus station be moved out of Royal Well but a study should be conducted to determine the best location. He acknowledged that improved cycling and walking facilities were also necessary.

He was mindful that they needed to be realistic about what was economically viable given Cheltenham's size and welcomed the introduction of payment in the park and ride car park to deter usage for non park and ride users. He also suggested the installation of secondary interchange points in suburban areas such as Coronation Square in order to improve routes all across the town.

A point of order was raised by Councillor Babbage that the constitution required that there should only be a move to the vote only if the Mayor considered that the item had been sufficiently discussed. The Mayor clarified that this had not been the case and invited Councillor Clucas to formally second the motion.

In seconding the motion Councillor Clucas stressed the importance of addressing the transport system given that we are dealing with an 18<sup>th</sup> Century layout in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century world. She noted that the town had expanded considerably and as such they need to act now to ensure the town did not become gridlocked. She suggested funding could be obtained from bus companies in order to put the social value back in to areas they serve. She highlighted that those with mobility problems have issues walking between locations and stressed the importance of better connecting the key nodes identified. Furthermore, buses on the Promenade particularly during race week were causing considerable damage to the paving.

The motion, as amended, was unanimously passed.

## **Motion B**

**Proposed by Councillor Wilkinson  
Seconded by Councillor Boyes**

*Council notes that:*

*Cheltenham has a history of welcoming refugees who have contributed to and shaped our town.*

*Cheltenham Welcomes Refugees, working with GARAS, has done our town proud by showing compassion to the refugee families who have made their homes here.*

*Cheltenham Borough Council has made a significant pledge of housing up to 100 refugee families over the four-year resettlement period, subject to logistical challenges.*

*Cheltenham Borough Council has recently entered into a collaborative arrangement with UKVI in their sourcing of private rented accommodation for households seeking asylum, with an estimate that 25 asylum seekers will benefit each year from the arrangement.*

***Council therefore recommends that the authority:***

***Seeks to follow the guidelines set out by the City of Sanctuary initiative and recognise the work done by Cheltenham Welcomes Refugees to adopt the title of Town of Sanctuary, effective immediately. This will include learning from best practice in existing Cities of Sanctuary.***

***In doing so, the authority seeks to take practical steps to welcome and include refugees in local activities and will seek ways of supporting refugees wherever it can.***

***To achieve this, the authority will deepen its work with Cheltenham Welcomes Refugees to build new links between CWR and the council's local partners. This will include asking council departments, the council's partners and other local organisations to support and provide inclusive and accessible activities.***

***Further, the authority commits to supporting activities that promote the education and training of refugees, enabling them to better integrate into the town and play an active role in the success of our local economy and creating sustainable communities.***

As proposer of the motion Councillor Wilkinson gave a brief overview of the situation. He thanked all those in the public gallery for attending. He noted that they had ambitious goals with regards to refugees and explained that the intention of the motion was to formalise the work they were currently doing and their plans for the future.

He informed Council that he and a number of Councillors had attended the annual meeting for refugees which had highlighted the level of support and schemes already available to refugees. He noted that the University of Gloucestershire offered a scholarship to a refugee which allowed them to study, gain a qualification and ultimately contribute to the local economy. He further acknowledged that Cheltenham Borough Council had made a pledge to house up to 100 refugee families over the four-year resettlement period. The key was ensuring that refugees were fully integrated in to the town, were able to play a pivotal role in the community and had access to services, education and training in order to be able to live safe lives.

Councillor Wilkinson acknowledged that much more could be done including taking part in local events, working with partners to put on extra services and providing additional funding to facilitate English lessons for refugees. It was also imperative that they worked closely with the 'Cheltenham Welcomes Refugees' organisation to determine what more could be done.

In seconding the motion Councillor Boyes highlighted the importance of taking action particularly given the increase in hate crime targeted at refugees. She welcomed the Council's intervention to provide housing for up to 100 refugee families, however, felt that as a country we should still be taking in more refugees. She noted that the Immigration Act 2016 ('the Dubs Amendment') which pledged to relocate and support unaccompanied refugee children from Europe was abandoned after only 350 children had reached safety. She thanked local charities for all their support and stressed the importance of integrating refugees in order to build stable, sustainable communities.

In the debate that followed, Members made the following comments:

- The issue was more pertinent than ever given the rise in xenophobia and hate crime
- It was extremely important to ensure that refugees had access to education in order to improve their English language skills as lack of communication is a key to barrier to integration.
- Government and trans national corporations had a duty to establish the causes of refugees being forced to flee their home country, including dealing with issues of poverty, war, famine and climate change.
- One Member highlighted that as one of the wealthiest economies in the world it was appalling what they were currently doing to deal with the refugee crisis.
- The residents and local organisations who have welcomed refugees were testament to Cheltenham and Members thanked them for their support.
- It was established that there was a bursary fund for refugees and all were encouraged to donate to the worthy cause.  
<https://www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/ug/sanctuaryscholarship>
- One Member questioned the Cabinet Member on how many refugees had already been housed in Cheltenham and what the predictions were for the future. The Cabinet Member Housing advised that he did not have these figures to hand but he would be happy to share them with colleagues and the press.
- The Cabinet Member Housing wished to place on record his thanks to Cheltenham Welcomes Refugees for all the work they had done to date and further welcomed the guidelines set out by the City of Sanctuary initiative.
- One Member stressed the importance of government allowing refugees to work in this country and hoped this message would be taken back to government by colleagues.
- It was suggested that the topic be put back on the agenda for a year's time to update on progress to date plans going forward.
- One Member acknowledged that the council should be mindful of the resource implications and needed to ensure that the necessary resource was in place to deliver on their promises.

In summing up Councillor Wilkinson thanked Members for their support and agreed it was essential that the proposals be supported by concrete actions. He noted that under a cross party bill introduced in parliament, refugees would have the right to work three months after arriving in the UK. He hoped this would soon be enacted in law.

The motion was unanimously passed.

**16. ANY OTHER ITEM THE MAYOR DETERMINES AS URGENT AND WHICH REQUIRES A DECISION**

None.

**17. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 -EXEMPT INFORMATION RESOLVED THAT**

In accordance with Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining agenda items as it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public are present there will be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in paragraph 3, Part (1) Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Paragraph 3; Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

**18. EXEMPT MINUTES  
RESOLVED THAT**

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

Bernard Fisher  
Chairman

Local authority investment decisions have made a significant shift over the past year with the financial press questioning the role of local authorities investing in property and assets as a means to generate income to compensate for the reduction in government funding. Investing in property and other assets is nothing new for Cheltenham Borough Council, we have historically held major assets such as retail sites and commercial property for some time now. In recent years however the emphasis on using these assets to generate a commercial yield has become much greater and this has involved some councils investing in property outside of its area. The scaling up of investments by local councils has been brought to the attention of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and CIPFA resulting in changes to the Treasury Management Code and the Prudential Code.

Following consultations in February and August 2017, CIPFA published its new 2017 guidelines of Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-sectoral Guidance Notes and the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities just before the end of 2018. The Council is now required to prepare and approve four strategies/statements:

- Capital Strategy;
- Investment Strategy;
- Treasury Management Strategy Statement; and an
- MRP Statement

## **I will start with the Capital Strategy**

The purpose of the Council's Capital Strategy is to document the principles and framework that underpin the longer-term capital investment and expenditure proposals.

The Council's Capital Strategy forms a key part of its overall Corporate Planning Framework. It provides a mechanism by which the Council's capital investment and financing decisions can be aligned with the Council's over-arching corporate priorities and objectives over a medium term planning horizon.

In particular, the Capital Strategy demonstrates how we will deliver our 5 key priorities these are working toward's making Cheltenham the Cyber Capital of the UK,

to deliver a number of Town Centre and wider public enhancements that will continue the revitalisation of the town ensuring its longer-term viability as a retail and cultural destination,

alongside enhancements to our environmental services and developing the way we commission these services,

we will also be seeking new opportunities to bring in additional resources, for example the introduction of the Cheltenham lottery as well as leveraging more value from our assets and commissioned providers to deliver our £100m housing investment plan,

and continue improvements in the way services and information are accessed, by residents and businesses by maximising new technology opportunities and different ways of working.

**The capital strategy aims to**, provide a clear context within which proposals for new capital expenditure are evaluated to ensure that all capital investment is targeted at meeting the Council's Vision and Priorities which I have just summarized. We will do this by delivering projects that focus on revenue benefits in the form of spend to save, spend to earn or generating growth in revenue income.

Put simply, our Capital Strategy aims to invest and deliver for the residents of the Borough, a few I would like to highlight,

- Page 26
- we have invested in commercial property which provides for an ongoing sustainable income stream to deliver front-line services, whilst also having a direct impact of the safe-guarding of much needed office accommodation within the town centre;
  - We are delivering the affordable homes which the market fails to provide and we will prioritise those people on our Housing Register;
  - Public Realm High Street investment focussed on supporting the revitalisation of the high street,
  - We have invested in a new suite of waste and recycling vehicles to enhance and deliver the services requested by our residents;
  - We have invested and delivered a new sport and play hub at leisure@;
  - We have invested in a new £8.5 million crematorium, on time and within budget, which will deliver services for future generations.

Moving forward with the capital programme it is important to remember that the financial resources available to meet corporate priorities are constrained in the current economic and political climate. Central government support for revenue and capital investment has reduced significantly over the last few years. Along with these reductions is the recognition that the Council must rely more on internal resources and seek ways in which investment decisions can be either self-sustaining or generate positive returns both in terms of meeting corporate objectives and producing revenue savings.

That said we are ambitious for our town! We will continue to seek economic investments that generate longer term growth. These projects will yield a combination of revenue generation, jobs and capital infrastructure investment. Based on sound business cases.

Housing is one of the top priorities for this administration, A significant element of past resources such as capital receipts and S106 contributions, have been applied to the housing market in the Borough. This work will continue to deliver a commitment from the Cabinet to facilitate the delivery of building affordable new homes and bringing void properties back into use, in partnership with Cheltenham Borough Homes. Significant progress has been made in this area and additional funds along with a strategic delivery partner will enhance this project.

The council is keen to work with other Government agencies and private developers to create long term employment opportunities through capital investment. Such investments will also appraise the ability to generate new business rate income.

To reduce its backlog maintenance liability the Council needs to rationalise its office accommodation and other operational estate. This is either in the form of commercially letting an element of its existing office accommodation or through the sale of surplus assets. Such action would contribute to ongoing revenue savings and / or capital receipts respectively.

Leisure, Culture & Tourism – are a major part of the Borough's economy. To support such areas the Council will consider the investment in infrastructure projects that bring in significant third party investment. The Council will be undertaking appropriate investment and replacement into ICT hardware and software on a case by case basis along with its Publica partners. The primary focus will be on improving the use of technology on an "invest to save" basis.

Turning to how we resource this strategy our current approach to capital financing is geared towards ensuring the maximisation of resources available. As such funding is applied in order from the following sources:

- Specific grants (e.g. Growth Fund, Better Care Fund)
- S106 monies / Partnership funding
- Useable capital receipts
- Revenue Contributions for Capital Outlay (RCCO)
- Reserves
- Prudential Borrowing

In relation to borrowing our objectives are to achieve low interest rates either long term or short term. As seen in table 6 - page 8 of appdx 2 borrowing is around £112m at an average rate of 3.26%. Going forward likely to increase further (in relation to HRA borrowing & West Cheltenham Project)

The Council is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit each year. In line with statutory guidance, a lower “operational boundary” is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit. Page 9 – Table 7 appdx 2 shows the authorized limit is set at £217m for 2019/20 and the operational boundary of £207m.

This enables the Council to maintain a greater degree of flexibility, as usable capital receipts can only be used to finance capital spending, whereas both revenue and reserves can be used for both capital and revenue purposes.

Whilst predominately linked to financing of the Housing Capital Programme, capital receipts derived from ‘Right to Buy Sales’ have been used in the past to support affordable housing provision.

The Prudential Code for Capital Finance allows councils to undertake unsupported borrowing to meet its objectives if this is considered to be affordable, prudent and sustainable, the code enables authorities to take greater control of their investment in the capital assets such as local authority housing, office accommodation, and infrastructure which are central to the delivery of quality local public services. The arrangements provide a flexible framework within which they can be procured, managed, maintained and developed. When considering the potential use of prudential borrowing, the Council must satisfy itself that the borrowing will be undertaken to deliver specific key priorities or be used to finance projects which will provide on-going revenue savings in excess of the financing costs.

Given the pressure on the Council’s revenue budget in future years, prudent use will be made of this discretion in cases where there is a clear financial benefit, Such schemes will focus on clear priorities, attracting significant third party investment and those that generate revenue benefits in future financial years.

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### **Non Treasury Investment Strategy report appdx3**

This investment strategy is a new report for 2019/20, meeting the requirements of statutory guidance issued by the government in January 2018, and focuses on the second and third of these categories

The Authority invests its money for three broad purposes:

- because it has surplus cash as a result of its day-to-day activities, for example when income is received in advance of expenditure (known as treasury management investments),
- to support local public services by lending to other organisations (service investments), and
- to earn investment income (known as commercial investments where this is the main purpose).

The Authority typically receives its income in cash for example from taxes and grants, before it pays for its expenditure in cash (e.g. through payroll and invoices). It also holds reserves for future expenditure. These activities lead to a cash surplus at various points of the year which is invested in accordance with guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. The balance of treasury management investments is expected to fluctuate between £26.3m and £32.0m during the 2019/20 financial year.

## **Service Investments: Loans**

Subject to a business case, the Council will lend money to its subsidiaries. The Council also lends money to support local public services and stimulate local economic growth. These include loans to organisations and residents within the Borough which support the priorities of the Council.

The main risk when making service loans is that the borrower will be unable to repay the principal lent and/or the interest due. In order to limit this risk, and ensure that total exposure to service loans remains proportionate to the size of the Authority, upper limits on the outstanding loans to each category of borrower have been set in table 1 of appdx 3. Most of the loans made in the past have been to subsidiaries Cheltenham Borough Homes (CBH) and Gloucestershire Airport.

In addition to the loans granted the Council has included provision in its Treasury Management Strategy to loan up to £500,000 to both Ubico and Cheltenham Borough Homes ( and up to £100,000 to Publica , Cheltenham Festivals and The Cheltenham Trust should any company require our support. The Council is a shareholder in Gloucestershire Airport, Ubico and SWAP (South West Audit Partnership) and a shared owner in Publica. In these cases, the loan facility is to enable the Council to be able to provide a loan for short-term cash flow purposes.

The Authority assesses the risk of loss before entering into and whilst holding service loans by undertaking credit checks and ensuring that appropriate legal documentation is in place to secure the Council's money.

The Council also receives independent financial advice on its financial dealings from Arlingclose Limited.

## **Service investment: Shares**

The Council has a £1 shareholding in Ubico Ltd. Ubico is wholly-owned by seven local authorities and operates as a not for profit enterprise. Also the Council has £435,222 shareholding in Gloucestershire Airport which equates to 50%.

One of the risks of investing in shares is that they could fall in value meaning that the initial outlay may not be recovered, however this authority has not invested into Ubico or Gloucestershire Airport to generate a financial return. The Council has invested purely to support service provision, and has no intention to dispose of its investment in the foreseeable future. Ubico is a cost sharing company – any surplus generated within Ubico is returned to the partner Councils [shareholders] similarly with any deficit met by the Councils.

## **Commercial Investments: Property**

Investment Property is defined in the CIPFA as property (land or buildings, or both) held solely to earn rentals or for capital appreciation, or both. The Council holds a number of assets which it classifies as Investment Properties within Cheltenham, as at the 31 March last year this value was £33,316.000 million pounds, members will recall that four commercial properties have been purchased during 18/19 at a cost £42.935 million, the value as at 31<sup>st</sup> March is currently being assessed and is expected to be £76,309.381.

In accordance with government guidance, the Authority considers a property investment to be secure if its accounting valuation is at or higher than its purchase cost including taxes and transaction costs.

The Council aims to generate a revenue return from its Investment Property assets which is greater than the return generated by its Treasury Management activity. It is understood that the fair value of property will fluctuate, although it is anticipated that the revenue returns in 2019/20 will remain constant. The Authority assesses the risk of movement in asset values before entering into and whilst holding property investments and mitigates the risk by purchasing property with secure tenants on long leases.

The Authority is dependent on investment activity to achieve a balanced revenue budget. Table 4 of appdx 3 shows the extent to which the expenditure planned to meet the service delivery objectives of the Authority is dependent on achieving the expected income from treasury investments over the lifecycle of the Medium Term Financial Plan. Should it fail to achieve the expected income targets, the Authority will be required to draw additional balances from reserves, or generate savings elsewhere within the budget to continue to provide its services.

### **Borrowing in Advance of Need**

Government guidance is that local authorities must not borrow more than or in advance of their needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. The Authority has plans to borrow in 2019/20 to invest in new capital schemes. Any funds borrowed will be in relation to specific schemes and based upon the cash required for the chosen schemes. There are no plans to borrow in advance of need.

### **Investment Indicators**

The Authority has set quantitative indicators to allow members and the public to assess the Authority's total risk exposure as a result of its investment decisions as set out in table 5

**Total risk exposure:** The first indicator shows the Authority's total exposure to potential investment losses. This includes amounts the Authority is contractually committed to and any guarantees the Authority has issued over third party loans.

**How investments are funded:** Government guidance is that these indicators should include how investments are funded. The Council's plans for borrowing are limited to a small number of schemes – which are primarily for service delivery – which do not form part of this report. As a result, investments funded by borrowing are presented in table 6:

The rates of return received are shown in table 7: The indicator shows the investment income received less the associated costs, including the cost of borrowing where appropriate, as a proportion of the sum initially invested. It should be noted that due to the complex local government accounting framework, not all recorded gains and losses affect the revenue account in the year they are incurred.

### **Treasury Management Strategy Statement**

Treasury management is the management of the Authority's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Authority has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Authority's prudent financial management, the report incorporates the borrowing and treasury investment strategies.

The UK's progress negotiating its exit from the European Union, together with its future trading arrangements, will continue to be a major influence on the Authority's treasury management strategy for 2019/20.

Brexit uncertainty, is showing slow growth forecasts for the UK and the US together with Interests forecasted for possibly two increases at the back end of 2019- but again all dependent on Brexit.

On 31st December 2018, the council held £112.886m of borrowing and £16.467m of investments. This is set out in further detail in Appendix 2. Forecast changes in these sums are shown in the balance sheet analysis in table 1 on page 67 of appdx 3.

The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. The Authority's current strategy is to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing. The Authority has an increasing CFR due to the capital programme approved by this council last month, but minimal investments and will therefore be required to borrow up to £44m over the forecast period.

The Authority's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change is a secondary objective.

Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to local government funding, the Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. With short-term interest rates currently much lower than long-term rates, it is likely to be more cost effective in the short-term to either use internal resources, or to borrow short-term loans instead.

This authority holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the past 12 months, the Authority's investment balance has averaged £26m, and levels at around £24m are expected to be maintained in the forthcoming year.

Investments are forecast to average £23m with a return rate of 2.05%- achieving £472k income.

If the UK enters into a recession in 2019/20, there is a small chance that the Bank of England could set its Bank Rate at or below zero, which is likely to feed through to negative interest rates on all low risk, short-term investment options.

The Authority may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types, subject to the cash and time limits. members can see this councils approved investment counterparties and the limits set out in table 2 at pages 6 and 7 of appndx 4

## **And turning finally to the Minimum Revenue Statement**

Guidance requires that the council must set an annual MRP statement as set out in the papers before you

Where the Authority finances capital expenditure by borrowing, it must put aside resources to repay that debt in later years. The amount charged to the revenue budget for the repayment of debt is known as Minimum Revenue Provision, although there has been no statutory minimum since 2008. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Authority to have regard to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG's) Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision most recently issued in 2018.

No MRP will be charged in respect of assets held within the Housing Revenue Account.

Capital expenditure incurred during 2019/20 will not be subject to a MRP charge until 2020/21 or until the year after an asset becomes operational.

Based on the Authority's latest estimate of its Capital Financing Requirement on 31st March 2019, the budget for MRP and voluntary revenue overpayments can be seen in the table on page 84 appndx 5.

Mayor, and members I hope will support the recommendations of the report, as set out in the paper.