



Notice of a meeting of Council

Monday, 18 October 2021
2.30 pm
Council Chamber - Municipal Offices

Membership	
Councillors:	Steve Harvey (Chair), Sandra Holliday (Vice-Chair), Victoria Atherstone, Matt Babbage, Paul Baker, Garth Barnes, Dilys Barrell, Ian Bassett-Smith, Angie Boyes, Nigel Britter, Jonny Brownsteen, Barbara Clark, Flo Clucas, Mike Collins, Iain Dobie, Stephan Fifield, Bernard Fisher, Wendy Flynn, Tim Harman, Rowena Hay, Alex Hegenbarth, Martin Horwood, Peter Jeffries, Alisha Lewis, Chris Mason, Guy Maughfling, Paul McCloskey, Andrew McKinlay, Emma Nelson, Tony Oliver, John Payne, Richard Pineger, Julie Sankey, Louis Savage, Diggory Seacome, Jo Stafford, Simon Wheeler, Max Wilkinson, Suzanne Williams and David Willingham

Agenda

1.	APOLOGIES	
2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
3.	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING Minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2021	(Pages 3 - 20)
4.	COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR	
5.	COMMUNICATIONS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL	
6.	TO RECEIVE PETITIONS	
7.	PUBLIC QUESTIONS These must be received no later than 12 noon on Monday 11 October 2021	
8.	MEMBER QUESTIONS These must be received no later than 12 noon on Monday 11 October 2021.	
9.	APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM MONITORING OFFICER Report of the Chief Executive	(Pages 21 - 26)

10.	INTERIM REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, PLACES AND STATIONS Report of the Electoral Registration Officer	(Pages 27 - 48)
11.	SAFETY OF WOMEN AT NIGHT Report of the Cabinet Member Safety and Communities	(Pages 49 - 56)
12.	ANNUAL REPORT ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY Report of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny	(Pages 57 - 76)
13.	NOTICES OF MOTION	
14.	ANY OTHER ITEM THE MAYOR DETERMINES AS URGENT AND WHICH REQUIRES A DECISION	
15.	LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 -EXEMPT INFORMATION The committee is recommended to approve the following resolution:- "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)	
16.	A FINANCIAL MATTER Report of the Leader	(Pages 77 - 80)

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Gareth Edmundson
Chief Executive

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Council

Monday, 19th July, 2021

2.00 - 5.55 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Steve Harvey (Chair), Sandra Holliday (Vice-Chair), Victoria Atherstone, Matt Babbage, Paul Baker, Garth Barnes, Dilys Barrell, Ian Bassett-Smith, Angie Boyes, Nigel Britter, Jonny Brownstein, Barbara Clark, Flo Clucas, Iain Dobie, Stephan Fifield, Bernard Fisher, Wendy Flynn, Tim Harman, Rowena Hay, Alex Hegenbarth, Peter Jeffries, Alisha Lewis, Chris Mason, Guy Maughfling, Paul McCloskey, Andrew McKinlay, Tony Oliver, John Payne, Richard Pineger, Julie Sankey, Louis Savage, Diggory Seacome, Simon Wheeler, Max Wilkinson, Suzanne Williams and David Willingham

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Collins, Horwood, Nelson and Stafford.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 June were approved and signed as a correct record.

4. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor wished to put on record his warmest congratulations to the Cheltenham Swimming and Water Polo Club who recently became the national men's water polo champions.

He wished to report his recent acceptance of a donation from City Fibre towards the laptops for learning project of the No Child Left Behind initiative which has now raised over £35k.

He also paid tribute to Cheltenham Borough Homes, working in conjunction with Cheltenham Borough Council, to use a brownfield site at 320 Swindon to build 24 new affordable or social houses-a tremendous initiative in the current climate as part of the council's housing investment programme.

He also wished to thank democratic services for setting up this meeting in Pittville Pump Room and thanked the Cheltenham Trust for hosting. He informed that he had been invited to open the Trust's Heritage Trail in September and also took the opportunity to commend the Trust on the success of the Heritage Café.

5. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Firstly, the Leader informed that Councillor Jonny Brownsteen would be taking up the vacant position on the Asset Management Working Group.

She had hoped to bring news that an expression of interest was made by Gloucester with a letter of support from the District council leaders across the county, to DCMS for the opportunity to have Gloucester for Gloucestershire as a City of Culture. Sadly this will not be the case as Gloucester had decided not to submit an application.

The Leader informed Council that the announcement of the preferred development partner for the Golden Valley will be made on the 30th July following the Cabinet decision on the 13th.

The Leader wished to send thoughts to all those in Germany who have lost family, homes and businesses due to the recent devastating flooding. She also extended this to all our European countries that have also been affected by the torrential rain, an inevitable effect of climate change. She highlighted the importance of addressing this at pace.

6. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS

There were none.

7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1.	Question from Louisa Meehan to Councillor Max Wilkinson, Cabinet Member Climate Emergency
	<p>Why are the bike stands still not reinstalled outside the Regent Arcade, Regent Street entrance, in Ormond Place. I had an enlightening conversation with one of the Optician at Harper & Cooper: the unintended consequence of the stands' removal means people are inclined to attach their bikes to the lamppost outside their premises, which results in blocking the use of the ramp for wheelchair access. The coffee shop opposite has a not very inviting sign which reads, 'no bicycles', so it's a fair guess bike parking has been a problem for them too. What happened to the old bike stands? Why can't they be put back, or am I to assume more Council money has been chucked on a skip?</p> <p>In previous correspondence with the Council I have been told that this is to support economic recovery, this area has been licensed to some of the café premises for a temporary period in order to support them with an outdoor area as we try to ease out of lockdown from the pandemic..."</p> <p>Harpreet Kular, Bsc(Hons), McOptom Optometrist Prof Cert CX, Harper & Cooper Opticians: <i>"The area has been licensed to accommodate café premises. 'The Find' was the local café that had use of the plaza area and has not used the area since 12th April 2021 when restrictions were lifted and indoor seating was permitted...."</i></p> <p>The Council's previous response that there are other bike parking facilities elsewhere is not a valid argument. They are usually full and are elsewhere.</p> <p><i>* 'The Value of Cycling' Fiona Rajé and Andrew Saffrey Department of Transport, University of Birmingham states "Catering for cycling is steadily rising on the agenda of business leaders and city mayors. Per square metre, cycle parking delivers 5 times higher retail spend than the same area of car parking, investment is effective in increasing usage</i></p>

	<p><i>cycling has a lower capital cost than other forms of infrastructure”.</i></p> <p>There is a simple, elegant solution available that supports everyone’s needs and inconveniences no one, would support the Council’s green credentials and underscores its recognition of the rights of those with disabilities with no detrimental impact. And this is not a demand to create a new facility, but a very reasonable request to reinstate, backed up by all the evidence given above. Therefore please will you agree to the reasonable and logical refitting of the cycle stands, to the benefit of all. An action that simultaneously removes an amenity and also creates a barrier to access, particularly for those with disabilities, to a much needed service cannot be in anyone’s interest. Cycling has many benefits, and accessibility is a right.</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p> <p>I thank Ms Meehan for her question and can assure her that cycling is very much a priority for the Council. We are currently speaking to various organisations on how we can improve capacity for the future which reflects our ambitions as set out in our strategy Connecting Cheltenham https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/61/climate_and_sustainability/1649/connecting_cheltenham. We recognise the County Council’s role as the transport authority and hope to work with them on realising our ambitions. To address the point about this specific cycle parking location, we are exploring how we can provide more cycle parking and storage space in the town centre, including in secure indoor locations. We will take into account the area referred to in the question when we look at new cycle parking locations.</p> <p>We must do this while balancing other priorities, and this includes supporting businesses responding to the challenges brought by the pandemic. Hospitality is one of the key parts of our economy that has been hit the hardest and we have been working hard to support the sector.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Louisa Meehan asked where the environmental and economic improvements cited in the Connecting Cheltenham strategy were in terms of implementation. She was concerned that the council was failing to meet its statutory obligation under the Equality Act 2010, as a consequence of the removal of the 4 bike stands and highlighted the disadvantages to a retailer due to the council’s failure to act. She asked when the Council was going to meet its obligation under the Equality Act?</p> <p>In response the Cabinet Member questioned which part of the Equalities Act the Council was not meeting but offered to meet the questioner in person to discuss the issues further. He explained that there were many parts of the Connecting Cheltenham strategy and bicycle stands and secure bicycle parking was part of it. .</p>
2.	<p>Question from Sam Thomas to the Cabinet Member Culture, Wellbeing and Business, Councillor Victoria Atherstone</p> <p>a) Cheltenham has a number of distinguished women who have made a major contribution to both town and country, including Josephine Butler and Dorothea Beale. What are the steps the Council recommends to get a statue raised to celebrate a notable Cheltenham woman?</p> <p>b) Given Cheltenham has multiple statues honouring men’s contributions to the town and country, why are there no statues in the town honouring the contribution of a woman?</p> <p>I agree there are numerous examples of distinguished women who have made a significant contribution to the town. I cannot however give reason as to why historic decisions were taken in respect of statues of men.</p>

	<p>The council has an advisory group The Public Art Panel that has been considering the issue and investigating a future commission that celebrates women. To help mark International Women's Day, Cheltenham's Public Art Panel worked with No Child Left Behind on a schools-based project that asked children to share some writing or artwork about women they find inspiring. This work will be displayed virtually (coming soon) and will form the basis of a report to the Public Art Panel that will help inform the vision for a future art installation that will celebrate women in Cheltenham.</p> <p>Children and young people were asked to create some art or writing about either or both of the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Which woman or women inspires you? 2) How do you see women represented around you e.g. in the media or art? How would you like to see them represented? <p>https://nclbcheltenham.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/IWD21.pdf</p> <p>Public art is funded through developer contributions and fundraising. At this time, there is insufficient funds to deliver a project, however we will be using the report as outlined above to inform next steps on an appropriate commission.</p> <p>In addition, the council is currently working with key stakeholders on a culture strategy, this will be inclusive in its cultural vision and will support issues of equity as well as equality.</p>
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8. MEMBER QUESTIONS

1.	Question from Councillor Paul Baker to the Cabinet Member Climate Emergency, Councillor Max Wilkinson
	<p>The issue of poor air quality is a very important one particularly for older residents and children who are more vulnerable to its effects.</p> <p>I appreciate Government sets the criteria for air quality, which many consider to be too low, and the County Council is responsible for our highways, however I am concerned that the Borough Council should be doing everything it can to improve air quality especially around schools like Naunton Park, on routes to schools and on heavily trafficked routes through shopping areas like the Bath Road.</p> <p>Gathering data is particularly important both to support initiatives to reduce traffic and to reassure the public that the air quality in their area is safe. Can the Cabinet Member tell me what actions we are taking to address this issue?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Thank you to Councillor Baker for raising this important issue. Air Quality in Cheltenham is actively monitored throughout the borough and has been for many years in line with Government Guidelines.</p> <p>Monitoring data on Nitrogen Dioxide levels can be found on our website here Nitrogen dioxide (NO2) monitoring data Cheltenham Borough Council and our associated reports on air quality are available here https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/downloads/download/693/air_quality_reports</p>

	<p>Progress is being made, however, improving air quality around schools can only happen quickly if people ditch their cars for the school run and fewer car trips are made generally and in particular, in the vicinity of schools. The Borough Council has for some time supported the School Streets initiatives being trialled by the County Council. We hope this approach will be built upon in due course.</p> <p>The Borough Council is responsible for air quality monitoring and producing an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP). The latest AQAP is under production and must as a minimum cover our Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), which is around the lower high street. However, we are going further and will be producing a strategy document that covers the wider borough. This will advocate a more dynamic approach to air quality monitoring, including around schools, building on the significant network of monitoring points the Council already operates. This will include a more dynamic approach to air quality monitoring, including around schools. The monitoring work for this has already begun and we hope to report back soon, but you are absolutely right to say that hat we cannot tackle poor air quality alone. That's why we intend expanding our approach far beyond the statutory minimum set out in legislation and are working with organisations that can help us, including the county council, the NHS and others. We are also in discussion with Royal Mail, which has a delivery depot at the centre of our AQMA.</p>
2.	Question from Councillor Alisha Lewis to the Cabinet Member Waste, Recycling and Street Services, Councillor Iain Dobie
	<p>Clarification on the shower cap bin lid trial plans:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you confirm plans to trial shower cap style lids on recycling bins in Cheltenham – with a timescale? 2. Can you confirm whether St Paul's will be included in any pilot/test scheme?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>As Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Street Services I am keen to support initiatives which encourage wasting less and recycling more. Our recycling rate in Cheltenham currently stands at 52.05% and we need to do better but it will take all of us working together, trying different things to achieve this.</p> <p>I am pleased to confirm that there are plans to trial the shower cap style recycling BOX lids in parts of the town and officers are planning how this can be implemented and what the timescale will be, hopefully later this summer but officers are rightly being cautious due to Covid-19 and the impact this is still having on the community and Ubico.</p> <p>St Pauls is definitely one area where I would be keen to trial these type of recycling box lids. For those that don't know what these type of lids are, they are the same as the ones issued in parts of Gloucester. The benefit of these different type of lids is that they are tied onto the recycling boxes so don't blow. In some areas when lids blow away they end up in the road, get run over and then broken meaning boxes end up with no lids and recycling blowing around creating a mess. In some areas, for some residents they may be helpful and we are keen to trial them to see if they make a difference.</p> <p>Ward members will be updated when more details are available.</p>
3.	Question from Councillor Tim Harman to the Cabinet Member Waste,

	Recycling and Street Services, Councillor Iain Dobie
	<p>Residents have raised with myself and other Councillors their concerns about the use of some sprays used by Ubico for weed control. Particular concern has been expressed due to the use of glyphosate herbicide. I understand that the Council are working with Ubico on alternatives.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member advise Council of the actions being taken in this direction and indicate a timescales for introducing more acceptable alternatives?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Supporting climate emergency initiatives including biodiversity is very important to me as cabinet member and I am committed to reducing the use of any herbicides in Cheltenham which is why we are talking with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust to help us do this-the recent press release outlined this.</p> <p>I am sure all councillors will remember my answer to a very similar question raised at the last council meeting on 21 June 2021 fully explaining what Cheltenham's agreed approach to weed control and weed spraying is but if not I can reiterate part of it.</p> <p>"Members may recall last year during COVID we trialled alternatives to weed spraying. However our conclusion at the end of the year, when we published an update as part of the Environmental Services Strategy approved by Cabinet in October 2020, was that, in addition to other manual and mechanical weed removal, one weed spray would be necessary this year and this will take place over the next few weeks starting at the end of this week.</p> <p>The targeted weed spray will start in the town centre then moving on to Lansdown, the Park, St Pauls, Springbank, Swindon Village and the rest of the borough over the next 6 weeks or so. Residents will notice the weeds dying off after a week or so.</p> <p>I am committed to reducing weed spraying to support the climate emergency and am pleased to say that the council is starting discussions with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust to look at how we can reduce this further moving forward. I am pleased to say that we have achieved a 50% reduction in weed spraying which is line with the commitment publicised last year.</p> <p>The most up to date information is available in the briefing note that I asked Karen Watson to email to all members on 7 July or on the council's website https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/weed-control</p> <p>Members will also find the weed control policy on the council's website setting out all the information available to date but I have included a link here to help you find it. This document sets out in more detail this brief summary which I will read out: Weed control policy Street cleaning and weed control Cheltenham Borough Council</p> <p>To clarify, currently glyphosate is licenced by the European Chemical Agency until 2022, with the European Food Agency stating that it is unlikely to pose a public health risk. National agencies across the world have declared glyphosate to be safe to use however some countries have now decided to ban glyphosate or severely curtail its use but the UK continues to say glyphosate based products are safe to use.</p>

	<p>The Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) recently provided a briefing to its members on glyphosate. Some notable points:</p> <p>There is no right or wrong answer to the question “is it safe to use glyphosate products”</p> <p>There are few alternatives to glyphosate and those which are seen as alternatives are often still in a pilot phase and much more expensive to use</p> <p>There may be a need for the public to accept higher levels of weeds if the use of glyphosate is banned</p> <p>Ending the use of pesticides on hard surfaces will likely mean that there will be more visible weeds for longer periods of time. However weeds do contribute to biodiversity by providing a habitat and source of food for bees and other insects.</p> <p>Of particular note, APSE says “it may be prudent for all local authorities to carefully consider the scale of glyphosate use, the likely risks arising, the potential to limit the reliance on glyphosate-based products and the ability to find a suitable alternative product to prepare for the future”.</p> <p>In Cheltenham, during 2019/20 and 2020/21 some trials of alternative methods of vegetation control have been undertaken in order to assess their effectiveness and suitability in Cheltenham although less than planned due to COVID-19. Similarly where reliable test data is available from other local authorities and professional bodies this will also be reviewed.</p> <p>Early signs indicate there is no direct chemical replacement for glyphosate and alternative treatments such as hot foams, acids, electricity and flame throwers are far less efficient in terms of material cost and labour involved applying them.</p> <p>While we keep our approach to weed control under regular review, we hope that the growing demand for alternatives to glyphosate based weed sprays will encourage manufacturers to develop cost effective alternatives before too long but in the meantime here in Cheltenham we will continue working hard to reduce weed spraying and increase manual weed removal within available budgets to protect our environment.</p>
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9. FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2020/21

The Cabinet Member Finance introduced the report and explained that the council had been on the front line of the response to the pandemic in Cheltenham, on matters including licensing and business grants, providing support to vulnerable people who were shielding, setting up community testing facilities and taking on the most challenging contact tracing, all the while keeping existing services running.

The delivery of the response had placed unprecedented financial pressures on resources, in addition to the £6.8m cuts to Government funding experienced over the past decade and following the first national lockdown, it was estimated that coronavirus would create a budget deficit of £1.831m in 2020/21 as a result of additional unbudgeted expenditure and irrecoverable income losses.

He reported that Council approved a recovery budget in November 2020 to close the gap by implementing a strategy to review surplus assets owned by the

Council for disposal. These would generate an estimated £4m of capital receipts which would be used to balance the budget. This work was ongoing and at pace.

He reported that by November 2020, a Government grant of £1.5m to cover expenditure relating to the pandemic response was received with an additional £300k required from internal resources.

There was also a huge impact on the income generated from sales, fees and charges. The recovery budget took this into account and at this point, even with the Government's income compensation scheme it was estimated that total losses would be just less than £1.5m.

He was pleased to report a £394k underspend against this recovery budget. In addition since the start of the pandemic £95m of financial support had been awarded to Cheltenham businesses.

The pandemic had still cost the authority £1.47m and the damage to the economy has been acute and recovery would take time. It was proposed to use the underspend from the 2020/21 budget to fund the first steps towards the long term, green sustainable recovery of the town.

£250k would be ring-fenced to fund initiatives and projects aimed to support making Cheltenham a place for everyone to thrive. This could include:

- Working with the Cheltenham BID to put on events to increase the footfall into the town centre.
- Investing in our communities to ensure residents are supported through our recovery plan
- Investing in our public toilets to ensure they are safe, accessible and fit for purpose.
- Investing in our green spaces to ensure there are adequate places for our residents to gather and celebrate as restrictions are released.

A number of proposals were being reviewed and he asked that authority be delegated to Officers in consultation with himself to approve spending on these projects to ensure the council can continue to be responsive to the needs of our town, businesses, partners, and residents.

He wished to put on record his thanks to the council's executive team and every member of staff, including our partner organisations, for the tremendous efforts they have put in over the last 15 months. Notably, he mentioned the Head of Finance and her team who had worked so hard to close down the 2020/21 financial year and bring this comprehensive report forward. He was looking forward to working closely with them over the next 12 months to support the green economic recovery of the town and further in the future as we move closer to achieving financial sustainability.

In response to Member questions the Cabinet Member responded as follows :

- Appendix 9 of the report detailed S106 funding in terms of public art but not spend; he proposed a meeting directly with the Member to discuss further but assured her that the funding was still available
- The Executive Director Finance and Assets clarified that the £250 k outstanding sundry debt related to a Highways contract and he confirmed that this invoice had now been paid.
- Functional Public art-the Cabinet Member Finance and Assets acknowledged the necessity to use every force in face of the climate

emergency. He would pick up this issue directly with the responsible Cabinet Member and make relevant recommendations to the Public Art Panel.

- Allocation of play spaces funding-the Cabinet Member would request officers to circulate the annotated S106 report so ward Members can follow up on the spending of that money
- The Cabinet Member Finance agreed to provide Members with details as to the level of support that the council had provided to landlords of its own investment properties around the town
- The Executive Director Finance and Assets undertook to circulate a breakdown of the annual £144k allocated for maintenance and repair of the Prince of Wales stadium and noted he was aware of the damage to that property due to flooding last year, which would be reimbursed through an insurance claim. He reminded Members that they had the opportunity to reprioritise resources at February budget setting.

In the debate that followed the Leader stated that it was a remarkable achievement that the council had delivered an underspend in light of the pandemic whilst continuing to deliver services throughout the pandemic. This was testament to a whole team effort of both council officers and partners.

She acknowledged the support Councillors had also provided to communities during the pandemic and wished to place on record her thanks to all those involved.

The Cabinet Member Culture, Wellbeing and Business welcomed the support to economic recovery and in particular green economic recovery. The Cheltenham Economic Recovery Task Force had been working hard with key stakeholders across the town and its work had not finished.

The Cabinet Member Safety and Communities emphasised the importance of the recovery of people and emphasised the ongoing work on building resilience within communities and opportunities for children and young people. She cited the developments at West Cheltenham as a significant opportunity in that respect. She thanked all those who had been actively involved in this ongoing project and in particular to the Cabinet Member Finance and Assets, the Executive Director Finance and Assets and his teams and all those who are concerned with ensuring that our children and young people do not go without.

A Member noted that whilst Cheltenham was a very affluent town, there were pockets of significant deprivation and it was important to be mindful that when recovery is realised, that those communities are not forgotten. There were particular issues, such as income deprivation affecting children and young people and it was likely that they would continue to live in poverty as they grow up.

The Mayor reiterated the congratulations awarded to the Executive Director Finance and Assets and the finance team who had all acted as exemplars in local government.

In summing up, the Cabinet Member Finance and Assets thanked Members for their questions and undertook to provide answers to those requesting them. He emphasised that over the last 15 months communities in the borough had shone through with the council continuing to work alongside them. Those young people growing up in poverty were at the forefront of our minds.

RESOLVED THAT:

1. **the financial outturn performance position for the General Fund, summarised at Appendix 2 be received, and it be noted that in delivering services in 2020/21, there was an underspend of £394,663 against the recovery budget approved by Council in November 2020;**
2. **£609,345 of carry forward approved by the Section 151 Officer under delegated powers at Appendix 5 be noted;**
3. **the proposal for the use of the underspend after the carry forward requests outlined in Section 2.10 of this report be approved and authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Finance and Assets in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and Assets to ensure the underspend it spent in line with this proposal;**
4. **the annual treasury management report at Appendix 7 and note the actual 2020/21 prudential and treasury indicators be noted.**
5. **the capital programme outturn position as detailed in Appendix 8 and approve the carry forward of unspent budgets into 2021/22;**
6. **the year end position in respect of Section 106 and CIL agreements and partnership funding agreements at Appendix 9 be noted;**
7. **the outturn position in respect of collection rates for council tax and non-domestic rates for 2020/21 in Appendix 10 be noted;**
8. **the outturn position in respect of collection rates for sundry debts for 2020/21 in Appendix 11 be noted;**
9. **the financial outturn performance position for the Housing Revenue Account for 2020/21 in Appendices 12 and 13 (as detailed in Section 11) be received and the carry forward of capital budgets in 2021/22 as set out in paragraph 11.9 be approved.**
10. **MINSTER INNOVATION EXCHANGE-ADDITIONAL FUNDING REQUEST**
In introducing the report the Leader explained that the Minster Exchange (MX) was a key project of this Council, and as a result of considerable hard work by both council officers and Workshop Cheltenham and significant progress had been made towards its delivery which she detailed.

The Leader informed Members that there remained considerable pressure on

the construction industry resulting in short supply of materials and price inflation of circa 20 % and significant demand. The council was aiming to deliver a operationally carbon efficient building for the MX project. The additional cost pressures were detailed in the report but included additional construction costs, increased specification of work including a building management system to manage utilities and the potential additional cost of linking to the power supply. A commitment had also been made to the virtual Growth Hub which is being delivered and additional legal advice was sought to support the joint venture and the complex procurement process. There was also an additional contingency required to ensure that the project could be delivered within the challenging funding deadlines. The overall impact was an additional budget requirement for the MX increasing the council's investment from £1 million to £1.995 which was £295k above the original level of the £1.7 m investment agreed by Council in March. She explained that the exempt Appendix 3 demonstrated that the additional borrowing could be repaid by the joint venture with Workshop Cheltenham over the initial 10 year period.

She reminded Members that this project had the potential to completely transform a much neglected area with significant antisocial behaviour into a new cultural and creative quarter where people will be able and want to spend time. This formed part of the council's key recovery plan from the pandemic and supports the development of the cyber eco-system of the Golden Valley Development. It also addresses reducing the carbon footprint in the town.

In the debate that followed Members made the following comments :

- There was an acknowledgement of the exceptional construction costs
- The benefits of the project in terms of accommodating start up and accelerating businesses and theatre and community groups, outweighed the costs, recognising the long term nature of the investment
- Caution should be taken in the construction phase due to the 'tightness' of the site and concern was expressed relating to unknown costs, in particular relating to the electricity substation requirements

In summing up, the Leader thanked Members for their comments and highlighted the long term nature of the investment. It would be an excellent use of space-opening out on to the Minster gardens which would be subject to long awaited improvements to footpaths and lighting. It also represented a feeder into the Golden Valley Cyber Central programme. She reassured Members that whilst the exact cost of electricity supply was not known, this had been included in the revised budget requested.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. Additional borrowing of £995k and upper borrowing requirement limit of £1.995m to deliver the Minster Exchange project be approved.**
- 2. A revised gross capital budget for Minster Exchange of £5.666m be incorporated into the Council's budget and capital programme for 2021/22.**

3. the Investment and Treasury strategy for 2021/22 be revised to include the revised borrowing limit for Minster Exchange of £1.995m.

11. CABINET APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

This agenda item was withdrawn.

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion A – Call to scrap the Government’s planning White Paper

Council notes:

- The significant concerns expressed by communities, including at the recent by-election in Chesham & Amersham, over the Conservative Government’s Planning Reforms.
- The concessions already made to Conservative backbench MPs over concerns about the impact of planning deregulation on home counties.
- Local resident concerns about their reduced ability to object to building works under Permitted Development Rights which have been extended under this Government.
- Widespread concern and condemnation of the Planning White Paper proposals across Local Government, the Planning and Architecture Sector and organisations concerned with protecting green spaces and heritage.
- The high environmental standards being pursued as part of the Golden Valley development at West Cheltenham.

Council is concerned that:

- The Government is not using the Planning White Paper to improve environmental outcomes from planning and building standards fast enough. This is at odds with the declaration of a climate emergency by many local authorities, including Cheltenham Borough Council.
- Government proposals to deregulate planning will water down the rights of residents to influence development where they live.
- The Government's proposals will put at risk the character of Gloucestershire’s city, towns and villages.

Council believes that:

- Residents have the right to a say over developments that will change the area they live in;
- Local councils, in consultation with their businesses and residents, are best placed to understand the issues in their area and respond with a housing strategy tailored to that area.

Council calls for the Leader to write to the Government to scrap its Planning White Paper and instead:

- **Undertake a wholesale review of Permitted Development Rights;**
- **Introduce rules which enable local areas to achieve much higher environmental standards in planning;**
- **Make the Planning Inspectorate more accountable to local people;**
- **Implement stronger controls to ensure Ministers making decisions on planning applications are not connected either financially or personally with the developers or related parties to the application;**
- **Strengthen the ability of local areas to secure affordable housing from private developers;**
- **Calls on Government to ensure that developers build on land with planning consent but not bank on it for their future profit.**

The motion was proposed by Cllr. Wilkinson and seconded by Cllr. Baker.

In proposing the motion, Cllr. Wilkinson recognised the limitations on all sides of the planning system, and emphasised that the government had made things worse through the enforced sale of council houses and its failed regional strategies and national policy framework. He had hoped that the White Paper on planning reforms would strengthen local government's hand to make plans to benefit the local area and bolster their ability to build affordable, sustainable housing and fight climate change. However, Planning For The Future did not do this. The truncated time period would simply not work and the lack of community engagement and climate considerations were worrying. While the council and CBH were pressing ahead with delivering affordable housing across the town, the government was seeking to free the private sector from its local obligations. He stressed that he welcomed change and progress, but the White Paper was wrong for both the town and the country.

In seconding the motion, Cllr. Baker noted that as a long-serving Member of Planning Committee he had seen how the authority struggled to influence and implement developments that properly addressed climate change. Housing accounted for 40% of UK carbon emissions, with some 50 tons of CO2 emitted per new home built. Planning policy must enable the council to deliver new homes, and contribute to biodiversity by actively reducing flood risk rather than just not increasing it. Land banking was a serious problem and should be tackled proactively.

The Mayor moved to the debate, where Members made the following points in support of the motion:

- Developers who had planning consent for homes but were not actually building them should be encouraged to use it or lose it. The proposer agreed to add this to the motion as an additional point.
- Local residents must have a real voice in the planning process, rather than it being a 'top-down' approach based on zonal planning.
- The White Paper failed to address many key issues and ultimately raised more questions than answers.

- The number of different Ministers of State for Housing over the last decade had caused a lack of continuity in government policy.
- Donations from housing developers were the major influence on government policy, rather than the public interest.
- The housing crisis was not being caused by local government red tape, and removing restrictions would not solve the problem.
- Housing needed to be built to a high standard, and removing regulations would make it easier for developers to avoid this.
- There needed to be greater oversight of the minority of landlords who exploited tenants, but the White Paper would reduce that instead.
- The White Paper did nothing to fix the structural problems of the housing system, and prioritised private developers over affordable housing.
- Residents had raised concerns about the lack of public engagement in the process.

Members also made the following points in opposition to the motion:

- The motion was premature, as the White Paper's proposed reforms had not yet become legislation.
- The council should take a more constructive role in the consultation and join the consultation rather than calling for it to be scrapped.
- The motion was cynical politicking in the aftermath of a by-election where the proposed planning reforms had been a key issue.

Cllr. Wilkinson thanked Members for their contributions to an interesting debate and summed up the key points.

The motion was approved.

Motion B – Response to voter ID reforms proposed in the Queen's Speech

This Council notes that:

- **The UK Government revealed in the Queen's speech, on 11 May, its intention to introduce laws requiring all eligible voters to show voter ID in all future elections;**
- **The UK Government claims this is to tackle electoral fraud;**

This Council further notes, however, that:

- **The Electoral Commission has stated that there is "no evidence of large-scale electoral fraud";**
- **That between 2017 and 2019, there were just 6 convictions and 12 police cautions relating to electoral fraud – the majority of which did not relate to ID fraud;**
- **That nearly 10 per cent of eligible voters do not have the necessary identification at present, and that previous trials of voter ID saw many hundreds of voters disenfranchised – including 750 people during the 2019 trials.**

This Council believes that:

- **The proposed legislation is a solution to a problem that doesn't exist and only serves to make it harder for some**

sections of Britain's electorate to vote – most notably minority groups and young voters;

- **The greater priority should be encouraging voter registrations within those groups that are typically under-represented during elections.**

This Council therefore resolves to:

- **Write to the Prime Minister and the Minister for the Cabinet Office outlining this Council's firm belief that the voter ID reforms proposed in the Queen's speech are an illiberal barrier to democratic participation;**
- **Work with scrutiny to investigate ways the Borough Council can encourage more people to participate in future elections in Cheltenham – with a particular focus on the next Borough Council elections in 2022 and 2024.**

The motion was proposed by Cllr. Fisher and seconded by Cllr. Clark.

In proposing the motion, Cllr. Fisher noted that the motion had originally been submitted by Cllr. Willingham, who was unable to attend the meeting in person. He emphasised that the government's plans for voter ID would disenfranchise a huge number of people, particularly from marginalised communities, without making elections any safer.

The Mayor moved to the debate, where Members made the following points in support of the motion:

- The reforms were an overblown solution to a problem that hardly existed at all. The government ought to focus on real issues that affected a lot of people.
- The least well-off in society would be most affected by the reforms, especially those unable to pay for ID and homeless people without an address.
- People could easily end up being disenfranchised by circumstances beyond their control, and this would affect lower income groups most of all.
- There are already checks within the system to prevent voter fraud.

Members also made the following points in opposition to the motion:

- It was not unusual to require people to show proof of identity in all manner of situations, and it was a requirement to vote in many liberal countries including France, Germany and Spain.
- Voter fraud did exist and was a real problem which should be tackled head-on.
- ID cards would likely be available for free, so nobody would be disenfranchised by income, and the rules would be enforced in a sensitive and light-touch way.

Cllr. Fisher thanked Members for their contributions and summed up the key points. He stressed that voter fraud was incredibly rare, with only 6 convictions and 12 cautions out of million votes across the 2017 and 2019 elections.

The motion was approved.

Motion C – Call to adopt 20mph maximum speeds in areas where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix

This Council:

- **Believes that 20 is plenty in residential areas.**
- **Agrees with and supports the UK Government's recent endorsement of The Stockholm Declaration, which stipulates in Resolution 11 that a council should "mandate a maximum road travel speed of [20mph] in areas where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix...except where strong evidence exists that higher speeds are safe."**
- **Calls on Gloucestershire County Council, as the Local Highways Authority, to consult the county's District Councils, Parish Councils and communities to identify all the roads which should adopt a 20mph speed limit no later than 30 April 2025 and to make significant progress towards realising these changes in tandem - establishing 20mph limits in identified places quickly if communities agree.**
- **Calls on Gloucestershire County Council to provide the necessary funding to achieve the goal of making our residents safe across Gloucestershire.**

The motion was proposed by Cllr. Lewis and seconded by Cllr. Clark.

In proposing the motion, Cllr. Lewis noted that the motion had originally been submitted by Cllr. Brownsteen, who was unable to attend the meeting in person. She noted that it was the council's job to improve the wellbeing of people in Cheltenham, but every day constituents were travelling on roads that could be made safer, especially for cyclists. She described the issue as being above party politics, and something that all Members could surely agree on.

In seconding the motion, Cllr. Clark emphasised the importance of road safety and the need for the council to do all it could to keep residents safe. She related the story of a personal loss due to a lack of road safety and her hopes that this would not happen to others.

The Deputy Mayor moved to the debate, where Members made the following points in support of the motion:

- It would be a default limit of 20mph rather than a blanket limit, so there would be room for adjustment depending on circumstances.
- The motion did not make unreasonable demands of the county council, allowing them until 2025 to put this in place.
- Residents had been campaigning for lower speed limits for a long time and have been frustrated by the county council's inaction.
- The county council set up a task group on road safety more than a year ago, but it was still yet to meet.
- Many areas in Cheltenham were largely built before cars were widely available and are simply not designed for high speed travel.
- 20mph limits have been implemented successfully all over the country.

Members also made the following points in opposition to the motion:

- The county council has already accepted a very similar motion, and is not against any of the requests in principle.
- Many areas in Cheltenham already enforce 20mph limits, and plenty more do not allow cars to go over 20mph in any case due to the amount of traffic.

Cllr. Lewis thanked colleagues for their contributions to a lively debate, and hoped that the motion would be just one step of a longer process towards making Cheltenham safer.

The motion was approved.

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

None.

Steve Harvey
Chairman

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Cheltenham Borough Council
Council
18 October 2021
Appointment of Interim Monitoring Officer

Accountable member	Councillor Rowena Hay, Chair of Appointments & Remuneration Committee
Accountable officer	Gareth Edmundson
Ward(s) affected	None
Key/Significant Decision	No
Executive summary	<p>Following formal notification from Tewkesbury Borough Council to terminate the Secondment Agreement of the Monitoring Officer (MO) in June 2021, a review of potential options to fill the post was considered.</p> <p>The Appointments & Remuneration committee met at the end of September and recommended to Council to appoint an interim Monitoring Officer for a period of approximately 6 months (subject to a permanent recruitment). This would allow for a further assessment of need, particularly in light of the council's current organisational review.</p> <p>This report sets out the background to the appointment of an interim and outlines the process to appoint to a permanent post.</p>
Recommendations	<p>Council is asked to resolve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. That with immediate effect, Howard Norris be appointed as interim Monitoring Officer for the Borough Council in accordance with section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. This will be for a period of approximately 6 months or until a permanent MO is recruited 1.2. To note that following the completion of an appropriate review, the Appointments & Remuneration (A&R) sub-committee will progress with the recruitment of a permanent MO to be put forward to Full Council for approval in due course. If CBC elects to appoint a permanent MO shared with another authority, interview panels will be agreed in consultation with the A&R sub-committee and partnering authority.

Financial implications	<p>Monitoring Officer is a statutory post. Previously, the post of Monitoring Officer has been provided by secondment from Tewkesbury Borough Council. With the current MO electing to return full time to Tewkesbury Borough Council, this has resulted in a variation to the partnership agreement with One Legal.</p> <p>However, more funding may need to be identified to cover the total cost of an interim MO and a future permanent position. Our budget monitoring process will include any additional in-year cost of this change and a proposal for how this can be funded. The process of implementing the Council's operating model will enable the council to allocate appropriate funding for this post on a permanent basis.</p> <p>Contact officer: Gemma Bell</p> <p>gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk</p>
Legal implications	<p>By law the Council must appoint a Monitoring Officer.</p> <p>Under the Constitution the Appointments and Remuneration Committee is responsible for the appointment of a Monitoring Officer but Full Council must approve the appointment.</p> <p>Contact officer: One Legal</p> <p>legalservices@onelegal.org.uk 01684 272012</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	<p>This is a new direct appointment for the Council as the previous post holder was a shared post with another authority.</p> <p>The duties of MO post have been benchmarked against other senior roles within the Council and the salary sits within the senior manager grading framework.</p> <p>Contact officer: Julie McCarthy</p> <p>julie.mccarthy@publicagroup.uk 01242 264355</p>
Key risks	<p>The risk of no or delayed appointment could risk delivery against the Council Plan and its priorities.</p>
Corporate and community plan Implications	<p>None arising from this report</p>
Environmental and climate change implications	<p>None arising from this report</p>
Property/Asset Implications	<p>None arising from this report</p>

1. Background

1.1 Under section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the Council is required to appoint one of its officers to act as Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer is responsible for:

- Updating the Constitution. The Monitoring Officer will, as appropriate, advise Council on amendments to the Constitution normally through the Constitution Working Group which has the role of making recommendations to the Council on it. He/she may also make such amendments to the Constitution as are necessary to take account of any decisions of Full Council, a Committee, the Cabinet or the Leader and changes of law or fact, and shall notify Councillors, the Head of Paid Service and such other Officers as he/she considers appropriate of any such changes.
- Ensuring lawfulness and fairness of decision making. After consulting with the Head of Paid Service and the Section 151 Officer, the Monitoring Officer will report to the Council (or to the Cabinet in relation to an Executive Function) if he/she considers that any proposal, decision or omission would give rise to unlawfulness or if any decision or omission has given rise to maladministration. Such a report will have the effect of stopping the proposal or decision being implemented until the report has been considered.
- Supporting the Standards Committee - The Monitoring Officer will contribute to the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct through the provision of support to the Standards Committee.
- Dealing with allegations of Breach of Code of Members' Conduct. The Monitoring Officer deals with all written complaints about breaches by Borough Councillors or any Parish Councillor within the Council's administrative area, of the Code of Members' Conduct. The Monitoring Officer will seek local resolution to any complaints where this is possible or will determine complaints in accordance with the authority delegated by the Council.

1.2 Following notification from Tewkesbury Borough Council to terminate the Secondment Agreement of the previous Monitoring Officer, a review of potential options to fill the post was considered.

1.3 Members will be aware of the current organisational review. To allow for a further assessment of need and to allow for engagement with other local authorities about the potential to share an appointed MO, consideration was given to appointing an interim Monitoring Officer for a period of 6 months or until a permanent MO was appointed.

1.4 A panel comprising Appointment and Remuneration (A&R) committee members and the Chief Executive was formed to interview candidates to the interim Monitoring Officer post in order to make a recommendation to Council. The panel was unanimous in its decision that, subject to the approval of Full Council, Howard Norris be offered the interim MO role. The interim MO role will continue to be a part-time, retaining a similar time commitment and resource level in place under the previous shared arrangement with Tewkesbury Borough Council.

1.6 The Committee also formed a sub committee comprising Councillors Hay, Collins and Harman to progress with the recruitment of a permanent MO to be put forward to Full Council for approval in due course.

2. Permanent Monitoring Officer Recruitment

2.1 It is important that CBC assess needs and requirements for the future role of MO. The Council has an ambitious and broad agenda in the coming years and it is important that enough capacity and expertise resides within the position of MO in order to meet the current and future needs of the Council. Recruitment of a permanent Monitoring Officer post is one of the key considerations of a future structure.

2.2 At present, other Local Authorities in Gloucestershire are also reviewing their arrangements with

regard to an MO. Cotswold DC have recently advertised for a full time senior management position who will also fulfil the requirement of MO and others have similarly appointed interim MOs until a permanent appointment to the role can be made.

- 2.3** To ensure that the post is competitive within the market and to attract a suitable candidate, the Appointments and Remuneration Committee recommended that Council recruit an MO at up to a Director Grade Level three for a permanent appointment.
- 2.4** While it is vital that the MO has appropriate capacity to meet CBC's needs, the current model of sharing a MO has worked well and has ensured that the Council remain safe and compliant with regard to its decision making and council business. Therefore, sharing a MO with another local authority in Gloucestershire remains a viable and efficient option going forward.
- 2.5** If at the conclusion of this assessment it is deemed that a full time MO post is required for the authority this may present an additional cost pressure in the council that will need to be addressed. The implementation of the council's Operating Model will provide an opportunity to explore ways in which funding can be identified to fund a permanent post.
- 3. Alternative options considered**
- 3.1** The Council has a statutory duty to make these appointments from suitably qualified and experienced officers. No other options have been identified.

Report author	Contact officer: Gareth Edmundson
Appendices	N/A
Background information	None

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	Impact 1-5	Likelihood 1-5	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transfer to risk register
1	Council Monitoring officer	GE	Sept 2021	3	1	2	Appointment process established for both interim and permanent MO position.	appointment of interim MO by Full Council in Oct. 2021	October 2021	GE	No
Explanatory notes Impact – an assessment of the impact if the risk occurs on a scale of 1-5 (1 being least impact and 5 being major or critical) Likelihood – how likely is it that the risk will occur on a scale of 1-5 (1 being almost impossible, 2 is very low, 3 is low, 4 significant, 5 high probability) Control - Either: Reduce / Accept / Transfer to 3rd party / Close											

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Cheltenham Borough Council

Council – 18 October 2021

Interim Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations for Charlton Park, Lansdown, Leckhampton, St. Mark's and Up Hatherley Wards

Accountable member	Cabinet Member Safety and Communities, Flo Clucas
Accountable officer	Director of Finance and Assets, Paul Jones
Ward(s) affected	Charlton Park, Lansdown, Leckhampton, St. Mark's and Up Hatherley
Key/Significant Decision	Yes
Executive summary	<p>The Council has a duty to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable and to ensure that the polling stations are accessible to all electors including those with special needs.</p> <p>A consultation exercise has been completed for the Charlton Park, Lansdown, Leckhampton, St. Mark's and Up Hatherley Wards and consideration has been given to the views put forward.</p>
Recommendations	<p>That Council approves:</p> <p>Charlton Park Ward, polling district EB – move the polling station from Leckhampton Baptist Hall, Pilley Lane to Squash Court, Old Patesians Sports and Social Club, Everest Road</p> <p>Charlton Park Ward – merge polling district ED with polling district EB</p> <p>Lansdown Ward, polling district HC – move the polling station from St Gregorys RC School, Knapp Road to The Old Priory Room, St Gregorys RC Church, Clarence Street</p> <p>Leckhampton Ward, polling district IA – move the polling station from Zion Hall, Pilley Lane to Leckhampton Baptist Hall, Pilley Lane</p> <p>Leckhampton Ward, polling district IB – retain polling station at Leckhampton Primary School</p> <p>Leckhampton Ward, polling district IC - move the polling station from Leckhampton Primary School, Hall Road to The Pavilion, Burrows Field, Moorend Grove</p> <p>St. Mark's Ward, polling district OA – retain polling station at Rowanfield Junior School</p> <p>Up Hatherley Ward, polling district SA - move the polling station from</p>

Financial implications	<p>There are no significant financial implications of note, any small costs that may be incurred can be absorbed within existing budgets.</p> <p>Jon Whitlock Finance Business Partner jon.whitlock@cheltenham.gov.uk 01242 26 4354</p>
Legal implications	<p>The council has a statutory duty to review its polling districts, polling places and polling stations. Any changes to the current polling districts, polling places and polling stations will take into account the provisions of the Equalities Act, Representation of People Act 1983 (as amended), Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The council must seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in the local authority area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances. The council must seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.</p> <p>Contact officer: One Legal, legal.services@onelegal.org.uk 01684 272691</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	<p>None arising from the report or recommendations</p> <p>Contact officer: Georgie Tweddell, Georgie.tweddell@publicagroup.uk 01285 623110</p>
Key risks	<p>There is a risk that electors in polling districts where the polling station has changed may attempt to vote at the previous polling station instead of the new polling station. The Returning Officer will issue poll cards that will state on the front of the card that the polling station has changed.</p>
Corporate and community plan Implications	<p>Keeping the provision of polling stations under review is an important part of commitment to ensure that the polling stations are accessible as possible to all electors</p>
Environmental and climate change implications	<p>The proposed changes to polling venues are not expected to have environmental or climate change implications. Polling stations are located to be accessible to electors within polling districts. This includes minimising the need for travel, which encourages electors to walk or cycle to the polling station.</p>
Property/Asset Implications	<p>Contact officer: Gemma Bell, Gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk</p>

1. Background

- 1.1** At the elections held in May this year, some of the venues used as polling stations were not available, due to the pandemic. Alternative venues sourced prompted the review to change some of the polling station venues permanently. Some schools also requested we look for alternative venues. An interim review of Charlton Park, Lansdown, Leckhampton, St. Mark's and Up Hatherley Wards was undertaken to ensure that all electors in these wards have reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable and to ensure that the polling stations are accessible to all electors, including those with special needs. The Acting Returning Officer for Cheltenham has made formal comment as part of this review, both into the existing polling stations and the polling stations that may be used based on the newly recommended polling places.

2. Responses from interested parties

- 2.1** Following the closing date for the review, as well as the formal comments from the Parliamentary Acting Returning Officer for Cheltenham (see paragraph 3 below), correspondence was received from two other sources.
- 2.2** The first comment received was from Councillor Richard Pineger of St. Mark's Ward who raised concerns with the proposed change of polling station from Rowanfield Junior School to Rowanfield Children's Centre. Councillor Pineger voiced concern that the Children's Centre is a relatively unknown venue and could cause electors to be unclear about where they are voting. The head at Rowanfield Junior School has also given assurance that accommodating a polling station within the school did not cause any disruption to the school.
- 2.3** Having considered Councillor Pineger's comments and that of the Head, the Acting Returning Officer has decided to disregard the original proposed change to move the polling station for polling district OA to the Children's Centre from Rowanfield Junior School.
- 2.4** The second comment was from Councillor Martin Horwood of Leckhampton Ward with regard to the proposed changes for all of the polling stations serving Leckhampton Ward as set out below.
- 2.5** Councillor Horwood welcomed the proposal to change the polling station for polling district IA to Leckhampton Baptist Hall from Zion Hall.
- 2.6** Councillor Horwood expressed concerns with the proposed change for polling district IB to Leckhampton Village Hall from Leckhampton Primary School. "There is no great geographical issue in the shift from the school to the Village Hall as the two are very close to one another. But the newly expanded Primary School will have better parking for elderly and disabled voters, better disabled access and more space than the Village Hall which has very limited and quite awkward parking and a small period entrance which opens directly into the path of cars using the car park. It is also a sloping driveway which could be treacherous in icy weather. Although aware of one or two complaints about the use of the school hall, the use of schools as polling stations is a well-established practice generally but also in Leckhampton specifically, and the new school will have more flexibility than before to minimise disruption." He thought that the review should bear in mind the significant population at the Lanes and Brizen Lane and subsidiary roads and the likely building of nearly 400 new homes within the ward in that immediate area in the near future. "This should prompt a possible review of ward boundaries but also of the possibility of a polling station in that part of IB which is a significant distance from the Village Hall."
- 2.7** Having considered Councillor Horwood's concerns with regard to accessibility, the Acting Returning Officer has decided to disregard the proposed change to move the polling station for polling district IB to the Village Hall from Leckhampton Primary School. The electoral arrangements for Cheltenham Borough Council are to be reviewed, when polling places and stations will also be reviewed.

- 2.8** Councillor Horwood supported the proposed change for polling district IC to Burrow's Field Pavilion from Leckhampton Primary School suggesting a further improvement would be to locate the polling station further north and so even more conveniently for the majority of the population of this polling district in the Moorend area towards the north of the ward. "Although it appears to be a minor move from the primary school, this location will have good access and parking, it will be significantly more convenient for voters on the 'birds' estate and it will reduce walking and cycling times from Moorend, thus discouraging car use. But if an even better location further north can be found (why not the Somerset Arms?), that would be even better."
- 2.9** The Acting Returning Officer did consider the Somerset Arms as a venue for the polling station for polling district IC before the consultation opened; unfortunately, the Landlord was unable to accommodate.

3. Response from the Acting Returning Officer (ARO) for Cheltenham

- 3.1** The list of polling stations along with the ARO's comments is set out in Appendix B.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1** **Charlton Park Ward, proposed change of polling station for polling district EB and merge of polling district ED with polling district EB** – The Squash Court at Old Patesians Sports and Social Club is situated in the Charlton Park Ward just outside of the polling district EB. It was used at the elections held in May when the designated polling station for polling district EB was not available due to essential health and safety works that had not been undertaken because of the pandemic. The proposed venue better serves the electorate in polling district EB as it is within the ward and there is ample parking. Polling district ED is a very small polling district with electors currently voting at Sacred Hearts Parish Hall with electors in polling district EC. Polling district EC includes the West Ward of the Parish of Charlton Kings. Polling districts EB and ED are not part of the parish. The electors currently in polling district ED are equidistant to Old Patesians Sports and Social Club, Everest Road and Sacred Hearts Parish Hall, Moorend Road.
- 4.2** **Lansdown Ward, proposed change of polling station for polling district HC** – To prevent disruption to the school.
- 4.3** **Leckhampton Ward, proposed change to polling stations** – Because of the proposed move of polling district EB (4.1) Leckhampton Baptist Hall is a more suitable venue than the designated polling station, Zion Hall, situated behind the Baptist Hall. With regard to polling district IC, the newly refurbished pavilion is located within the polling district and will reduce the number of electors to Leckhampton Primary School.
- 4.4** **Up Hatherley Ward, proposed change to polling station for polling district SA** – To prevent disruption to the school.

5. How this initiative contributes to the corporate plan

- 5.1** The proposed recommendations will help ensure that polling stations remain accessible to as many electors as possible including those with special needs.

6. Consultation and feedback

- 6.1** A consultation exercise was carried out and proposal and comments on the review were requested. Views and comments were requested from the following:

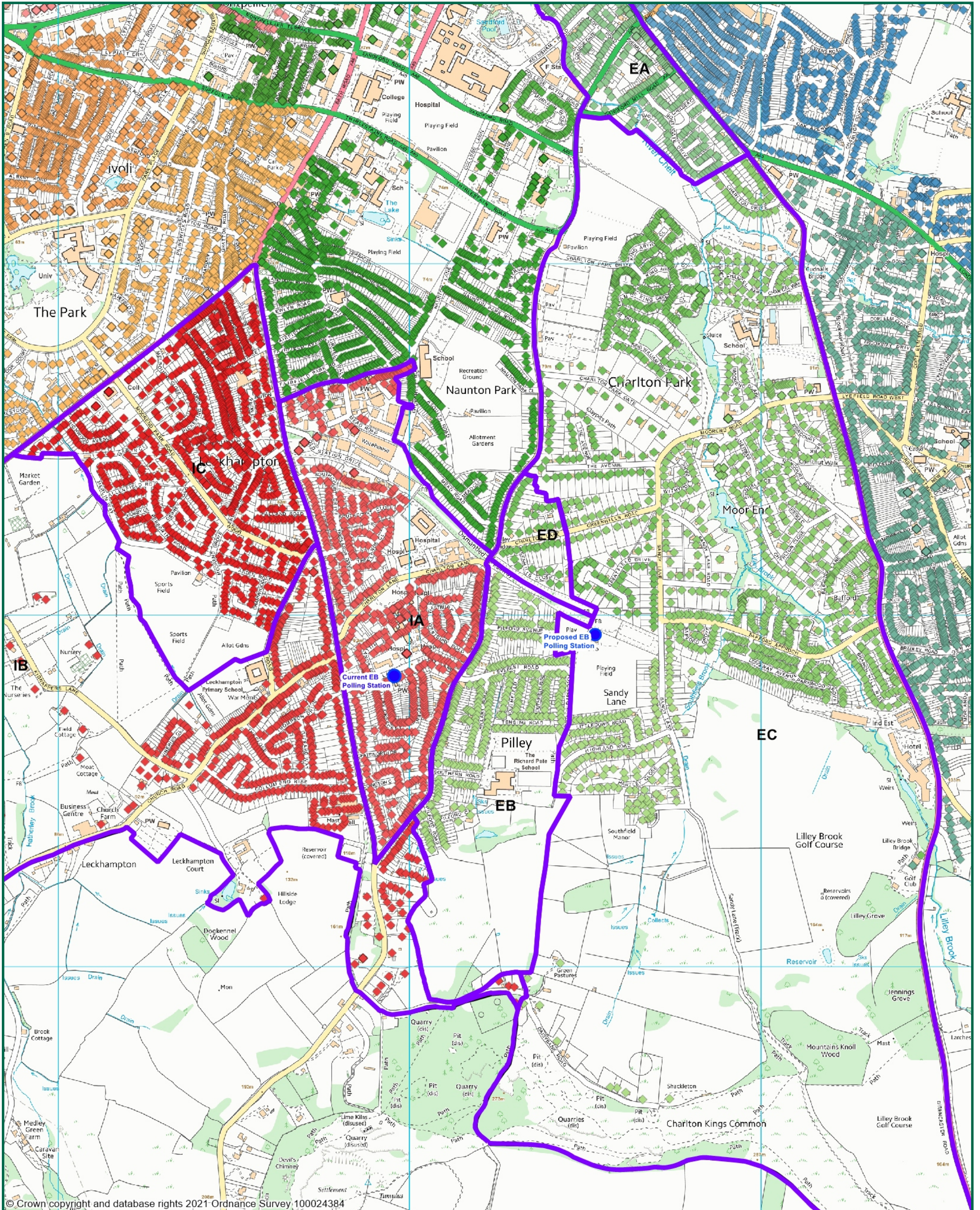
- MP for Cheltenham
- Borough Councillors for the Wards concerned
- County Councillors for the Electoral Divisions concerned
- Parish Councils
- Local Community Group

7. Performance management –monitoring and review

7.1 The electoral team always undertake an informal review of polling stations after each election to identify any issues which may arise from time to time.

Report author	Contact officer: Kim Smith, kim.smith@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264348
Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk Assessment 2. Plan A map of Polling Districts EB and ED 3. Plan B map of Polling District HC 4. Plan C map of Polling Districts IA and IC 5. Plan D map of Polling District SA 6. Appendix B – ARO Comments 7. Appendix C - List for publication
Background information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	Impact 1-5	Likelihood 1-6	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transferred to risk register
	Elector unsure of location of polling station	RO	15 Sep	1	1	2	A	Poll card with note highlighting Polling Station has changed. Helpline and office contact details included on poll card	Next election	Electoral Services Officer	Elections risk register
Explanatory notes Impact – an assessment of the impact if the risk occurs on a scale of 1-5 (1 being least impact and 5 being major or critical) Likelihood – how likely is it that the risk will occur on a scale of 1-6 (1 being almost impossible, 2 is very low, 3 is low, 4 significant, 5 high and 6 a very high probability) Control - Either: Reduce / Accept / Transfer to 3rd party / Close											

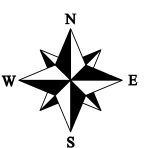


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Current and Proposed Polling Station for EB

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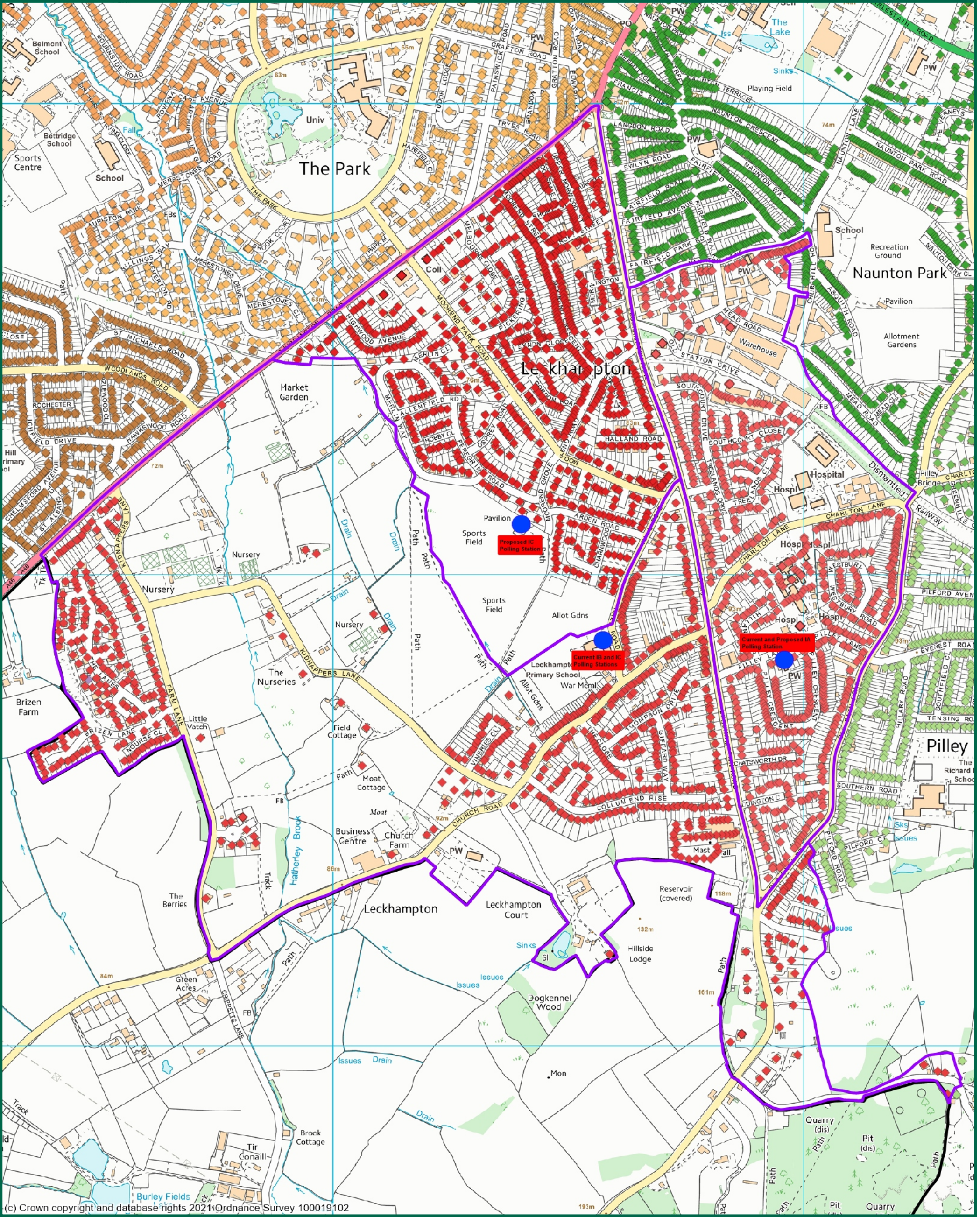
27 July 2021



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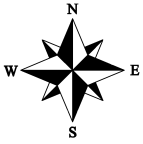


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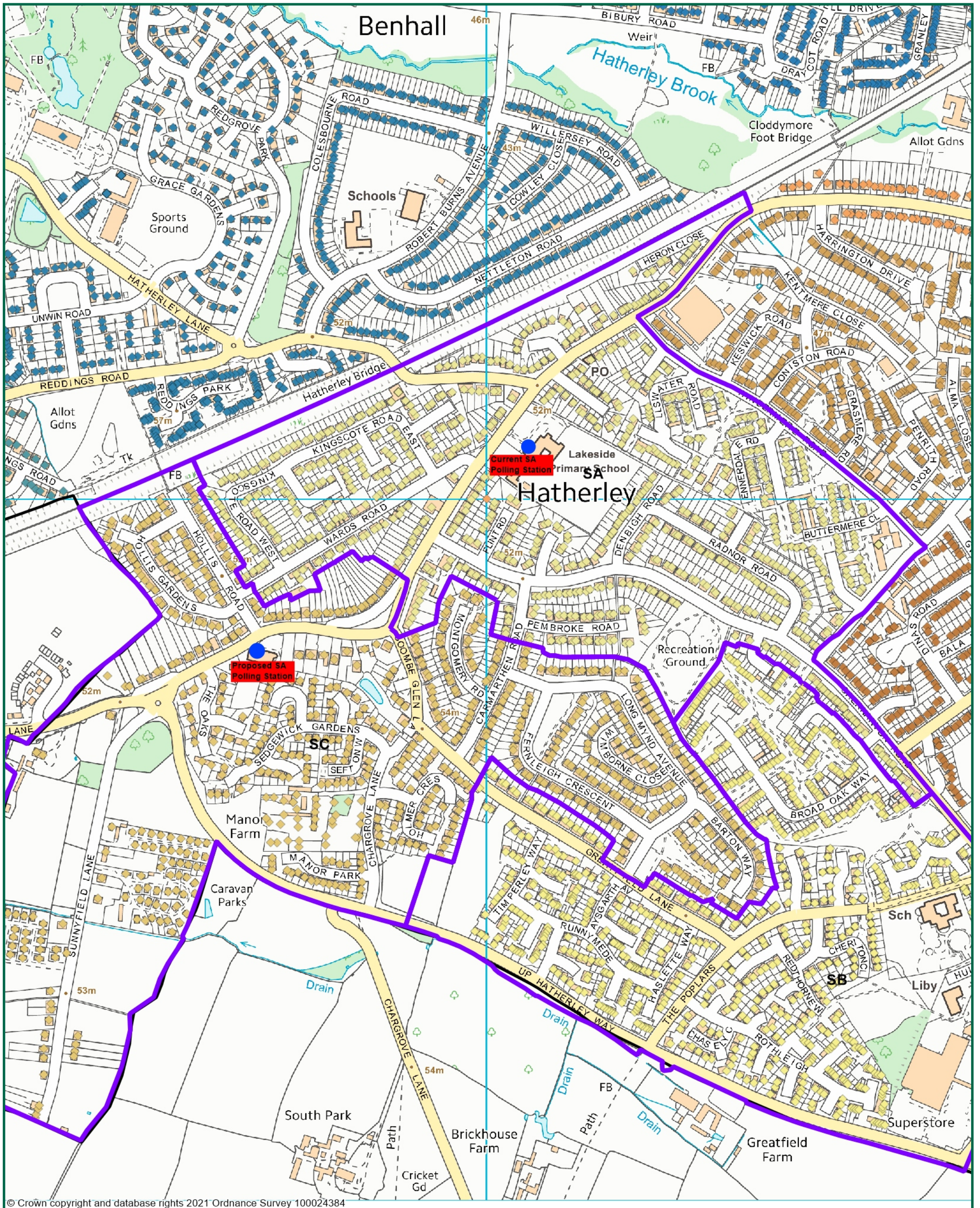
**Current and Proposed Polling
Stations for Leckhampton Ward**

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05 October 2021



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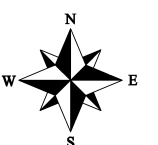


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Current and Proposed Polling Stations for SA

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Interim Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Charlton Park Ward

<u>Polling District</u>	<u>Current Polling Place and or Polling Station</u>	<u>Acting Returning Officer's Comments</u>	<u>Proposed Polling Place and or Polling Station</u>	<u>Proposed Polling District</u>
EA	Cheltenham East Community Fire and Rescue Station, Keynsham Road, GL53 7PY	Disabled access. No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.
EB	Leckhampton Baptist Hall, Pilley Lane, GL53 9EP	<p>Leckhampton Baptist Hall was not available for the elections that took place during the Pandemic. After looking for alternatives in the area, the squash court at Old Patesians Sports and Social Club was used. Leckhampton Baptist is situated outside of the boundary of Charlton Park Ward.</p> <p>I propose polling station change to The Squash Court, Old Patesians Sports and Social Club, Everest Road, GL53 9LG. no negative feedback/complaints from electors when the premises was used for the elections in May 2021 and the polling station is situated in Charlton Park Ward. Good disabled access and car park.</p>	Old Pateisans Sports and Social Club – Squash Court	No changes proposed.
EC Bafford Approach to King William Drive	Sacred Hearts Parish Hall, Moorend Road	Disabled access. No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.
EC Lawson Glade to Other Electors ED	Sacred Hearts Parish Hall, Moorend Road	To merge polling district ED with polling district EB and for those electors to vote at the proposed polling station, Old Patesians Sports and Social Club.	To move electors in ED to Old Pateisans Sports and Social Club – Squash Court to	ED to be merged into EB. No changes proposed to EC

Interim Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Lansdown Ward

<u>Polling District</u>	<u>Current Polling Place and or Polling Station</u>	<u>Acting Returning Officer's Comments</u>	<u>Proposed Polling Place and or Polling Station</u>	<u>Proposed Polling District</u>
HA	Christ Church Church Hall, Malvern Road, GL50 2JH	Disabled access. No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.
HB	St Andrews Church Hall, Montpellier Street, GL50 1SP	Disabled access. No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.
HC	St Gregorys RC School, Knapp Road, GL50 3QG	<p>St Gregorys RC School has disabled access and there have been no complaints from electors. In order to prevent disruption to the school I have managed to seek an alternative venue.</p> <p>Propose polling station change to St Gregory's Old Priory, Clarence Street. The building is more than adequate to house a polling station. The room is accessed via Clarence Street and has disabled access.</p>	St Gregory's Old Priory, Clarence Street	No changes proposed.

Interim Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Leckhampton Ward

<u>Polling District</u>	<u>Current Polling Place and or Polling Station</u>	<u>Acting Returning Officer's Comments</u>	<u>Proposed Polling Place and or Polling Station</u>	<u>Proposed Polling District</u>
IA	Zion Hall, Pilley Lane, GL53 9EP	<p>Zion Hall was not available for the elections that took place during the Pandemic. After looking for alternative premises in the area, we used the squash courts at Old Patesians Sports and Social Club for polling districts EB (Charlton Park Ward) and polling district IA (Leckhampton Ward). I have proposed to move the polling place and station for polling district EB to the squash court on a permanent basis. If this proposal is agreed, Leckhampton Baptist will become available.</p> <p>Propose polling station change to Leckhampton Baptist Hall, Pilley Lane, GL53 9EP. Zion Hall and Leckhampton Baptist Hall are at the same location, (Zion Hall at the rear of the Baptist Hall) and is accessed via an alleyway at the side of the Baptist Hall. The Baptist Hall is a more suitable venue for a polling station, as it is more accessible.</p>	Leckhampton Baptist Hall.	No changes proposed.
IB	Leckhampton Primary School, Hall Road, GL53 0HP	<p>Leckhampton Primary School has disabled access and is a suitable venue for a polling station. However, I have had complaints from parents about the disruption caused.</p> <p>Propose polling station change to The Leckhampton Village Hall, Church Road, GL53 0QJ. The building is adequate to house a polling station. The room is accessed from the car park. A purpose built ramp (provided by the hall) will need to be fitted to the entrance door to allow disabled access in to the polling station.</p>	Leckhampton Village Hall.	No changes proposed.

<u>Polling District</u>	<u>Current Polling Place and or Polling Station</u>	<u>Acting Returning Officer's Comments</u>	<u>Proposed Polling Place and or Polling Station</u>	<u>Proposed Polling District</u>
IC	Leckhampton Primary School, Hall Road, GL53 0HP	<p>Leckhampton Primary School has disabled access and is a suitable venue for a polling station. However, I have had complaints from parents about the disruption caused. The polling station is situated in polling district IB.</p> <p>Proposed polling station change to The Pavilion, Burrows Field, Moorend Grove, GL53 0EY. The Pavilion is currently being renovated and when completed will have a function room with disabled access via a path leading from the carpark. The venue is situated within the polling district.</p>	The Pavilion, Burrows Field	No changes proposed.

Interim Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

St Marks Ward

<u>Polling District</u>	<u>Current Polling Place and or Polling Station</u>	<u>Acting Returning Officer's Comments</u>	<u>Proposed Polling Place and or Polling Station</u>	<u>Proposed Polling District</u>
OA	Rowanfield Junior School, Alstone Lane, GL51 8HY	<p>Rowanfield Junior School has disabled access and is a suitable venue for a polling station. I have not had any complaints but understand that it does cause disruption to the school on polling day.</p> <p>Propose polling station change to Rowanfield Children's Centre. It is accessed from the main road down a path, which has lighting. The room has direct disabled access and will not impact on the daily running of the centre.</p>	Rowanfield Children's Centre.	No changes proposed.
OB	St Marks and Hesters Way Community Centre, Brooklyn Road, GL51 8DS	Disabled access. No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.

Interim Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Up Hatherley Ward

<u>Polling District</u>	<u>Current Polling Place and or Polling Station</u>	<u>Acting Returning Officer's Comments</u>	<u>Proposed Polling Place and or Polling Station</u>	<u>Proposed Polling District</u>
SA	Lakeside Primary School, Hatherley Road, GL51 6HR	<p>Lakeside Primary School has previously had a portakabin in the car park but is no longer suitable due to the electorate and turnout. In recent years, the main school building has been used but at the elections during the Pandemic the room was not available whilst the school was open therefore an alternative venue was found to limit any further disruption to the children.</p> <p>Propose polling station change to St Philip and St James Church Centre, Cold Pool Lane, GL51 6HR. The building is more than adequate to house a polling station. It has disabled access and on site carpark. This is just outside the polling district but was used for the May 2021 elections and there were no negative feedback/complaints from electors.</p>	St Philip and St James Church Centre.	No changes proposed.
SB	Hillview Community Centre, (next to library), Hulbert Crescent, GL51 3FZ	Disabled access. No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.
SC	Up Hatherley Village Hall, Cold Pool Lane, GL51 6JA	Disabled access. No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.	No changes proposed.

Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations
Cheltenham Parliamentary Constituency
For the Borough Wards Listed Below

Ward	Polling District	Polling Place and/or Polling Station
Charlton Park	EA	Cheltenham East Community Fire & Rescue Station, Keynsham Road GL53 7PY
Charlton Park	EB	Squash Court Old Patesians Sports and Social Club Everest Road Cheltenham GL53 9LG
Charlton Park	EC Electors - Bafford Approach to King William Drive	Sacred Hearts Parish Hall Moorend Road GL53 9AU
Charlton Park	EC Electors - Lawson Glade to Other Electors	Sacred Hearts Parish Hall Moorend Road GL53 9AU
Lansdown	HA	Christ Church Church Hall Malvern Road GL50 2JH
Lansdown	HB	St Andrews Church Hall Montpellier Street GL50 1SP
Lansdown	HC	St Gregory's Old Priory 70 Clarence Street Cheltenham GL50 3LE

Ward	Polling District	Polling Place and/or Polling Station
Leckhampton	IA	Leckhampton Baptist Hall Pilley Lane GL53 9EP
Leckhampton	IB	Leckhampton Primary School Hall Road GL53 0HP
Leckhampton	IC	The Pavilion Burrows Field Moorend Grove Cheltenham GL53 0HA
Up Hatherley	SA	St Philip and St James Parish Church Centre Cold Pool Lane Cheltenham GL51 6HY
Up Hatherley	SB	Hillview Community Centre, (Next To Library) Hulbert Crescent GL51 3BW
Up Hatherley	SC	Up Hatherley Village Hall Cold Pool Lane GL51 6JA

Cheltenham Borough Council

Council 18 October 2021

Safety of Women at Night

Accountable member	Cllr Flo Clucas, Cabinet Member Safety and Communities
Accountable officer	Darren Knight, Executive Director People and Change
Ward(s) affected	All
Key/Significant Decision	No
Executive summary	<p>The council and its partners have been concerned about the safety of women at night for a number of years now.</p> <p>This summer, The Home Office made a specific pot of funding available to address the issues faced by women at night to which we agreed we would make a bid into.</p> <p>To support the bid, the council undertook a survey that ran from 5 August to 20 August 2021 on the council's website to help understand how safe women feel in the evening and at night in Cheltenham's town centre. The survey was well received and provides some concerning data about how safe women feel at night.</p> <p>This report updates Council on the findings of the survey, the contents of the bid to the Home Office and future next steps including how we communicate the results of the survey.</p>
Recommendations	<p>Council</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes results of the survey as set out in section 2. 2. Notes submission of the grant application to the Home Office as set out in section 3 3. Request that Cabinet consider the proposals to progress a range of projects, set out in para 7.2 onwards, should the bid not be successful.
Financial implications	<p>There are no financial implications on the council's general fund from the decisions recommended in this report.</p> <p>If the grant application to the Home Office is successful, this will be managed in line with the Council's constitution</p>

	Contact officer: Martin Yates Business Partner Accountant Business Support Services Cheltenham Borough Council Martin.Yates@cheltenham.gov.uk Tel : 01242 264115
Legal implications	<p>If the grant application to the Home Office is successful, the council will enter into a legal agreement with the Home Office.</p> <p>Contact officer: One Legal Legal.Services@onelegal.org.uk</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	There are no HR implications as a result of this report
Key risks	Given the results of the survey, if the council is not seen to be leading action on keeping women safe, there is a risk of reputational harm
Corporate and community plan Implications	<p>Keeping women safe at night in our town centre will support two of our corporate plan priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing the revitalisation and improvement of our vibrant Town centre and public spaces • Delivering services to meet the needs of our residents and communities
Environmental and climate change implications	None identified as consequences of the decisions recommended in this report.
Property/Asset Implications	None identified as consequences of the decisions recommended in this report.

1. Background

- 1.1 The council and its partners have been concerned about the safety of women at night for a number of years as the reports of sexual harassment, abuse and intimidation have increased.
- 1.2 Extensive work has been undertaken with Partners to seek to make our Night Time Economy safe for women and girls. This has seen a number of projects implemented including awareness raising projects in partnership with GRASAC, our local rape and sexual abuse centre and implementing the Ask for Angela scheme, along with external validation through the Purple Flag scheme.
- 1.3 This Partnership approach has strengthened our determination to push forward with new projects and this summer, the Home Office has made a specific pot of funding available to address the issues faced by women at night to which we agreed we would make a bid. This would build in and grow the work already being done.
- 1.4 To support the bid, the council undertook a survey that ran from 5 August to 20 August 2021 on the council's website to help understand how safe women feel in the evening and at night in Cheltenham's town centre. The survey was well received and provides some concerning data about how safe women feel at night.
- 1.5 The report is timely given the national interest in the safety of women at night following Sarah Everard's horrific murder, the conviction of Wayne Couzens and the fact that at least 81 other UK women have been killed in circumstances where the suspect is a man since her murder. That is 81 since the tragic death of Sarah Everard.
- 1.6 Given the results of the survey, we also need to consider what elements of the bid can proceed if the Home Office turn down our bid – for instance, we may be able to secure funding from our partners to develop the pledge or elements of the communications plan.

2. Safety of women at night survey:

- 2.1 The survey had a very good uptake with 638 responses – 95% of which were female. Out of these responses:
 - **72% of respondents** told us that they don't feel safe at night, rising to 75% not feeling safe during race week.
 - **39% of respondents** have experienced some form of sexual assault.
 - **30% of respondents** told us that they get regularly sexually harassed.
 - **15% of respondents** told us that they are on occasions experiencing more serious crimes such as stalking and exposure.
 - **33% of respondents** told us that these unwanted behaviours are happening regularly in pubs and clubs and 25% are experiencing these regularly on the street.
 - Despite the frequency of unwanted behaviours, **34% of respondents** are not telling anyone about their experiences.
 - When asked why respondents are not reporting, the overwhelming majority cite a lack of confidence that they would be taken seriously.
 - **94% of respondents** told us that they have changed their behaviours following their experiences.

- 2.2 In terms of what we should be doing - respondents told us that all parts of the night-time economy need to take the issue of sexual violence seriously. Women in particular are telling us that they do not want to be blamed or asked to change their behaviours, instead they want to see a culture created where sexual harassment is unacceptable which would also see men being educated about the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

3. Contents of the bid

- 3.1 The contents of the bid were informed by what our survey respondents told us they want to happen to make them feel safer at night.
- 3.2 **All parts of the night-time economy need to take the issue of sexual violence seriously:**
- 3.3 We will use funding from the Home Office's Safety of Women at Night (SWAN) fund to develop and implement a public pledge for women's safety that key public sector partners along with night-time businesses and third sector organisations will sign and commit to taking action to keep women safe.
- 3.4 We expect the pledge to cover commitments in the four following areas:
- Raising awareness across the organisation of the impact of sexual violence
 - Training for staff and decision makers
 - Developing and implementing appropriate reporting and recording processes
 - Supporting joined-up communications around the safety of women at night (see below)
- 3.5 **Take action to implement our pledge and demonstrate we are taking sexual violence seriously:**
- 3.6 A pledge is nothing without a firm commitment to take action. We will use SWAN funding fund to deliver the following:
- We will work to **incorporate the pledge within our licensing policy** – so that we make signing and implementing the pledge a condition of granting a licence.
 - We will work with the University to **create a charter mark and accreditation programme** and award this to licensed premises that have committed to the pledge and taken action to across the four areas.
 - We will work with the University and GRASAC to **deliver a programme of training** – we will focus our training on the management and staff of licensed premises, councillors, officers and staff of VCS organisations
- 3.7 **Creating a culture where sexual harassment is unacceptable**
- 3.8 On the back of the pledge, we want to develop a communications plan that will highlight the impact that sexual crimes have on their victims, and create a whole town culture change to the way we view sexual crimes. Men in particular will be encouraged to reflect that inappropriate behaviour is not acceptable, and they will be given the confidence to constructively challenge the behaviour of others.
- 3.9 **Put more feet on the ground in the town centre at night to help keep women safe and to reinforce the message that sexual harassment is unacceptable**
- 3.10 Cheltenham is lucky to have three organisations that work really hard to promote the safety of all users of the night-time economy.

- Cheltenham Guardians Safeguarding Team
- Cheltenham Street Pastors.
- University Student Community Patrol

- 3.11 Many respondents to our survey acknowledged how much more safe they feel knowing that they are present in our town centre at night and asked that we look to expand their capacity wherever possible. Through the bid and our ongoing work we are looking to support our three NTE organisations; with the street pastors and student community patrol potentially receiving funding if the bid is successful.
- 3.12 **Educating men about the impact of their behaviours and to take on more responsibility for policing themselves**
- 3.13 We intend to support our plan with some specific education work in local schools and youth groups with groups of young men and women around the themes of healthy relationships and consent.

4. Financial details of the bid

All parts of the night-time economy need to take the issue of sexual violence seriously:	
Develop a public pledge for women's safety	£20,000
Take action to implement our pledge and demonstrate we are taking sexual violence seriously:	
Incorporate the pledge within our licensing policy	0
create a charter mark and accreditation programme for licensed premises	£13,250
Deliver a programme of training	£20,250
Creating a culture where sexual harassment is unacceptable	
develop a communications plan – whole town culture change	£65,000
Put more feet on the ground in the town centre at night to help keep women safe and to reinforce the message that sexual harassment is unacceptable	
support our three NTE organisations	£15,000
Educating men about the impact of their behaviours and to take on more responsibility for policing themselves	
education work in local schools and youth groups	£10,400
Total	£143,900

5. County-wide bid

- 5.1 In addition to the Cheltenham bid to the Home Office, partners in Gloucestershire, via the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) have made two applications to previous rounds of the safer streets fund. The good news is that both these application have been successful. In total the county will receive £1,061,478. The funding will be used for:

5.2 Countywide bid (£517,050):

- Anonymous reporting app and 18 mobile CCTV cameras for districts / local areas to use where hotspots are identified. In addition, the OPCC will be purchasing laptops for the CCTV and relevant airtime agreements.
- Bystander intervention 'train the trainer' training to challenge poor behaviour as it occurs
- Boost leadership programme in schools to prevent unhealthy cultures from developing
- Communications activity

5.3 It is good that Cheltenham will benefit from the county-wide bid, in particular the roll-out of the anonymous reporting app and the mobile CCTV cameras.

5.4 Gloucester City bid (£544,428):

- Additional and upgrades to existing CCTV cameras and lighting around Gloucester Park to address safety concerns of people identified through the recent survey
- Community engagement / building focusing on VAWG in Gloucester Park
- Sex worker outreach programme enhancement

6. Governance

6.1 The approach to supporting the safety of women at night is very much of interest to our partners – and we have worked with the Police, University, Gloucestershire Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (GRASAC) and Cheltenham Safe to develop the bid.

6.2 We will work through the Cheltenham Communities Partnership; which acts as Cheltenham's community safety partnership to ensure that there is multi-agency support for the project, and to promote the benefits of the project to its member organisations.

6.3 We will also continue to work within county-wide partnerships that are working to reduce to the risks around sexual violence including the Gloucestershire Sexual Violence Partnership and Safer Gloucestershire

7. Next steps

7.1 If the bid is successful, the table below sets out the key milestones:

Key milestones

Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Development work with key partners to refine the four areas of pledge	Announcement of outcome of bid	Consultation with licensed premises operators to co-create the charter mark & accreditation programme	Accelerate activity on the development of the charter and move to finalise	Commence programme of consultation with licensing committee members and ENTE businesses and their representative groups	Full implementation of the comms plan ahead of race week
Request for comms tenders via council procurement portal	Uni to develop the charter mark and accreditation programme	GRASAC and the Uni to develop the training programme for licensed premises			Bring forward amendments to the council's licensing policy

- 7.2 If the bid is not successful, we would suggest the following commitments are taken forward:
- 7.3 Develop the public pledge for women's safety – we will use officer time to develop the pledge, similar to how we have successfully secured 70 organisations to sign up to the No Child Left Behind community agreement,
- 7.4 Incorporate the pledge within our licensing policy
- 7.5 Develop the communications plan to create a culture where sexual harassment is unacceptable. We see this element as being so critical to the safety of women at night that we will use officer time, plus time given by our partners to make this element happen. We might not be able to deliver all elements of what was envisaged but we will be able to make a difference.
- 7.6 We will also work with county-wide colleagues to implement the activities set out in para 5.2
- 7.7 In addition, as members will know, each year Gloucestershire participates in the 16 days of action against gender-based violence; starting on the 25th November (International day for the elimination of violence against women) and ending on 10th December (Human rights day).
- 7.8 This year, the reclaim the night march, on 25 November, will be held in Cheltenham and more information will be issued to members nearer the time to encourage participation.
- 7.9 Members may also like to consider the value in a members' seminar on the subject – we have a commitment from Gloucestershire Police that they would be happy to attend and we could also invite other partners including GRASAC and the University.

Report author	Contact officer: Richard.gibson@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264280
Appendices	1. Risk Assessment
Background information	

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	Impact 1-5	Likelihood 1-6	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transferred to risk register
	Given the results of the survey, if the council is not seen to be leading action on keeping women safe, there is a risk of reputational harm	Darren Knight	20.8.21	4	3	12	Reduce	Report to council with the summary results of the survey Commitment to take forward work regardless of the outcome of the bid	October November	Richard Gibson	
Explanatory notes Impact – an assessment of the impact if the risk occurs on a scale of 1-5 (1 being least impact and 5 being major or critical) Likelihood – how likely is it that the risk will occur on a scale of 1-6 (1 being almost impossible, 2 is very low, 3 is low, 4 significant, 5 high and 6 a very high probability) Control - Either: Reduce / Accept / Transfer to 3rd party / Close											

Cheltenham Borough Council Council – 18th October 2021 Annual Report on Overview and Scrutiny

Accountable member	Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Chris Mason
Accountable officer	Democracy Officer, Harry Mayo
Accountable scrutiny committee	Overview and Scrutiny
Ward(s) affected	All indirectly
Significant Decision	No
Executive summary	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee manages and coordinates scrutiny at the council, with scrutiny task groups carrying out the detailed work and reporting back to the main committee.</p> <p>Under these arrangements the Overview and Scrutiny Committee produce an annual report for Council and this is contained in Appendix 2. This report sets out the achievements of scrutiny between April 2020 and March 2021, including the outcomes of the scrutiny task groups, as well as detailing 'what's next'.</p> <p>Scrutiny endorsed the annual report at their meeting on the 6th September 2021 and welcomes the opportunity for Council to debate this report and give its views on the success or otherwise of the scrutiny arrangements.</p>
Recommendations	Council is asked to note the Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny 2020-21.

Financial implications	<p>There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The annual budget proposals and the scrutiny of financial performance and other budgetary issues are reviewed throughout the year by the Budget Scrutiny Working Group, as detailed in the section on Task Groups in the annual Scrutiny report.</p> <p>Contact officer: Paul Jones, Executive Director Finance and Assets paul.jones@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264365</p>
Legal implications	<p>There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation within this report.</p> <p>Contact officer: One Legal, legalservices@onelegal.org.uk</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	<p>There are no direct HR implications arising from this report.</p> <p>Contact officer: Georgie Tweddell, HR Business Partner, georgie.tweddell@publicagroup.uk</p>
Key risks	<p>The original risk assessment which accompanied the report to Council in December 2011 has been updated with an assessment of the current risks affecting the effectiveness of the O&S arrangements and is attached as Appendix 1.</p>
Corporate and community plan Implications	<p>An effective overview and scrutiny process can contribute to positive outcomes on any of the objectives in the Corporate Strategy.</p> <p>Increased public involvement in Overview and Scrutiny will support the council's objective to listen and respond to local communities and their issues.</p>
Environmental and climate change implications	<p>None</p>

Report author	<p>Contact officer: Harry Mayo, Democracy Officer harry.mayo@cheltenham.gov.uk Tel: 01242 264211</p>
Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk Assessment 2. Annual Report
Background information	<p>Minutes of 6th September O&S meeting (item 8)</p>

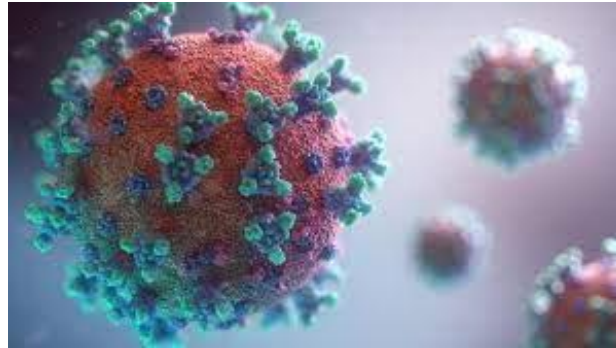
The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk		
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	Impact 1-4	Likelihood 1-6	Score	Control	Action	Comments as at September 2019
	If any scrutiny arrangements are not supported by a change in culture across members and officers they may not be successful in delivering the outcomes required.	Democratic Services Team Leader	27/9/11	3	3	9	Reduce	Ensure we take every opportunity to review our scrutiny arrangements. The scrutiny review will provide an opportunity to enhance our scrutiny arrangements where necessary.	Member training was held in May 2019. Scrutiny is covered as part of the corporate induction and Officer training is offered on a regular basis. Campbell Tickell undertook a review of scrutiny and fed back their findings and recommendations in February 2020. A Task Group has been established to devise an action plan for delivery of the recommendations.
	If the council cannot dedicate resources to support the scrutiny process then the O&S process will not be fully effective.	Democratic Services Team Leader	1/12/11	3	2	6	Accept	Optimise the use of existing resources within the scrutiny arrangements	It is acknowledged that facilitation support from Democratic Services for scrutiny task groups is important and all task groups have been supported. Resources are limited across the council so members will need to carefully prioritise all scrutiny task group reviews to ensure they make optimum use of the resources available. In February 2020, the Campbell Tickell review team suggested that the committee should review and determine how enquiry topics are to be identified; should they be focused on the delivery of the council's corporate plan? They felt that this would make better use of finite resources and help negate

									possible tension between Cabinet and the committee.
	If the task groups operate outside of the democratic process, then scrutiny could become disjointed and progress difficult to control and track.	Democratic Services Team Leader	1/12/11	3	2	6	Accept	Guidance to officers supporting task groups on keeping documentation and reporting back to Democratic Services.	See note above. In the past, task groups facilitated by officers outside of democratic services have on occasion been less well documented and more difficult to track progress of. A scrutiny guide was produced and officers are encouraged to adopt standard procedures and good practice. Task groups in the last 12 months have been supported by Democratic Services.
	If members do not put themselves forward for task groups the workload could be unevenly shared across members and be a source of potential conflict or result in task groups not having the right skill mix.	Group Leaders	1/12/11	3	3	9	Reduce	Utilise the skills audit. Group Leaders to manage, monitor and encourage participation. Task groups to maintain records of attendance.	One task group was established during 2019-20 and this provided an opportunity to introduce members, who had not previously participated in a review, to how task groups operate. It is hoped that other members will put themselves forward should a topic of interest arise.
	If scrutiny does not have any dedicated budget it will be difficult to promote public involvement and engagement	Council	1/12/11	2	3	6	Accept	Utilise relevant project budgets Consider allocating small budget to O&S as part of budget round	Scrutiny does not have a dedicated budget but this has not been a significant issue to date, with budget having been allocated to member training and a scrutiny review in 2019. It could become an issue if O&S wished to procure some external expertise at any point.
	If O&S does not take an active role in the major change programmes it may	Chair of O&S	21/09/15	3	2	6	Accept	O&S to include scrutiny of change programmes in its workplan and	Member seminars continue to be held at appropriate times and the relevant Cabinet Members have been invited to discuss particular programmes and

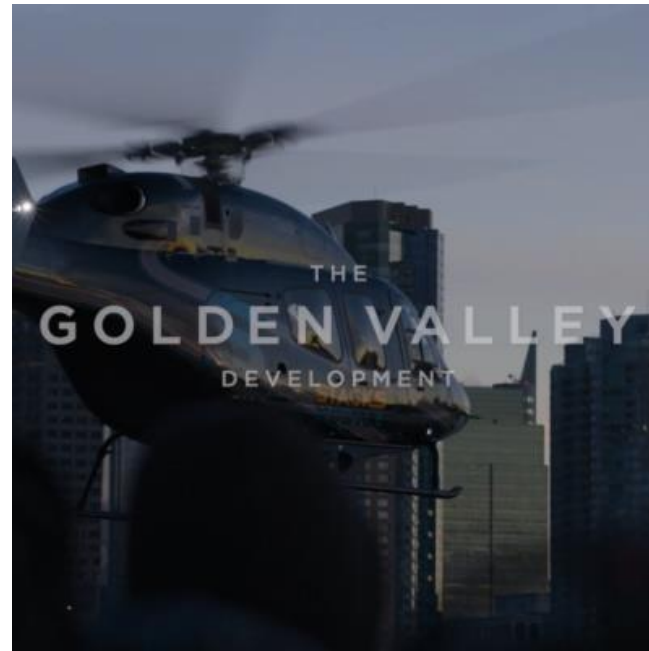
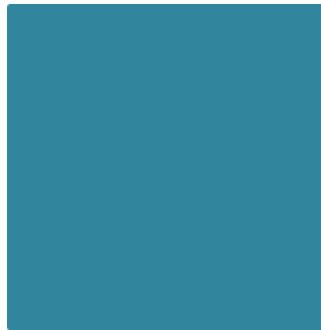
	lose its opportunity to influence the scrutiny arrangements in any new proposed ways of working							ensure it is consulted on any future scrutiny arrangements	projects as necessary and additional information can be requested.
	If scrutiny is not carrying out the full extent of its role i.e. pre and post decision scrutiny and overview, there is a risk of a democratic deficit.	Democratic Services	25/7/17	3	2	6	Accept	Ensure new member and staff inductions cover the full extent of the role of scrutiny.	Member training was undertaken after the most recent elections in May 2021, as part of the new member induction. Consideration is being given to how scrutiny training could be included on the council's new Learning Management System.
Explanatory notes Impact – an assessment of the impact if the risk occurs on a scale of 1-4 (4 being the greatest impact) Likelihood – how likely is it that the risk will occur on a scale of 1-6 (6 being most likely) Control - Either: Reduce / Accept / Transfer to 3rd party / Close									

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SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21



PUBLICA



FOREWORD

COUNCILLOR CHRIS MASON, CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

It is my pleasure to introduce the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S), Annual Report for 2020/21.

In keeping with tradition. I would like to thank all those who have made a positive contribution to O&S. This year has seen a change the membership of the committee. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to Cllrs Baker, Dobie, Holiday, Horwood and Wilkinson who have gone on to fields a new within the council, and Klara Sudbury who did not stand for re-election in May.

For any committee to function efficiently it needs a solid support base. The Council's Democratic Services has certain provided this support during these very challenging times. My final thanks go to Saira Malin and Darren Knight.

The format for running the committee was changed in the year 2019/20. I am pleased to confirm that the receipt of pre-meetings reports is now the norm, which improves efficiency. Thus, allowing members to forward specific questions to presenters before the start of the meeting. This in turn enhances the depth of debate and understanding.

Despite the pandemic and virtual meetings, the committee has considered several important issues and policies. Though not extensive, these include monitoring air quality by schools, our Covid-19 recovery plan, response to the council's climate change motion, challenging the economic and development plans for the town, housing, the municipal offices and CIL governance. One of the committee's key functions is to be a critical friend. It is in this spirit that those addressing the committee can discuss what is going well and where improvements could be made. An effective O&S committee should provide challenge and make constructive comments and/or suggestions; and this is what it has done over the past 12 months.

I trust members find the report informative and following its presentation to the council would welcome questions.

DARREN KNIGHT

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE & CHANGE

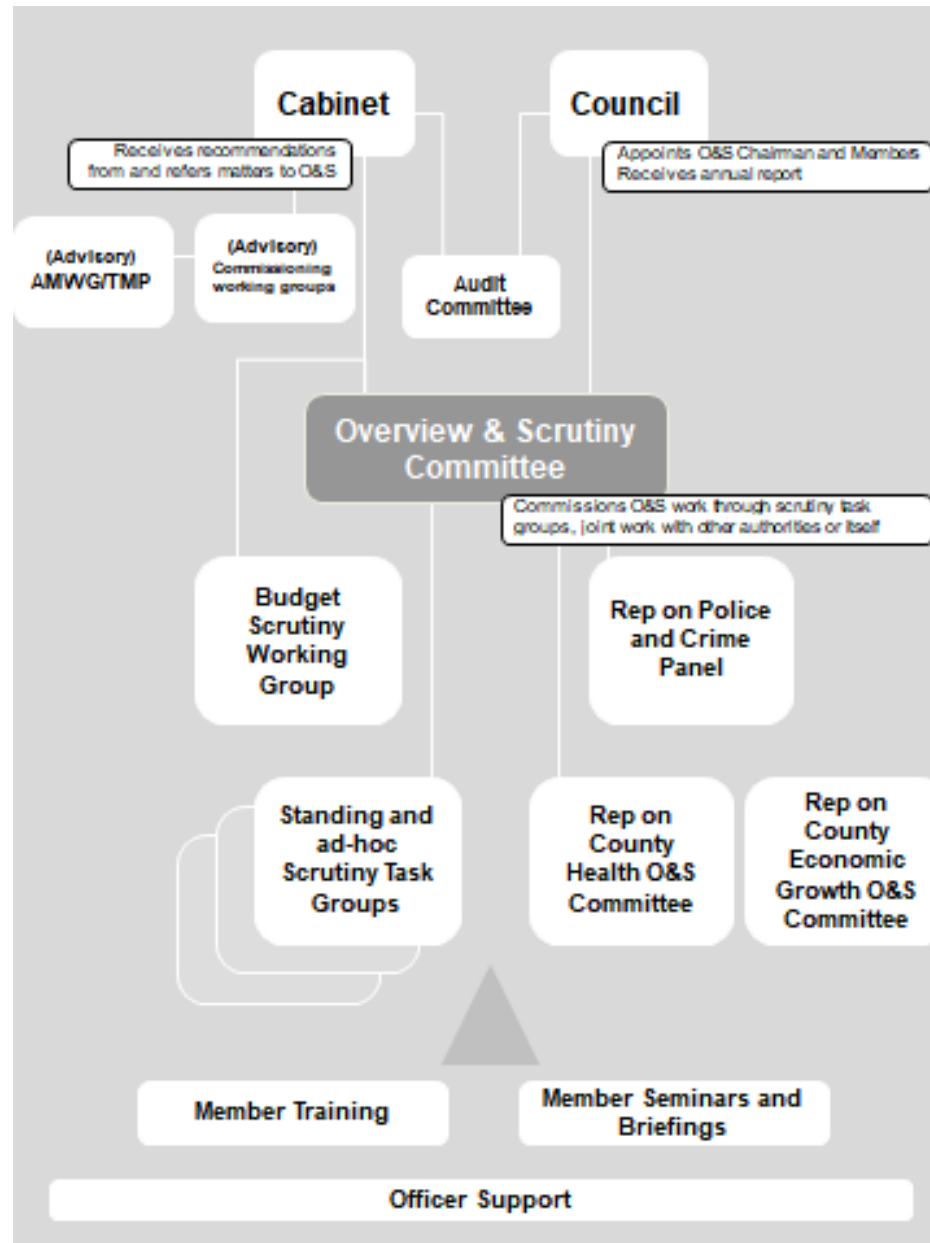
The role that the committee plays in local democracy in holding to account both members and officers is as important as ever, as the authority, the town, and in fact the whole country, continues to experience a period of significant change.

With the Council progressing major projects such as the Golden Valley Development and the £180m housing investment plan, it was good to see the Committee commission an independent review to help identify ways to further improve their effectiveness, as they will have a key role reviewing the progress of these initiatives and as well as other ambitions the Council is taking forward.

The findings from the review have been positively welcomed by the committee and put into an action plan to take forward with a dedicated task and finish group established. Actions have already been rapidly implemented to further improve the committee's effectiveness.

On a personal note, I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the Chair's Group and wider committee to support this vital part of the Council's wider governance arrangements.

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TASK GROUPS

BUDGET SCRUTINY

The Budget Scrutiny Working Group (BSWG) is a small but effective group that keeps a careful watch on in-year spend and the developing budget for the following year. Input from the group is particularly important as the council seeks to diversify the way in which it raises income to support service provision in light of its various financial challenges.

The Covid crisis formed the main focus during the last year, resulting in a recovery budget which the group scrutinised in detail in November before its approval by Cabinet and Council. The group acknowledged the unprecedented situation and the need to consider all options in order to maintain financial stability and continue delivering high quality services.

The group also considered budget monitoring reports, the financial outturn report and the General Fund and HRA budget proposals for 2021/22. Throughout, it took into account the difficult economic conditions the council was operating in and looked ahead to the challenges that may be faced in the future, both as a result of the pandemic and beyond.

Paul Jones (Executive Director Finance and Assets) commented that the Budget Scrutiny Working Group is *'a valuable process which has given members an opportunity to input into the development of the budget proposals and key initiatives which has added value to the process. BSWG have also provided an independent review of the financial performance of the council during the year, as well as considering the final outturn position and our approach to commercialisation. The financial position remains challenging and it is both helpful and important to have a forum for deeper consideration of the issues facing the council and wider member influence over the strategy for dealing with it.'*

TASK GROUPS

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES

The O&S Committee were asked by Council to look at whether Special Responsibility Allowances payments could be made to those members who are appointed to outside bodies as non-executive directors or trustees.

Given the complexities of the issue, the committee decided that a task group would be the most appropriate way in which to give consideration to this matter. The one page strategy was agreed by the O&S Committee in February 2020 and they were tasked to understand the options and restrictions relating to such payments, looking at what other authorities did and considering the budget implications of any payments.

Due to Covid, the task group did not meet until October 2020, where the group considered advice from the Legal Officer. This made clear that to enable a payment to be made the Member had to be 'representing the authority'. Yet when a member took up the position of Director or Trustee of an outside body they were attending Board meetings in their capacity as a Director or Trustee of that body and were expected and indeed would have legal duties to look after the bodies' interests and to further its aims and not the authority's aims.

In light of this advice the STG ruled out recommending an SRA for those members who were appointed as Directors or Trustees and returned to the committee in November 2020. The O&S Committee were of the opinion that no further work should be undertaken as none of the bodies for which SRAs were potentially payable were bodies where members had been appointed as non-executive directors or trustees; and it had been these bodies, specifically, that Council had asked the O&S Committee to consider.

A report outlining this conclusion was noted by Council in December 2020.

TASK GROUPS

SCRUTINY REVIEW

In July 2019, Campbell Tickell were commissioned to undertake a review of the council's Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee. The key aim of the review was to make recommendations as to how the O&S Committee could be more effective and what changes could be made to ensure it made a tangible difference to the work of the council, and also consider whether existing resources were sufficient to support effective scrutiny.

Campbell Tickell reported their recommendations in February 2020 and the committee resolved to establish a task group to look at the recommendations, how best they could be implemented and devising an action plan.

Progress was impacted by Covid-19 and as such, the review took longer than it ordinarily would. The task group considered each of the recommendations and appropriate actions and presented their final report to the committee in June 2021. As a consequence, their recommendations will be covered in more detail in the 2021-22 annual report.

OTHER SUCCESSES

It should be noted at this stage that a number of meetings were cancelled in the first months of the pandemic.

When the committee started to meet again, virtually, the Overview and Scrutiny committee looked at the following things, in addition to standard items, including reviewing Council performance, briefings from the Leader on key issues and regular updates from representatives on county-wide scrutiny groups:

Publica

Publica presented their annual performance report. The challenges of the pandemic were acknowledged, as was the support that had been provided at an operational level, which was highly commended by officers and members. The report identified key areas of focus for the ensuing year and members looked forward to discussing progress in these areas at a future meeting.

West Cheltenham

Officers updated the committee on the impact of Covid-19 on the procurement process, the programme and the assessments which had informed these processes. Members agreed that this was an ambitious and exciting prospect for Cheltenham and commented on how impressive, exciting and engaging the marketing material had been.

Council investments

The committee were reassured that the council's commercial investments were less of a worry to CBC than the loss of parking income, simply because unlike some neighbouring authorities, CBC had a more diverse investment portfolio and less exposure to the retail sector. Members commended the prudent investments that had been made, in Cheltenham, for the benefit of Cheltenham.

The Cheltenham Trust

The committee considered the current financial position and performance of The Trust in light of the pandemic and discussed future plans. Members were impressed with the quick and dynamic way that the Trust had responded to the Covid situation and thanked the team for delivering on the promises they had made in the previous year.

OTHER SUCCESSES

Air Quality

The Senior Environmental Health Officer outlined some of the work being done, specifically around schools. He also explained some of the complexities of monitoring and limitations in terms of restrictions.

Clearview

The committee were given a live demonstration of the system which would be used by the organisation to review, monitor and manage performance and risk. Admittedly some of the data not been fully populated or updated since it was first input, because the system had been rolled out immediately before the pandemic. The committee could see how useful the system would be for the organisation and for them as a committee, in being able to monitor performance in 'real time'.

Covid-19 Recovery Programme

The committee received an update on some of the key initiatives that were underway in terms of recovery activity, which had been split into 5 work streams (Economy, Returning CBC to a new normal, Community & Volunteer, Environment & Wellbeing and Finance), each made up of a range of activities and with a lead officer/member.

Climate Emergency

The newly elected Cabinet Member Climate and Communities, Councillor Wilkinson, outlined some of his priorities going forward. He acknowledged that there was little spare capacity within existing resource to pursue enough new projects, but assured the committee that the climate change emergency budget would be used to employ new members of staff who could take forward some key projects.

Cabinet Member Economy & Development

The newly elected Cabinet Member Economy & Development, Councillor Atherstone, outlined ambitious plans to support the development of her portfolio, which were particularly relevant due to a number of key priorities for the borough; including Cheltenham's COVID-19 economic recovery growth plans and development of sustainable and affordable housing.

OTHER SUCCESSES

Strategic Housing Review

The committee were given the opportunity to consider the independent strategic housing review report. Members fully supported the recommendation that CBH be retained and the partnership be developed further.

Strategic Waste Site

The committee had asked to be kept informed of progress and this was an opportunity for them to hear about how the project had been impacted by Covid and understand revised timescales.

Cheltenham Economic Recovery Task Force

Members were introduced to the Chair and gained an understanding of the priorities, as well as some of the challenges facing the Task Force. They felt the business plan was innovative and exciting and would look forward to future updates.

Community Infrastructure Levy governance arrangements

The Head of Planning explained the legislative requirements for governance and reporting of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), as well as the regulations which constrained where and how these monies could be spent. The committee suggested that a register of monies held and allocated would be useful and asked that this be developed as soon as possible.

Municipal Offices – options appraisal update

Officers outlined progress on what the committee accepted was a highly complex and emotive issue. Progress had been hampered by the pandemic, but members were pleased at the full range of options that were being considered and the depth to which these options were being explored.

CABINET MEMBER WORKING GROUPS

Cabinet Member working groups are fundamentally different to scrutiny task groups in that they are set up and chaired by the Cabinet Member and their aim is to assist the Cabinet Member in formulating their final report to Cabinet. By contrast scrutiny task groups are scrutiny led and can only make recommendations to Cabinet or Council or another body.

However, what they do have in common is that very often Cabinet Member working groups are helping to formulate new policy and offer challenge which are both key parts of the overview and scrutiny function. Both involve non-Executive Members.

The working groups for 2020/21 included:

- Asset Management Working Group
- Planning and Liaison Member Working Group
- Housing Supply
- Members' ICT
- Waste and Recycling

WHAT'S NEXT?

Please note that this report looks back over the work undertaken by the committee between April 2020 and March 2021 and as such, this section may refer to events which have already taken place and which will be covered in more detail in the 2021/22 Annual Report. Also, the work of the committee is in no way limited to the items listed below.

O&S Review STG – the task group will present their draft action plan in response to the Campbell Tickell recommendations.

One Legal – the committee will hear about how the shared service has evolved since its inception in 2009, as well as understanding current performance and challenges.

Housing and Regeneration – officers will present a draft strategy which will be designed to achieve long-term and overall objectives in terms of housing and regeneration in the town.

Business Improvement District (BID) – having successfully secured a second term, the committee will consider the new BID business plan. This will be linked with a wider conversation about the high street and public realm.

Covid-19 – 2021/22 will see a continued focus on the pandemic, particularly lessons learned and the Recovery Plan. The committee will also continue to look at how shared services and organisations including The Cheltenham Trust have been or continue to be impacted.

Golden Valley Development – the committee have requested updates at appropriate junctures of this project, which represents the biggest project ever undertaken by the council.

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