# Cheltenham Borough Council Cabinet

**Meeting date:**      **6 December 2022**

**Meeting time:**      **6.00 pm**

**Meeting venue:**     **Council Chamber - Municipal Offices**

## Membership:

Councillors Rowena Hay (Leader of the Council), Peter Jeffries (Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member Finance, Assets and Regeneration), Victoria Atherstone (Cabinet Member Housing), Flo Clucas (Cabinet Member Safety & Communities), Mike Collins (Cabinet Member Cyber, Regeneration and Commercial Income), Iain Dobie (Cabinet Member Waste, Recycling & Street Services), Martin Horwood (Cabinet Member Customer & Regulatory Services), Alisha Lewis (Cabinet Member Climate Emergency) and Max Wilkinson (Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing)

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**Contact:**     democraticservices@cheltenham.gov.uk
**Phone:**       01242 264 246

# Agenda

## SECTION 1 : PROCEDURAL MATTERS

**1. Apologies**

**2. Declarations of interest**

**3. Minutes of the last meeting**                           (Pages 5 - 20)

**4. Public and Member Questions and Petitions**
These must be received no later than 12 noon on the fifth working day before the date of the meeting

## SECTION 2 : THE COUNCIL
*There are no matters referred to the Cabinet by the Council on this occasion*

## SECTION 3 : OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
*There are no matters referred to the Cabinet by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on this occasion*

## SECTION 4 : OTHER COMMITTEES
*There are no matters referred to the Cabinet by other Committees on this occasion*

## SECTION 5 : REPORTS FROM CABINET MEMBERS AND/OR OFFICERS

**5. Household Support Fund Programme 2022**          (Pages 21 - 28)
Report of the Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities

**6. 2022 Independent Resident Satisfaction Survey Results**     (Pages 29 - 108)
Report of the Leader

**7. Use of the Green Investment Fund to upgrade the council's building management system**                           (Pages 109 - 116)
Report of the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency

**8. Treasury Mid-Term Report - position at 30 September 2022** (Pages 117 - 130)
Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets

**9. Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy**            (Pages 131 - 152)
Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets

## SECTION 6 : BRIEFING SESSION
- Leader and Cabinet Members

**10.  Briefing from Cabinet Members**

**SECTION 7 : DECISIONS OF CABINET MEMBERS**
Member decisions taken since the last Cabinet meeting

**SECTION 8 : ANY OTHER ITEM(S) THAT THE LEADER DETERMINES TO BE URGENT AND REQUIRES A DECISION**

**SECTION 9 : LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXEMPT BUSINESS**

**11.  Local Government Act 1972 - Exempt Business**
 **The Cabinet 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 paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, Part (1) Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Paragraph 1: Information relating to any individual.

Paragraph 2: Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual

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

**12.  Compulsory Purchase Resolution - 168 Arle Road**          (Pages 153 - 166)
Report of the Cabinet Member for Housing

**13.  A Property Matter (1)**          (Pages 167 - 178)
Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets

**14.  A Property Matter (2)**          (Pages 179 - 220)
Report of the Cabinet Member for Cyber, Regeneration and Commercial Income

**Section 10: BRIEFING NOTES**
Briefing notes are circulated for information with the Cabinet papers but are not on the agenda

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# Agenda Item 3

# Cabinet

## Tuesday, 8th November, 2022
## 6.00 - 6.55 pm

**Attendees**

Councillors:     Rowena Hay (Leader of the Council), Peter Jeffries (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Finance & Assets), Victoria Atherstone (Cabinet Member Housing), Flo Clucas (Cabinet Member Safety & Communities), Mike Collins (Cabinet Member Cyber, Regeneration and Commercial Income), Iain Dobie (Cabinet Member Waste, Recycling & Street Services), Martin Horwood (Cabinet Member Customer & Regulatory Services), Alisha Lewis (Cabinet Member Climate Emergency) and Max Wilkinson (Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing)

Also in attendance:     Gareth Edmundson, Harry Mayo, Councillor Wendy Flynn, Councillor Dr David Willingham, Judith Baker and Claire Hughes

# Minutes

1.     **APOLOGIES**
There were none.

2.     **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
There were none.

3.     **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**
The minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> October meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

4.     **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**
**Public Questions**

There was one public question. As the questioner was not in attendance to ask a supplementary, the question and answer were taken as read.

| 1. | **Question from Tess Beck to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing, Councillor Max Wilkinson** |
|---|---|
| | In 2014 Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) set up the Cheltenham Trust as a charitable trust to deliver culture and leisure services on behalf of the council and to manage some of the council's most significant public buildings. The specification for the council's contract with the Trust was very detailed including what services the Trust would deliver, who would fund what, who was liable for what. And it was almost entirely public. |

| | In April 2022 CBC Cabinet agreed a new specification with the Trust and this agreement and the review was entirely restricted. Although a restriction of some of the financial information contained within the review may be justified, I fail to understand the reasoning for restricting the whole of the review and revised specification, given the level of public interest. |
| --- | --- |
| | Given that the Cheltenham Trust is charged with delivering a number of the council's strategic priorities on behalf of Cheltenham Borough Council (including helping people in Cheltenham live healthier, fulfilling and active lives, inspiring people in Cheltenham to take part in and gain valuable skills and experiences, and promote Cheltenham as a word class place to live, work, study and visit), there should be a greater level of transparency. Any argument to maintain the exemption is likely to be outweighed by the public interest in the information being disclosed. We can infer the Trust has been relieved of some responsibilities (e.g. the duty to provide tourist information services) but why can this not be made explicit? |
| | Can the Cabinet members and officers responsible for the report and revised specification undertake to review the documentation with a view to making as much of the information as possible public in the interests of transparency? |
| **Response from Cabinet Member** | |
| | Thank you Tess for bringing this question to Cabinet. |
| | I am a firm believer that the council should be as open and as transparent as possible, including in its relationships with its commissioned providers who are delivering services on behalf of the council. |
| | You are correct in saying that when the report came to cabinet earlier this year to seek approval for the updated specification, it was restricted and therefore members of the public were unable to see some details. This was because the covering report did contain some financial information that we did not wish to be put in the public domain. |
| | However, the specification itself, which sets out the council's specific requirements for how the agreed services will be delivered, does not contain any financial information. |
| | I have liaised with officers and also sought legal advice and I am happy that we will now place the current specification (as agreed by Cabinet on 5 April, prior to the date on which I took over this portfolio) in the public domain. |
| | I will do this via a delegated cabinet member decision and as such it will be published on the council's democracy pages as a decision. |
| | I fully intend that the paperwork will be made publicly available by Friday 18 November. |

**Member Questions**

| 1. | **Question from Councillor Wendy Flynn to the Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities, Councillor Flo Clucas** |
|---|---|
| | What consultation took place with children and young people (how many children were consulted, what methods were used to collect opinions and how was the information fed into the various strategies) when drawing up Cheltenham Borough Council's main policies and strategies, including, but not limited, to Social Value Policy, Place Strategy, Corporate Plan 2019-23, Cheltenham Local Plan, Culture Strategy? |
| | **Response from Cabinet Member** |
| | Thank you Cllr Flynn for your question. It gives me the opportunity to say what has been done with our children and young people in our communities across Cheltenham, how that consultation has happened and how that has been put into practice. |
| | Obviously the Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on what we were able to do during various lockdowns and indeed on what our partners were able to do at that time. However, let me go through some of what has been done and since the end of the lockdown what we have been doing this year. |
| | Let me start with the Culture Strategy. The councillor may remember that just before Covid we had young artists from the Wilson Arts Collective, come to Council and address council before our meeting, saying what they wanted, what they needed and how they thought that should happen: work space, exhibition space and the opportunity to grow as artists through greater support. I am pleased that many of their requests are now in the draft culture strategy, and have been adopted by those that manage culture in our town. |
| | In terms of the council's corporate plan, No Child Left Behind is one of the council's most significant projects and has been since our first full year in 2019. The corporate plan sets out a number of other important projects that will benefit children and young people, such as ensuring that all our communities benefit from future golden valley investments, investing in our high street and public spaces, and work collaboratively to support cycling and walking projects. |
| | And although Covid interrupted a good deal of our plans, through No Child Left Behind, we were able to deliver projects that supported our most vulnerable young people. |
| | Ahead of the summer holidays in 2020, using funding made available from GCC and the 10 elected county councillors, No Child Left Behind, working with our community food providers under the #FeedCheltenham banner, devised a holiday hunger scheme to provide food to families with children on free school meals. In total over 700 family meals were delivered to local families via six local community food providers |
| | During the third lockdown, in February 2021, NCLB launched our #LaptopsforLearning scheme which was set up to help ensure local children have access to the right IT equipment to support their learning – both at home during that lockdown, and also when they return to school. The project saw approximately £35,000 raised and 129 devices donated. |
| | Again, during the pandemic, NCLB developed the NCLB Community Agreement which arose from a collective understanding that the current offer for our children and young people – in terms of early years provision, education, family support, social care support and youth support does not |

work well for some of our children. Across a range of partners, led by our primary schools there was a collective ambition to do more, and to commit to an enhanced level of support so that all our children have the opportunity to thrive.

This ambition was developed into a collective commitment to all children and their families in Cheltenham, called the community agreement. The agreement offers to every carer, every parent and indeed every child the opportunity to speak to somebody who can advise, who can help, who can counsel who can assist them should they have a problem or issue or a concern or worry.

In order to develop this, we obviously were, in close contact with our primary and secondary schools and with others who might have been involved actively.

The schools actively consulted the children as to what we were doing and how. If you look at the NCLB website you will see information there in relation to the Community Agreement which we believe is a fundamental path to assist those who require advice and help, whether they are parents, carers, children or young people.

More recently, during the course of the last year through NCLB, Cheltenham Education Partnership and Large Enterprise Action Group, and other partners, have met with many children and young people. The young people and children were asked to tell us what they thought about particular issues - decided by them. We asked them tell us their views, ask questions and suggest improvements.

One example:

In March and in June, via Cheltenham Education Partnership myself and other colleagues took part in the Cheltenham for Change youth debates, with in total over one hundred children taking part.

Those children came and talked about equity and equality and how they felt that it was not apparent in the work that was being done in Cheltenham. One example given was a lack of comprehensive and meaningful engagement after the various careers fairs they had attended.

The young people found it very difficult indeed to access relevant people in companies who could say to them what they could do, how they could get involved, and how they could develop a career path without going to university.

The upshot of that is that this year with our partners in the Chamber of Commerce, Cheltenham Education Partnership and Large Enterprise Action Group we will launch a new project around skills and ambition that will be accessible to all of our children and young people. It will enable young people to have proper access to those within companies and within organisations who can actually advise them and point them in the right direction.

By bringing together businesses and schools, we hope that this project will become an instrument that young people can use to help them plan their future and more of this is being integrated into what we do during the course of the next year.

In terms of planning and playgrounds particularly where major developments were being planned, we wanted to ensure that our children had a voice. We were able to consult with children and with young people as to how they wish to see those develop. I will give you an example N W Cheltenham and Swindon Village.

The Village has a significant local green space and in order to capture the

local green space and preserve it in the local plan. Children were asked for their views and there were hundreds of responses from our children, from girl guides and scouts, from our youth club, from our young people who go to school, from young people who use playgrounds, from young people who are involved through the parish council and other activities.

A significant number of changes were made as a result of that and were incorporated into the local plan. The changes were recognised by the planning Inspectorate and have therefore been retained.

All of this has required a great deal of work and I make no apologies for thanking officers Tracy Brown and Richard Gibson and those who work in our partner organisations for the help and support that they have given for our children. It is quite significant and I know of nowhere else in the country where this has been done.

Our young people and children have not just a voice in the future of Cheltenham so that they feel that this town is for them, that they have shaped it and made it their own.

However, to go further with the consultation process, to capture the voices of our children and young people, make it more formal and systematic, would take significant time and resources. At the present time, with our partners, we are doing this in a different way. Listening to the views of our young people and children by:

- Working with Cheltenham Education Partnership, to discuss issues with our young people and children that they wish to raise, giving answers and factoring in their concerns when we make policy or plan projects or make decisions;
- Working with the Culture Board to ensure the voices of young people are heard in their strategy and by ensuring there is a young person's representative on the board
- Working with local partners working directly with children and young people. O&S recently heard from local schools about the experiences our children are facing.

As a result, the Council and our partners continue to place a high priority on our work to support young people and children:

- The council's Social Value Policy makes clear that one of the four priority communities identified for investment through our social value work is children and young people growing up in poverty.
- The Communities' Partnership has as one of its four priorities ' Young people have opportunities to discover their potential';
- The Culture Strategy has one of its six priorities 'Improving the life chances of our young people';
- The Corporate Plan 2023-2027 includes two specific priorities:
  - To work with schools, colleges and universities to support the cyber tech skills of young people;

  - Through No Child Left Behind continue to raise awareness of issues affecting our children, such as criminal exploitation, period poverty or healthy eating and work with partners across the public, private and voluntary sectors to tackle these and other issues.

| | Supplementary question |
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| | Thank you for your detailed response. It seems to be that there is no idea of how many children have been consulted, that consultation has been ad hoc and mostly initiated by other organisations, and that you cannot really tell me how it feeds into the council's strategies. My supplementary is based on the part of the question concerning the Culture Strategy. What specific requests were made by young people that were then incorporated into the draft Culture Strategy? |
| | **Response from Cabinet Member** |
| | I am thankful for the people who have put their time, effort and money into No Child Left Behind, and wanted to thank them in a public way with a detailed response.<br>Regarding the Culture Strategy, a few years ago we heard at Council from the young artists' collective at the Wilson about what they wanted, and this was all fed into the strategy. If you look at the Wilson now, studios are being made available to young people, showing that this has been enacted. We also have a situation where young people are part of that cultural environment, with young people on the Culture Board. This gives them a voice and helps them ensure that what they see as necessary actually happens. The organisation brought in to help develop the Culture Strategy had meetings young people all across the town and helped work these in. |
| 2. | **Question from Councillor Wendy Flynn to the Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities, Councillor Flo Clucas** |
| | How does No Child Left Behind monitor and evaluate its impact? |
| | **Response from Cabinet Member** |
| | In terms of monitoring the work of NCLB, I take an annual report to full council which was presented this year on 21 March. https://democracy.cheltenham.gov.uk/documents/s39665/2022_03_21_COU_No_Child_Left_Behind.pdf<br>The update was agreed unanimously by members in the chamber. Some of the highlights in the report<br>*In terms of statistics, despite the challenges of the pandemic, NCLB is having a significant impact across a range of success measures:*<br>• *No of partners engaged estimated to be in the region of 120 (public sector / VCS / business)*<br>• *Attendees at virtual training events - 163*<br>• *Profile of NCLB– no of social media engagements 1500 followers and 23k impressions monthly (mean average across twitter and facebook)*<br><br>*Amount of funding raised and sources = £292k which includes*<br>• *£230k for the HAF projects*<br>• *£35k for laptops for learning*<br>• *c.£6k from the Cheltenham Lottery*<br>• *£15k from the OPCC*<br>• *£6k event sponsorship*<br><br>*Some of the positives from our work include:*<br>• *Whole town approach; NCLB is designed so as to have broad* |

*appeal to all Cheltenham's children and young people – it has not sought to limit itself to just benefitting children living in poverty. By doing so we have been able to galvanise a broad base of support for NCLB*

- *Demonstration of the council's place leadership role; coordinating NCLB goes beyond the traditional role of a distract council. But using the place vision as a basis, this council has shown that it is willing to lead the debate and coordinate action on matters that impact on its residents.*
- *Commitment shown by local partners including public, VCS, businesses and local schools*

In terms of more specific ways in which NCLB monitors and evaluates its work, I would like to highlight the following:

In 2021, NCLB jointly undertook a social return on investment pilot with the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board. The report showed that pupils had benefitted from their involvement in NCLB events including helping with their understanding of the way in which, it helped inspire them about future careers.

The pilot took information from a range of interviews with children, parents and teachers at one local school. The plan is to roll the methodology out across a wider range of schools and other organisations working with children and young people.

NCLB partners are currently working with a consultant employed to support the county holiday activity programme to develop a theory of change for some aspects of NCLB. Once finalised, the theory of change will help us move to a more sophisticated methodology for evaluating our impact given that NCLB has evolved over the past four years.

The No Child Left Behind Partnership remains strong. It has built a town-wide coalition of like-minded partners who are determined to take action so that local children have the opportunity to thrive.

| | **Supplementary question** |
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| | Monitoring and evaluation is as much about the gaps as well as what is being done. I heard from a school recently with a very high proportion of students on pupil premiums who was not a member of No Child Left Behind, and hadn't been involved in it at all besides the holiday play and food scheme. How is NCLB identifying these gaps and aiming to fill them? |
| | **Response from Cabinet Member** |
| | We can't force schools to be a part of NCLB, we can just offer what we have to those schools. The list of schools participating is currently at 24, the vast majority of schools in the town. If others wish to be involved then they are more than welcome, but neither I or the council can force them to do so. The last NCLB report presented to Council gives a full overview of what we do and the outcomes – if schools see this and want to be a part of it, they can put their hand up and say yes please. If you can let me know the name of the school, I'd be happy to speak to them and see what we can do to facilitate this. |
| 3. | **Question from Councillor Wendy Flynn to the Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities, Councillor Flo Clucas** |

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| | How has signing up to the No Child Left Behind Community Agreement impacted on what those signing up do and how is the effect on the outcomes for children from sign ups to the agreement recorded? |
| | **Response from Cabinet Member** |
| | The Community Agreement arose from a collective understanding that the offer for children and young people – in terms of early years' provision, education, family support, social care support and youth support did not work well for some of our children. Across a range of partners there was a collective ambition to do more, and to commit to placing kindness, empathy and understanding at the heart of everything we do. <br> To date 24 schools have signed up alongside 57 organisations including 16 businesses. <br> NCLB has supported partners through a range of learning events for signatories such as two virtual leadership summits and training courses for front-line staff with 163 attendances. <br> On 9 March this year, NCLB held its annual awards event to celebrate local projects that have supported families throughout the pandemic. This event was held in partnership with Punchline (an online business publication) who have helped raise £6,000 from 12 business. <br> The community agreement is delivering the aim of transforming how we address child poverty through changing the narrative and our organisation cultures. |
| | **Supplementary question** |
| | I have scoured the internet and intranet and have been unable to find any terms of reference, aims and objectives, consultation strategy or anything to do with monitoring and evaluation. It is really important for councillors to have that information, especially with Council due to consider the O&S referral regarding the NCLB/UNICEF motion. Can the Cabinet Member undertake to ensure that all councillors have access to this before that meeting? |
| | **Response from Cabinet Member** |
| | The aims and objectives of NLCB were set out in the initial framework which came to Council in 2018/2019, and haven't changed. The annual reports show this, with the next one due in January. NCLB is not about this council dictating to others what they should do – it has instead created a town-wide organisation of groups that come together to do their best for children, despite childrens' services being a county council responsibility. Alongside the detached youth program that we are running, we work with partners to make things better and create new opportunities for our young people. |
| 4. | **Question from Councillor Wendy Flynn to the Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities, Councillor Flo Clucas** |
| | Children have the right to voice their opinions and have these be taken into account in decisions that affect them. <br> *"Children generally do not vote and do not traditionally take part in political processes. Without special attention to the opinions of children – as expressed at home and in schools, in local communities and even in governments – children's views go unheard on the many important issues* |

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|---|---|
| | *that affect them now or will affect them in the future."* UNICEF<br><br>How does Cheltenham Borough Council ensure children's views are heard on the important issues that affect them? |
| | **Response from Cabinet Member** |
| | NCLB is really proactive in taking opportunities to hear from children and young people about their experiences.<br>We are excited to announce that NCLB is in discussion with the University to undertake a research project into the lived experiences of Cheltenham young people following Covid. This will involve direct engagement with young people across the town using a variety of methodologies. This has been prompted by partner organisations raising concerns about the impact on young people from the disruptions caused by Covid particularly as they approach adulthood.<br>The aim of the research is to look at how best to support young people to achieve their potential and will include consideration of mental and physical wellbeing, along with how we ensure all young people feel safe and respected.<br>In terms of other opportunities, we took the opportunity at the children's festival in May 2022 to get young children thinking about Cheltenham and the places where they live.<br>Holiday activity and food programme evaluation – over the summer, we made sure that children taking part in our HAF activities had the chance to tell us what they liked about the activity, what they would change and what activities they'd like to do in the future. We were really pleased that 245 children responded giving us valuable insight to help us with future.<br>As part of our work, we are co-funding a programme of detached youth work that is being delivered in priority communities throughout Cheltenham.<br>Cheltenham Borough Council, through its commitment to No Child Left Behind will continue to work with a wide range of partners to ensure that the voices of children and young people get heard on a wide range of matters that impact on their lives. |
| | **Supplementary question** |
| | I recently ran an evening for the Girl Guides on influencing and change, and the children there (aged between 11 and 15 and from three different schools) felt that adults didn't care about their views once they left primary school. Childrens' views are still not adequately being heard in this town. Will the Cabinet Member commit to ensuring this council has a Consultation with Children and Young People Strategy so that all our young people can have a voice? |
| | **Response from Cabinet Member** |
| | Over the last six months, we have had meetings with hundreds of children, where they were asked what needed to change. The last one of these was in June, with about 150 children present, and there were 200 at the one before, both from primary and secondary schools. The children wanted to see a greater emphasis on equity and equality, and help us find out more |

about their needs. One of the things that also became clear was that young people were being told that the only route out available to them was university. We were able to show them that apprenticeships could have the same positive effect, such as with this council, and there are different mechanisms available.

As for listening to young people, the Girl Guides were recently instrumental in helping to capture local green space in Swindon Village thanks to their letter writing. We listen to them and want to listen to them more over the next year or two. We have secured funding for the next year of NCLB, and hope that more will be made available thereafter. We are not the body that is wholly responsible for childrens' services, as that lies with the county council. What we are doing here is bridging the gap, ensuring that children are heard and effective action is taken, and I am pleased to say that is what is happening.

**5. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME**

The Cabinet Member Finance, Assets and Regeneration introduced the report, explaining that each year since 2013, the council had been required to set its local council tax support scheme for working age residents. Council tax support for pensioners was not localised and continued to be provided by a national scheme. Funding for this scheme was rolled into the revenue support grant and subject to annual cuts. As the council no longer received a revenue support grant, it needed to fund its share of the cost of the scheme itself.

In 2019/20, the council had approved a new scheme, one of the main aims of which was to ensure that the most vulnerable and those with the lowest incomes continued to receive 100% support. The proposed council tax support scheme from 1st April 2023 for working age people would continue to be based on five income bands, with the highest band providing support at 100% of the council tax liability, then reducing to 80%, 60%, 40% and 20% as household income increased.

He explained that due to the impact of Covid, the caseload for working age people had increased by 25% across 2020/21. On the 1st March 2020, there were 3,984 recipients totalling £3.3m, this rose to 4,988 recipients totalling £4.7m by April 2021. By October 2021, there had been a slight reduction to 4,839 recipients totalling £4.5m. This trend continued, by October 2022 there were 4643 recipients totalling £4.2m in support.

He stressed that despite the increase in the number of working age residents requiring assistance compared to pre-pandemic levels, they would continue to provide 100% support to the most vulnerable and those on the lowest incomes. Many residents were still recovering financially from the effects of the pandemic, coupled with the cost of living emergency, and this scheme would provide vital help for the most financially vulnerable residents.

He drew colleagues' attention to the fourth recommendation, which gave officers a degree of flexibility to react to possible changes from national government regarding benefits. It was important that they be in a position to make the relevant changes to the policy when the government made up its mind about what support it would give residents in receipt of welfare. He thanked

officers in the Revenues and Benefits team for their extraordinary efforts to support residents, and commended the report to Cabinet.

The Cabinet Member Housing thanked him for bringing this repot forward, and highlighted the importance of the scheme. During the pandemic, they had seen the figures in need of support increase significantly, and it was good to see this declining again now. She was grateful that they were in a position to offer such extensive support.

The Cabinet Member Customer and Regulatory Services added that he was proud to see the council going above and beyond what they were required to do by law, and supporting 5,000 of the most vulnerable people in their community. The government had a tin ear when it came to the cumulative impact of their policies on vulnerable people, and the combined effects of the cost of living crisis, the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, Brexit, and the government's actions to destabilise the economy had been especially tough on people of working age. He was proud of the council's response but not surprised. He added that he had recently been working with elderly constituents who were struggling to claim support, since the qualifying criteria for pensioners was administered nationally, and those who had been to proud to claim benefits in the past were not eligible. This was a clear gap in provision that needed to be closed.

The Cabinet Member Safety and Communities praised the continuing support provided to low income households, with no changes to the scheme conditions being proposed. This compared favourably to other authorities around the country, who were having to cut support in all areas. She thanked the Cabinet Member Finance, Assets and Regeneration on behalf of the children in Cheltenham living below the poverty line.

The Leader moved to the vote, where it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED THAT:**

1. the outcome of the consultation on the Local Council Tax Support Scheme in Appendix 3 be noted;

2. the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for working age customers in Appendix 4 and summarised in Appendix 5 as the preferred option for 2023-24 be approved;

3. Council be recommended to approve the proposed Local Council Tax Support Scheme for working age customers for 2023/24 on 12th December 2022;

4. Council be recommended to give authority to the Executive Director for Finance Assets and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member Finance and Assets to uprate any premiums, allowances and determine the income levels in line with any increase in Welfare Benefits by 20 February 2023.

6.   **QUARTERLY BUDGET MONITORING REPORT, JULY - SEPTEMBER**

The Cabinet Member Finance, Assets and Regeneration introduced the report, explaining that it made for sober reading due to the cost-of-living emergency declared by the council. Since the Q1 report, inflation had further increased to 10.1% and was expected to hit 13% in the winter. Interest rates had also increased again and now stood at 3%.

The Q2 report forecast an overspend of more than £2.39m, of which £1.985m was estimated to relate to economic pressures as a result of the rising inflation, rising interest rates and the wider economic volatility. This was against a budget which, when approved, was prudent and realistic for a town recovering from a pandemic. Rising interest rates had both a negative pressure on borrowing costs and a positive effect on investment income, but overall they were left with a significant net pressure on their budgeted position. The most significant cost of living pressure faced continued to be the predicted cost of energy as they entered the crucial winter period.

He reminded colleagues of a number of actions the council was taking to reduce costs in this area, including reducing their energy usage, which also supports their campaign towards Net Zero. He thanked the Cabinet Member Climate Emergency for her hard work in driving forward this priority. The current monitoring position for the 2022/23 budget clearly showed that even with the decisions this administration had taken over the last two years, there was still very significant economic volatility and uncertainty affecting how they managed resources, delivered services and progressed their community priorities

The proposal to fund the projected overspend using general balances would provide the council with short term resilience throughout the cost-of-living crisis. With interest rates and inflation continuing to rise, their available resources would be continually reviewed to enable the council to support the most vulnerable residents in our town through the financial pressures they were also facing. He thanked all those involved in the report for the work they had undertaken, and thanked Cabinet colleagues for their continued support as they traversed the volatile financial future before them.

The Cabinet Member Climate Emergency added that residents would be sympathetic to their position, as we were all having to tighten our belts. The legacy of central government had left them in a profound financial hole, but they were in a fortunate position due to the investments they had made to secure their long-term financial future. She thanked the Cabinet Member and the finance team for ensuring that the work they did continued despite a tough financial situation.

The Leader moved to the vote, where it was unanimously:

RESOLVED THAT:

1. the contents of the report including the key projected variances to the 2022-23 budget approved by Council on 21 February 2022 and the actions to ensure overspends are reduced as far as possible by the end of the financial year be noted.


7.   **DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN**

The Leader of the Council introduced the report, explaining that the current Corporate Plan came to an end in 2022/2023 and so a new one was required. The existing plan set out significant flagship initiatives which were still continuing, such as plans to make Cheltenham the cyber capital of the UK through the Golden Valley Development, the Climate Emergency Action Plan: Pathway to Net Zero, and increasing the number of affordable carbon neutral homes through our £180m housing investment plan. Our approach was therefore to refresh our existing Corporate Plan to ensure that the focus remained on these critically important initiatives that would provide huge benefits to the people of Cheltenham, as well as ensuring we are able to respond to other opportunities and challenges ahead.

She highlighted that the financial pressures facing local government continued, with further challenges needed to navigate including energy costs and wider inflationary pressures. She recognised that the council also had a role to play in partnership with others when it came to supporting residents, communities and businesses with the cost of living crisis.

The Corporate Plan was a critical document that ensured strategic direction, focused prioritisation of resources and formed a key component of good corporate governance. Without a refreshed plan, the council would be operating without an agreed framework of priorities and objectives. She welcomed comments and asked for Cabinet's support as set out in the recommendations.

The Cabinet Member Cyber, Regeneration and Commercial Income highlighted the work that had gone into this report. He had recently hosted a group of next generation leaders from the Local Government Association (LGA), who had been impressed by the town's ambition and especially projects like Golden Valley. This excitement stemmed from good corporate governance and project management. The corporate plan underlined a real focus on housing investment.

The Cabinet Member Finance, Assets and Regeneration echoed these comments. Compared to the budget monitoring report, which painted a stark picture, it was great to see a continuing focus on vital corporate priorities, and ambition rather than doom and gloom.

The Cabinet Member Waste, Recycling and Street Services highlighted the importance of working with parish councils on projects like this, and added that he was attending a meeting of the five parish councils this coming Saturday. Every level of local government needed to be engaged, particularly on topics like climate change, and it needed to be a two-way process with feedback on both sides.

The Cabinet Member Climate Emergency praised the draft plan as a spectacular document, which she was glad to see embed climate concerns at every stage.

The Cabinet Member Housing added that she had also attended the LGA visit along with colleagues. The strong relationship between CBC and CBH had also been a source of admiration. It was good to see a focus on delivering affordable homes and supporting struggling residents, and she was looking forward to delivering on ambitious goals in the future, like the pipeline of 450 homes over the next 4-5 years. She urged the public to engage with the consultation, emphasising that the more feedback the better.

The Leader moved to the vote, where it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED THAT:**

1. Consultation and engagement activities be undertaken with key community and business stakeholders;

2. The final version be recommended to February's full Council for review and approval.

8. **BRIEFING FROM CABINET MEMBERS**
The Cabinet Member Customer and Regulatory Services reported that the borough's Air Quality Action Plan was now live on https://haveyoursay.cheltenham.gov.uk/. The report was data-heavy but showed that no part of Cheltenham currently exceeded the limit in nitrous oxide or PM2.5s, which contributed respiratory disorders and lung and heart issues. One small area had historically hit higher than allowed levels of nitrous oxide, and although it didn't at the moment, they had declared a limited AQMA for that specific area. There was no absolutely safe level of air pollution, and they could not be complacent. They needed to keep working across the whole town to monitor and improve levels where possible.

He explained that the plan included more than 20 actions for the whole borough, and 7 additional actions for the specific area. This issue required action not just by CBC but also by other councils, businesses, residents and communities, and specifically GCC as the highways authority due to the importance of traffic pollution. He thanked his predecessor in the portfolio (Cllr. Wilkinson) for his work on this, as well as Louis Krog, Bernadette Reed and the whole Environmental Health team. They had been out on the A40 today looking at brand new nitrous oxide monitoring equipment, and understood that they needed to go beyond their statutory obligations to deliver cleaner air.

The Cabinet Member Safety and Communities added that this meeting's agenda had been a topic of discussion at a meeting of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris, where she spoke to colleagues from Europe and across the world. She had been able to point to exactly what Cheltenham was doing to develop mechanisms for generating income far beyond government funding. She was always looking to spread the message about what Cheltenham was doing, and this would enable other places to learn from it.

The Cabinet Member Waste, Recycling and Street Services reminded colleagues that they had been the first council in the country to begin roadside recycling of coffee pods. The Podback scheme had now recycled 2 million of these, and it had cost the council nothing because it had been developed alongside the commercial sector. It had also generated a number of pocket forests, and there would be a ceremony in one of these soon to celebrate their success, with the Mayor in attendance. This was ground-breaking work which other councils were now undertaking.

The Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing added that he had recently attended a meeting of the Charlton Kings Senior

Citizens Welfare Committee alongside Cllr. Boyes, and had been able to inform them of the work they were doing to support senior citizens, including warm spaces and the food network. The key question attendees had asked was about access to this support, considering the unreliability of buses. It was clear that this issue would come to a head over the winter, and he hoped that the county council would find a resolution in its discussions with Stagecoach and others to protect access to essential services.

The Cabinet Member Housing reported that she had been grateful to attend the recent CBH AGM, and put on record her warm welcome to Martin Surl as the new Chair of the Board. Martin brought vast experience of the town as the former Police & Crime Commissioner and many years' service as a police officer. She was looking forward to working with him over the next few years, and thanked the outgoing chair Jason Langley for his hard work and dedication.

The Cabinet Member Climate Emergency thanked the climate team for the implementation of the climate decision wheel. This was a valuable tool which would help visualise the climate and social impact of council decisions, and had been published as a case study by the LGA. CBC was leading the way on this kind of work. She added that the Building Management System policy had passed the Green Investment Board and would soon be coming to Cabinet for approval, and she was interested to see its impact on our energy use.

The Leader of the Council reported that the boundary review had landed, and she had attended a cross-party working group last night about this. She urged all Members to look closely at the details, noting that it was a challenge built on compromise. She also welcomed the new Monitoring Officer, Claire Hughes, to her first formal meeting.

### Decisions of Cabinet Members

The Cabinet Member Waste, Recycling and Street Services had taken a decision on 12$^{th}$ October to extend the terms of agreement relating to the sale of recycling material to 28$^{th}$ February 2023 (by Deed of Variation) for five named contractors. This had been due to expire on 17$^{th}$ October 2022, and would now be up for further review in the new year.

The Cabinet Member Finance, Assets and Regeneration had taken two decisions: the first, on 17$^{th}$ October, to approve Phase Three of the Discretionary Council Tax Energy Rebate Scheme, and the second, on 3$^{rd}$ November, to dispose of the freeholds of No.12 and No. 14 St James Street.

**Chair**

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# Cabinet

**Meeting date:  6 December 2022**

## Member Questions (2 total)

### 1.  Question from Councillor Wendy Flynn to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Rowena Hay

Why are only Cabinet and Full Council meetings available to watch on YouTube after the event and not all public meetings of this Council?

**Response from the Leader**

Thank you, Councillor Flynn, for raising this. It had been brought to my attention prior our new Monitoring Officer joining us, and following her arrival it is on a future agenda.

In accordance with our webcasting policy at Appendix K in the constitution, all council meetings are streamed live to YouTube.  To date, the Democratic Services team has been following advice issued when the council was required to conduct virtual meetings during the Covid pandemic, which recommended removal of the recordings from the public domain immediately after each meeting – with the exception of Cabinet and Council.  This practice has resulted in the recordings being deleted from YouTube once the minutes of the meeting have been approved.

The Monitoring Officer is now reviewing this practice and will be recommending updates to the webcasting policy to the next meeting of the Constitution Working Group with a view to the proposed changes coming to Council in 2023

### 2.  Question from Councillor Wendy Flynn to Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing, Councillor Max Wilkinson

In the face of both a Cost of Living Crisis and a Climate Emergency, this winter a number of towns and cities in the UK and Europe (including countries much colder than ours) have ditched seasonal ice rinks in favour of roller rinks.  There's an absurdity on councils constructing temporary, energy-guzzling ice rinks outside at a time when global warming means increasingly milder winters. As a roller rink would be cheaper for people to access, have a much, much smaller environmental impact, and yet be just as much fun, will the cabinet member commit to pursuing a festive public roller rink for next year instead of an ice rink?

**Response from Cabinet Member**

Thank you to Cllr Flynn for raising this issue. Carbon footprint reduction is an important part of this council's goals and monitoring is part of that work. After

assessing the 2021 winter ice rink, we put in place plans to substantially reduce emissions from future ice rinks, including the initiation of a project to install electricity connections on site. While a roller rink lacks the festive links of an ice rink, we always welcome suggestions and if Cllr Flynn would like to provide more details we will consider this as part of the procurement for the 2023 Christmas festivities and future activities. However, this council's plan remains to host an ice rink next year.

# Cheltenham Borough Council

# Cabinet

# 6 December 2022

# Household Support Fund Programme 2022

**Accountable member:**

Cllr Flo Clucas, Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities

**Accountable officer:**

Richard Gibson, Head of communities, wellbeing & partnerships

**Accountable scrutiny committee:**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Key/Significant Decision:**

No

**Executive summary:**

Gloucestershire County Council has allocated two tranches of funding to Cheltenham Borough Council from its allocation of the government's household support fund:

- The first tranche of £150k to cover the period 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022
- The second tranche of £143k to cover the period of 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023

The aim of the Household Support Fund is to provide support to vulnerable households in most need of support to help with significantly rising living costs in line with the eligible expenditure below.

This report summarises the allocation, distribution and monitoring of the grant.

**Recommendations:**

1. **To approve the award of the first tranche of grant funding as set out as set out in para 2.8**

2. **To approve the award of the second tranche of grant funding as set out in para 2.11 and 2.12**

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## 1. Implications

### 1.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications for the Council of this decision. The first tranche of the Household Support Fund has been received from Gloucestershire County Council and unallocated funds will be re-paid at the end of the project. The second tranche will be invoiced for once the delivery plan has been signed off by GCC.

**Signed off by:** Andy Taylor, Finance Business Partner, andrew.taylor@cheltenham.gov.uk

### 1.2 Legal implications

The Council will enter into grant agreements with the providers which are based on the approved Small Grant Agreement for grants below £10,000 and the approved Standard Grant Agreement for grants of £10,000 and above.

All financial assistance given by the Council to non-individuals has to comply with the provisions of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 (the Act) which is partially in force. This replaced state aid when the UK left the EU. In order for financial assistance to be a subsidy, it has to meet 4 criteria; one of which is that it is given to an 'enterprise'. We consider that the recipients do not meet that definition "a person who is engaged in economic activity that entails offering goods or services on a market…" and therefore no further considerations of the Act are required.

**Contact: One Legal, legalservices@onelegal.org.uk**

### 1.3 HR implications

There are no HR implications associated with the decision

### 1.4 Environmental and climate change implications

None identified as a result of this decision.

### 1.5 Property/asset implications

There are no property implications associated with the decision

### 1.6 Corporate policy framework implications

The decision will enable support to be provided to those individuals and families most in need to help with significantly rising living costs. This supports the Council's commitment to invest in and develop the strength and presence of our voluntary sector in our communities to help support the most vulnerable as set out in the Council's Recovery Strategy.

**Signed off by:** Richard Gibson, Head of communities, wellbeing & partnerships

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### 1.7 Promoting equality and reducing discrimination

The project is delivered via an established network of community-based providers who all place

a high priority on promoting equality and tackling discrimination. Each of the providers will manage the scheme in line with their own equality and diversity policies.

As a network of providers, we are very much focused on ensuring that those that are in the most need are able to access the additional support funded by the household support fund. We have worked to ensure that there is both a good geographical spread of support across the borough via our network of five community food pantries, plus ensuring that the organisations that are working most closely those that are vulnerable (Citizens Advice, Childrens centres, CCP and the household essentials project) have the support to make a difference.

## 1.8    Performance management – monitoring and review

The council submits a delivery plan to GCC to secure the funds. This includes an estimate of the numbers of people accessing support. Working with its providers, the Council, will monitor the numbers of people accessing support via this fund and report this back to GCC at the end of the scheme.

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## 2.    Background

**2.1**    The objective of the Household Support Fund is to provide support to vulnerable households in most need of support to help with significantly rising living costs.

**2.2**    Councils have the flexibility within the scheme to identify which vulnerable households are in most need of support and apply their own discretion when identifying eligibility. In doing so, they should particularly consider households who cannot increase their income through work.

**2.3**    The first tranche of the funding (April 22 to Sept 22) was allocated against the following framework:

- At least one third of the total funding will be ring-fenced to support households with children,

- at least one third of the total funding will be ring fenced to support pensioners

- with up to one third of the total funding to other households genuinely in need of support. This may include households not currently in receipt of DWP welfare benefits;

**2.4**    The second tranche of the funding (Oct 22 to March 23) is to be used to provide support to vulnerable households in most need of support to help with significantly rising living costs using discretion on how to identify and support those most in need, taking into account a wide range of information

**2.5**    Eligible spend includes:

- Energy and water. The Fund should primarily be used to support with energy bills for any form of fuel that is used for the purpose of domestic heating, cooking or lighting, including oil or portable gas cylinders. It can also be used to support with water bills including for drinking, washing, cooking, and sanitary purposes and sewerage.

- Food. The Fund should also primarily be used to provide support with food whether in kind or through vouchers.

- Essentials linked to energy and water. The Fund can be used to provide support with essentials linked to energy and water (including sanitary products, warm clothing, soap, blankets, boiler service/repair, purchase of equipment including fridges, freezers, ovens, etc.), in recognition that a range of costs may arise which directly affect a household's ability to afford or access energy , food and water.

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- Wider essentials. The Fund can be used to support with wider essential needs not linked to energy and water should Authorities consider this appropriate in their area. These may include, but are not limited to, support with other bills including broadband or phone bills, clothing, and essential transport-related costs such as repairing a car, buying a bicycle or paying for fuel. This list is not exhaustive.

2.6  For the period **1 April to 30 September 2022**, the government made available a total of £421m to County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England to support those most in need to help with significantly rising living costs.

2.7  From its allocation of £3,692,483.14, Gloucestershire County Council allocated **£150k** to Cheltenham Borough Council

2.8  Working within the framework set out above, the council worked with a range of key delivery partners to assemble the delivery plan – set out below:

| Provider | Household Support Fund Activity (Apr 22 – Sep 22) | allocation |
|---|---|---|
| **#feedcheltenham** | Supermarket food vouchers and food pantry tokens to be distributed through the network of community food pantries | £47,025 |
| | Admin | £3,150 |
| **Cheltenham Children Centres** | Household items (eg cleaning / toiletries) for vulnerable families with under 5s, plus clothes and shoes or bedding vouchers. | £19,350 |
| | Admin | £1,912.5 |
| **Food Bank - energy vouchers** | Fuel Bank Foundation vouchers provision via Cheltenham Food Bank, CCP and Springbank | £50,625 |
| | Admin | £1,912.5 |
| **Chelt Household Essentials Project** | Access to household essentials / one-off items to vulnerable families, plus clothes and shoes or bedding vouchers. | £9,787.5 |
| | Admin | £1,912.5 |
| **CCP** | Access to household essentials / one-off items to vulnerable families, plus clothes and shoes or bedding vouchers. | £9,787.5 |
| | Admin | £1,912.5 |
| **Citizen's advice** | Clothes and shoes or bedding vouchers. | £1,350 |
| | Admin | £1,125 |
| | | **£149,850** |

2.9  The allocations outlined above were worked up by the head of communities, wellbeing & partnerships working with the network of providers and in consultation with the Cabinet Member Cabinet Member Safety and Communities. Due to some of the amounts being allocated to third parties being in excess of £10k, One Legal has advised that Cabinet should formally ratify those allocations in line with the Constitution in Table 5 of Part 3E.

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**2.10** For the period **1 October to 31 March 2023**, the government has again made available a sum of £421m to County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England to support those most in need to help with significantly rising living costs.

**2.11** From its allocation of £3,692,483.14, Gloucestershire County Council allocated **£143k** to Cheltenham Borough Council. **£123k** of this will be allocated to its community partners in line with the proposed delivery plan set out below:

| Provider | Household Support Fund Activity (Oct 22 – Mar 23) | allocation |
|---|---|---|
| #feedcheltenham | Supermarket food vouchers and food pantry tokens to be distributed through the network of community food pantries | £37,700 |
| | Admin | £3,770 |
| Cheltenham Children Centres | Household items (eg cleaning / toiletries) for vulnerable families with under 5s, plus clothes, shoes & bedding vouchers. | £14,170 |
| | Admin | £1,417 |
| Food Bank - energy vouchers | Fuel Bank Foundation vouchers provision | £19,500 |
| | Admin | £1,950 |
| Chelt Household Essentials Project | Access to household essentials / one-off items to vulnerable families, plus clothes, shoes & bedding vouchers. | £7,410 |
| | Admin | £741 |
| CCP | Access to household essentials / one-off items to vulnerable families, plus clothes, shoes & bedding vouchers. | £7,410 |
| | Admin | £741 |
| Citizen's advice | Energy vouchers | £26,000 |
| | Admin | £2,600 |
| | | **£123,409** |

**2.12** A further £20k has been agreed by GCC to support the distribution of additional food to vulnerable households in the run up to Christmas. The food will be purchased from a local supplier and distributed through our network of community food pantries.

## 3. Reasons for recommendations

**3.1** Working within the framework set out above, the council has worked with a range of key delivery partners to assemble the delivery plan – set out above:

## 4. Alternative options considered

**4.1** None

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**5.** **Consultation and feedback**

**5.1** Through our community food network, the council has developed good working relationships with a wide range of community organisations through our collective work to support people made vulnerable due to the pandemic. Through this network, we have collectively identified the most appropriate organisations to work with on the household support fund scheme. Regular updates are provided to the other organisations via the food network. The delivery plan was then developed in consultation with the providers identified in the tables above.

**6.** **Key risks**

**6.1** The main risk to the council is any potential cost over-run e.g. by inadvertently paying out more to the providers that has been allocated in the delivery plan.

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**Report author:** Richard Gibson  Head of communities, wellbeing & partnerships

richard.gibson@cheltenham.gov.uk

**Appendices:**

  i.      Risk Assessment

**Appendix 1: Risk Assessment**

| Risk ref | Risk description | Risk owner | Impact score (1-5) | Likelihood score (1-5) | Initial raw risk score (1 - 25) | Risk response | Controls / Mitigating actions | Control / Action owner | Deadline for controls/ actions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Potential cost over-run by inadvertently paying out more to the providers that has been allocated in the delivery plan | Richard Gibson | 12.2.21 | 3 | 2 | 6 | Reduce | Only pass money over to third parties up to the maximum that has been pre-allocated and monitoring spend | 31.3.21 |

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# Cheltenham Borough Council

# Cabinet – 6 December 2022

# 2022 Independent Resident Satisfaction Survey Results

**Accountable member:**

Cllr Rowena Hay, Leader of the Council

**Accountable officers:**

Darren Knight, Executive Director - Place & Communities

**Accountable scrutiny committee:**

n/a

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Key/Significant Decision:**

No

**Executive summary:**

Residents' surveys are frequently carried out by local Councils in order to collect statistically robust views from a representative sample of residents.

Cheltenham Residents Survey 2022 provides a range of resident insight that can help inform current and future decision making, as well as providing a baseline against which future improvements can be measured.

To coincide the development of a new Corporate Plan, an independent resident survey was commissioned to get insight from local people and understand the where they think the Council should focus its efforts. The survey was undertaken by independent market research company

Enventure Research.

The results shows that overall, **90%** of Cheltenham residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, which is a 6% increase when compared to the 2019 results.  This is also 9% higher than the Local Government Association (LGA) national polling at 81%.

**Recommendations:**

1.  **Cabinet acknowledge the 2022 Resident Satisfaction Survey results and the baseline they provide for the new Corporate Plan priorities.**

2.  **The survey is repeated in three years' time to measure the impact of the Council's corporate plan on resident satisfaction levels.**

3.  **The results are used to inform Council service plans to address areas in need of performance improvement and/or further investigation.**

4.  **The results from the survey are communicated to the Council's partners that have lead responsibilities for areas where further improvement has been identified.**

1.  **Implications**

    **1.1. Financial implications**

    There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

    **Signed off by:** Gemma Bell, Director of Finance & Assets. Gemma.Bell@cheltenham.gov.uk

    **1.2. Legal implications**

    There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

    **Signed off by:** One Legal – legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

    **1.3. HR implications**

    There are no HR implications as a result of this report.

    **Signed off by:** Clare Jones, HR Business Partner.  clare.jones@publicagroup.uk

    **1.4. Environmental and climate change implications**

    There are no environmental or climate change implications as a result of this report.

    **Signed off by:** Laura Tapping, Climate Emergency Programme Officer. laura.tapping@cheltenham.gov.uk

    **1.5. Property/asset implications**

There are no property implications as a result of this report.

**Signed off by:** Simon Hodges, Senior Surveyor.  simon.hodges@cheltenham.gov.uk

### 1.6. Corporate policy framework implications

The resident survey results will be used to help inform the new Corporate Plan.  Results where applicable will tracked and benchmarked through the Council's balanced scorecard via Clearview.

**Signed off by:** Ann Wolstencroft, Head of Projects, Performance & Risk. ann.wolstencroft@cheltenham.gov.uk

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## 2. Promoting equality and reducing discrimination

- An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed for this report.  The survey was a representative sample of the population as set out in the market research methodology statement.

## 3. Performance management – monitoring and review

- The results will be collated and measured through the Council's performance management system Clearview
- The results can be subject to review upon request by the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

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## 4. Background

4.1. Residents' surveys are frequently carried out by local Councils in order to collect statistically robust views from a representative sample of residents.  The last resident survey was undertaken in 2019.

4.2. In 2022, the Leader of the Council requested an independent resident satisfaction survey to gain insights from a statistically representative sample of the borough's population to help inform the development of the new Corporate Plan, which will be taken to full Council in February 2023.

4.3. The benefits of undertaking such a survey allows the Council to:

- Compare the views of residents to national data sets;
- Explore priorities at a local level;
- Set baselines/track perceptions of service quality;
- Collect insight to inform strategy - e.g.  channel shift and communications plans;
- Collect data on new or emerging issues
- Provide a set of baseline measures for the Council's Corporate Plan and Place Vision

4.4. Following a competitive procurement process, Enventure Research were commissioned to undertake the survey on behalf of the Council. Enventure Research are members of the Market Research Society and comply with industry standards for research, insight and analytics and have significant experience of undertaking resident satisfaction surveys on behalf of local authorities.

## 5. Survey Methodology and Response Rate

5.1. A questionnaire was co-designed by Cheltenham Borough Council and Enventure Research and included questions designed to understand:

- How the Council could improve residents' experience as a Cheltenham resident
- Satisfaction with the local area
- Whether residents' local area has changed in the past year
- Perceptions of living in Cheltenham
- Satisfaction with the town centre amenities
- Behaviour changes related to climate change
- Perceptions of housing in Cheltenham
- Awareness and perceptions of the Golden Valley Development
- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on residents' places of work
- Views on how the Council runs things
- Opinions on whether the Council provides value for money
- The rate at which residents feel council tax should be raised
- Satisfaction with Council services
- How well informed the Council keeps its residents
- Whether residents can influence decisions affecting their local area
- How residents obtain information from and about the Council

5.2. To allow comparisons to be made against previous survey findings, some questions from the 2019 Resident Survey were included, as well as questions from the LGA 'Are You Being Served?' national polling survey to allow for benchmarking on a national scale.

5.3. **A representative telephone survey:** This was conducted with residents of Cheltenham aged 16 and above by a team of telephone interviewers using a CATI methodology (Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing), whereby respondents' answers to questions are directly input into survey software.

5.4. In addition, some interviews were undertaken face-to-face at various locations across Cheltenham town centre to ensure hard to reach residents were included, such as those from ethnic minority backgrounds and younger residents.

5.5. Interviews took approximately 12 minutes for an interviewer to complete with a respondent. Interviewer shifts took place at different times, on both weekdays and weekends (including at peak times). Before launching the survey, the questionnaire was tested with a small number of residents who were asked to take part and provide feedback on their experience. This helped ensure that the questionnaire was easy to understand, would elicit useful responses, was of a suitable length and that the

questions were asked in a non-biased manner to collect valid and reliable data.

5.6. In total, **1,100** telephone interviews were completed, with research taking place from 7 September to 6 October 2022. Quotas for the survey were set on age, gender and area of Cheltenham based on mid-year population estimates in 2020, to provide a sample that was broadly representative of Cheltenham residents.

5.7. **Online survey:** This provided all residents with the opportunity to take part in the survey, an online version of the same questionnaire used in the representative telephone and face-to-face survey was made available for residents to complete.

5.8. The online survey was hosted and managed online by Enventure Research between 20 September and 5 October 2022. The survey was open to people aged 16 and above who lived in the borough. The online survey was promoted via the Council's website and social media channels, such as the Council's official Facebook (boosted post), Twitter and LinkedIn pages. The online survey received **246** responses.

5.9. In total**, 1,346** responses were received to the survey.

## 6. Statistical Confidence

6.1. As the survey was undertaken by a sample of people who live in Cheltenham, all results are subject to sampling tolerances. Based on ONS mid-2020 estimates, the Cheltenham population of those aged 16 and above is 95,371, meaning that the 1,100 representative sample size will provide **an accuracy of +/-2.9% at the 95% confidence interval**.

6.2. This means with a result of 50%, we can be 95% sure that if we interviewed all residents then the result would be between 47.1% and 52.9%.

## 7. Benchmarking

7.1. Some of the questions asked in the Cheltenham Resident Survey are also asked by the Local Government Association (LGA) in a national tracker survey, which is administered to a representative sample of 1,000 British adults using a telephone survey methodology.

7.2. Results from the Cheltenham Resident Survey have been compared where the same question has been asked in the national survey. The survey that the results have been compared with what was undertaken in June 2022.

7.3. Where questions have been repeated from the previous Cheltenham Resident Survey conducted in 2019 the results have been included for comparison. It should be noted that the methodology of this year's survey is different to that in 2019, which utilised a postal methodology, so results are not necessarily directly comparable, but will give a good indication of trends in attitudes and perceptions.

## 8. Key Findings

8.1. A summary of the some of the high level results from the representative sample of residents surveyed are briefly summarised below.  The full detailed report, results and analysis is set out in Appendix 1.

- Overall, **90%** of Cheltenham residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, which is a 6% increase when compared to the 2019 results.  This score continues to be higher than the national Local Government Association (LGA) benchmark polling at 81%

- A total of 81% of residents felt Cheltenham has either got better or not changed much over the last twelve months

- 78% of residents felt Cheltenham has a vibrant culture and an exciting place to live

- 89% of residents would recommend Cheltenham as a place to live

- 80% of residents felt Cheltenham has a positive future

- 68% of residents choose to walk, cycle or use public transport more instead of using a car with a further 18% willing to make this change in the next few years

- Satisfaction with how the Council runs things has increased by 4% and now at 59% and is broadly in line with the Local Government Associational Benchmark national polling for local authority satisfaction levels

- 76% of residents felt there was a need for more affordable homes to buy and rent

- In relation to the Council's plan to make Cheltenham the Cyber Capital of the UK through the Golden Valley Development, 75% of residents who are aware of this project, felt it will be positive for the local economy

- Satisfaction with safety during the day is 87% but this drops to 44% after dark.

- Only 44% of residents felt they have the opportunity to grow their career in Cheltenham

- 88% of residents were satisfied with the parks and open spaces

- 72% of residents were satisfied with the cleanliness of streets in their local area

- 83% of residents were satisfied with household collections for domestic waste

- 81% of residents were satisfied with household collections for recyclables

- Whilst only 61% of residents were satisfied with the range of shops available 88% were satisfied with the range of events in Cheltenham

8.2. Residents were also asked to state one thing they feel the Council should do to improve Cheltenham.  The top themes from the representative sample are

summarised below:

- The most common response related to better roads/path maintenance (28%) (This is the responsibility of Gloucestershire County Council and not Cheltenham Borough Council)

- No issues/nothing (11%)

- Cleaner pavements/roads/areas of litter (8%)

- More car parking needed/more disabled car parking/ reduce cost of parking (8%).

8.3. The top theme from the online survey is summarised below:

- Regeneration of the High Street was important, with 18% suggesting High Street regeneration/encourage businesses.

8.4. The results and insight will be shared with other organisations the Council works closely with such as Gloucestershire County Council (the highways authority), Cheltenham BID, GFirstLep, UBICO, Chamber of Commerce, Parish Councils, Cheltenham Police, Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner and others.

8.5. In summary, these are a very positive set of results and show an overall improvement based on the 2019 survey.   The full detailed report, results and analysis, are set out in appendix one and the infographic summary in appendix 2.

## 9. Key risks

9.1. No risks have been identified with this report.

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**Appendices:**

i.      2022 Independent Resident Survey Results Full Report
ii.     Infographic summary

**Background information:**

None.

# Cheltenham Resident Survey

## Research Report for

**CHELTENHAM**
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## October 2022

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# Contents

# Executive Summary

## Background

Cheltenham Borough Council wished to conduct a survey with a representative sample of its residents to understand views on a number of topics related to the Council and the local area, in order to help inform a refresh of the Corporate Plan. Benchmarking was also required against the findings from the 2019 Resident Survey and the LGA 'Are You Being Served?' polling survey.

Enventure Research was commissioned to conduct the survey, analyse and evaluate the feedback and provide a comprehensive report on the findings.

## Methodology summary

A 12-minute questionnaire was co-designed by Cheltenham Borough Council and Enventure Research including questions from the previous 2019 Resident Survey and LGA benchmarking questions for comparison. The LGA 'Are You Being Served?' polling survey is a national tracker survey, which is administered to a representative sample of 1,000 British adults using a telephone survey methodology. The latest survey was conducted in June 2022.

The research programme included a telephone survey with a representative sample of 1,100 residents of Cheltenham aged 16 and above. In addition, some survey interviews were undertaken face-to-face at locations across Cheltenham town centre to engage with residents who are typically hard to reach. An online version of the survey was also made available for all Cheltenham residents to complete and was promoted via social media channels.

Between 7 September and 6 October 2022, 1,346 people took part in the survey. This includes 1,100 who took part in the representative survey and a further 246 who completed the open online survey. The 1,100 representative sample size provides an accuracy of +/-2.9% at the 95% confidence interval. This means with a result of 50%, we can be 95% sure that if we interviewed all residents then the result would be between 47.1% and 52.9%.

## Key findings

Please note the key findings are based on the results to the representative survey only. The main body of the report details the results to the online survey alongside the representative survey.

**Results of the representative survey are in line with the latest LGA Polling Survey and are more positive than 2019**
- Overall resident satisfaction with their local area as a place to live is at 90%, which is a 6% increase since 2019 and 9% higher than the national LGA Polling Survey (81%)
- Satisfaction with the way the Council runs things has increased to 59% since 2019 (+4%), and is now broadly in line with the national LGA Polling Survey (63%)
- Agreement that the Council provides value for money has increased by 10% to 41% since 2019, which is also broadly in line with the national LGA Polling Survey (45%)
- The proportion of those who think the Council keeps residents well informed about the services and benefits it provides has increased to 56% (+15%), which is consistent with the national LGA Polling Survey (57%)
- Overall agreement has increased for all statements about Cheltenham as a place to live, with the largest increase recorded for *Cheltenham has a positive future* (+19%)
- Regarding town centre amenities, the largest increase in overall satisfaction was recorded for *events* (+21%)

- Overall satisfaction with Council services have increased, particularly for *the cleanliness of the streets in the local area* (+11%), *the household collections for recyclables* (+9%) and *the way the Council tackles anti-social behaviour* (+9%)
- Overall agreement that they can influence decisions affecting their local area increased by 10%

**Respondents would most like to see changes to road maintenance to improve their experience as a resident, but some are happy with things the way they are**

- When asked what one change the Council could make to improve their experience as a Cheltenham resident, the most common response was *better roads/path maintenance* (28%), however it is important to recognise that highways is the responsibility of Gloucestershire County Council and not Cheltenham Borough Council
- It is also positive to note that 11% suggested *nothing/no issues*, which was the second most common response
- A further 8% suggested *cleaner pavements/roads/areas of litter*

**Respondents believe their local area has not changed much in the past year**

- The majority of respondents (70%) said their local area has *not changed much* in the past year
- A further 11% felt it had *got better* and 20% thought it had *got worse*

**Respondents tend to have positive perceptions of Cheltenham as a place to live but there is room for improvement, particularly around young people and growing careers**

- Respondents were most likely to agree with the statement *I would recommend Cheltenham as a place to live* (89%)
- Large proportions also agreed that *Cheltenham has a positive future* (80%) and *Cheltenham has a vibrant culture and is an exciting place to live* (78%)
- Smaller proportions agreed that *Cheltenham is a place that offers opportunity for young people* (51%) and *by living in Cheltenham, I have the opportunity to grow my career* (44%)
- A large proportion answered that they didn't know or that it was not relevant to them in response to *by living in Cheltenham, I have the opportunity to grow my career* (28%)

**High levels of satisfaction were recorded for most town centre amenities, but more could be done to improve satisfaction related to visiting after dark**

- Respondents were most likely to be satisfied with *events* (88%), *safety during the day* (87%) and *Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit in the daytime* (82%)
- Less than half were satisfied with *Cheltenham town centre as a place to visit after dark* (48%) and *safety after dark* (44%)

**The majority of respondents have already made several behaviour changes to tackle climate change**

- Respondents were most likely to say they already *minimise energy usage at home* (80%)
- Large proportions also said that they are already *mindful of food consumption* (71%), that they already *choose to walk, cycle or use public transport more instead of using a car* (68%), and they already *avoid single use plastics and plastic packaging* (62%)
- Respondents were most likely to say that they would be willing to *avoid single use plastics and plastic packaging* (33%) and *improve the energy efficiency of their home* (31%)
- 14% said they would not be willing to *choose to walk, cycle or use public transport more instead of a car*

**Respondents tend to agree that there is a need for more affordable homes to buy and rent in Cheltenham, but opinion is split regarding building homes on available land**

- Three quarters of respondents agreed that *there is a need for more affordable homes to buy in Cheltenham* (76%) and *rent in Cheltenham* (76%)

- A larger proportion disagreed that they would be *willing to accept some new homes being built on available land* (47%) than agreed (34%)

**Just over half are aware of the Golden Valley Development and the majority believe it will be a positive attribute for Cheltenham, but awareness of what will be based there is low**
- Just over half (54%) are aware of the Golden Valley Development
- Large proportions agreed that *the Golden Valley Development will be positive for the local economy* (75%) and *for Cheltenham residents* (65%)
- Equal proportions agreed and disagreed that they could *confidently describe the Golden Valley Development and what will be based there* (39% agree and 39% disagree)
- A small proportion agreed that they *would be interested in applying for a job at the Golden Valley Development* (17%)

**Three in ten respondents' place of work had been impacted by the pandemic, and were most likely to have changed jobs**
- 28% of respondents reported that the pandemic had had an impact on where they work and a further 28% said this was not applicable to them
- Those whose workplace had been impacted by the pandemic were most likely to say they had *changed jobs* (30%) in relation to their current working arrangements
- Similar proportions said they were *now a hybrid worker and their place of work away from home is in Cheltenham* (22%) or that they *now fully work from home* (20%)

**The majority believe that council tax should be raised below the level of inflation**
- 67% of respondents said that council tax should be increased *below inflation*
- A further 30% of respondents said that it should *match inflation*
- Only a very small proportion felt it should be increased *above inflation* (3%)

**Respondents are generally satisfied with the services provided by the Council, but a large proportion is unaware of how the Council tackles anti-social behaviour**
- Respondents were most likely to be satisfied with *the parks and open spaces provided by the Council* (88%), *the household collections for domestic waste* (83%) and *the household collections for recyclables* (81%)
- *The way the Council tackles anti-social behaviour* recorded the lowest satisfaction (30%)
- A large proportion answered that they don't know in relation to *the way the Council tackles anti-social behaviour* (33%)

**It is important to the majority of respondents that the Council has a physical presence in the town centre as well as an online presence**
- Respondents thought it was most important that *the public can access the Council's services digitally* (91%)
- Large proportions also felt it was very or fairly important that *there is a place within the town centre where the public can make enquiries and access Council services* (90%) and *the Council's main office and staff are located in the town centre* (85%)

**The proportion of those who agree they can influence decisions affecting their local area has increased since 2019, but respondents are still more likely to disagree than agree**
- Overall agreement that they can influence decisions affecting their local area has increased by 10% since 2019
- However, respondents are still more likely to disagree (44%) than agree (29%)

**The most common sources of information from or about the Council are the Council website, leaflets or posters, and the local media**
- Half (51%) said they obtain information from or about the Council via the *Council website*
- Other common responses include *leaflets or posters* (32%) and *local media* (17%)

# The Research Programme

## Introduction

Cheltenham Borough Council wished to conduct a survey with a representative sample of its residents to understand views on a number of topics related to the Council and the local area, in order to help inform a refresh of the Corporate Plan. Benchmarking was also required against the findings from the 2019 Resident Survey and the LGA 'Are You Being Served?' polling survey.

Enventure Research was commissioned to conduct the survey, analyse and evaluate the feedback and provide a comprehensive report on the findings.

## Methodology and survey design

**Questionnaire design**
A questionnaire was co-designed by Cheltenham Borough Council and Enventure Research and included questions designed to understand:

- How the Council could improve residents' experience as a Cheltenham resident
- Satisfaction with the local area
- Whether residents' local area has changed in the past year
- Perceptions of living in Cheltenham
- Satisfaction with the town centre amenities
- Behaviour changes related to climate change
- Perceptions of housing in Cheltenham
- Awareness and perceptions of the Golden Valley Development
- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on residents' places of work
- Views on how the Council runs things
- Opinions on whether the Council provides value for money
- The rate at which residents feel council tax should be raised
- Satisfaction with Council services
- How well informed the Council keeps its residents
- Whether residents can influence decisions affecting their local area
- How residents obtain information from and about the Council

To allow comparisons to be made against previous survey findings, some questions from the 2019 Resident Survey were included, as well as questions from the LGA 'Are You Being Served?' national polling survey to allow for benchmarking on a national scale.

For reference, a copy of the questionnaire can be found in the **Appendices**.

**Representative telephone and face-to-face survey**
A representative telephone survey was conducted with residents of Cheltenham aged 16 and above by a team of telephone interviewers using a CATI methodology (Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing), whereby respondents' answers to questions are directly input into survey software. In addition, some interviews were undertaken face-to-face at various locations across Cheltenham town centre to ensure hard to reach residents were included, such as those from ethnic minority backgrounds and younger residents.

Interviews took approximately 12 minutes for an interviewer to complete with a respondent. Interviewer shifts took place at different times, on both weekdays and weekends (including at peak times).

Before launching the survey, the questionnaire was tested with a small number of residents who were asked to take part and provide feedback on their experience. This helped ensure that the questionnaire was easy to understand, would elicit useful responses, was of a suitable length and that the questions were asked in a non-biased manner to collect valid and reliable data.

In total, **1,100 interviews** were completed, with research taking place from 7 September to 6 October 2022.

Quotas for the survey were set on age, gender and area of Cheltenham based on mid-year population estimates in 2020, to provide a sample that was broadly representative of Cheltenham residents.

**Online survey**

To provide all residents with the opportunity to take part in the survey, an online version of the same questionnaire used in the representative telephone and face-to-face survey was made available for residents to complete. The online survey was hosted and managed online by Enventure Research between 20 September and 5 October 2022. The survey was open to people aged 16 and above who lived in the borough.

The online survey was promoted via the Council's website and social media channels, such as the Council's official Facebook (including a paid advert), Twitter and LinkedIn pages.

The online survey received **246** responses.

## Survey response

In total, **1,346 responses** were received to the survey.

*Figure 1 – Survey responses by methodology*

| Methodology | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Representative telephone and face-to-face survey | 1,100 | 82% |
| Online survey | 246 | 18% |
| **TOTAL** | **1,346** | **100%** |

## Interpretation of the findings

**Figures**

This report contains tables and charts. In some instances, the responses may not add up to 100%. There are several reasons why this might happen:

- The question may have allowed each respondent to give more than one answer
- Only the most common responses may be shown in the table or chart
- Individual percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number so the total may come to 99% or 101%
- A response of less than 0.5% will be shown as 0%

In some cases, response options are not shown in figures if they were not selected by any respondents.

**Sampling tolerances**

As the survey was undertaken by a sample of people who live in Cheltenham, all results are subject to sampling tolerances. Based on ONS mid-2020 estimates, the Cheltenham population of those aged 16 and above is 95,371, meaning that the 1,100 representative sample size will provide an accuracy of +/-2.9% at the 95% confidence interval. This means with a result of 50%, we can be 95% sure that if we interviewed all residents then the result would be between 47.1% and 52.9%.

**Subgroup analysis**

Subgroup analysis has been undertaken to explore the representative survey results by gender, age, ethnicity, area of Cheltenham, whether children live in the household, and disability. This analysis has only been carried out where the sample size is seen to be sufficient. In some cases where sample sizes are not large enough, subgroups have been combined to create a larger group. The percentages shown in the subgroup analysis reflect the proportion of the subgroup who answered the question and gave a particular response. Subgroup analysis has not been carried out for the online survey, as the sample size is smaller and not representative.

Differences that are statistically significant according to the z-test at the 95% confidence level have been highlighted in this report. The z-test is a commonly used statistical test used to highlight whether differences in results are 'significant'. By this we mean that we can say with 95% confidence that we would see a difference if all residents within a specific subgroup had answered the question.

**Other responses**

For some questions, respondents were able to select 'other' and provide a free-text response. Where 15 or more 'other' responses have been received, a summary has been provided within the commentary to highlight the most common response themes.

**Response scales**

Some survey questions allowed respondents to answer questions using Likert scales, such as satisfaction rating scales. As differences between responses within these scales are often subjective, for example the difference between those who answered 'very satisfied' and 'quite satisfied', these response options have been combined to create total responses.

**Benchmarking and comparisons**

Some of the questions asked in the Cheltenham Resident Survey are also asked by the Local Government Association (LGA) in a national tracker survey, which is administered to a representative sample of 1,000 British adults using a telephone survey methodology. Results from the Cheltenham Resident Survey have been compared where the same question has been asked in the national survey. The survey that the results have been compared with was undertaken in June 2022.

Where questions have been repeated from the previous Cheltenham Resident Survey conducted in 2019 the results have been included for comparison. It should be noted that the methodology of this year's survey is different to that in 2019, which utilised a postal methodology, so results are not necessarily directly comparable, but will give a good indication of trends in attitudes and perceptions.

**Terminology**

Throughout this report, those who took part in the representative survey are referred to as 'representative respondents', whilst those who completed the online version of the survey are referred to as 'online respondents'.

# Research Findings

## The local area

### Changes to improve residents' experiences

Respondents were asked what one change they would want the Council to make to improve their experience as a Cheltenham resident. The most common response for both surveys related to *better roads/path maintenance* (28% representative and 22% online).

Other common responses for those taking part in the representative survey include *no issues/nothing* (11%), *cleaner pavements/roads/areas of litter* (8%) and *reduce cost of parking/more car parking needed/more disabled car parking* (8%).

Regeneration of the High Street was important for online respondents, with 18% suggesting *High Street regeneration/encourage businesses.* A further 7% of online respondents said *cleaner pavements/roads/areas of litter.*

**Figure 2 – (Q1) What one change would you want Cheltenham Borough Council to do to improve your experience as a Cheltenham resident? (top 10 responses)**
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*

| Response | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| *Representative survey* | | |
| Better roads/path maintenance | 313 | 28% |
| No issues/nothing | 126 | 11% |
| Cleaner pavements/roads/areas of litter | 88 | 8% |
| Reduce cost of parking/more car parking needed/more disabled car parking | 85 | 8% |
| High Street regeneration/encourage businesses | 58 | 5% |
| More/better public transport | 57 | 5% |
| Better traffic management/improve traffic flow/roadwork planning/less roadworks | 48 | 4% |
| Address ASB/crime/drugs/make safer | 38 | 3% |
| Improved cycle infrastructure/more cycle parking | 34 | 3% |
| Other | 50 | 5% |
| *Online survey* | | |
| Better roads/path maintenance | 54 | 22% |
| High Street regeneration/encourage businesses | 45 | 18% |
| Cleaner pavements/roads/areas of litter | 19 | 8% |
| Improved cycle infrastructure/more cycle parking | 18 | 7% |
| Better traffic management/improve traffic flow/roadwork planning/less roadworks | 17 | 7% |
| More/better public transport | 16 | 7% |
| Pedestrianise town centre | 13 | 5% |
| Speed restrictions/safer roads | 11 | 4% |
| Reduce cost of parking/more car parking needed/more disabled car parking | 11 | 4% |
| Address ASB/crime/drugs/make safer | 8 | 3% |
| Address green areas/more green maintenance needed | 8 | 3% |
| Spend money more wisely | 7 | 3% |
| More care for environment | 7 | 3% |

## Satisfaction with the local area

Respondents were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with their local area as a place to live. Nine in ten representative respondents (90%) indicated that they were satisfied, including 49% who were *very satisfied* and 41% who were *fairly satisfied.* A further 5% were *neither satisfied nor dissatisfied* and just 5% were either *fairly dissatisfied* (3%) or *very dissatisfied* (1%).

Although still very high, satisfaction was lower amongst those who took part in the online survey, with three quarters indicating that they were satisfied (74% overall). Online respondents were more likely to say they were dissatisfied (15% overall) than representative respondents (5% overall).

As shown in the chart below, the representative survey recorded a higher level of satisfaction than the LGA Polling Survey (+9%).

***Figure 3 – (Q2) Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?***
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246); LGA (1,002)*
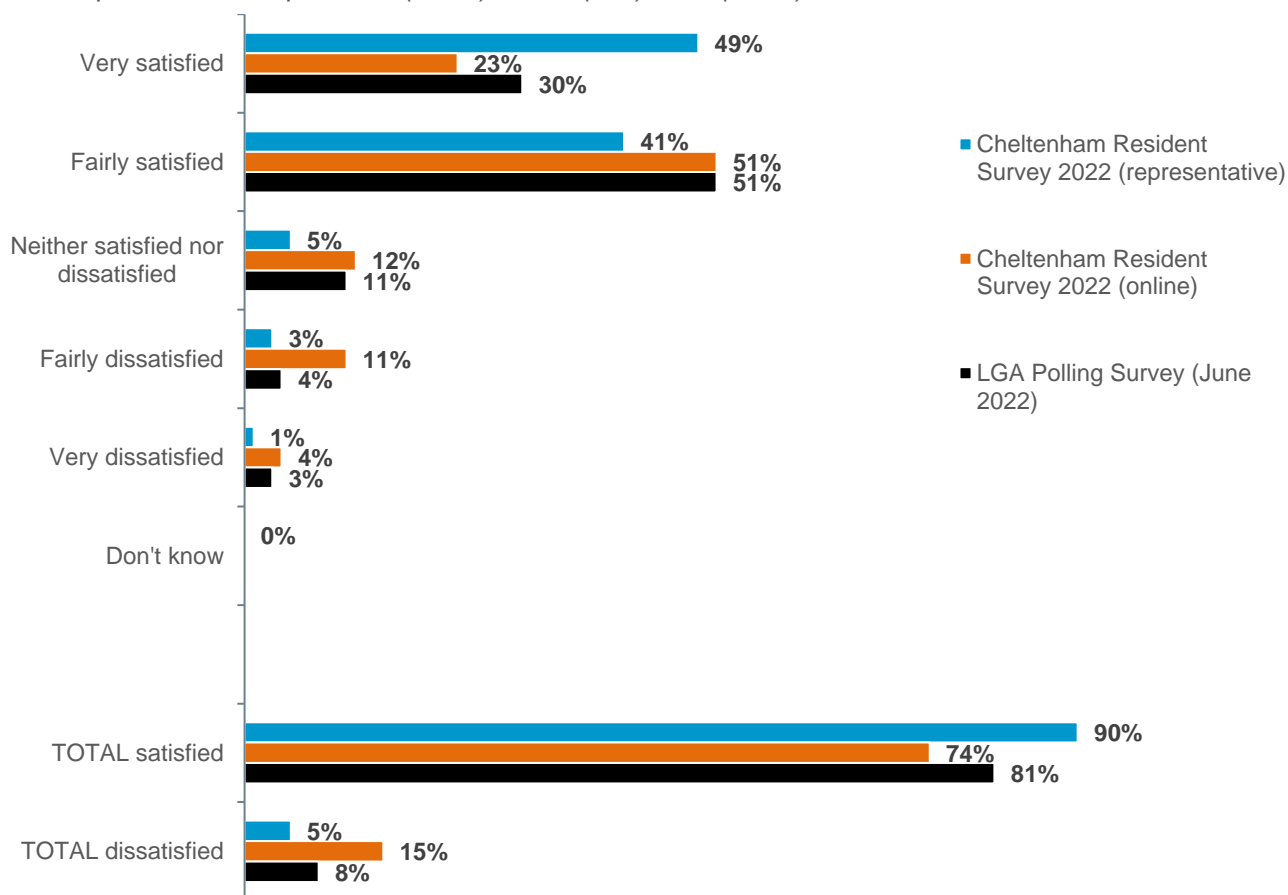


**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Subgroups more likely to indicate that they were **satisfied** (90% overall) include:

- Those living in Central (91%), Cheltenham North (92%) and Cheltenham South East (94%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (84%)
- Those who do not have a disability (91%) vs those who do (81%)

The table below shows the results of the representative survey to this question alongside the results from the 2019 survey for comparison.

Overall satisfaction has increased by 6%, which is largely driven by the significant increase in the proportion who said they were *very satisfied* (+20%).

***Figure 4 – (Q2) Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?* (representative telephone survey only – compared with previous survey results)**
*Base: All representative respondents 2022 (1,100); 2019 (1,572)*

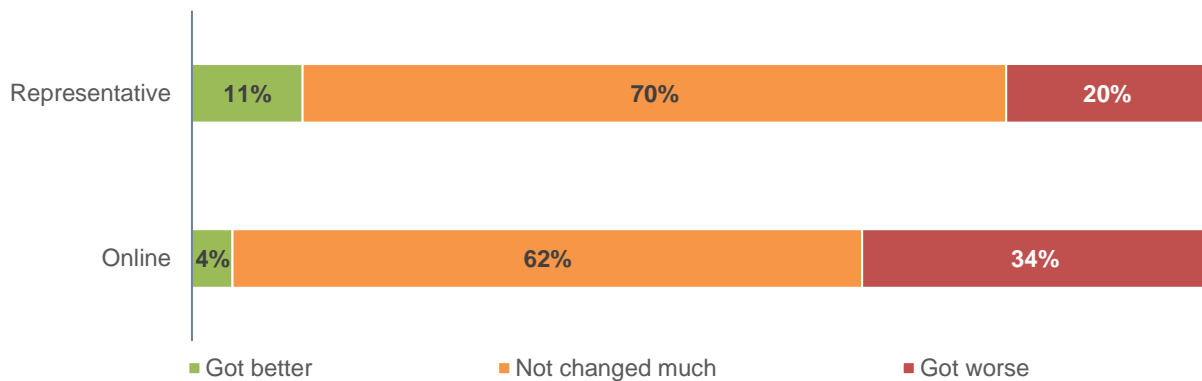| Response | 2022 | 2019 | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very satisfied | **49%** | 29% | +20% |
| Fairly satisfied | **41%** | 56% | -15% |
| Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | **5%** | 9% | -4% |
| Fairly dissatisfied | **3%** | 5% | -2% |
| Very dissatisfied | **1%** | 2% | -1% |
| TOTAL satisfied | **90%** | 84% | +6% |

## Changes to the local area in the past year

When asked whether their local area has got better, worse or not changed much over the past year, 11% of representative respondents felt it had *got better*, whilst the majority (70%) thought it had *not changed much*. A further 20% of representative respondents reported feeling that their local area had *got worse.*

The majority of online respondents (62%) said their local area had *not changed much*, whilst 4% believed it had *got better* and a third (34%) thought it had *got worse.*

***Figure 5 – (Q3) On the whole, do you think that over the past year your local area has got better or worse, or not changed much?***
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*



Representative: Got better 11%, Not changed much 70%, Got worse 20%
Online: Got better 4%, Not changed much 62%, Got worse 34%

■ Got better    ■ Not changed much    ■ Got worse

---

**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Subgroups more likely to feel that their local area has **got better** (11% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-54 (14%) vs those aged 55+ (7%)
- Those living in Central (14%) and Cheltenham North (14%) vs those living in Cheltenham South East (6%)

Subgroups more likely to feel that their local area has **got worse** (20% overall) include:

- Those aged 55+ (24%) vs those aged 16-34 (15%)
- Those who have a disability (29%) vs those who do not (18%)

---

The table below shows the results of the representative survey to this question alongside the results from the 2019 survey for comparison.

The proportion who said their local area had *got worse* has decreased by 8%.

***Figure 6 – (Q3) On the whole, do you think that over the past year your local area has got better or worse, or not changed much?* (representative telephone survey only – compared with previous survey results)**
*Base: All representative respondents 2022 (1,100); 2019 (1,534)*

| Response | 2022 | 2019 | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| Got better | **11%** | 9% | +2% |
| Not changed much | **70%** | 63% | +7% |
| Got worse | **20%** | 28% | -8% |

## Agreement with statements about Cheltenham

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about Cheltenham as a place to live. The chart below shows a breakdown of the responses provided by representative respondents.

Representative respondents were most likely to agree with the statement *I would recommend Cheltenham as a place to live* (89%). This was followed by eight in ten (80%) who agreed that *Cheltenham has a positive future* and a similar proportion (78%) who agreed that *Cheltenham has a vibrant culture and is an exciting place to live.*

Smaller proportions of representative respondents agreed that *Cheltenham is a place that offers opportunity for young people* (51%) and *by living in Cheltenham, I have the opportunity to grow my career* (44%). However, much larger proportions also said they didn't know or that these statements weren't relevant to them (19% and 28% respectively) when compared with other statements.

***Figure 7 – (Q4) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?***
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100)*
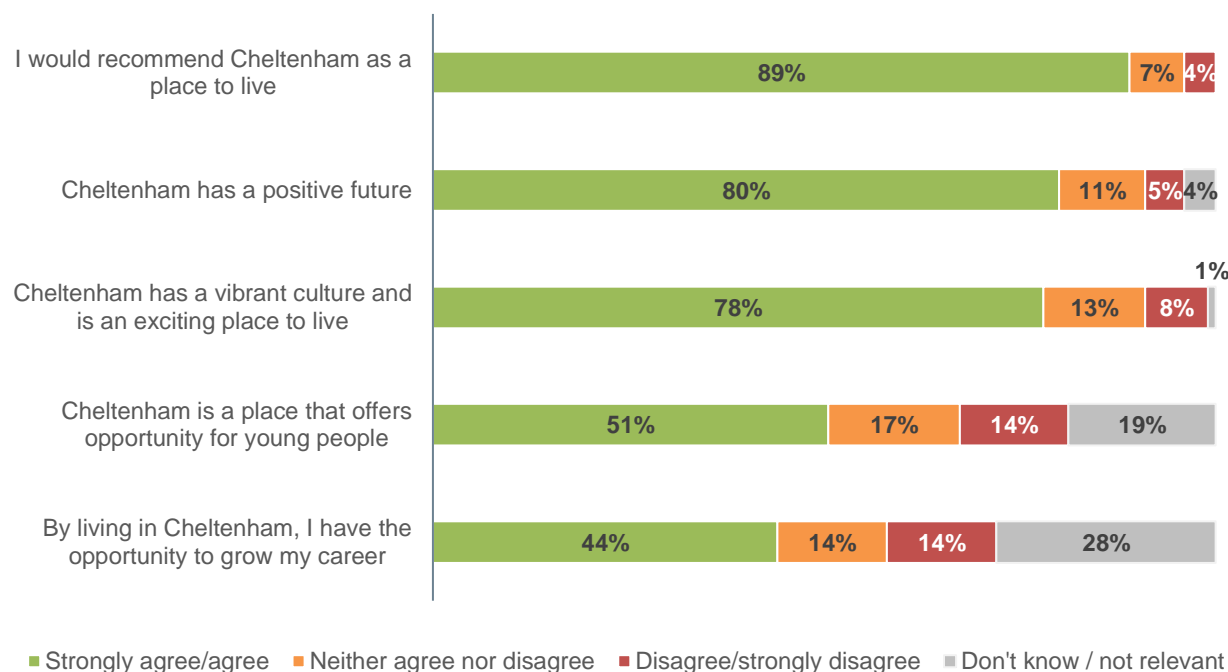


- Strongly agree/agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree/strongly disagree
- Don't know / not relevant

---

**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Subgroups more likely to **agree** with the statement **I would recommend Cheltenham as a place to live** (89% overall) include:

- Those aged 35-54 (91%) vs those aged 16-34 (85%)
- Those living in Central (90%) and Cheltenham South East (94%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (83%)

Those living in Central and Cheltenham South East were more likely to **agree** with the statement **Cheltenham has a vibrant culture and is an exciting place to live** (84% and 85% respectively) vs those living in Cheltenham West (71%).

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**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey continued**

Subgroups more likely to **disagree** with the statement **Cheltenham is a place that offers opportunity for young people** (14% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-34 (21%) vs those aged 35+ (12%)
- Those living in Cheltenham West (20%) vs those living in Central (11%) and Cheltenham South West (7%)

Subgroups more likely to **agree** with the statement **by living in Cheltenham, I have the opportunity to grow my career** (44% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-54 (55%) vs those aged 55+ (32%)
- Those with children or young people aged 0-18 in their household (52%) vs those without (41%)
- Those who do not have a disability (45%) vs those who do (36%)

Subgroups more likely to **disagree** with the statement **by living in Cheltenham, I have the opportunity to grow my career** (14% overall) include:

- Those from ethnic minority backgrounds (31%) vs those of White ethnicity (14%)
- Those living in Cheltenham West (20%) vs those living in Cheltenham North (12%) and Cheltenham South West (10%)
- Those with children or young people aged 0-18 in their household (19%) vs those without (13%)

The table below shows the results of the representative survey to this question alongside the results from the 2019 survey for comparison.

Overall agreement has increased for all statements since the 2019 survey, with the largest increases being seen for *Cheltenham has a positive future* (+19%), *Cheltenham is a place that offers opportunity for young people* (+16%) and *by living in Cheltenham, I have the opportunity to grow my career* (+15%).

***Figure 8 – (Q4) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Representative telephone survey only – compared with previous survey results [% strongly agree/agree])***
*Base: All representative respondents 2022 (1,100); 2019 (various – unknown)*

| Response | 2022 | 2019 | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| I would recommend Cheltenham as a place to live | **89%** | 82% | +7% |
| Cheltenham has a positive future | **80%** | 61% | +19% |
| Cheltenham has a vibrant culture and is an exciting place to live | **78%** | 69% | +9% |
| Cheltenham is a place that offers opportunity for young people | **51%** | 35% | +16% |
| By living in Cheltenham, I have the opportunity to grow my career | **44%** | 29% | +15% |

Online respondents were also most likely to agree with the statement *I would recommend Cheltenham as a place to live* (76%). Two thirds (67%) agreed that *Cheltenham has a vibrant culture and is an exciting place to live* and just over half (53%) agreed that *Cheltenham has a positive future.*

As seen with the findings from the representative survey, much smaller proportions agreed that *Cheltenham is a place that offers opportunity for young people* (28%) and *by living in Cheltenham, I have the opportunity to grow my career* (23%). Online respondents were most likely to answer that they neither agreed nor disagreed for the statement *Cheltenham is a place that offers opportunity for young people* (32%) and were most likely to indicate that they did not know or that it was not relevant to them in response to the statement *by living in Cheltenham, I have the opportunity to grow my career* (35%).

**Figure 9 – (Q4) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**
*Base: All online respondents (246)*



■ Strongly agree/agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree/strongly disagree ■ Don't know / not relevant
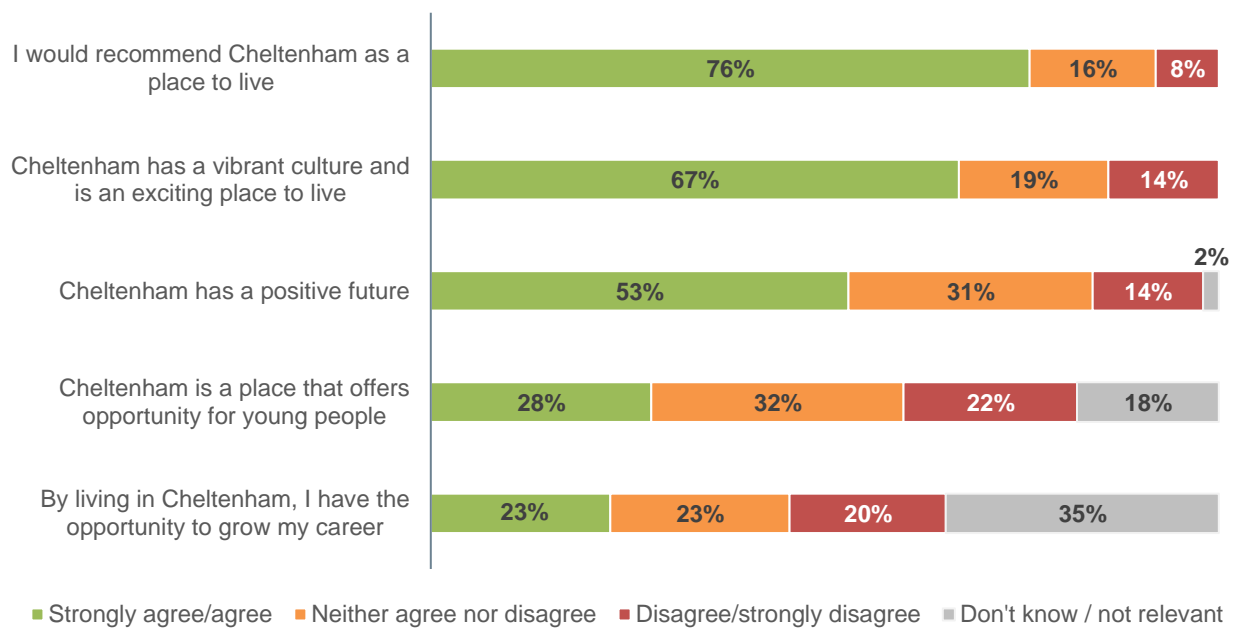
## Satisfaction with town centre amenities

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with a number of amenities in Cheltenham town centre. The chart below shows a breakdown of the responses provided by representative respondents.

*Events* recorded the highest level of satisfaction (88%), with examples provided such as Cheltenham Festivals, the Farmer's Market, ice rink and Children's Festival.

Representative respondents appear to prefer Cheltenham town centre during the daytime, as 87% were satisfied with their *safety during the day* and a further 82% were satisfied with *Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit in the daytime.* By comparison, 48% were satisfied with *Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit after dark* and 44% were satisfied with their *safety after dark.* However, it is important to highlight that large proportions indicated that they did not know (*Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit after dark* at 16% and *safety after dark* at 17%).

The survey results suggest that there are some further areas for improvement, where the majority of representative respondents indicated that they were satisfied, but significant proportions also recorded their dissatisfaction. This includes *the general appearance* (65% satisfied and 19% dissatisfied), *the overall cleanliness* (62% satisfied and 19% dissatisfied) and *the range of shops available* (61% satisfied and 22% dissatisfied).

**Figure 10 – (Q5) Thinking about the town centre, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following?**
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100)*
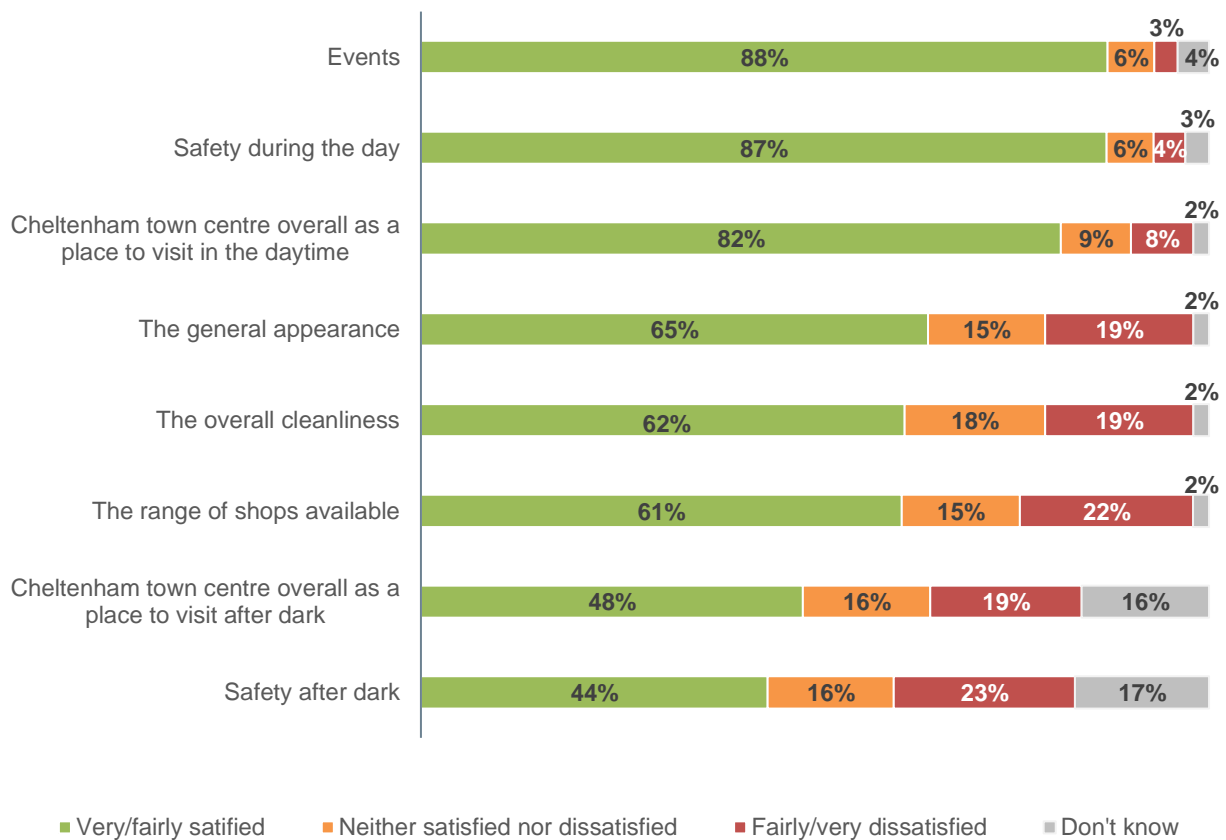
**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Female respondents were more likely to be **dissatisfied** with the following when compared with male respondents:

- The range of shops available (26% vs 16%)
- Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit after dark (22% vs 17%)
- Safety after dark (28% vs 17%)

Conversely, male respondents were more likely to be **satisfied** with the following when compared with female respondents:

- The range of shops available (65% vs 58%)
- Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit after dark (52% vs 45%)
- Safety after dark (50% vs 39%)

Compared with those aged 35+, respondents aged 16-34 were more likely to be **satisfied** with **the general appearance** (80% vs 60%) and **the range of shops available** (73% vs 58%).

Compared with those aged 55+, respondents aged 16-54 were more likely to be **satisfied** with **the overall cleanliness** (66% vs 55%) and **Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit after dark** (60% vs 35%).

Those aged 55+ were more likely be **dissatisfied** with the following:

- The general appearance (27%) vs those aged 16-54 (12%)
- The overall cleanliness (24%) vs those aged 16-54 (17%)
- The range of shops available (25%) vs those aged 16-34 (15%)

Those who have a disability were more likely to be **dissatisfied** with **Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit after dark** (32%) and **safety after dark** (32%) vs those who do not (18% and 22% respectively).

Those with children and young people aged 0-18 in their household were more likely to be **satisfied** with the following when compared with those without:

- Events (94% vs 86%)
- The general appearance (70% vs 63%)
- Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit after dark (61% vs 44%)

There were also some differences based on where respondents lived:

- Those living in Cheltenham South East were more likely to be **satisfied** with **events** (93%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (84%) and Cheltenham South West (86%)
- Those living in Cheltenham South East were more likely to be **satisfied** with **Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit in the daytime** (87%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (77%)
- Those living in Cheltenham North were more likely to be **satisfied** with **the range of shops available** (69%) vs those living in Cheltenham South East (57%)
- Those living in Central (24%), Cheltenham West (22%), Cheltenham South West (23%) and Cheltenham South East (26%) were more likely to be **dissatisfied** with **the range of shops available** vs those living in Cheltenham North (14%)
- Those living in Central were more likely to be **satisfied** with **Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit after dark** (56%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (43%) and Cheltenham South West (42%)

The table below shows the results of the representative survey to this question alongside the results from the 2019 survey for comparison.

Satisfaction has increased for the majority of town centre amenities asked about since the 2019 survey, with the largest increase recorded for *events* (+21%). However, it is important to note that the 2019 survey was worded slightly differently and asked about *the range of events and activities.*

Decreases in satisfaction have been recorded for *the general appearance* (-1%), *the overall cleanliness* (-2%) and *the range of shops available* (-6%) since the 2019 survey.

***Figure 11 – (Q5) Thinking about the town centre, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following?* (Representative telephone survey only – compared with previous survey results [% very/fairly satisfied])**
*Base: All representative respondents 2022 (1,100); 2019 (various – unknown)*

| Response | 2022 | 2019 | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| Events | **88%** | 67% | +21% |
| Safety during the day | **87%** | 84% | +3% |
| Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit in the daytime | **82%** | 80% | +2% |
| The general appearance | **65%** | 66% | -1% |
| The overall cleanliness | **62%** | 64% | -2% |
| The range of shops available | **61%** | 67% | -6% |
| Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit after dark | **48%** | 40% | +8% |
| Safety after dark | **44%** | 38% | +6% |

Nine in ten online respondents (91%) reported that they were satisfied with their *safety during the day*. A further 69% were satisfied with *Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit in the daytime,* and 65% were satisfied with *events.*

Less than half of online respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the remaining town centre amenities. The lowest levels of satisfaction were recorded for *the general appearance* (38%) and *the overall cleanliness* (37%), with online respondents being more likely to state they were dissatisfied with these in comparison (49% and 50% respectively).

**Figure 12 – (Q5) Thinking about the town centre, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following?**
*Base: All online respondents (246)*
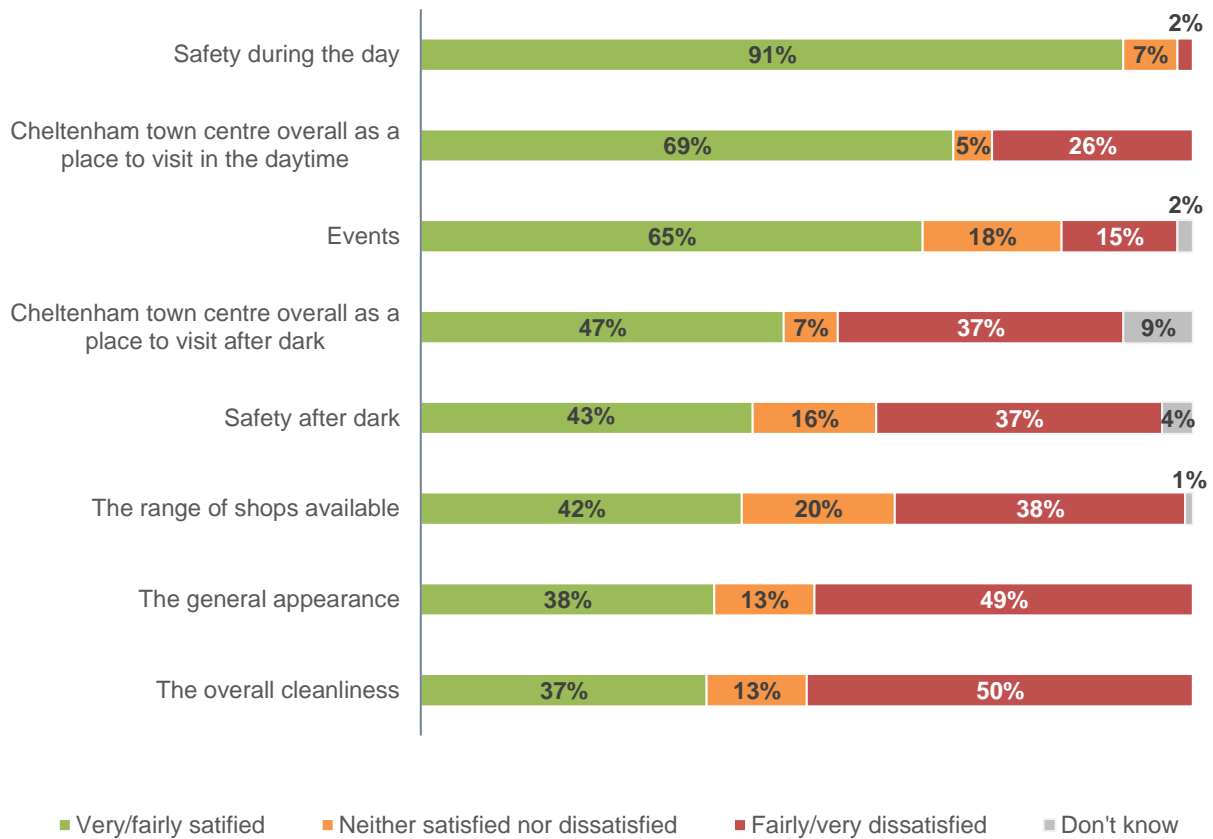
# Environmental issues

## Behaviour changes in the next five years

To understand residents' existing and potential behaviour changes to tackle climate change, a list of behaviours and activities were read out to respondents, who were then asked to indicate whether they currently did these specifically to reduce the impact of climate change. For any activities they were not currently doing, respondents were subsequently asked to state whether they would be willing to do these to reduce the impact of climate change in the next five years.

Eight in ten representative respondents (80%) said they were already *minimising energy usage at home.* Seven in ten (71%) said they were already *being mindful of food consumption*, and a similar proportion (68%) said they were already *choosing to walk, cycle or use public transport more instead of using a car.*

*Avoiding single use plastics and plastic packaging* was the behaviour change that representative respondents were most willing to make if they hadn't already made this change (33%), closely followed by *improving the energy efficiency of their home* (31%).

Representative respondents were most likely to say they would not be willing to *choose to walk, cycle or use public transport more instead of using a car* (14%) or *improve the energy efficiency of their home* (12%) if they hadn't made these changes already.

**Figure 13 – (Q6) Which of the following changes, if any, have you made or would you be willing to make in the next five years specifically to tackle climate change and not for any other reason?**
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100)*



Legend:
- Have made this change already
- Would be willing to make this change in the next 5 years
- Have not made this change and would not be willing to
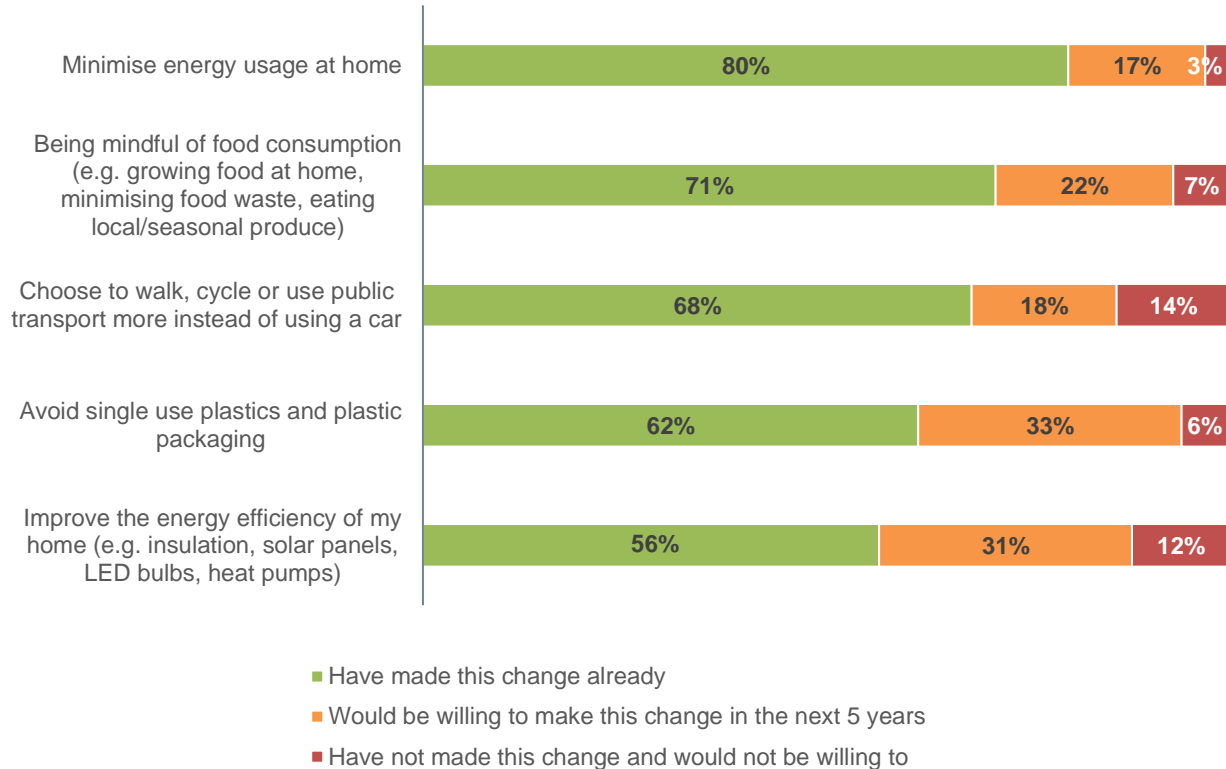
**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Male respondents were more likely to say they would **not be willing** to make the following changes in the next five years when compared with female respondents:

- Minimise energy usage at home (5% vs 2%)
- Being mindful of food consumption (9% vs 6%)
- Avoid single use plastics and plastic packaging (7% vs 4%)

Conversely, female respondents were more likely to say they were **already being mindful of food consumption** (74%) and **avoiding single use plastics and plastic packaging** (65%) than male respondents (67% and 58% respectively).

Compared with younger respondents, those aged 55+ were more likely to indicate they have **already made** the following changes:

- Minimise energy usage at home (83%) vs those aged 16-34 (74%)
- Being mindful of food consumption (76%) vs those aged 16-54 (66%)
- Avoid single use plastics and plastic packaging (66%) vs those aged 16-54 (57%)
- Improve the energy efficiency of their home (70%) vs those aged 16-54 (45%)

Those who have a disability were more likely to say they **already improve the energy efficiency of their home** (71%) than those who do not (54%).

Subgroups more likely to say they would be **willing** to **minimise energy usage at home** in the next five years (17% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-54 (20%) vs those aged 55+ (12%)
- Those living in Cheltenham South East (21%) vs those living in Central (13%)

Subgroups more likely to say they would be **willing** to **avoid single use plastics and plastic packaging** in the next five years (33% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-34 (45%) vs those aged 35+ (30%)
- Those with children and young people aged 0-18 in their household (42%) vs those without (29%)
- Those who do not have a disability (34%) vs those who do (24%)

Subgroups more likely to say they would be **willing** to **improve the energy efficiency of their home** in the next five years (31% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-34 (46%) vs those aged 35+ (27%)
- Those living in Cheltenham North (36%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (27%)
- Those with children and young people aged 0-18 in their household (40%) vs those without (28%)
- Those who do not have a disability (33%) vs those who do (17%)

Three quarters of online respondents (75%) said they already *minimise energy usage at home,* closely followed by 71% who said they are already *being mindful of food consumption.*

Similar proportions of online respondents said they already *avoid single use plastics and plastic packaging* (65%) and *choose to walk, cycle or use public transport more instead of using a car* (64%). However, a larger proportion said they would not be willing to *choose to walk, cycle or use public transport more instead of using a car* (15%) than *avoid single use plastics and plastic packaging* (4%).

The responses relating to *improving the energy efficiency of their home* were split between those who have already made this change (46%) and those who would be willing to make this change in the next five years (47%). A further 7% said they would not be willing to make this change.

**Figure 14 – (Q6) Which of the following changes, if any, have you made or would you be willing to make in the next five years specifically to tackle climate change and not for any other reason?**
*Base: All online respondents (246)*



- ■ Have made this change already
- ■ Would be willing to make this change in the next 5 years
- ■ Have not made this change and would not be willing to
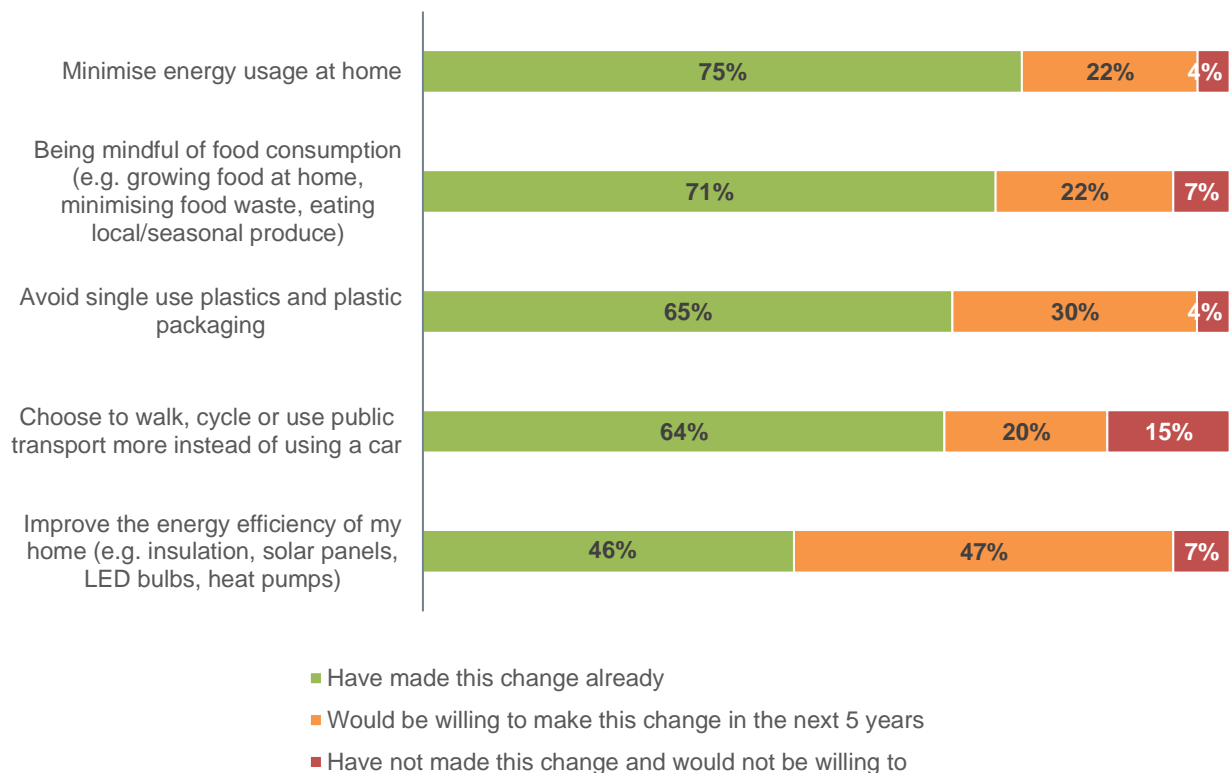
# Developing Cheltenham

## Agreement with statements about housing in Cheltenham

To gauge perceptions of housing in Cheltenham, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with three statements regarding this. Three quarters of representative respondents agreed that *there is a need for more affordable homes to buy* (76%) and *rent in Cheltenham* (76%).

Whilst a third of representative respondents (34%) agreed that they are *willing to accept some new homes being built on available land*, a larger proportion (47%) disagreed with this statement. A further 17% said they neither agreed nor disagreed.

***Figure 15 – (Q7) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about housing in Cheltenham?***
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100)*
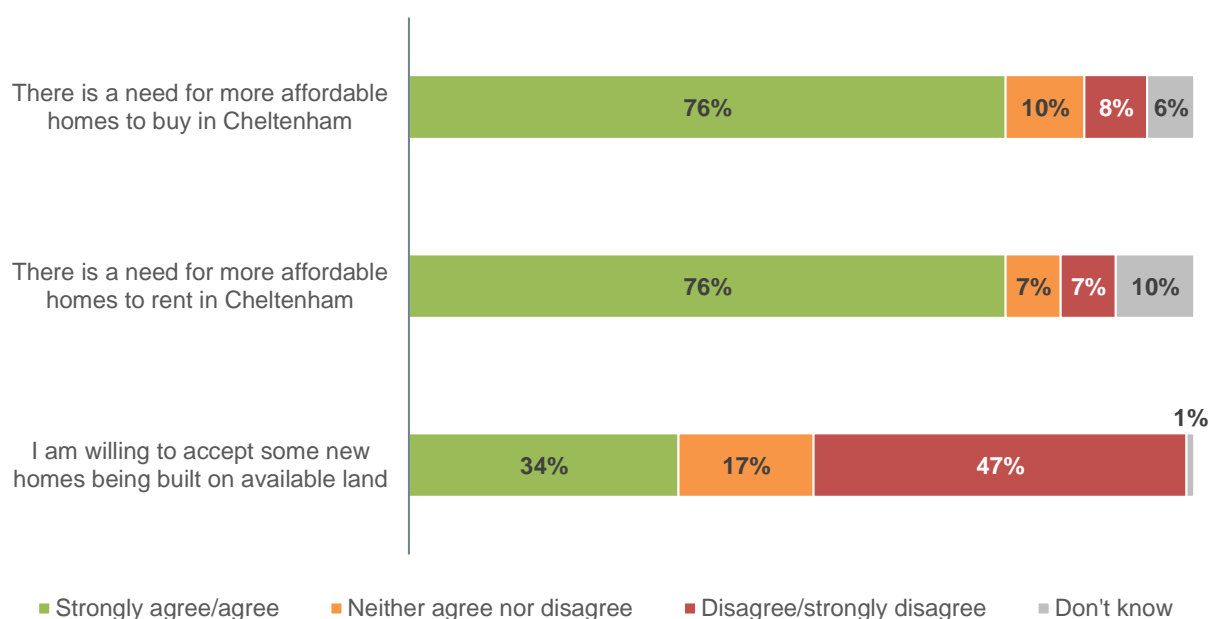


- ■ Strongly agree/agree  ■ Neither agree nor disagree  ■ Disagree/strongly disagree  ■ Don't know

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**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Those living in Central and Cheltenham West were more likely to **agree** that **there is a need for more affordable homes to buy in Cheltenham** (80% and 81% respectively) vs those living in Cheltenham South West (69%).

Those aged 55+ were more likely to **disagree** that **there is a need for more affordable homes to buy in Cheltenham** (10%) vs those aged 16-34 (4%).

Subgroups more likely to **agree** that **there is a need for more affordable homes to rent in Cheltenham** (76% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-54 (79%) vs those aged 55+ (72%)
- Those living in Central (81%) and Cheltenham West (81%) vs those living in Cheltenham South West (68%) and Cheltenham South East (72%)

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**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey continued**

Those aged 35+ were more likely to **disagree** that **there is a need for more affordable homes to rent in Cheltenham** (8%) vs those aged 16-34 (3%).

Subgroups more likely to **agree** that they are **willing to accept some new homes being built on available land** (34% overall) include:

- Male respondents (42%) vs female respondents (28%)
- Those aged 16-34 (40%) vs those aged 55+ (31%)
- Those living in Cheltenham West (47%) vs those living elsewhere, particularly Cheltenham North (27%)

Subgroups more likely to **disagree** that they are **willing to accept some new homes being built on available land** (47% overall) include:

- Female respondents (52%) vs male respondents (41%)
- Those aged 55+ (53%) vs those aged 16-54 (42%)
- Those living in Cheltenham North (51%), Cheltenham South West (51%) and Cheltenham South East (51%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (39%)

As seen with the results of the representative survey, large proportions of online respondents agreed that *there is a need for more affordable homes to buy* (70%) and *rent in Cheltenham* (67%).

Online respondents were more likely to agree that they are *willing to accept some new homes being built on available land* when compared with representative respondents (61% vs 34%).

**Figure 16 – (Q7) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about housing in Cheltenham?**
*Base: All online respondents (246)*



Strongly agree/agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree/strongly disagree ■ Don't know
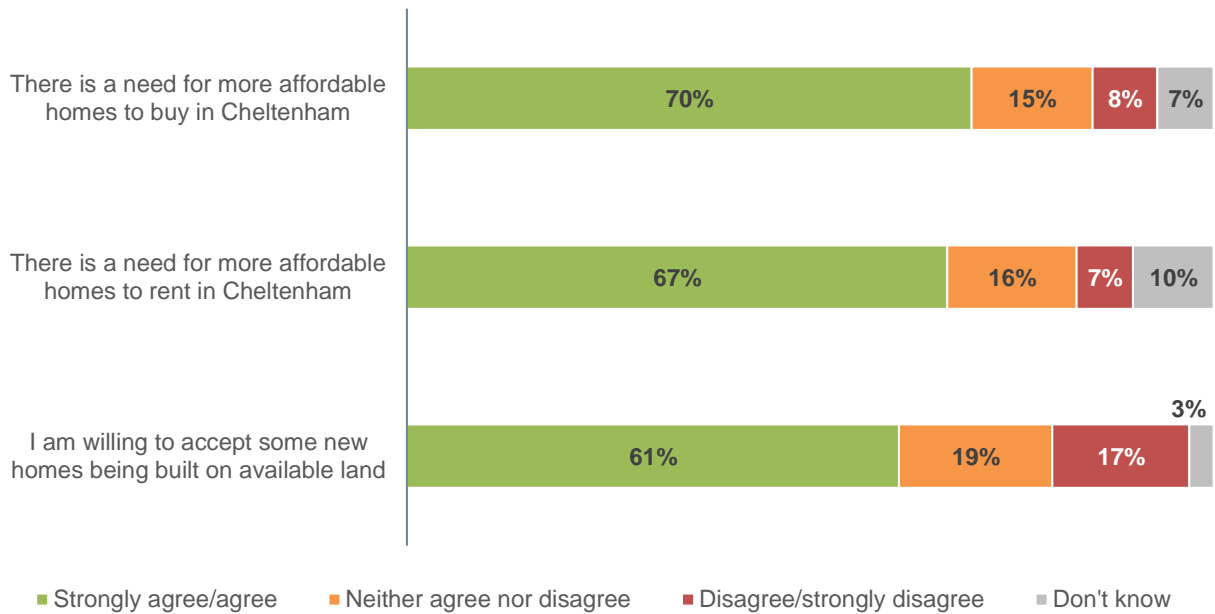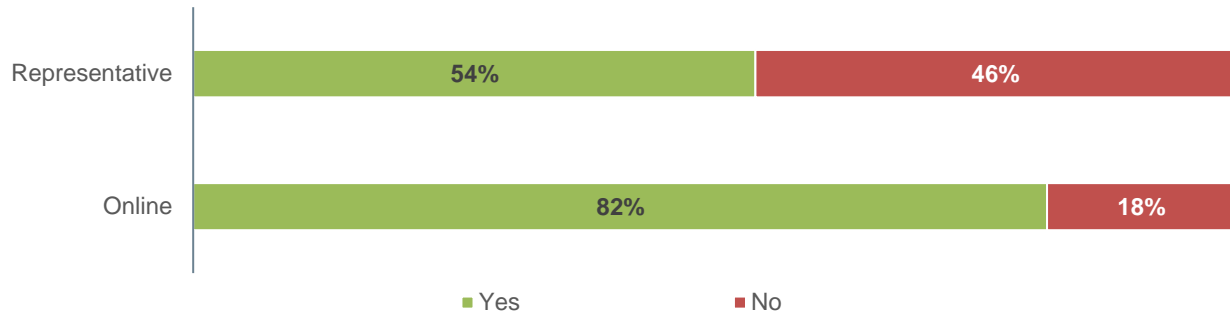
## Awareness of the Golden Valley Development

Just over half (54%) of those who took part in the representative survey said they were aware of the Golden Valley Development. A significantly larger proportion of online respondents (82%) said they were aware of this.

**Figure 17 – (Q8) Are you aware of the Golden Valley Development?**
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*



**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Subgroups more likely to say they were **not aware** of the Golden Valley Development (46% overall) include:

- Female respondents (50%) vs male respondents (43%)
- Those aged 16-34 (53%) vs those aged 55+ (42%)
- Those from ethnic minority backgrounds (65%) vs those of White ethnicity (45%)
- Those living in Central (51%) and Cheltenham North (52%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (38%)

## Perceptions of the Golden Valley Development

Those who indicated that they were aware of the Golden Valley Development were then asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about this to gauge perceptions and awareness of the development.
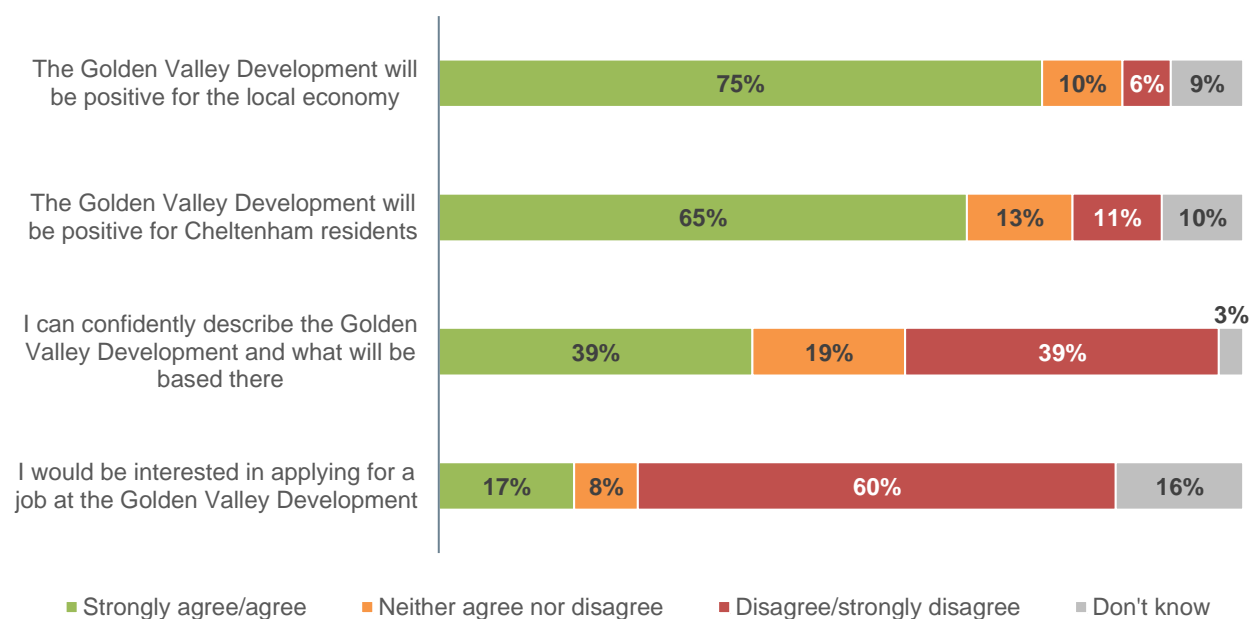
Three quarters (75%) of representative respondents agreed that *the Golden Valley Development will be positive for the local economy* and two thirds (65%) agreed that *the Golden Valley Development will be positive for Cheltenham residents.*

Awareness of what the Golden Valley Development entails is mixed, with equal split between representative respondents who agreed and disagreed with the statement *I can confidently describe the Golden Valley Development and what will be based there* (both at 39%). A further 19% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement.

A total of 17% of representative respondents agreed that they *would be interested in applying for a job at the Golden Valley Development*, whilst a similar proportion (16%) said they did not know. A large proportion (60%) disagreed.

***Figure 18 – (Q9) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Golden Valley Development?***
*Base: Representative respondents who were aware of the Golden Valley Development (591)*



- Strongly agree/agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree/strongly disagree
- Don't know

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**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Subgroups more likely to **agree** that **the Golden Valley Development will be positive for the local economy** (75% overall) include:

- Male respondents (80%) vs female respondents (71%)
- Those aged 55+ (79%) vs those aged 16-34 (68%)
- Those living in Cheltenham South East (84%) vs those living in Central (70%) and Cheltenham South West (70%)

Female respondents were more likely to **disagree** that **the Golden Valley Development will be positive for the local economy** (8%) vs male respondents (4%).

**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey continued**

Male respondents were more likely to **agree** that **the Golden Valley Development will be positive for Cheltenham residents** (69%) vs female respondents (61%).

Subgroups more likely to **agree** that they **can confidently describe the Golden Valley Development and what will be based there** (39% overall) include:

- Male respondents (47%) vs female respondents (32%)
- Those aged 35-54 (45%) vs those aged 16-34 (31%)

Subgroups more likely to **disagree** that they **can confidently describe the Golden Valley Development and what will be based there** (39% overall) include:

- Female respondents (46%) vs male respondents (33%)
- Those living in Cheltenham South East (50%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (33%)

Subgroups more likely to **agree** that they **would be interested in applying for a job at the Golden Valley Development** (17% overall) include:

- Male respondents (20%) vs female respondents (13%)
- Those aged 16-54 (25%) vs those aged 55+ (8%)
- Those living in Cheltenham South West (24%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (13%)
- Those with children and young people aged 0-18 in their household (27%) vs those without (13%)

Those aged 35+ were more likely to **disagree** that they **would be interested in applying for a job at the Golden Valley Development** (64%) vs those aged 16-34 (48%).

Subgroups more likely to say they **don't know** whether they **would be interested in applying for a job at the Golden Valley Development** (16% overall) include:

- Female respondents (19%) vs male respondents (13%)
- Those aged 55+ (24%) vs those aged 16-54 (7%)
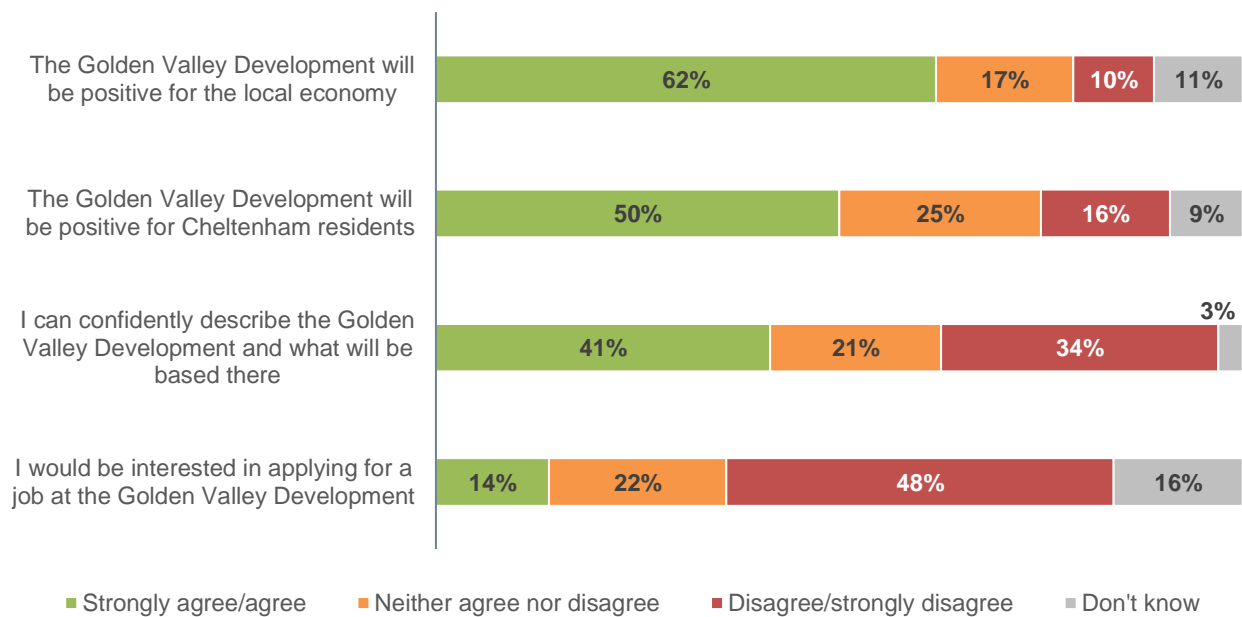- Those without children and young people aged 0-18 in their household (19%) vs those with (9%)

Online respondents were most likely to agree that *the Golden Valley Development will be positive for the local economy* (62%), and half (50%) also agreed that *the Golden Valley Development will be positive for Cheltenham residents*.

Compared with representative respondents, a similar proportion of online respondents agreed that they *can confidently describe the Golden Valley Development and what will be there* (41% vs 39%), with a further 34% of online respondents who disagreed and 21% who neither agreed nor disagreed.

A total of 14% of online respondents agreed that they *would be interested in applying for a job at the Golden Valley Development*, with a further 22% who neither agreed nor disagreed and 16% indicating that they did not know. Half of online respondents (48%) disagreed with this statement.

**Figure 19 – (Q9) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Golden Valley Development?**
*Base: Online respondents who were aware of the Golden Valley Development (201)*



| Statement | Strongly agree/agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree/strongly disagree | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Golden Valley Development will be positive for the local economy | 62% | 17% | 10% | 11% |
| The Golden Valley Development will be positive for Cheltenham residents | 50% | 25% | 16% | 9% |
| I can confidently describe the Golden Valley Development and what will be based there | 41% | 21% | 34% | 3% |
| I would be interested in applying for a job at the Golden Valley Development | 14% | 22% | 48% | 16% |

■ Strongly agree/agree  ■ Neither agree nor disagree  ■ Disagree/strongly disagree  ■ Don't know

# Covid-19 pandemic

## Impact of the pandemic on residents' workplaces

Respondents were asked whether the pandemic had any impact on where they work in order to understand any potential changes to residents' workplaces caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. As shown in the chart below, online respondents were more likely to say that where they work had been impacted by the pandemic than representative respondents (35% vs 28%).

A further 28% of representative respondents and 35% of online respondents said this was not applicable to them.

***Figure 20 – (Q10) Has the pandemic had any impact on where you work?***
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*
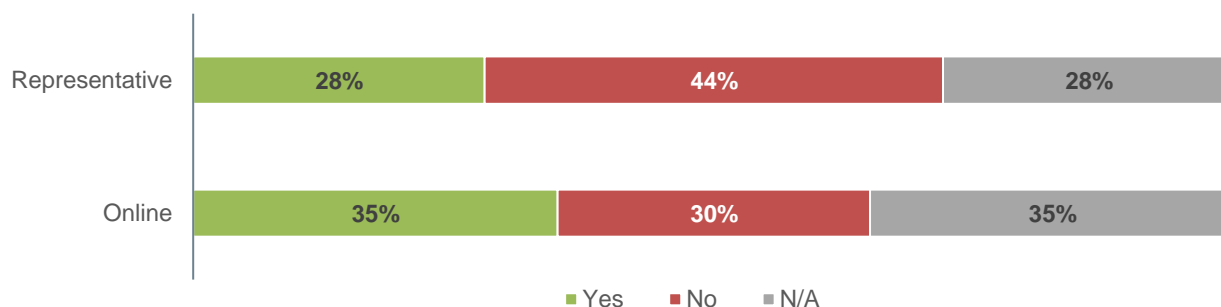


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**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Subgroups more likely to say that the pandemic **did have an impact** on where they work (28% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-54 (36%) vs those aged 55+ (18%)
- Those living in Central (32%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (23%)
- Those with children and young people aged 0-18 in their household (35%) vs those without (25%)
- Those who do not have a disability (29%) vs those who do (17%)

Subgroups more likely to say that the pandemic **did not have an impact** on where they work (44% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-54 (59%) vs those aged 55+ (27%)
- Those living in Cheltenham West (52%) vs those living in Central (42%), Cheltenham North (40%) and Cheltenham South West (40%)
- Those with children and young people aged 0-18 in their household (58%) vs those without (40%)

Subgroups more likely to say this was **not applicable** to them (28% overall) include:

- Those aged 55+ (55%) vs those aged 16-54 (5%)
- Those living in Cheltenham South West (35%) vs those living in Central (26%), Cheltenham West (25%) and Cheltenham South East (25%)
- Those without children and young people aged 0-18 in their household (36%) vs those with (8%)
- Those who have a disability (43%) vs those who do not (26%)

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To understand the impact of the pandemic on the distribution of residents working in and out of Cheltenham, those who said that the pandemic did have an impact on where they work were asked what their current working arrangements are. Three in ten representative respondents (30%) said they had *changed jobs* since the pandemic. Similar proportions of representative respondents said they are *now a hybrid worker and their place of work away from home is in Cheltenham* (22%) or that they *now fully work from home* (20%). A further 11% said they are *now a hybrid worker and their place of work away from home is outside of Cheltenham.*

Online respondents were most likely to say they are *now a hybrid worker and their place is work away from home is outside Cheltenham* (29%) or *in Cheltenham* (26%).

A quarter of representative respondents (26%) provided an alternative response, shown in the chart as '*other*'. These '*other*' responses mostly related to no longer being in employment due to being made redundant, retiring or leaving employment to look after their children.

The most common '*other*' responses given by online respondents (18%) also related to no longer being in employment.

***Figure 21 – (Q11) If yes, what are your current working arrangements?***
*Base: Those who said the pandemic had an impact on where they work – representative (304); online (85)*
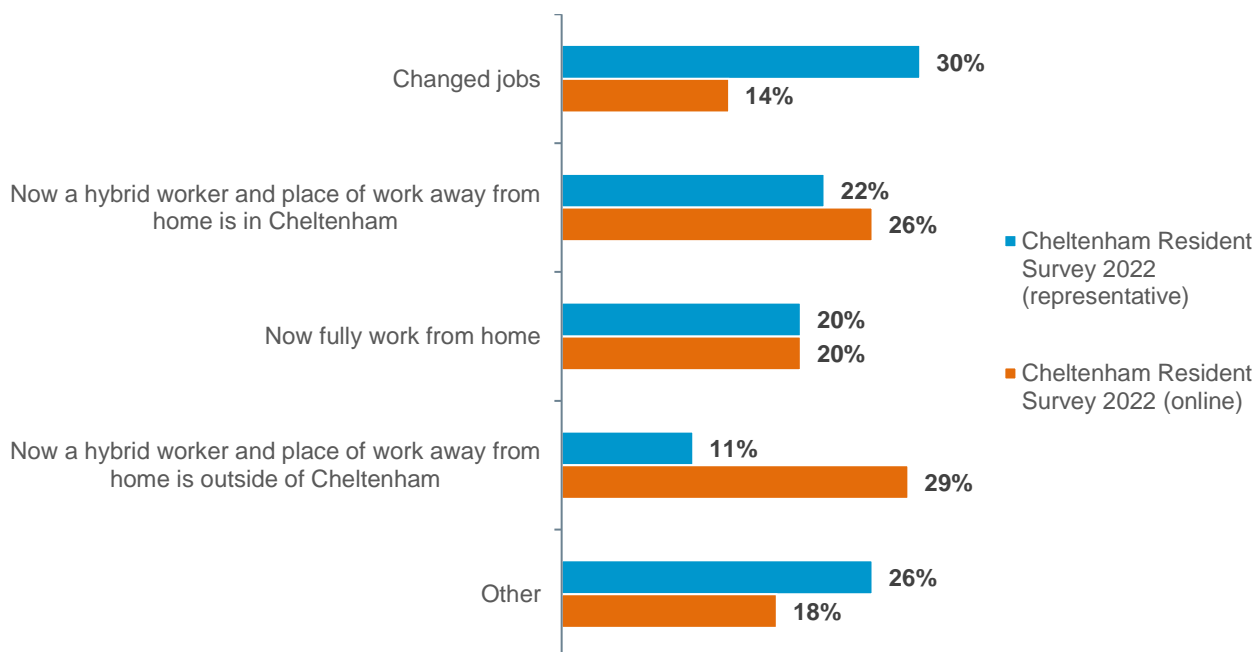


**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Those aged 16-34 were more likely to indicate that they have **changed jobs** (53%) vs those aged 35+ (22%).

Conversely, those aged 35+ were more likely to say they are **now a hybrid worker and place of work away from home is in Cheltenham** (25%) and they **now fully work from home** (23%) vs those aged 16-34 (12% and 10% respectively).

# Views on Cheltenham Borough Council

## How the Council runs things

Six in ten representative respondents (59%) said they were satisfied with the way Cheltenham Borough Council runs things, which is in line with the LGA Polling Survey (63%). This included 11% who were *very satisfied* and 48% who were *fairly satisfied*. A quarter (23%) were *neither satisfied nor dissatisfied* and a further 15% indicated that they were dissatisfied, including 10% who were *fairly dissatisfied* and 5% who were *very dissatisfied*.

A third of online respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the way Cheltenham Borough Council runs things (34% overall), however, a larger proportion indicated they were dissatisfied (41% overall).

**Figure 22 – (Q12) Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Cheltenham Borough Council runs things?**
Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246); LGA (1,002)
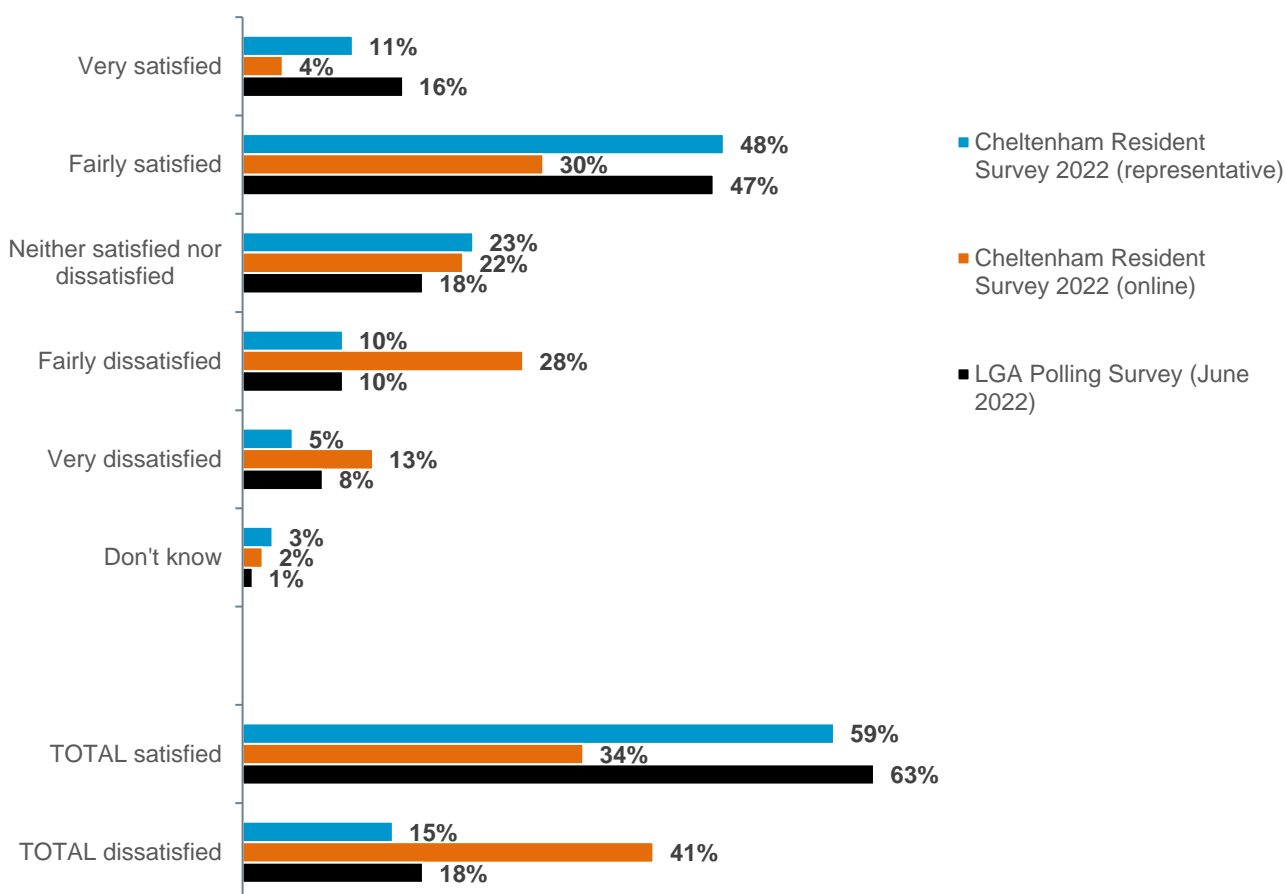


**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Those who do not have a disability were more likely to be **satisfied** (60%) vs those who do (51%).

Those aged 55+ were more likely to be **dissatisfied** (19%) vs those aged 16-54 (13%).

The table below shows the results of the representative survey to this question alongside the results from the 2019 survey for comparison.

Since the 2019 survey, overall satisfaction with the way Cheltenham Borough Council runs things has increased by 4%.

***Figure 23 – (Q12) Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Cheltenham Borough Council runs things? (representative telephone survey only – compared with previous survey results)***
*Base: All representative respondents 2022 (1,100); 2019 (1,555)*

| Response | 2022 | 2019 | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very satisfied | **11%** | 6% | +5% |
| Fairly satisfied | **48%** | 50% | -2% |
| Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | **23%** | 23% | - |
| Fairly dissatisfied | **10%** | 13% | -3% |
| Very dissatisfied | **5%** | 5% | - |
| TOTAL satisfied | **59%** | 55% | +4% |

## Value for money

Four in ten representative respondents (41%) agreed that Cheltenham Borough Council provides value for money, including 6% who *strongly agreed* and 35% who said they *tend to agree.* This figure is in line with the LGA Polling Survey (45%). A quarter of representative respondents (27%) *neither agreed nor disagreed* and 22% disagreed, either *tending to* (13%) or *strongly* (9%).

As seen previously, those who took part in the online survey held a more negative opinion, with a larger proportion saying they disagreed (43% overall*)* than agreed (25% overall).

***Figure 24 – (Q13) To what extent do you agree or disagree that Cheltenham Borough Council provides value for money?***
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246); LGA (1,002)*
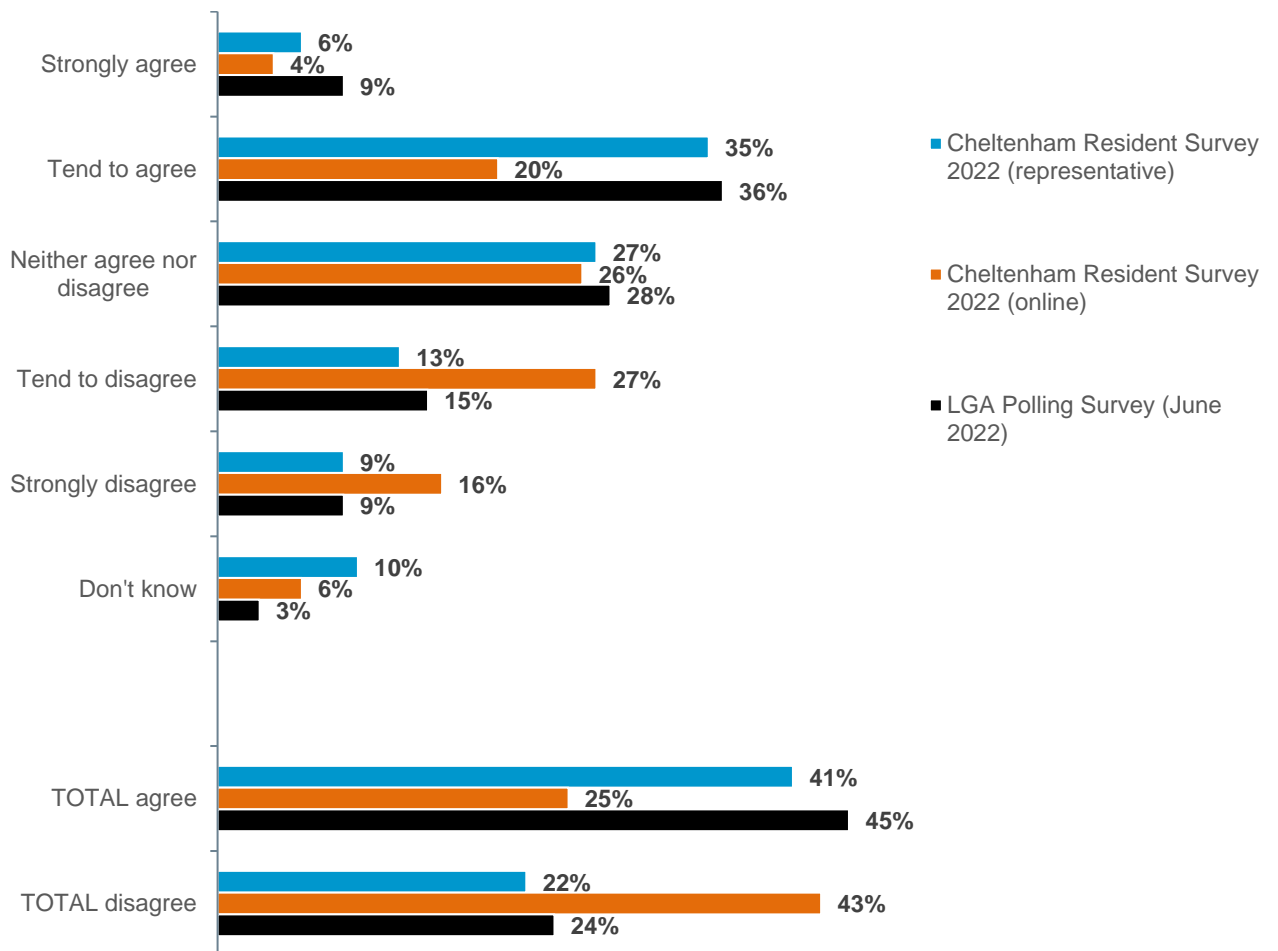


**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Those living in Cheltenham South East were more likely to **disagree** (30%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (20%), Cheltenham North (21%) and Cheltenham South West (19%).

The table below shows the results of the representative survey to this question alongside the results from the 2019 survey for comparison.

Overall agreement that Cheltenham Borough Council provides value for money has increased by 10% since the 2019 survey.

*Figure 25 – (Q13) To what extent do you agree or disagree that Cheltenham Borough Council provides value for money?* **(representative telephone survey only – compared with previous survey results)**
*Base: All representative respondents 2022 (1,100); 2019 (1,546)*

| Response | 2022 | 2019 | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly agree | **6%** | 3% | +3% |
| Tend to agree | **35%** | 28% | +7% |
| Neither agree nor disagree | **27%** | 36% | -9% |
| Tend to disagree | **13%** | 18% | -5% |
| Strongly disagree | **9%** | 7% | +2% |
| TOTAL agree | **41%** | 31% | +10% |

## Potential increase in council tax

Due to the unprecedented economic times, it is likely that Cheltenham Borough Council will need to raise council tax in order to provide valued services and investment across the borough. Respondents were therefore asked at what level it should be raised.

The most common response for both representative and online respondents was that the increase should be *below inflation* (67% representative and 57% online). A further 30% of representative respondents and 39% of online respondents felt that council tax should be increased to *match inflation*. Although very small, similar proportions of representative and online respondents thought that it should be increased *above inflation* (3% representative and 5% online).

***Figure 26 – (Q14) At what level should [council tax] be raised?***
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*
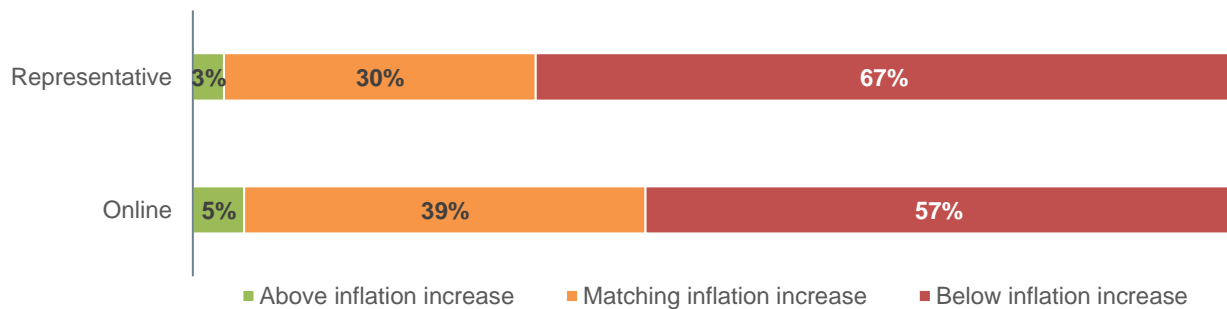


**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Subgroups more likely to select **matching inflation increase** (30% overall) include:

- Those aged 55+ (35%) vs those aged 16-54 (26%)
- Those living in Cheltenham South West (34%) and Cheltenham South East (36%) vs those living in Cheltenham North (23%)

Subgroups more likely to select **below inflation increase** (67% overall) include:

- Female respondents (70%) vs male respondents (64%)
- Those aged 16-54 (71%) vs those aged 55+ (62%)
- Those living in Cheltenham North (73%) vs those living in Cheltenham South East (60%)

## Satisfaction with council services

Respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with a range of services provided by the Council. The chart below shows a breakdown of the responses provided by representative respondents.

Representative respondents were most likely to be satisfied with *the parks and open spaces provided by the Council* (88%), followed by *the household collections for domestic waste* (83%) and *the household collections for recyclables* (81%).

Just over seven in ten representative respondents (72%) were satisfied with *the cleanliness of the streets in their local area*, however almost a fifth (18%) indicated that they were dissatisfied with this.

*The way the Council tackles anti-social behaviour* recorded the lowest level of satisfaction (30%). However, it should be highlighted that large proportions said they did not know (33%) or were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (18%). A further 19% indicated dissatisfaction with this.

**Figure 27 – (Q15) Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with..?**
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100)*



Legend: ■ Very/fairly satified  ■ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  ■ Fairly/very dissatisfied  ■ Don't know

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**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Compared with younger respondents, those aged 55+ were more likely to be **satisfied** with **the household collections for domestic waste** (86% vs 79% of those aged 35-54) and **the household collections for recyclables** (86% vs 77% of those aged 16-54).

Those aged 16-54 were more likely to be **dissatisfied** with **the household collections for recyclables** (16%) vs those aged 55+ (8%).

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**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey continued**

Those living in Cheltenham South East were more likely to be **satisfied** with **the parks and open spaces provided by the Council** (92%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (85%).

**Satisfaction** with **the cleanliness of the streets in their local area** was higher amongst those living in Cheltenham North (78%), Cheltenham South West (76%) and Cheltenham South East (79%) vs those living in Central (61%).

Subgroups more likely to be **dissatisfied** with **the cleanliness of the streets in their local area** (18% overall) include:

- Those aged 55+ (22%) vs those aged 35-54 (15%)
- Those living in Central (25%) vs those living in Cheltenham North (14%), Cheltenham South West (15%) and Cheltenham South East (15%)

Subgroups more likely to be **satisfied** with **the way the Council tackles anti-social behaviour** (30% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-34 (37%) vs those aged 55+ (25%)
- Those living in Central (34%) vs those living in Cheltenham North (25%)

Subgroups more likely to be **dissatisfied** with **the way the Council tackles anti-social behaviour** (19% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-54 (22%) vs those aged 55+ (15%)
- Those from ethnic minority backgrounds (33%) vs those of White ethnicity (18%)

Subgroups more likely to answer **don't know** in relation to **the way the Council tackles anti-social behaviour** (33% overall) include:

- Those aged 55+ (43%) vs those aged 16-54 (25%)
- Those living in Cheltenham North (41%) vs those living in Central (31%) and Cheltenham West (30%)

The table below shows the results of the representative survey to this question alongside the results from the 2019 survey for comparison.

The results to this year's survey recorded an increase in satisfaction for all services provided by the Council since the 2019 survey, with the largest increase seen for *the cleanliness of the streets in your local area* (+11%).

***Figure 28 – Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with…?* (Representative telephone survey only – compared with previous survey results [% very/fairly satisfied])**
*Base: All representative respondents 2022 (1,100); 2019 (various – unknown)*

| Response | 2022 | 2019 | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| The parks and open spaces provided by the Council | **88%** | 84% | +4% |
| The household collections for domestic waste | **83%** | 79% | +4% |
| The household collections for recyclables | **81%** | 72% | +9% |
| The cleanliness of the streets in your local area | **72%** | 61% | +11% |
| The way the Council tackles anti-social behaviour | **30%** | 21% | +9% |

Large proportions of online respondents indicated that they were satisfied with *the household collections for domestic waste* (84%) and *the parks and open spaces provided by the Council* (82%). Three quarters (76%) of online respondents were also satisfied with *the household collections for recyclables*.

Opinion was split regarding *the cleanliness of streets in their local area* amongst online respondents, with 43% indicating they were satisfied and 42% dissatisfied.

A larger proportion of online respondents were dissatisfied with *the way the Council tackles antic-social behaviour* (37%) than satisfied (11%). However, large proportions also indicated that they did not know (28%) or that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (24%).

***Figure 29 – (Q15) Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with…?***
*Base: All online respondents (246)*
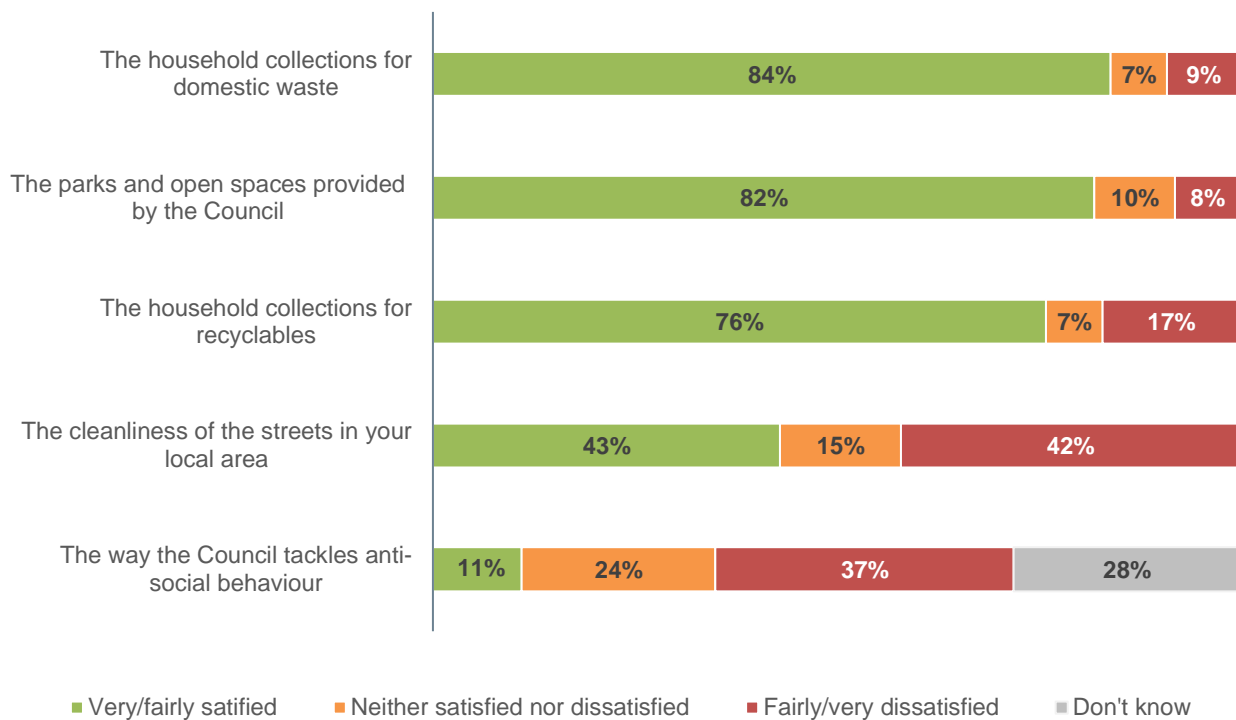
## The Council's presence

To understand residents' priorities regarding the Council's presence, respondents were asked to indicate how much importance they placed on the Council's physical presence in the town centre as well as its digital presence.

The vast majority of representative respondents felt that all aspects of the Council's presence were important, with 91% who felt it was important that *the public can access the Council's services digitally* (69% very important and 22% fairly important) and a similar proportion (90%) who felt it was important that *there is a place within the town centre where the public can make enquiries and access Council services* (65% very important and 24% fairly important). A further 85% felt it was important that *the Council's main office and staff are located in the town centre* (59% very important and 26% fairly important).

**Figure 30 – (Q16) How important is it to you that..?**
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100)*
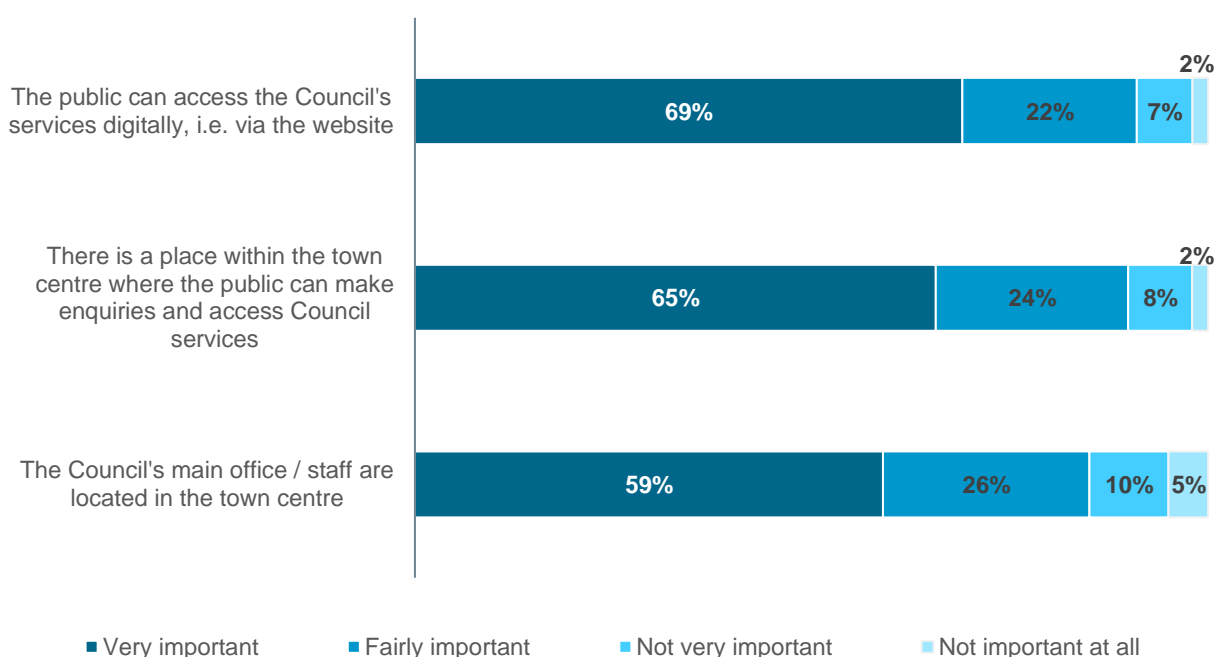


■ Very important  ■ Fairly important  ■ Not very important  ■ Not important at all

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**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Subgroups more likely to say that it is **important** to them that **the public can access the Council's services digitally** (91% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-54 (97%) vs those aged 55+ (84%)
- Those with children and young people aged 0-18 in their household (96%) vs those without (89%)
- Those who do not have a disability (92%) vs those who do (83%)

Subgroups more likely to say that it is **important** to them that **there is a place within the town centre where the public can make enquiries and access Council services** (90% overall) include:

- Those aged 55+ (93%) vs those aged 16-54 (86%)
- Those without children and young people aged 0-18 in their household (92%) vs those with (83%)
- Those who have a disability (96%) vs those who do not (89%)

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**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey continued**

Subgroups more likely to say that it is **important** to them that **the Council's main offices and staff are located in the town centre** (85% overall) include:

- Female respondents (88%) vs male respondents (82%)
- Those aged 55+ (89%) vs those aged 35-54 (80%)
- Those living in Central (88%), Cheltenham West (89%) and Cheltenham South West (85%) vs those living in Cheltenham South East (76%)
- Those without children and young people aged 0-18 in their household (88%) vs those with (77%)
- Those who have a disability (97%) vs those who do not (83%)

The table below shows the results of the representative survey to this question alongside the results from the 2019 survey for comparison. Please note the importance of accessing Council services digitally was not asked in 2019.

Since the 2019 survey, the importance has increased significantly for having *a place within the town centre where the public can make enquiries and access Council services* (+18%) and *the Council's main office and staff are located in the town centre* (+24%).

*Figure 31 – How important is it to you that…?* **(Representative telephone survey only – compared with previous survey results [% very/fairly important])**
*Base: All representative respondents 2022 (1,100); 2019 (various – unknown)*

| Response | 2022 | 2019 | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| There is a place within the town centre where the public can make enquiries and access Council services | **90%** | 72% | +18% |
| The Council's main office / staff are located in the town centre | **85%** | 61% | +24% |

Nearly all online respondents (96%) said it was important that *the public can access the Council's services digitally*, including 78% who said it was very important and 19% who said it was fairly important.

Three quarters of online respondents (77%) felt it was important that *there is a place within the town centre where the public can make enquiries and access Council services*, including 53% who said this was very important and 24% who said fairly important.

Two-thirds of online respondents (65%) indicated that it was important to them that *the Council's main office and staff are located in the town centre*, including 43% who said it was very important and 22% who said fairly important. However, a third (35%) felt this was unimportant, including 19% who said it was not very important and 16% who felt it was not important at all.

***Figure 32 – (Q16) How important is it to you that..?***
*Base: All online respondents (246)*
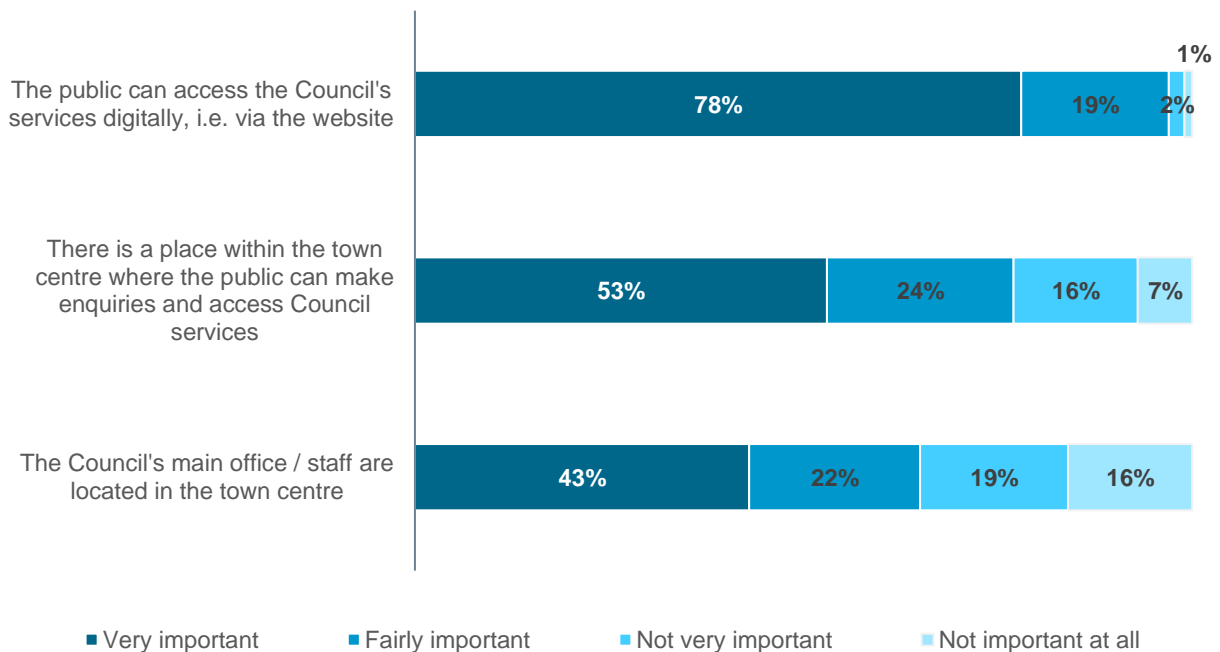
# Interaction with Cheltenham Borough Council

## Keeping residents informed

In relation to being kept informed about the services and benefits provided by the Council, the results to the representative survey are consistent with the LGA Polling Survey. As shown in the chart below, 56% of representative respondents felt they were kept *very well informed* (8%) or *fairly well informed* (48%), compared with 57% in the LGA Polling Survey. A total of 37% of representative respondents felt they were kept *not very well informed* (26%) or *not well informed at all* (11%), which is also similar to the LGA Polling Survey (40%).

Four in ten online respondents felt they were kept well informed (40% overall), whilst a larger proportion felt they were not kept well informed (54% overall).

***Figure 33 – (Q17) Overall, how well informed do you think Cheltenham Borough Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?***
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246); LGA (1,002)*
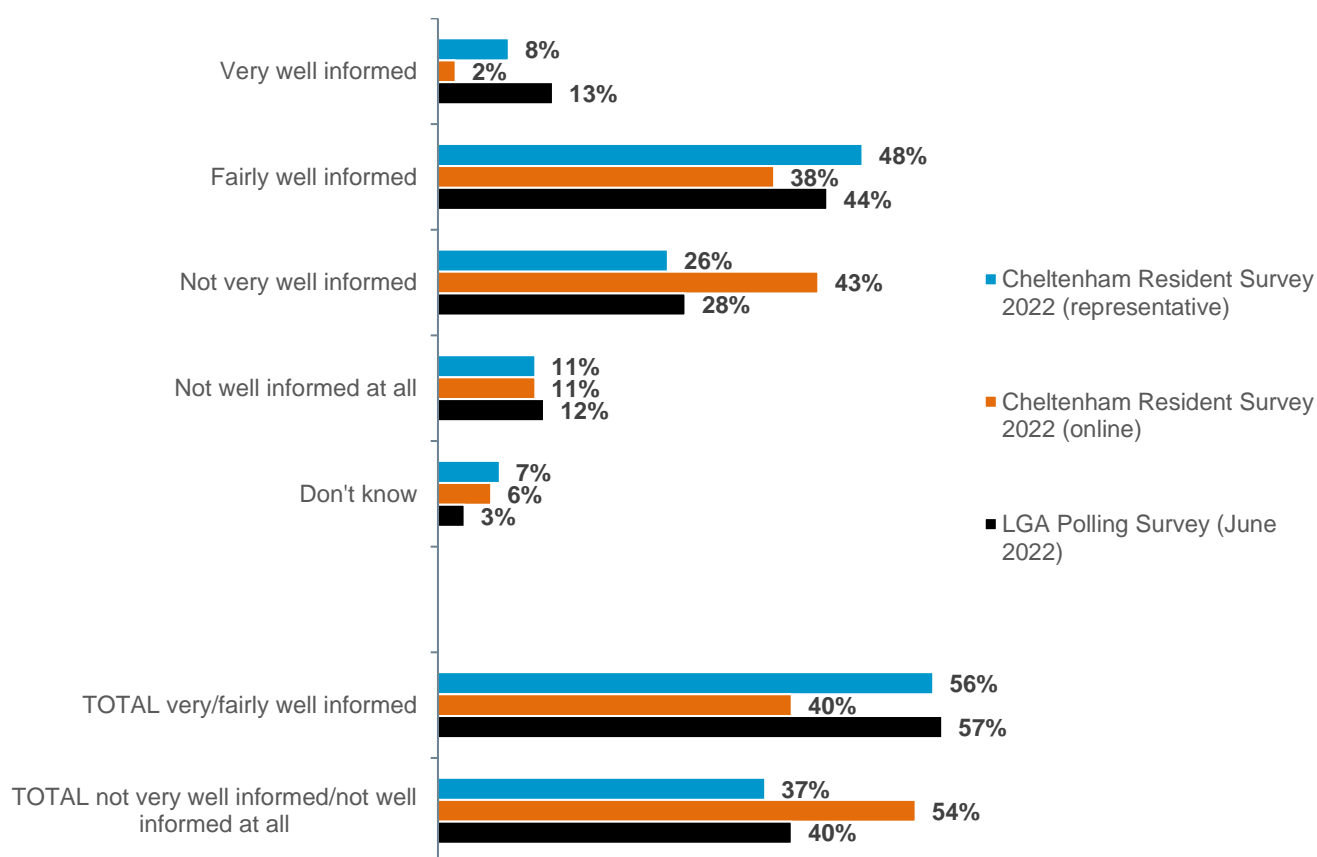


**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Those aged 55+ were more likely to say they are kept **well informed** (59%) vs those aged 16-34 (51%).

Subgroups more likely to say they **don't know** (7% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-34 (12%) vs those aged 35+ (5%)
- Those from ethnic minority backgrounds (16%) vs those of White ethnicity (6%)
- Those living in Cheltenham North (10%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (4%) and Cheltenham South East (2%)

The table below shows the results of the representative survey to this question alongside the results from the 2019 survey for comparison.

The proportion of those who felt they were kept *very well informed* or *fairly well informed* has increased by 15% since the 2019 survey. It is also positive to highlight the significant decrease in the proportion of those who answered *not very well informed* (-14%).

**Figure 34 – (Q17) Overall, how well informed do you think Cheltenham Borough Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides? (representative telephone survey only – compared with previous survey results)**
*Base: All representative respondents 2022 (1,100); 2019 (1,563)*

| Response | 2022 | 2019 | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very well informed | **8%** | 3% | +5% |
| Fairly well informed | **48%** | 38% | +10% |
| Not very well informed | **26%** | 40% | -14% |
| Not well informed at all | **11%** | 12% | -1% |
| TOTAL well informed | **56%** | 41% | +15% |

## Influencing decisions

Three in ten representative respondents (29%) agreed that they can influence decisions affecting their local area, including 2% who *strongly agreed* and 26% who *agreed.* However, a larger proportion disagreed with this (44%), including 30% who said they *disagree* and 14% who *strongly disagreed.* A further 17% of representative respondents *neither agreed nor disagreed.*

Online respondents were also more likely to disagree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area (61% overall) than agree (19% overall).

***Figure 35 – (Q18) Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?***
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*
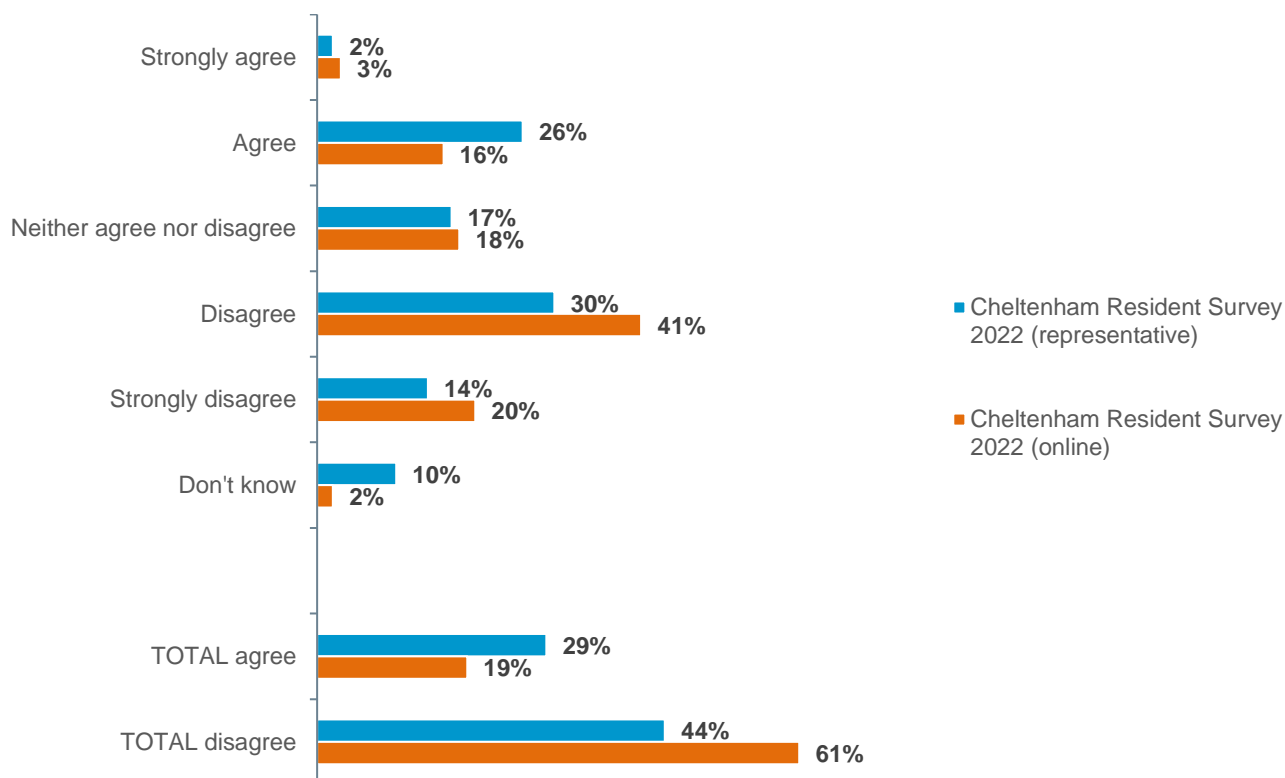


**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Those living in Central and Cheltenham West were more likely to **agree** (34% and 32% respectively) vs those living in Cheltenham South East (22%).

Those aged 35+ were more likely to **disagree** (46%) vs those aged 16-34 (36%).

Subgroups more likely to say they **don't know** (10% overall) include:

- Those aged 16-34 (19%) vs those aged 35+ (8%)
- Those from ethnic minority backgrounds (24%) vs those of White ethnicity (10%)

The table below shows the results of the representative survey to this question alongside the results from the 2019 survey for comparison. Please note that only the total figures for agree and disagree were included within the report for the 2019 survey.

Although a larger proportion of respondents disagreed that they can influence decisions affecting their local area, it is positive to see that the level of agreement has increased since the previous survey (+10%). The proportion of those who said they *don't know* has also increased slightly (+3%).

***Figure 36 – (Q18) Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?* (representative telephone survey only – compared with previous survey results)**
*Base: All representative respondents 2022 (1,100); 2019 (unknown)*

| Response | 2022 | 2019 | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| TOTAL agree | **29%** | 19% | +10% |
| Neither agree nor disagree | **17%** | 26% | -9% |
| TOTAL disagree | **44%** | 48% | -4% |
| Don't know | **10%** | 7% | +3% |

## Finding out about Cheltenham Borough Council

Respondents were asked how they obtain information from or about Cheltenham Borough Council. The most common response by far was the *Council website*, selected by 51% of representative respondents and 62% of online respondents. Other common sources of information include *leaflets or posters* (32% representative and 31% online) and *local media* (17% representative and 32% online).

Compared with representative respondents, online respondents were significantly more likely to say they obtain their information *directly from their Councillor* (18% vs 6%), via the *Council Facebook page* (17% vs 5%), *local social media accounts* (25% vs 2%) and *local organisations* (13% compared with 1%).

Representative respondents were more likely to select *none of these* than online respondents (12% vs 7%).

The most common *'other'* responses by representative respondents (7%) include email and phoning the Council directly.

The full range of responses is shown in the chart below.

**Figure 37 – (Q19) How do you currently obtain information from or about Cheltenham Borough Council?**
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*
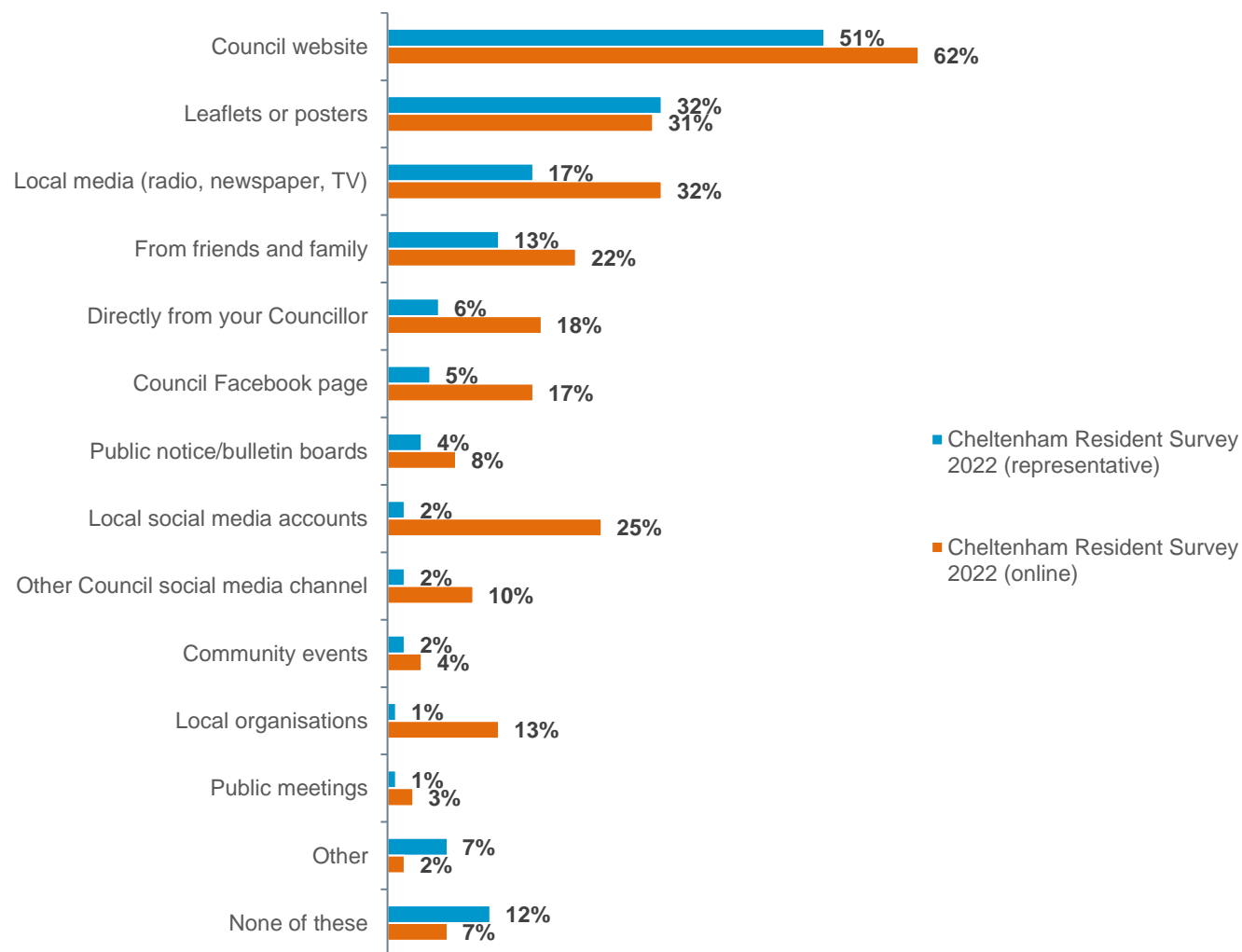
**Subgroup analysis of the representative survey**

Subgroups more likely to select the **Council website** (51% overall) include:

- Those aged 35-54 (59%) vs those aged 16-34 (51%) and 55+ (44%)
- Those living in Cheltenham South East (60%) vs those living in Cheltenham West (46%)
- Those with children and young people aged 0-18 in their household (60%) vs those without (47%)
- Those who do not have a disability (52%) vs those who do (42%)

Compared with older respondents, those aged **16-34** were more likely to select the following:

- From friends and family (18%) vs those aged 35+ (11%)
- None of these (16%) vs those aged 35+ (10%)
- Council Facebook page (8%) vs those aged 55+ (3%)
- Public notice/bulletin boards (8%) vs those aged 35+ (3%)
- Local social media accounts (5%) vs those aged 55+ (1%)
- Community events (4%) vs those aged 35+ (1%)

Compared with those aged 16-54, those aged 55+ were more likely to select **local media** (25% vs 12%) and **directly from their Councillor** (10% vs 3%).

Those living in Central (13%), Cheltenham West (12%), Cheltenham North (11%) and Cheltenham South West (13%) were more likely to select **none of these** vs those living in Cheltenham South East (4%).

The table below shows the results of the representative survey to this question alongside the results from the 2019 survey for comparison.

There have been some significant changes relating to how respondents obtain information from or about the Council since the previous survey. The proportion using *local media* and *from friends and family* has decreased significantly (-26% and -22% respectively), whilst the proportion of those obtaining information from the *Council website* has increased significantly (+15%).

***Figure 38 – (Q19) How do you currently obtain information from or about Cheltenham Borough Council?* (representative telephone survey only – compared with previous survey results)**
*Base: All representative respondents 2022 (1,100); 2019 (1,556)*

| Response | 2022 | 2019 | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| Council website | **51%** | 36% | +15% |
| Leaflets or posters | **32%** | 45% | -13% |
| Local media (radio, newspaper, TV) | **17%** | 43% | -26% |
| From friends and family | **13%** | 35% | -22% |
| Directly from your Councillor | **6%** | 12% | -6% |
| Council Facebook page | **5%** | 8% | -3% |
| Public notice/bulletin boards | **4%** | 14% | -10% |
| Local social media accounts | **2%** | - | - |
| Other Council social media channel | **2%** | 3% | -1% |
| Community events | **2%** | 8% | -6% |
| Local organisations | **1%** | - | - |
| Public meetings | **1%** | 3% | -2% |
| Other | **7%** | 6% | +1% |
| None of these | **12%** | 9% | +3% |

# Respondent profile

*Figures 39 to 45* present the profile of those who took part in the representative and online surveys.

### Figure 39 – Gender
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*

| Gender | Representative survey | Online survey |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 47% | 40% |
| Female | 52% | 55% |
| I prefer to self-describe | | - |
| Prefer not to say | 1% | 5% |

### Figure 40 – Age
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*

| Age | Representative survey | Online survey |
|---|---|---|
| 16-18 | 2% | - |
| 19-24 | 8% | 1% |
| 25-34 | 14% | 7% |
| 35-44 | 14% | 10% |
| 45-54 | 17% | 16% |
| 55-64 | 16% | 28% |
| 65-74 | 15% | 24% |
| 75+ | 12% | 10% |
| Prefer not to say | 4% | 4% |

### Figure 41 – Area of Cheltenham (based on ward)
*Base: Those who provided their ward or postcode (1,061); online (238)*

| Area of Cheltenham | Representative survey | Online survey |
|---|---|---|
| Central | 22% | 24% |
| Cheltenham West | 21% | 13% |
| Cheltenham North | 21% | 19% |
| Cheltenham South West | 18% | 22% |
| Cheltenham South East | 18% | 22% |

*Figure 42 – Ward*
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*

| Ward | Representative survey | Online survey |
|---|---|---|
| All Saints | 5% | 4% |
| Battledown | 3% | 5% |
| Benhall | 5% | 4% |
| Charlton Kings | 7% | 10% |
| Charlton Park | 2% | 2% |
| College | 5% | 7% |
| Hesters Way | 7% | 3% |
| Lansdown | 6% | 7% |
| Leckhampton | 5% | 5% |
| Oakley | 2% | 1% |
| Park | 5% | 9% |
| Pittville | 8% | 8% |
| Prestbury | 6% | 7% |
| Springbank | 3% | 2% |
| St Mark's | 6% | 4% |
| St Paul's | 6% | 5% |
| St Peter's | 4% | 2% |
| Swindon Village | 4% | 3% |
| Up Hatherley | 5% | 5% |
| Warden Hill | 3% | 3% |
| Don't know | - | - |
| Prefer not to say | 4% | 3% |

*Figure 43 – Ethnicity*
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*

| Ward | Representative survey | Online survey |
|---|---|---|
| White/White British | 94% | 92% |
| Asian/Asian British | 3% | 1% |
| Black/Black British | 1% | - |
| Mixed ethnicity | 0% | 1% |
| Other ethnic group | 0% | 0% |
| Prefer not to say | 2% | 5% |

*Figure 44 – Do any children or young people aged 0-18 live in your household?*
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*

| Ward | Representative survey | Online survey |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 26% | 21% |
| No | 73% | 75% |
| Prefer not to say | 2% | 4% |

*Figure 45 – Do you have a disability?*
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*

| Ward | Representative survey | Online survey |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 13% | 10% |
| No | 85% | 83% |
| Prefer not to say | 2% | 7% |

*Figure 45 – Do you have a disability?*
*Base: All representative respondents (1,100); online (246)*

# Conclusions

The following conclusions have been reached by Enventure Research, an independent research agency, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Council.

**Results show that Cheltenham Borough Council is performing in line with the national average**
It is positive that the results from the representative survey are in line with the results from the latest LGA Polling Survey. This relates to satisfaction with how the Council runs things, agreement that the Council provides value for money, and how well informed the Council keeps its residents about the benefits and services it provides. Further to this, results from the representative survey were more positive than the LGA Polling Survey regarding satisfaction with the local area as a place to live.

**Resident perceptions of the Council have improved since 2019**
It is also extremely positive to note that the findings from this year's representative survey are more positive than the previous survey conducted in 2019, suggesting that residents' perceptions have improved in line with any improvements the Council has made in the last three years. The largest improvements were recorded for agreement that Cheltenham has a positive future, satisfaction with events, and the perception that the Council keeps its residents well informed.

**A key area for improvement is the general upkeep and maintenance of Cheltenham**
Although it is the responsibility of Gloucestershire County Council and not Cheltenham Borough Council, respondents in both the representative and online surveys would most like to see better maintenance of roads and paths in Cheltenham. Given that this falls outside of the Council's remit but is a common suggestion for how to improve their experience as a resident, it may be beneficial to remind residents that this is a County Council issue. It is therefore recommended that these results are shared with Gloucestershire County Council who are responsible for highways.

Throughout the survey findings, it is suggested that more could be done to improve the general appearance and cleanliness of Cheltenham. Common responses when asked what would improve their experience as a resident included cleaner pavements and less litter, as well as more High Street regeneration. Sizeable proportions of respondents also recorded their dissatisfaction with the general appearance, overall cleanliness and cleanliness of streets in their local area, particularly those who took part in the online survey.

**Perceptions of living in Cheltenham are positive, but there is room for improvement around opportunities for young people and growing careers**
The vast majority of respondents were satisfied with their local area as a place to live, and although some indicated that they thought their local area had got worse in the past year, the majority felt it had either not changed much, and a small proportion thought it had got better.

When asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about Cheltenham, the majority of both representative and online respondents agreed that they would recommend Cheltenham as a place to live, that Cheltenham has a positive future, and that it has a vibrant culture and is an exciting place to live.

However, much smaller proportions agreed that Cheltenham is a place that offers opportunity for young people, or that by living in Cheltenham they have the opportunity to grow their career, highlighting these as areas for future improvement.

**Resident satisfaction with town centre amenities and Council services is high, but more could be done to improve satisfaction related to visiting the town centre after dark**
Regarding town centre amenities, large proportions of respondents were satisfied with events, their safety during the day and Cheltenham town centre as a place to visit in the daytime. Less than half of both representative and online respondents said they were satisfied with Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit after dark and their safety after dark, highlighting these as areas for improvement amongst residents. Female respondents and those who have a disability were more likely to be dissatisfied with both of these when compared with male respondents and those who do not have a disability.

High levels of satisfaction were also recorded for the parks and open spaces provided by the Council, the household collections for domestic waste and the household collections for recyclables. The way the Council tackles anti-social behaviour recorded low levels of satisfaction amongst respondents, however it is important to note that large proportions indicated that they did not know in relation to this, suggesting that residents are unaware of the Council's role in this area.

**The majority of residents have already made several behaviour changes to tackle climate change, but there is room for the Council to encourage some residents to do more**
The majority of respondents said they have already made several changes to their behaviour specifically to tackle climate change, such as: minimising energy usage at home; being mindful of food consumption; choosing to walk, cycle or use public transport more instead of using a car; and avoiding single use plastic plastics and plastic packaging.

Amongst those who had not already made the changes, respondents were most likely to indicate that they would be willing to avoid single use plastics and plastic packaging, as well as improve the energy efficiency of their home in the next five years. The subgroups of residents who were more likely to be willing to make these changes include those aged 16-34, those with children and young people in their household, and those who do not have a disability.

**Residents agree that there is a need for more affordable homes to buy and rent in Cheltenham, but opinion is split regarding building homes on available land**
The majority of respondents agreed that there is a need for more affordable homes to buy and rent in Cheltenham.

However, representative respondents were more likely to disagree that they would be willing to accept some new homes being built on available land (although this was not the case for online respondents). Those more likely to disagree include females, those aged 55+ and those living in Cheltenham North, Cheltenham South West and Cheltenham South East.

**Although residents believe the Golden Valley Development will be positive for the local economy, the Council could do more to increase awareness of what will be based there**
Online respondents were significantly more likely to say they were aware of the Golden Valley Development than representative respondents.

Amongst those who were aware of the Golden Valley Development, the majority agreed that it will be positive for the local economy as well as for Cheltenham residents. However, agreement that they could confidently describe the Golden Valley Development and what will be based there was low, suggesting that residents would benefit from more information about this.

Although only small proportions of respondents agreed they would be interested in applying for a job at the Golden Valley Development, sizeable proportions also said they neither agreed nor disagreed or that they did not know. This suggests that these undecided residents could also benefit from more information about the development and jobs that will be available here.

**Three in ten residents' place of work has been impacted by the pandemic, and are most likely to have changed jobs**

Around a third of respondents said the pandemic had an impact on where they work. These residents were more likely to be aged 16-54, living in Central Cheltenham, have children and young people in their household, and not have a disability.

For those who indicated that the pandemic did have an impact on where they work, responses differed between representative and online respondents. Representative respondents were most likely to say they had changed jobs, whilst online respondents were most likely to say they are now a hybrid worker and their place of work away from home is outside of Cheltenham.

**The majority believe that council tax should be raised below the level of inflation**

When asked at what level council tax should be raised, the majority of respondents said it should be raised below the level of inflation. These respondents were more likely to be female, aged 16-54 and living in Cheltenham North.

**It is important to residents that the Council continues to have both a physical and digital presence**

The vast majority of respondents indicated that it was either very or fairly important to them that the public can access the Council's services digitally, that there is a place within the town centre where the public can access Council services, and that the Council's main office and staff are located in the town centre.

Those more likely to say it was important that the public can access the Council's services digitally were aged 16-54, have children and young people in their household, and do not have a disability. Those aged 55+ and who have a disability were more likely to say it was important that the Council has a physical presence in the town centre.

**The Council could do more to assure residents that they can influence decisions affecting their local area**

Although the proportion of those who agreed they can influence decisions affecting their local area has increased since the previous survey, respondents were more likely to disagree with this. As those aged 35+ were more likely to disagree, the Council could do more to engage with this cohort of residents to reassure them that they can influence local decisions, or perhaps understand why they feel they cannot.

**The most common sources of information from or about the Council are the Council website, leaflets or posters, and the local media**

Respondents were most likely to say they obtain information from or about the Council via its website, leaflets or posters, and local media.

Compared with the results from the previous survey, there have been some significant changes relating to how respondents obtain this information. Based on the findings of this year's representative survey, residents are more likely to be visiting the Council website for information. Further to this, residents are significantly less likely to be obtaining information from local media and friends and family.

# Appendices

# Cheltenham Resident Survey 2022

INTERVIEWER NOTE

1. Interview Cheltenham residents aged 16 or over according to your given quota
2. Read the introductory text 'READ OUT' where it is provided, before asking the questions
3. Do not read out the 'don't know' category in questions

READ OUT: Good morning / afternoon / evening. My name is.................. and I am calling from Enventure Research on behalf of Cheltenham Borough Council, who have asked us to carry out a survey to help them understand the views of their residents about the local area, the Council and council services.

The interview should take around 12 minutes to complete. Your answers will be anonymous and confidential, and will be used to help inform a refresh of the Council's Corporate Plan.

Would you have time to take part in the survey?

BOOK APPOINTMENT IF NECESSARY

All information provided will be analysed by Enventure Research, an independent research agency, and treated in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations and the Market Research Society Code of Conduct. Enventure Research will only use information you provide to inform the research. Enventure Research is registered with the Data Controller and is a Market Research Society Company Partner. For our privacy notice, please refer to our website www.enventure.co.uk

*If resident seems unsure...*

You do not have to answer any questions if you don't want to, and you can end the interview at any time. Are you happy to proceed?

QA    Before we start, can I just confirm that you are a Cheltenham resident? *If resident is unsure, confirm they pay Council Tax to Cheltenham Borough Council*

○ Yes
○ No - THANK AND CLOSE

READ OUT: To make sure we are speaking to a good spread of Cheltenham residents, the first few questions are about you.

**D1**   What is your gender?

- ○ Male
- ○ Female
- ○ I prefer to self-describe
- ○ Prefer not to say

How do you prefer to describe your gender?

[                                                                    ]

**D2**   How old are you?

- ○ Under 16 - THANK AND CLOSE
- ○ 16-18
- ○ 19-24
- ○ 25-34
- ○ 35-44
- ○ 45-54
- ○ 55-64
- ○ 65-74
- ○ 75+
- ○ Prefer not to say

**D3**   What is your ethnicity?

- ○ White - British
- ○ White - East European
- ○ White - Gypsy, Roma or Irish Traveller
- ○ White - Irish
- ○ Any other White background
- ○ Asian / Asian British - Bangladeshi
- ○ Asian / Asian British - Chinese
- ○ Asian / Asian British - Indian
- ○ Asian / Asian British - Pakistani
- ○ Any other Asian background
- ○ Black / Black British - African
- ○ Black / Black British - Caribbean
- ○ Any other Black background
- ○ Mixed or multiple ethnic background
- ○ Any other ethnic group
- ○ Prefer not to say

**D4**     Which ward do you live in?

- ○ All Saints
- ○ Battledown
- ○ Benhall
- ○ Charlton Kings
- ○ Charlton Park
- ○ College
- ○ Hesters Way
- ○ Lansdown
- ○ Leckhampton
- ○ Oakley
- ○ Park
- ○ Pittville
- ○ Prestbury
- ○ Springbank
- ○ St Mark's
- ○ St Paul's
- ○ St Peter's
- ○ Swindon Village
- ○ Up Hatherley
- ○ Warden Hill
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

**D5**     If you don't know which ward you live in, please could you tell us your full postcode? This won't be used to identify you in any way

[            ]

**D6**     Do any children or young people aged 0-18 live in your household?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Prefer not to say

**D7**     Do you have a disability?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Prefer not to say

READ OUT: The next set of questions is about living in Cheltenham and your local area.

Q1    Before we ask you some more detailed questions about living in Cheltenham, what <u>one</u> change would you want Cheltenham Borough Council to do to improve your experience as a Cheltenham resident? *RESPONDENT SHOULD ONLY PROVIDE ONE RESPONSE, DO NOT PROMPT*

| |
|---|

Q2    Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live? Your local area is the area within 10-15 minutes' walk from your house *SINGLE CHOICE*

- ◯ Very satisfied
- ◯ Fairly satisfied
- ◯ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ◯ Fairly dissatisfied
- ◯ Very dissatisfied
- ◯ Don't know

Q3    On the whole, do you think that over the past year your local area has got better or worse, or not changed much? *SINGLE CHOICE*

- ◯ Got better
- ◯ Not changed much
- ◯ Got worse

Q4    To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW*

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know / not relevant |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cheltenham has a vibrant culture and is an exciting place to live | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ |
| Cheltenham is a place that offers opportunity for young people | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ |
| I would recommend Cheltenham as a place to live | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ |
| Cheltenham has a positive future | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ |
| By living in Cheltenham, I have the opportunity to grow my career | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ | ◯ |

**Q5** Thinking about the town centre, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following? *SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW*

| | Very satisfied | Fairly satisfied | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | Fairly dissatisfied | Very dissatisfied | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The overall cleanliness | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The general appearance | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Safety during the day | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Safety after dark | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit in the daytime | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Cheltenham town centre overall as a place to visit after dark | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The range of shops available | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Events (e.g. Cheltenham Festivals, Farmer's Market, ice rink, Children's Festival etc.) | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

## Environmental issues

READ OUT: The next set of questions is about living in Cheltenham and your local area.

**Q6** Which of the following changes, if any, have you made or would you be willing to make in the next 5 years <u>specifically to tackle climate change</u> and not for any other reason such as money, health or personal preference? Please select the response option which most closely applies to you *SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW*

| | Have made this change already | Would be willing to make this change in the next 5 years | Have not made this change and would not be willing to |
|---|---|---|---|
| Choose to walk, cycle or use public transport more instead of using a car | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Being mindful of food consumption, i.e. growing food at home, minimising food waste, eating local/seasonal produce | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Minimise energy usage at home | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Avoid single use plastics and plastic packaging | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Improve the energy efficiency of my home (i.e. insulation, solar panels, LED bulbs, heat pumps etc.) | ○ | ○ | ○ |

READ OUT: These questions are about the future and development of Cheltenham.

Q7    To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about housing in Cheltenham? *SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW*

|  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| There is a need for more affordable homes to <u>buy</u> in Cheltenham | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| There is a need for more affordable homes to <u>rent</u> in Cheltenham | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I am willing to accept some new homes being built on green spaces | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Q8    Are you aware of the Golden Valley Development? *SINGLE CHOICE*

○ Yes
○ No

READ OUT: Golden Valley Development is building a national cyber innovation centre, cyber park and new homes near GCHQ.

Q9    Cheltenham Borough Council has invested £40 million in the Golden Valley Development and is the driving force behind the project. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Golden Valley Development? *SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW*

|  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I can confidently describe the Golden Valley Development and what will be based there | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The Golden Valley Development will be positive for Cheltenham residents | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The Golden Valley Development will be positive for the local economy | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I would be interested in applying for a job at the Golden Valley Development | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

## Covid-19 pandemic

READ OUT: I'm now going to ask you about the Covid-19 pandemic.

Q10    Has the pandemic had any impact on where you work? *SINGLE CHOICE*

○ Yes
○ No

Q11    If yes, what are your current working arrangements? *SINGLE CHOICE, PROMPT IF NECESSARY*

- ◯ Changed jobs
- ◯ Now work fully from home
- ◯ Now a hybrid worker and place of work away from home is in Chelthenham
- ◯ Now a hybrid worker and place of work away from home is outside of Cheltenham
- ◯ Other

Other (please specify)

[                                                                    ]

## Your views on Cheltenham Borough Council

READ OUT: I will now ask you some questions about your views on Cheltenham Borough Council.

Q12    Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Cheltenham Borough Council runs things? *SINGLE CHOICE*

- ◯ Very satisfied
- ◯ Fairly satisfied
- ◯ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ◯ Fairly dissatisfied
- ◯ Very dissatisfied
- ◯ Don't know

Q13    To what extent do you agree or disagree that Cheltenham Borough Council provides value for money? *SINGLE CHOICE*

- ◯ Strongly agree
- ◯ Tend to agree
- ◯ Neither agree nor disagree
- ◯ Tend to disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree
- ◯ Don't know

Q14    Due to these unprecedented economic times, it is likely that Cheltenham Borough Council will need to raise council tax in order to continue to provide valued services and investment in our town. At what level should it be raised? Please note the current rate of inflation is 10.1% *SINGLE CHOICE*

- ◯ Above inflation increase
- ◯ Increase matching inflation
- ◯ Below inflation increase

Q15 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with...? *SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW*

| | Very satisfied | Fairly satisfied | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | Fairly dissatisfied | Very dissatisfied | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The household collections for domestic waste | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The household collections for recyclables | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The cleanliness of the streets in your local area | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The parks and open spaces provided by the Council | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The way the Council tackles anti-social behaviour | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Q16 How important is it to you that...? *SELECT ONE RESPONSE PER ROW*

| | Very important | Fairly important | Not very important | Not important at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| There is a place within the town centre where the public can make enquiries and access Council services | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The Council's main office / staff are located in the town centre | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| The public can access the Council's services digitally, i.e. via the website | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

## Interaction with Cheltenham Borough Council

READ OUT: The final set of questions is about interacting with the Council.

Q17 Overall, how well informed do you think Cheltenham Borough Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides? *SINGLE CHOICE*

○ Very well informed
○ Fairly well informed
○ Not very well informed
○ Not well informed at all
○ Don't know

Q18 Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area? *SINGLE CHOICE*

○ Strongly agree
○ Agree
○ Neither agree nor disagree
○ Disagree
○ Strongly disagree
○ Don't know

**Q19** How do you currently obtain information from or about Cheltenham Borough Council?
*MULTIPLE CHOICE*

- ☐ Leaflets or posters
- ☐ Local media (radio, newspaper, TV)
- ☐ Council website
- ☐ From friends and family
- ☐ Public notice/bulletin boards
- ☐ Directly from your Councillor
- ☐ Council Facebook page

- ☐ Community events
- ☐ Public meetings
- ☐ Other Council social media channel
- ☐ Local Twitter accounts
- ☐ Local organisations
- ☐ Other
- ☐ None of these

Other (please specify)
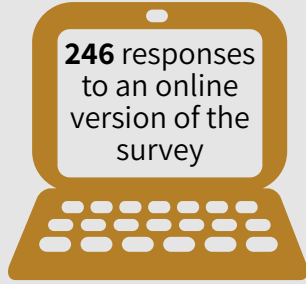
[ ]

Thank you.

# Resident Survey 2022

**CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## Methodology and introduction

**Representative** survey of **1,100 residents** via telephone and face to face interviews

**246** responses to an online version of the survey

We can be **95% confident** that the representative survey results provide a **margin of error\*** of
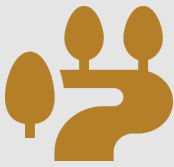
**+/-2.9%**
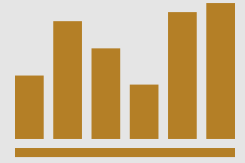
This report only includes key findings from the **representative survey**

## Top 3 performing areas

**90%** ↑ since 2019
are **satisfied** with their **local area as a place to live**

**88%** ↑ since 2019
are **satisfied** with the Council's **parks and open spaces**

**88%** ↑ since 2019
are **satisfied** with **events** in Cheltenham

## Top 3 areas for improvement

Residents would like to see an improvement in the **maintenance of Cheltenham**, particularly for roads

This is the **responsibility of Gloucestershire County Council**

**76%**
Three quarters think there is a **need for more affordable homes**

**44%**
Less than half feel they have the opportunity to **grow their career** in Cheltenham

## Cheltenham is in line with the national average for local government

■ Cheltenham Resident Survey 2022    ■ LGA National Polling Survey June 2022    ↑ result has increased since 2019

**Satisfaction with the local area as a place to live**
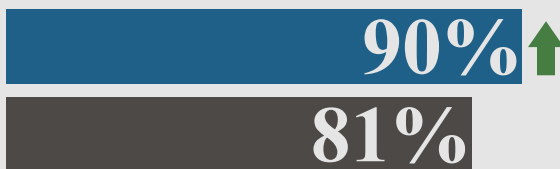
**90%** ↑
**81%**

**Satisfaction with the way the Council runs things**

**59%** ↑
**63%**

**Perception that the Council keeps residents well informed**

**56%** ↑
**57%**

**Agreement that the Council provides value for money**

**41%** ↑
**45%**
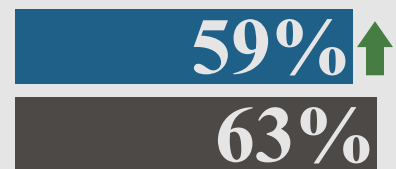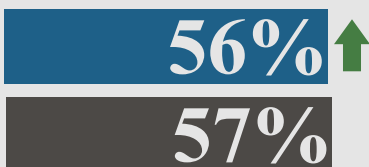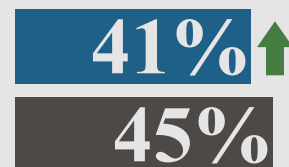
\* A margin of error of +/-2.9% means that we can be 95% sure that had the entire population of Cheltenham been surveyed, the result would not differ more or less than 2.9% from the survey finding.

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# Satisfaction with Council services

⬆ result has increased since 2019

**Parks and open spaces provided by the Council**
**88%** ⬆

**The household collections for domestic waste**
**83%** ⬆

**The household collections for recyclables**
**81%** ⬆

**The cleanliness of the streets in your local area**
**72%** ⬆

**The way the Council tackles anti-social behaviour**
**30%** ⬆

A further **51%** answered either 'don't know' or 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'

# A potential council tax increase

At what level should council tax be raised?

**67%**
**30%**
**3%**

■ Above inflation increase
■ Matching inflation increase
■ Below inflation increase

# Satisfaction with visiting Cheltenham town centre

☀ During the daytime    ★ After dark

**Safety when visiting the town centre**
**87%**
**44%**
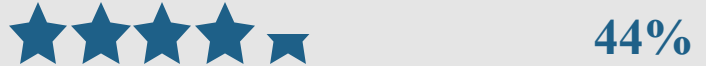
**Cheltenham town centre as a place to visit**
**82%**
**48%**
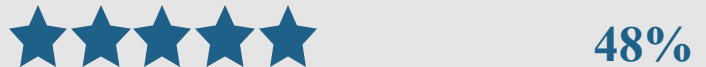
# Importance of the Council's digital and physical presence

How important is it to you that…? (% very/fairly important)

**90%**
**91%**
**85%**

**1** The public can access the Council's services digitally

**2** There is a place in the town centre where the public can make enquiries and access Council services

**3** The Council's main office and staff are located in the town centre

# Making Cheltenham the cyber capital of the UK through the Golden Valley Development*

Just over half of residents are **aware** of the Golden Valley Development
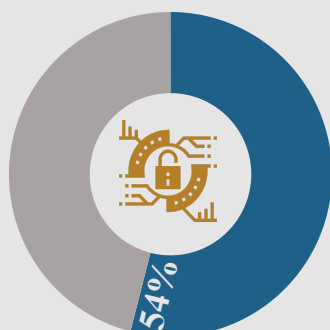
Three quarters **agree** that the Golden Valley Development will be **positive for the local economy**
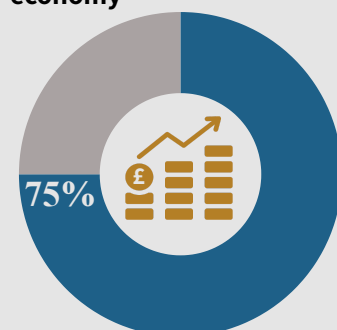
Two thirds **agree** that the Golden Valley Development will be **positive for Cheltenham residents**
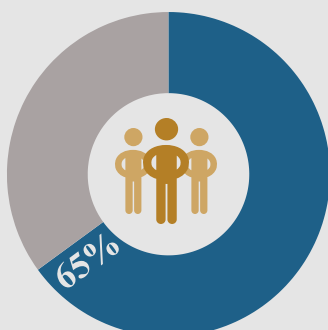
But only two in five can **confidently describe the Golden Valley Development** and what will be there

**54%**

**75%**

**65%**

**39%**
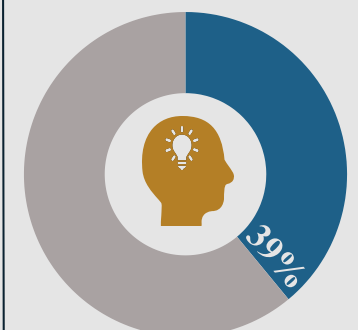
* The Golden Valley Development, led by Cheltenham Borough Council, is building a national cyber innovation centre, cyber park and new homes near GCHQ. For more info, visit www.goldenvalleyuk.com.

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CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Cheltenham Borough Council

# Cabinet Meeting – 6 December 2022

# Use of the Green Investment Fund to upgrade the council's Building Management System

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**Accountable member:**

Cllr Alisha Lewis – Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency

**Accountable officer:**

Gemma Bell - Director of Finance and Assets (Deputy Section 151 Officer)

Mike Redman - Director of Climate Change and Place Services

**Accountable scrutiny committee:**

N/A

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

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**Key/Significant Decision:**

Yes – Key

(Climate Change Impact Assessment attached Appendix 2)

**Executive summary:**

The Heating and Energy Policy approved by Full Council in October 2022 included the following recommendation.

*The Council will commit to reviewing and potentially upgrading the current building management systems where these are not performing effectively*

**T**his review has now been undertaken by looking at energy usage throughout the estate and completing a site survey of the existing provision of services.

Based on our findings there is an urgent need for investment in more fit for purpose building management systems across the Council's operational property estate. This includes the

Municipal Office, all properties managed by the Cheltenham Trust and the Swindon Road Depot.

With investment in the system and based on the prior year's energy prices, there would be an immediate saving of at least 10% which would lead to a quick investment payback of less than three years. If we utilise current prices, the payback becomes less than two years, as per the attached spreadsheet.

In February 2022, Full Council approved a £10m Green Investment Fund to support initiatives which would deliver a return and contribute to reducing the carbon footprint of the town. Detailed savings proposals and a full business case for the building management system was presented to the Green Investment Board on 27 October 2022. The business case was approved for a £151,000 capital investment from the Green Investment Fund towards the system. The remaining annual management costs will be covered by the savings delivered from the reduction in energy usage expected following installation.

The conditions of the Green Investment funding require Cabinet ratification of the decision made by the Green Investment Board which is reflected in the recommendations below.

**Recommendations:**

1.  **Approve a capital investment of £151,000 from the Green Investment Fund to install and/or upgrade the building management systems and monitoring arrangements across the council's operational property estate; and**

2.  **Delegate authority to the Director of Climate Change, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Assets (Deputy s151 Officer) to procure and award the contract for the installation of the equipment and monitor the implementation.**

---

## 1. Background

1.1. The current energy crisis is unprecedented. Last October, 4.5 million UK households were in fuel poverty. Now, National Energy Action predicts this will rise to 8.4 million households. The Council has also been directly affected financially by the current cost rises and must therefore take urgent action to effectively manage its energy usage. The current price increases are likely to continue for the foreseeable future, unless there is a major change in the factors driving the market. There is no obvious evidence of such change on the horizon, except the demand reduction that will inevitably follow. In line with other major organisations, the Council must decrease its energy usage quickly in order to manage expenditure this winter. This is also in alignment with the climate ambition to be Net Zero by 2030.

## 2. Reasons for recommendations

2.1. These recommendations will reduce our energy use in a consistent way, offering both carbon and financial savings for the council.

2.2. The recommended investment will also offer improved visibility of current systems and

energy performance to Council staff.

## 3. Alternative options considered

3.1. We have considered taking no action and remaining with the existing provider, but given current energy prices, this is considered financially unacceptable – see Appendix 1 (risk assessment).

## 4. Consultation and feedback

4.1. This report has been written in consultation with the Property team and the Climate Emergency Team.  Discussions have been held with staff and the operators of our buildings, regarding the best way to manage our current energy usage.

4.2. The proposal has also been considered by the inaugural meeting of the Green Investment Board, which has unanimously recommended the investment for approval under the recently established Cheltenham Green Deal and financed by the Green Investment Fund.

## 5. Key risks

5.1. This is an improvement to the existing building management system, rather than the implementation of an entirely new system and building surveys have already been carried out in scoping the work for this proposal.

5.2. The Head of Property at the Cheltenham Trust has been briefed on the installation of the new system and is supportive of the proposal, as a method of demonstrating the environmental considerations outlined in the recently reviewed management agreement.

5.3. The proposal for installation across all our buildings is dependent on the success of the pilot at the leisure centre, which has already demonstrated significant savings. There have been some communication issues which will be dealt with by setting up a working party of The Cheltenham Trust, Property Services, IT and relevant contractors for each installation

5.4. Given the issues we have already found in the existing set up, we have included a further £20,000 for contingency works within the project scope and assessed payback calculations.

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## 6. Implications

### 6.1. Financial implications

The current budget monitoring report presented to Cabinet in November 2022 included a £1m pressure caused by increased energy costs in 2022/23 and it is unlikely that this will be reduced back to 2021/22 levels in the next two years. The implementation of a fit for purpose building management system will reduce energy usage and support the Council

to minimise as much as possible the medium term impact of higher energy costs.

**Signed off by:** Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets, 01242 264124

### 6.2. Legal implications

The procurement of these services will be above the current procurement threshold. Officers will undertake a compliant procurement exercise in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and will engage with One Legal and Publica during this process.

Signed off by: One Legal, legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

### 6.3. HR implications

There are no direct implications from the recommendations.

**Signed off by:** Clare Jones, HR Business Partner, clare.jones@publicagroup.uk

### 6.4. Environmental and climate change implications

The proposed investment in improved systems for monitoring and controlling operational energy use will help to lower our consumption, delivering both financial and carbon savings.

**Signed off by:** Laura Tapping – Project Officer for Climate Change

### 6.5. Property/asset implications

The implementation of a new building management system will allow the property team to better manage and understand our operational buildings, in particular those that are occupied or managed on our behalf by third parties. It will provide data on the systems which will support a prioritised planned maintenance programme and allow us to deploy our resources in the areas of greatest need.

**Signed off by:** Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets, 01242 264124

### 6.6. Corporate policy framework implications

The recommendations, if approved, will support the council in its ambition to become a net zero Council and Borough by 2030 as set out in our Climate Emergency Action Plan: Pathway to Net Zero and deliver on one of its specific actions relating to council buildings: "*Measure the energy usage of CBC owned properties and develop a heating and energy efficiency strategy to set out actions needed to actively reduce energy consumption and move away from the use of fossil fuels…...*"

**Signed off by:** Richard Gibson, Head of Communities, Wellbeing and Partnerships

richard.gibson@cheltenham.gov.uk

## 7. Promoting equality and reducing discrimination

7.1. Please see assessment attached

## 8. Performance management – monitoring and review

8.1. Once the project is authorised, it will be managed by Property Services in consultation with IT, The Cheltenham Trust, Ubico etc.

8.2. After installation, a feedback session will be held with operational staff to identify any operational issues arising.

8.3. Regular monthly then quarterly meetings will be held with the supplier, property and operational staff.

8.4. Regular financial reviews will be held to confirm the final payback position.

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**Report author:**

Alexandra Wells, Energy Officer

alexandra.wells@cheltenham.gov.uk

**Appendices:**

i.    Risk Assessment
ii.   Climate Change Impact Assessment

**Appendix 1: Risk Assessment**

| Risk ref | Risk description | Risk owner | Impact score (1-5) | Likelihood score (1-5) | Initial raw risk score (1 - 25) | Risk response | Controls / Mitigating actions | Control / Action owner | Deadline for controls/ actions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 347 | Risk to operational processes during installation | Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets | 3 | 2 | 6 | Reduce | Putting a working party together of relevant stakeholders to manage, monitor and review. Setting up of manual control whilst panels are being upgraded. | Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets | |
| | If we do not implement improvements to the building management systems in our key operational buildings, energy costs will be less controllable and are more likely to become unaffordable | Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets | 4 | 6 | 24 | Reduce | Implement report recommendations | Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets | Spring 20 |

**Building Management System Upgrade**

| ENVIRONMENTAL | Scores | Action | Justification |
|---|---|---|---|
| GHGs | 4 | No action required | This should reduce our use of gas significantly in the buildings which the Council operate or have partners which operate them |
| Air quality | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Sustainable Transport | 0 | No action required. | 0 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Biodiversity | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Land use change | 0 | No action required. | It specially applies to energy usage for already developed land |
| Soil and waterway health | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Climate Change Adaptation | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Energy Use | 4 | No action required | 0 |
| Waste | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Sustainable Materials | 0 | No action required. | 0 |

| SOCIAL | Scores | Action | Justification |
|---|---|---|---|
| Food | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Health | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Housing | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Education | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Community | 4 | No action required | If we can reduce consumption we maybe able to offer a cheaper service in the future or reinvest savings |
| Culture | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Accessibility | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Local Economy and Jobs | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Safety | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Democratic Voice | 0 | No action required. | 0 |
| Equity | 0 | No action required. | 0 |

# Cheltenham Borough Council

# Cabinet – 6 December 2022
# Council - 12 December 2022

# Treasury Mid-term Report – position at 30 September 2022

**Accountable member:**

**Cllr Peter Jeffries – Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets**

**Accountable officer:**

Gemma Bell - Director of Finance and Assets (Deputy Section 151 Officer)

**Accountable scrutiny committee:**

Treasury Management Panel

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Key/Significant Decision:**

No

**Executive summary:**

The regulatory environment places responsibility on members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. This report is important in that respect, as it provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities for the first six months of this financial year and highlights compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by members in March 2022. The Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23 has been determined by the adoption of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the CIPFA Code) which requires the council to approve treasury management semi-annual and annual reports.

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**Recommendation:**

1. **Following the recommendation of Treasury Management Panel, to note the contents of this summary report of the treasury management activity during the first six months of 2022/23 and recommend it onto Council.**

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### Background

1.1. On 21 March 2022, Council approved the Authority's treasury management strategy for 2022/23. The Council has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk remains central to the Council's treasury management strategy.

1.2. Chartered Institute of Public Finance (CIPFA) published its revised Treasury Management Code of Practice and Prudential Code for Capital Finance in December 2021. The key changes in the two codes are around permitted reasons to borrow, knowledge and skills, and the management of non-treasury investments. Authorities could defer introducing the revised reporting requirements within the revised Codes until the 2023/24 financial year if they wish which this council has elected to do.

## 2. Economic Background

2.1. The economic backdrop during the April to September period continued to be characterised by high oil, gas and commodity prices, ongoing high inflation and its impact on consumers' cost of living, no imminent end in sight to the Russia-Ukraine hostilities and its associated impact on the supply chain, and China's zero-covid policy.

2.2. The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has continued to put pressure on global inflation and the economic outlook for UK and world growth remains weak. The UK political situation towards the end of the period following the 'fiscal event' increased uncertainty further.

2.3. Central Bank rhetoric and action remained robust. The Bank of England, Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank all pushed up interest rates over the period and committed to fighting inflation, even when the consequences were in all likelihood recessions in those regions.

2.4. UK inflation remained extremely high. Annual headline CPI hit 10.1% in July, the highest rate for 40 years, before falling modestly to 9.9% in August but then back up to 10.1% in September. RPI registered 12.3% in both July and August and then rose to 12.6% in September. The energy regulator, Ofgem, increased the energy price cap by 54% in April, while a further increase in the cap from October, which would have seen households with average energy consumption pay over £3,500 per annum, was dampened by the UK government stepping in to provide around £150 billion of support to limit bills to £2,500 annually until 2024.

2.5. The Bank of England increased the official Bank Rate to 2.25% over the period. From 0.75% in March, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) pushed through rises of 0.25% in each of the following two MPC meetings, before hiking by 0.50% in August

and again in September 2022. The Committee noted that domestic inflationary pressures are expected to remain strong and so given ongoing strong expression around tackling inflation further Bank Rate rises should be expected. At the time of writing this report the Bank Rate has now increased to 3% in November.

2.6. On 23rd September the UK government, following a change of leadership, announced a raft of measures in a 'mini budget', loosening fiscal policy with a view to boosting the UK's trend growth rate to 2.5%. With little detail on how government borrowing would be returned to a sustainable path, financial markets reacted negatively. Gilt yields rose dramatically by between 0.7% - 1% for all maturities with the rise most pronounced for shorter dated gilts. The swift rise in gilt yields left pension funds vulnerable, as it led to margin calls on their interest rate swaps and risked triggering large scale redemptions of assets across their portfolios to meet these demands. It became necessary for the Bank of England to intervene to preserve market stability through the purchase of long-dated gilts, albeit as a temporary measure, which has had the desired effect with 50-year gilt yields falling over 100bps in a single day.

## 3. Credit review

3.1. Having completed its full review of its credit advice on unsecured deposits at UK and non-UK banks, in May Arlingclose extended the maximum duration limit for five UK banks, four Canadian banks and four German banks to six months. The maximum duration for unsecured deposits with other UK and non-UK banks on Arlingclose's recommended list is 100 days. These recommendations were unchanged at the end of the period.

3.2. Arlingclose continued to monitor and assess credit default swap levels for signs of credit stress but made no changes to the counterparty list or recommended durations. Nevertheless, increased market volatility is expected to remain a feature, at least in the near term and, as ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by Arlingclose remains under constant review.

## 4. Treasury Management Summary position as at 31st March 2022

4.1. On 31st March 2022, the Authority had net borrowing of £152.751m arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. These factors are summarised in Table 1 below.

4.2.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary

|  | 31.3.22 Actual £m |
|---|---|
| General Fund CFR | 115.287 |
| HRA CFR | 66.715 |
| **Total CFR** | **182.002** |
| External borrowing | 175.686 |
| **Less : Internal borrowing** | 6.316 |

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| | |
|---|---|
| Less: Usable reserves | 20.957 |
| Less: Working capital | 1.978 |
| **Net borrowing** | **152.751** |

### Borrowing

4.3. CIPFA's 2021 Prudential Code is clear that local authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return and that it is not prudent for local authorities to make any investment or spending decision that will increase the capital financing requirement, and so may lead to new borrowing, unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the Authority.

4.4. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield and this Authority intends to avoid this activity in order to retain its access to PWLB loans.

4.5. As outlined in the treasury strategy, the Authority's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change being a secondary objective. The Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio.

4.6. Over the April-September period short term PWLB rates rose dramatically, particular in late September after the Chancellor's 'mini-budget', included unfunded tax cuts and additional borrowing to fund consumer energy price subsidies. Exceptional volatility threatened financial stability, requiring Bank of England intervention in the gilt market. Over a twenty-four-hour period some PWLB rates increased to 6%, before the intervention had the desired effect, bringing rates back down by over 1% for certain maturities. A truly wild and unprecedented period in fixed income markets, with a direct impact on PWLB rates.

4.7. Interest rates rose by over 2% during the period in both the long and short term. As an indication the 5-year maturity certainty rate rose from 2.30% on 1st April to 5.09% on 30th September; over the same period the 30-year maturity certainty rate rose from 2.63% to 4.68%.

Table 2: Treasury Management Summary

| | 31.3.22 Balance £m | Movement £m | 30.9.22 Balance £m | 30.9.22 Rate % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Long-term borrowing | 119.686 | (1.111) | 118.575 | 3.17 |
| Short-term borrowing | 56.000 | (10.500) | 45.500 | 1.93 |
| **Total borrowing** | **175.686** | (11.611) | **164.075** | **2.83** |

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| | | | | |
|---|---:|---:|---:|---:|
| Long-term investments | 11.590 | 3.011 | 14.601 | 3.85 |
| Short-term investments | 0.925 | 0.225 | 1.150 | 4.25 |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 10.420 | (9.405) | 1.015 | 1.75 |
| **Total investments** | **22.935** | **(6.169)** | **16.766** | **3.72** |
| **Net borrowing** | **152.751** | **(5.442)** | **147.309** | |

4.7. The balance as can be seen in Table 2 shows a reduced figure of £147.309m as at 30th September 2022 compared with the balance held at 1st April 2022. The weighted average interest rate on these loans is 2.83% up from 2.20% in March 2022. Borrowing costs are expected to be £439k higher than forecasted in November 2021, however the budget will be re-aligned to the new forecast for 2022/23.

4.8. Current temporary borrowing of £45.5m has been used over several years to fund capital expenditure as an alternative to taking out longer term borrowing which was much more expensive at the time, however due to the acceleration of interest rates since December 2021, a review will be undertaken to see if this is the best method of funding going forward. The authority will liaise with Arlingclose first before any changes in strategy are required.

4.9. The outstanding loans on 30th September 2022 are summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Borrowing Position

| | 31.3.22 Balance £m | 2022/23 Movement £m | 30.9.22 Balance £m | 30.9.22 Rate % |
|---|---:|---:|---:|---:|
| Public Works Loan Board | 103.786 | (1.111) | 102.675 | 3.04 |
| Banks (LOBO) | 7.000 | 0 | 7.000 | 4.45 |
| Banks (fixed-term) | 8.900 | 0 | 8.900 | 3.82 |
| Local authorities (short-term) | 56.000 | (10.500) | 45.500 | 1.93 |
| **Total borrowing** | **175.686** | **(11.611)** | **164.075** | **2.83** |

4.10. LOBO loans: The Authority continues to hold £7m of LOBO (Lender's Option Borrower's Option) loans where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the interest rate at set dates, following which the Authority has the option to either accept the new rate or to repay the loan at no additional cost. No banks exercised their option during the first 6 months of this financial year.

## 5. Investments

5.1. The Council holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the six month period the council's investment balance ranged between £14m and £32.5m due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The Authority also received a bulk income payment in late March 2022 of around £6.8m to distribute out the Energy Rebates to every household entitled to the £150 refund. This was successfully completed by the end of September. The investment position is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Treasury Investment Position

|  | 31.3.22 Balance £m | Net Movement £m | 30.9.22 Balance £m | 30.9.22 Rate of Return % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Money Market Funds/ Call Accounts | 10.420 | (9.405) | 1.015 | 1.76 |
| Pooled Funds | 7.000 | - | 7.000 | 4.90 |
| Other investments | 5.478 | 3.225 | 8.703 | 3.29 |
| **Total Investments** | **22.898** | **(6.180)** | **16.718** | **2.72** |

5.2. Both the CIPFA Code and Government Guidance require the Council to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Council's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment.

5.3. The increases in Bank Rate over the period under review, and with the prospect of more increases to come, short-dated cash rates, which had ranged between 0.7% - 1.5% at the end of March, rose by around 1.5% for overnight/7-day maturities and by nearly 3.5% for 9-12 month maturities.

5.4. By the end of September, the rates on DMADF deposits ranged between 1.85% and 3.5%. The return on the Council's sterling low volatility net asset value (LVNAV) Money Market Funds ranged between 0.9% - 1.1% in early April and between 2% and 2.20% at the end of September 2022.

5.5. Investment income was budgeted to be £599,771 in the Council's 2022/23 budget, set in February 2022. The Council has reviewed its expectations for investment income in 2022/23 and has assumed after looking at the returns over the first 6 months that the income could exceed budget by £240,000, so the revised budget will be amended in line with the surplus expected due to the increasing interest rates and strong dividends in the first half of the year from the Pooled Funds.

5.6. £7m of the Authority's investments are held in externally managed strategic pooled equity, multi-asset and property funds where short-term security and liquidity are

lesser considerations, and the objectives instead are regular revenue income and long-term price stability. These funds have generated an average total return of 4.84% for the first 6 months of this financial year which is used to support services in year. Because the Council's externally managed funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Council's investment objectives are regularly reviewed. Strategic fund investments are made in the knowledge that capital values will move both up and down on months, quarters and even years; but with the confidence that over a three- to five-year period total returns will exceed cash interest rate.
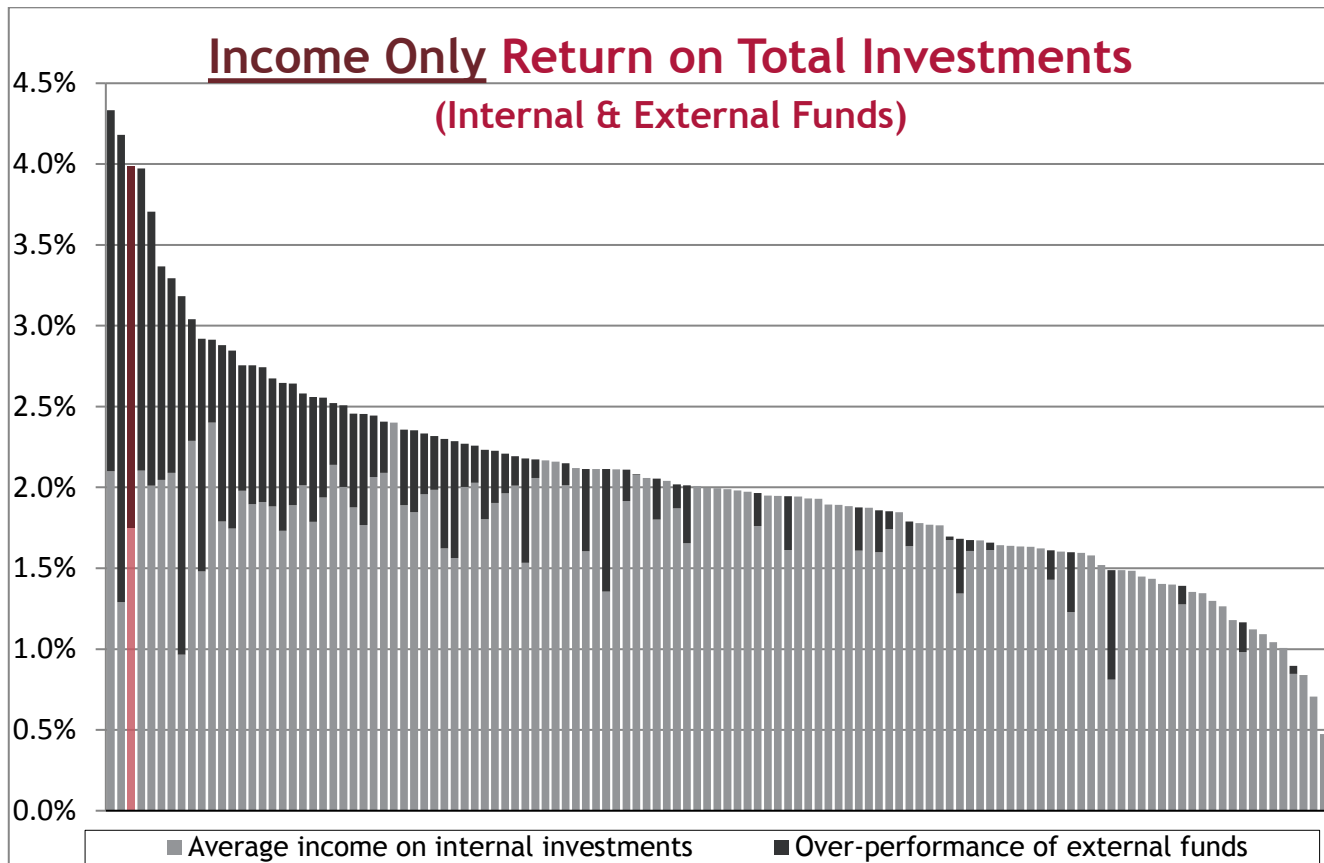
5.7. <u>Table 5: Pooled Funds</u>

| FUND NAME | Initial Investment | 1 April 2022 Fund Value | 30 Sept 2022 Fund Value | Dividends paid out in 2022/23 as at 30 Sept | Gain / (Loss) for 2022/23 | Gain / (Loss) to Initial Principal |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| CCLA Property Fund | 3,000,000 | 3,238,505 | 3,324,276 | 58,273 | 85,771 | 324,276 |
| Schroders Income Maximiser Fund * | 2,000,000 | 1,614,650 | 1,323,034 | 75,334 | (291,616) | (676,966) |
| CCLA Diversified Income Fund | 2,000,000 | 2,068,723 | 1,891,399 | 30,908 | (177,324) | (108,601) |
| **Total** | **7,000,000** | **6,921,878** | **6,538,709** | **164,515** | **(383,169)** | **(461,291)** |

\*   The Schroders Income Maximiser Fund has purchased shares within the oil and gas industry, which accounts 8.65% of the total amount invested in the fund (14% Sept 2021). This equates to £173,000 of the original £2m invested into the fund by this council. The dividend returns are currently returning over 7%. There are no plans at present to sell this investment as the fund is valued below the initial investment, which would need to be funded by revenue. As opportunities to support the climate ambitions of the Council arise, they will be considered. However, the treasury management function is controlled by statute and by professional guidelines and the first priorities of treasury must remain security, liquidity, and yield.

5.8. Total interest earned in the first 6 months of this financial year can be compared with all 121 clients of Arlingclose in table 6 below which see Cheltenham near the top of the table.

<u>Table 6: Income returned for 2022/23.</u>

**Income Only Return on Total Investments**
(Internal & External Funds)

Legend: ■ Average income on internal investments  ■ Over-performance of external funds

**Economic Outlook for the rest of 2022/2023**

5.8. Table 7: Interest rate forecast

| | Current | Dec 22 | Mar 23 | Jun 23 | Sep 23 | Dec 23 | Mar 24 | Jun 24 | Sep 24 | Dec 24 | Mar 25 | Jun 25 | Sep 25 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Official Bank Rate | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Upside Risk | 0.00 | 0.25 | 0.50 | 0.75 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.25 | 1.50 | 1.75 | 1.50 | 1.25 | 1.25 |
| Arlingclose Central Case | 3.00 | 3.50 | 4.00 | 4.25 | 4.25 | 4.25 | 4.25 | 4.00 | 3.75 | 3.50 | 3.50 | 3.50 | 3.50 |
| Downside Risk | 0.00 | 0.25 | 0.50 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |

5.9. Arlingclose now expects Bank Rate to peak at 4.25% next year as seen in table 7 above. The MPC is particularly concerned about the implications of fiscal loosening, the tight labour market, sterling weakness and the willingness of firms to raise prices and wages.

5.10. The threat of inflation remaining much higher and stickier than expected continues to be central banks' validation for doubling down on policy rate hikes in increments almost unthinkable a year ago, despite sagging consumer confidence, indicators pointing to slowing growth and numerous geopolitical factors at play.

5.11. The Bank of England's quarterly Monetary Policy Report with revised inflation and growth forecasts was released on Thursday 3rd November. A further rise in domestic inflationary pressures and a tight labour market will compel the Monetary Policy Committee to increase policy rates by 0.75% at the culmination of its meeting on Thursday, even though indicators point to the economy contracting and heading for a recession.

5.12. UK government policy has mitigated some of the expected rise in energy inflation for households and businesses flattening the peak for CPI, whilst extending the duration of elevated CPI. Continued currency weakness could add inflationary pressure.

## 6. Compliance

6.1. The Chief Finance Officer reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the first six months of 2022/23 complied fully with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy.

Table 8: Debt Limits

|  | 30.9.22 Actual £m | 2022/23 Operational Boundary £m | 2022/23 Authorised Limit £m | Complied? Yes/No |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total debt** | 164.075 | *264.00* | 274.00 | Yes |

Council approved in March 2022 the authorised borrowing limit and operational boundary limit are increased to the new levels as shown above in table 8. Since the operational boundary is a management tool for in-year monitoring it is not significant if the operational boundary is breached on occasions due to variations in cash flow, and this is not counted as a compliance failure.

## Treasury Management Indicators

The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

**Security:** The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

| | 30.9.22 Actual | 2022/23 Target | Complied? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Portfolio average credit rating | A+ | A- | Yes |

**Maturity Structure of Borrowing:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. This indicator covers the risk of replacement loans being unavailable, not interest rate risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of all borrowing were:

| | 30.9.22 Actual | Upper Limit | Lower Limit | Complied? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Under 12 months | 0.28% | 50% | 0% | YES |
| 12 months and within 24 months | 30.79% | 50% | 0% | YES |
| 24 months and within 5 years | 1.73% | 100% | 0% | YES |
| 5 years and within 10 years | 11.91% | 100% | 0% | YES |
| 10 years and above | 55.29% | 100% | 0% | YES |

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

## 7. Consultation

7.1. Arlingclose the Council's treasury advisors have supported officers in preparing the treasury activities over the first 6 months of this financial year.

## 8. Implications

8.1. **Financial implications**

As detailed throughout this report.

**Signed off by:** Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets (Deputy s151 Officer), 01242 264124

8.2. **Legal implications**

None arising from the report recommendations.

**Signed off by:** One Legal legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

8.3. **HR implications**

As detailed in the report.

**Signed off by:** Julie McCarthy, HR Manager, julie.mccarthy@publicagroup.uk

8.4. **Environmental and climate change implications**

The Council does have some exposure to investments in a pooled fund which has shares with oil and gas companies. This is detailed in Section 5.7 of the report. As a responsible investor, the Council is committed to considering environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues, and has a particular interest in taking action against climate change and pursuing activities that have a positive social impact.

**Signed off by:** Laura Tapping, Climate Emergency Programme Officer, 01242 264263

8.5. **Property/asset implications**

None specific directly arising from the recommendations.

**Signed off by:** Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets, 01242 264124

8.6. **Corporate policy framework implications**

Taking action to ensure overspends are reduced as far as possible by the end of the financial year will help ensure that the council can continue to deliver its corporate objectives as set out in the 2019-2023 Corporate Plan.

**Signed off by:** Richard Gibson, Head of Communities, Wellbeing and Partnerships, 01242 264280

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## 9. Performance management – monitoring and review

9.1. The budget position will continue to be monitored by the Finance team throughout the year and a revised budget will be presented to the December Cabinet with the 2023/24 draft budget proposal.

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**Report author:**

Andrew Sherbourne, Capital and Treasury Management Accountant

**Appendices:**

1. Risk Assessment

## Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

| Risk ref | Risk description | Risk owner | Impact score (1-5) | Likelihood score (1-5) | Initial raw risk score (1 - 25) | Risk response | Controls / Mitigating actions | Control / Action owner | Deadline for controls/ actions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | LOBO Loans - If £7m of these loans is recalled by the banks if they choose to exercise their option then we would need to have the resources on the day to repay. Alternative borrowing arrangements at today's current rates would be favourable for the Council | Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets | 1 | 2 | 2 | Accept and Monitor | If the loans are recalled the council could take out temporary borrowing/ new long term borrowing through the PWLB or sale of units held in Pooled Funds. Any capital receipts available could also be used to repay debt. | Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets | Ongoing |
|  | If the assumptions made within the strategies change, then the aspirations within the capital programme may become unaffordable | ED Finance and Assets | 3 | 2 | 6 | Accept and Monitor | The Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential and Treasury Indicators reflect various assumptions of future interest rate movements and Government support for capital expenditure. These will be continually monitored and any necessary amendments will be made in accordance with the Strategy | ED Finance and Assets | Ongoing |
|  | If the assumptions made within the strategies change, then the projected returns and the return of the initial investments may not be | ED Finance and Assets | 3 | 2 | 6 | Accept and Monitor | The Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential and Treasury Indicators reflect various | ED Finance and Assets | Ongoing |

| Risk ref | Risk description | Risk owner | Impact score (1-5) | Likelihood score (1-5) | Initial raw risk score (1 - 25) | Risk response | Controls / Mitigating actions | Control / Action owner | Deadline for controls/ actions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | received. | | | | | | assumptions of future interest rate movements and Government support for capital expenditure. These will be continually monitored and any necessary amendments will be<br><br>made in accordance with the Strategy | | |
| | If thorough due diligence is not undertaken when pursuing PRS schemes, the Council may not meet all of the criteria set out within its capital and investment strategies. | ED Finance and Assets | 4 | 2 | 8 | Accept & Monitor | Due diligence is of paramount importance. All of our investments have individual business cases that are subject to thorough risk assessment and stress testing and we also stress test the whole housing to ensure all risks are captured and properly controlled. Where appropriate to the size and scale of the project we also commission independent technical, legal, accounting, risk management, property, taxation advice | ED Finance and Assets | Ongoing |

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# Cheltenham Borough Council

# Cabinet – 6ᵗʰ December 2022

# Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy

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**Accountable member:**

Councillor Peter Jeffries, Cabinet Member Finance and Assets

**Accountable officer:**

Paul Jones, Executive Director Finance and Assets

**Accountable scrutiny committee:**

Not applicable

**Ward(s) affected:**

All indirectly

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**Key/Significant Decision:**

No

**Executive summary:**

To present Cabinet with an updated Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy for approval.

The Policy has been reviewed to ensure the content reflects current legislation and the Council's Policies and Procedures.  The Policy will replace the existing Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy.

**Recommendations:**

1. **Approve and adopt the Policy attached to this report and;**

2. **Authorise the Director of Finance and Assets (Deputy S151 Officer) to approve future minor amendments to the Policy in consultation with the Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit, One Legal and the Cabinet Member Finance and Assets.**

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## 1. Background

1.1.    The Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit is tasked with reviewing the Council's Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy.  It is recommended good practice that the Policy is updated and reviewed at least every few years in line with any legislative changes.

1.2.    In administering its responsibilities; this Council has a duty to prevent fraud and corruption, whether it is attempted by someone outside or within the Council such as another organisation, a resident, an employee or Councillor.

## 2. Reasons for recommendations

2.1.    The Policy, attached at Appendix ii, has been updated in accordance with the review period. Review frequency is as required by legislative changes or every three years. This has been slightly delayed due to events over the last two years.

2.2.    The Council's existing Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy was developed to reflect (i) latest legislation and (ii) the changes from the creation of the Single Fraud Investigation Services (operated by the Department for Work and Pensions) which subsumed the Council's responsibilities for investigating Housing Benefit Fraud.

2.3.    The Policy was last reviewed following the changes brought about by data protection legislation / regulations.

2.4.    The Policy highlights the key legislation and roles and responsibilities of Members, Officers and other parties.

2.5.    The changes are relatively minor and can be seen as red text within the Policy at Annex A.

2.6.    A section has been inserted relating to Money Laundering and Proceeds of Crime and relating to Modern Slavery, detailing the Council's responsibilities.

2.7.    The Policy has also been refreshed to reflect the growth of the Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit work streams and responsibilities relating to risk.

2.8.    As part of the consultation process, the Policy has been reviewed by One Legal and the Director of Finance and Assets.

2.9.    Cabinet last considered the Policy in April 2016 when it replaced the existing Policy.

2.10.   The Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee considered and endorsed the Policy in September 2022.

2.11.   Awareness will be raised with all staff following the approval of the Policy. Online refresher training will be issued to staff following approval of the Policy

## 3. Alternative options considered

3.1.    None.

## 4. Consultation and feedback

**4.1.** Any Policies drafted or revised by the Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit have been reviewed by One Legal and have been issued to the relevant Senior Officers, Governance Group and Executive Leadership Team for comment.

## 5. Key risks

**5.1.** The Council is required to proactively tackle fraudulent activity in relation to the abuse of public funds.

**5.2.** Failure to undertake such activity would accordingly not be compliant and expose the authority to greater risk of fraud and/or corruption. If the Council does not have effective counter fraud and corruption controls it risks both assets and reputation.

## 6. Implications

### 6.1. Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

The support of the Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy will help to support the prevention and detection of misuse of public funds and fraud therefore reducing potential financial loss to the Councils.

**Signed off by:** Gemma Bell, Head of Finance and Assets (Deputy S151 Officer), Gemma.Bell@cheltenham.gov.uk

### 6.2. Legal implications

In general terms, the existence and application of an effective fraud risk management regime assists the Council in effective financial governance which is less susceptible to legal challenge.

The legislation utilised by the Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit and other service areas within the Council is identified within the Policy and the Council must comply with all legislative requirements.

The Council must also ensure that authorisations obtained under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 or the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 are appropriately logged, maintained and updated on the central register.

**Signed off by:** One Legal, legalservices@onelegal.org

### 6.3. HR implications

The HR team continue to work closely with the Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit on all internal investigations. The promotion of effective counter fraud controls and a zero tolerance approach to internal misconduct promotes a positive work environment.

**Signed off by:** Julie McCarthy, HR Manager – Operations and Service Centre Julie.McCarthy@publicagroup.uk

### 6.4. Environmental and climate change implications

Not applicable.

## 6.5. Property/asset implications

Not applicable.

## 6.6. Corporate policy framework implications

The Council is committed to an effective counter fraud and corruption culture, by promoting high ethical standards and encouraging the prevention and detection of fraudulent activities, thus supporting corporate and community plans.

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# 7. Promoting equality and reducing discrimination

Not applicable.

# 8. Performance management – monitoring and review

None directly arising from this report.

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## Report author:

Emma Cathcart, Head of Service Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit,
Emma.Cathcart@cotswold.gov.uk

## Appendices:

i.    Risk Assessment
ii.   Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy

## Background information:

Report to Cabinet, 19th April 2016 (agenda item 5)

**Appendix 1: Risk Assessment**

| Risk ref | Risk description | Risk owner | Impact score (1-5) | Likelihood score (1-5) | Initial raw risk score (1 - 25) | Risk response | Controls / Mitigating actions | Control / Action owner | Deadline for controls/ actions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The authority suffers material loss and reputational damage due to fraud | Executive Director Finance and Assets | 3 | 3 | 9 | Reduce | Maintain a Counter Fraud Team to reduce the likelihood of the risk materialising and also to help recover losses, thus reducing the impact. | Head of Service, Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit | Ongoing |
| 2 | Without dedicated specialist staff in place, the Council may be unable to take effective and efficient measures to counter fraud, potentially resulting in authority suffering material losses due to fraud and error | Executive Director Finance and Assets | 3 | 4 | 12 | Reduce | Retain a specialist Counter Fraud Unit to tackle the misuse of public funds on behalf of the Council. | Head of Service, Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit | Ongoing |

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| Version Control: | |
|---|---|
| **Document Name:** | Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy |
| **Version:** | 2 |
| **Responsible Officer:** | Emma Cathcart, Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit |
| **Approved by:** | Executive / Cabinet |
| **Next Review Date** | May 2025 |
| **Retention Period:** | N/A |

**Revision History**

| Revision date | Version | Description |
|---|---|---|
| August 2019 | 1.1 | Update following changes to data protection legislation |
| May 2022 | 2 | Review and Update |
| | | |

**Consultees**

| Internal | External |
|---|---|
| CFEU Lead | |
| One Legal / Legal Services | |

**Distribution**

| Name | |
|---|---|
| All Staff | |

**CONTENTS**

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

1.1.    In administering its responsibilities; this Council has a duty to prevent fraud and corruption, whether it is attempted by someone outside or within the Council such as another organisation, a resident, an employee or Member. The Council is committed to an effective Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption culture, by promoting high ethical standards and encouraging the prevention, detection and investigation of fraudulent activities.

1.2.    The Section 151 Officer has a statutory responsibility under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to ensure the proper arrangements for the Council's financial affairs to include the development of financial codes of practice and accounting instructions.  Through delegation of duties, the Officer ensures appropriate controls are in place.

1.3.    The Monitoring Officer has a statutory responsibility to advise the Council on the legality of its decisions and to ensure that the Council's actions do not give rise to illegality or maladministration. It is therefore essential for employees to follow the Council's policies and procedures to demonstrate that the Council is acting in an open and transparent manner.

1.4.    The Council has a statutory duty to undertake an adequate and effective internal audit of its accounting records and its system of internal controls. The Council's Financial Rules state that 'whenever a matter arises which involves, or is thought to involve irregularities concerning cash, stores or other property of the Council, or any suspected irregularity in the exercise of the functions of the Council, the Director, Head of Service or equivalent Senior Officer has a duty to immediately notify the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, who shall take steps as the consider necessary by way of investigation and report'. Furthermore the Financial Rules also state that each Director, Head of Service or equivalent Senior Officer is responsible for 'notifying the Section 151 Officer and the Chief Audit Executive immediately of any suspected fraud, theft, irregularity, improper use or misappropriation of the Council's property or resources.

1.5.    The Council has a zero tolerance approach to fraud committed or attempted by any person against the organisation or any of its partner agencies.  The Council will thoroughly investigate all suggestions of fraud, corruption or theft, from within the Council and from external sources which it recognises can:

- Undermine the standards of public service that the Council is attempting to achieve by diverting resources from legitimate activities.

- Reduce the level of resources and services available for the residents of the borough, district or county as a whole.

- Result in consequences which damage public confidence in the Council and / or adversely affect staff morale.

1.6.    Any proven fraud will be dealt with in a consistent and proportionate manner. Appropriate sanctions and redress for losses will be pursued, to include criminal proceedings against anyone perpetrating, or seeking to perpetrate, fraud, corruption or theft against the Council.

1.7.    The Council is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity, honesty, integrity and accountability. The Council expects all Officers, Members and partner organisations to observe these standards and values, which are defined within the Code of Conduct for Employees and the Members Code of Conduct, to help achieve the Council's over-arching priority for the continued delivery of outcomes and value for money for local tax-payers.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

2.1. **FRAUD**

The term "fraud" is usually used to describe depriving someone of something by deceit, which might either be misuse of funds or other resources, or more complicated crimes like false accounting or the supply of false information. In legal terms, all of these activities are the same crime, theft, examples of which include deception, bribery, forgery, extortion, corruption, theft, conspiracy, embezzlement, misappropriation, false representation, concealment of material facts and collusion.

2.2 Fraud was introduced as a general offence and is defined within The Fraud Act 2006. The Act details that a person is guilty of fraud if he commits any of the following:

- Fraud by false representation; that is if a person:

(a) dishonestly makes a false representation, and
(b) intends, by making the representation:
   (i) to make a gain for himself or another, or
   (ii) to cause loss to another or to expose another to a risk of loss.

- Fraud by failing to disclose information; that is if a person:

(a) dishonestly fails to disclose to another person information which he is under a legal duty to disclose, and
(b) intends, by failing to disclose the information:
   (i) to make a gain for himself or another, or
   (ii) to cause loss to another or to expose another to a risk of loss.

- Fraud by abuse of position; that is if a person:
(a) occupies a position in which he is expected to safeguard, or not to act against, the financial interests of another person,
(b) dishonestly abuses that position, and
(c) intends, by means of the abuse of that position:
   (i) to make a gain for himself or another, or
   (ii) to cause loss to another or to expose another to a risk of loss.

2.3 In addition the Act introduced new offences in relation to obtaining services dishonestly, possessing, making, and supplying articles for the use in frauds and fraudulent trading applicable to non-corporate traders.

2.4. **CORRUPTION**

Is the deliberate use of one's position for direct or indirect personal gain. "Corruption" covers the offering, giving, soliciting or acceptance of an inducement or reward, which may influence the action of any person to act inappropriately and against the interests of the organisation.

2.5. **THEFT**

Is the physical misappropriation of cash or other tangible assets. A person is guilty of "theft" if he or she dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it.

2.6. **MONEY LAUNDERING**

Money laundering is the process by which criminals attempt to 'recycle' the proceeds of their criminal activities in order to conceal its origins and ownership whilst retaining use of the funds.

2.7 The burden of identifying and reporting acts of money laundering rests within the organisation. Any service that receives money from an external person or body is

potentially vulnerable to a money laundering operation.  The need for vigilance is vital and any suspicion concerning the appropriateness of a transaction should be reported and advice sought from the Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer or Chief Audit Executive.  A failure to report a suspicion could compromise an individual and they could be caught by the money laundering provisions.  All employees are therefore instructed to be aware of the increasing possibility of receiving requests that are not genuine and are in fact for the purpose of money laundering.

2.8    The Council recognises its responsibilities under Money Laundering and Proceeds of Crime Legislation.  These responsibilities are adhered to in line with the Council's Proceeds of Crime and Anti-Money Laundering Policy and the related Procedures.  The Council is required to have a designated Officer for money laundering reporting purposes.

2.9    Both Financial and Legal Officers working for the Council also have their own professional guidance in relation to money laundering which places a duty on them to report any suspicions. These suspicions may override their legal professional privilege and confidentiality.

2.10   **BRIBERY**

The Bribery Act 2010 introduced four main offences, simplified below.  Please note, a 'financial' or 'other advantage' may include money, assets, gifts or services within the following:

- Bribing another person: a person is guilty of an offence if he offers, promises or gives a financial or other advantage to another person.  Further if he intends the advantage to induce a person to perform improperly a function or activity or if he knows or believes the acceptance of the advantage offered constitutes improper activity.

- Offences relating to being bribed: a person is guilty of an offence if he requests, agrees to receive, or accepts a financial or other advantage intending that as a consequence an improper activity or function will be performed improperly or if he knows or believes the acceptance of the advantage offered constitutes improper activity.  Where a person agrees to receive or accepts an advantage as a reward for improper activity or function that has been performed.  It does not matter whether the recipient of the bribe receives it directly or through a third party, or whether it is for the recipient's ultimate advantage or not.

- Bribery of a foreign public official: a person who bribes a foreign public official is guilty of an offence if the person's intention is to influence the foreign public official in their capacity, duty or role as a foreign public official.  A person must also intend to obtain or retain business or an advantage in the conduct of business and must offer, promise or give any financial or other advantage.

- Failure of commercial organisations to prevent bribery: organisations, which include the Council, must have adequate procedures in place to prevent bribery in relation to the obtaining or retaining of business associated with the business itself.

2.11   The Council is committed to ensuring the prevention of corruption and bribery and sets out its policy in relation to the acceptance of gifts and hospitality within the Code of Conduct for Employees (or equivalent) and the Members Code of Conduct.  Offers of or the receipt of any gifts or hospitality should be recorded by Officers and Members in the appropriate register.  Officers and Members are also required to declare any outside interests that they have which may result in a conflict of interest in respect of transactions and dealings with the Council.  Again, any such interests will be recorded in an appropriate register.

2.12    Prior to entering into any business arrangements, all Council Officers and/or business units should ensure that they have taken all reasonable steps to identify any potential areas of risk relating to bribery or corruption.  If an Officer has any concerns they must raise them with The Chief Audit Executive.

2.13.   **MODERN SLAVERY**

Modern Slavery takes a number of forms but all relate to the illegal exploitation of people for personal or commercial gain.  The Council recognises its responsibilities as outlined within the legislation and is committed to promoting transparency in supply chains to prevent modern slavery and to take appropriate action to identify and address those risks.

## 3.  SCOPE

3.1    In relation to any of the above mentioned offences, this policy applies to:

- All employees, including shared service employees, casual workers and agency staff.
- Members.
- Committee Members of Council funded voluntary organisations.
- Partner organisations, where the Council has a financial or statutory responsibility.
- Council Suppliers, Contractors and Consultants.
- The general public.

## 4.  AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1    The aims and objectives of the Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy are to:

- Ensure that the Council has measures in place to guard against fraud and loss and that the Council maximises revenue recovery.

- Safeguard the Council's valuable resources by ensuring they are not lost through fraud but are used for providing services to the community as a whole.

- Create a 'counter fraud' culture which highlights the Council's zero tolerance to fraud, corruption, bribery and theft, which defines roles and responsibilities and actively engages everyone (the public, Members, Officers, managers and policy makers).

4.2    The Council aims to:

- Proactively deter, prevent and detect fraud, corruption, bribery and theft.

- Investigate any suspicions of, or detected instances of fraud, corruption, bribery and theft.

- Enable the Council to apply appropriate sanctions, to include prosecution, and recovery of losses.

- Provide recommendations to inform policy, system and control improvements, thereby reducing the Council's exposure to fraudulent activity.

## 5.  PRINCIPLES

5.1    The Council will not tolerate abuse of its services or resources and has high expectations of propriety, integrity and accountability from all parties identified within this policy.  Maintaining this policy supports this vision.

5.2    The Council has a documented Constitution, Scheme of Delegated Powers and Financial Regulations to give Members and Officers clear instructions or guidance for

carrying out the Council's functions and responsibilities. Responsibility for ensuring compliance with these documents rests with management with adherence being periodically monitored by Internal Audit Services; where breaches are identified these will be investigated in accordance with this policy and the Council's Financial Rules.

5.3   The Council expects that Members and Officers will lead by example in ensuring adherence to rules, procedures and recommended practices. A culture will be maintained that is conducive to ensuring probity. Members and Officers should adopt the standards in public life as set out by the Nolan Committee, known as the Nolan Principles:

- Selflessness – to take decisions solely in terms of the public interest and not in order to gain for themselves.

- Integrity – not to place themselves under any obligation to outside individuals or organisations that may influence the undertaking of their official duties.

- Objectivity – when carrying out any aspect of their public duties, to make decisions and choices on merit.

- Accountability – to be accountable, to the public, for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the appropriate scrutiny.

- Openness – to be as open as possible about the decisions and actions they take and the reasons for those decisions and actions. The dissemination of information should only be restricted when the wider public interest clearly demands it.

- Honesty – to declare any private interests which relate to their public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a manner which protects the public interest.

- Leadership – to promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

5.4   The Council will ensure that the resources dedicated to counter fraud activity are appropriate and any officers involved in delivering these services are trained to deliver a professional counter fraud service to the correct standards ensuring consistency, fairness and objectivity.

5.5   All fraudulent activity is unacceptable, and may result in consideration of legal action being taken against the individual(s) concerned. In addition, the Council has in place disciplinary procedures which must be followed whenever Officers are suspected of committing a fraudulent or corrupt act. These procedures are monitored and managed by the Human Resources Team and may be utilised where the outcome of an investigation indicates fraudulent or corrupt acts have occurred.

5.6   The Council may pursue the repayment of any financial gain from individuals involved in fraud, malpractice and wrongdoing. The Council may also pursue compensation for any costs it has incurred when investigating fraudulent or corrupt acts.

5.7   This policy encourages those detailed within this document to report any genuine suspicions of fraudulent activity. However, malicious allegations or those motivated by personal gain will not be tolerated and, if proven, disciplinary or legal action may be taken. Reporting arrangements in relation to incidents of fraud or irregularity are detailed below.

5.8   The Council will work both internally across different departments and with external organisations such as the Police, HM Revenue and Customs and other Councils to strengthen and continuously improve its arrangements to prevent fraud and corruption. The Council is committed to assisting the Police in fighting Serious and Organised

crime and will implement measures and share data to ensure the Council is not engaging with organised crime gangs when procuring goods and services.

5.9 The Council collects and stores data within multiple departments to enable data cleansing, data sharing and data matching. This process can be utilised for the prevention and detection of fraud and the Council will pursue this where appropriate. The Council applies fair processing practices and these are reflected within data collection documents, stationery and other data collection processes such as those required for the National Fraud Initiative.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES

| OFFICER / DEPARTMENT | SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES |
|---|---|
| **Head of Paid Service / Chief Executive** | Ultimately accountable for the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for countering fraud and corruption. |
| **Chief Finance Officer** <br><br> **(Section 151 Officer)** | To ensure the Council has adopted an appropriate Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy. That there is an effective internal control environment in place and resources to investigate allegations of fraud and corruption. |
| **Monitoring Officer** | To advise Members and Officers on ethical issues, conduct and powers to ensure that the Council operates within the law and statutory Codes of Practice. |
| **Audit Committee/ Audit and General Purposes Committee / Audit and Governance Committee** | To receive formal assurance from an appropriate representative at meetings and an annual opinion report in relation to the Council's control measures and counter fraud activity. <br><br> The Audit Committee also receives assurance from external audit on the Council's Annual Accounts and Annual Governance Statement. |
| **Councillors / Members** | To comply with the Members Code of Conduct and related Council policies and procedures. <br><br> To be aware of the possibility of fraud, corruption, bribery and theft and to report any genuine concerns to the Chief Audit Executive. |
| **External Audit / Internal Audit** | Has a duty to ensure that the Council has adequate arrangements in place for the prevention and detection of fraud, corruption, bribery and theft. <br><br> Has powers to investigate fraud and the Council may invoke this service. |

| OFFICER / DEPARTMENT | SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES |
|---|---|
| **Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit** | Responsible for assisting the development and implementation of the Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy. The Counter Fraud Unit have a duty to monitor the investigation of any reported issues of irregularity.<br><br>To ensure that all suspected or reported irregularities are dealt with promptly and in accordance with this policy.<br><br>That action is identified to improve controls and reduce means, opportunity and the risk of recurrence.<br><br>Reporting to the appropriate Senior Officer(s) (Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, Chief Audit Executive) with regard to the progress and results of investigations.<br><br>Reporting annually to the Audit Committee on proven frauds. |
| **Counter Fraud Provision / Services** | To proactively deter, prevent and detect fraud, corruption, bribery and theft within or against the Council.<br><br>To work on behalf of charities, Social Housing Providers and other organisations to proactively deter, prevent and detect fraud, bribery, corruption and theft for the benefit of local residents and the public purse.<br><br>To investigate all suspicions of fraud, corruption, bribery or theft, within or against the Council, in accordance with the Criminal Procedures and Investigations Act 1996 (CPIA).<br><br>To consider reputational damage and the public interest test when investigating any instances of fraud, corruption, bribery or theft.<br><br>To conduct interviews under caution when appropriate in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE).<br><br>To undertake any surveillance operation or obtaining any communications data, adhering to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 – this is applicable when undertaking criminal investigations only.<br><br>To comply with Data Protection Legislation (and the General Data Protection Regulations) when obtaining or processing personal data. |

| OFFICER / DEPARTMENT | SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES |
|---|---|
| | To report to the appropriate Senior Officer(s) for decisions in relation to further action. |
| | To enable the Council to apply appropriate sanctions, to include criminal proceedings, and to assist in the recovery of losses in accordance with the Council's Corporate Enforcement Policy. To include prosecutions on behalf of Social Housing Providers, Charities, and other organisations where it is in the public interest and for the benefit of the local residents. |
| | To prepare Witness Statements and prosecution paperwork for the Council's Legal Department. |
| | To attend and present evidence in the Magistrates Court, the Crown Court and Employment Tribunals. |
| | To provide recommendations to inform policy, system and control improvements. |
| | To provide fraud awareness training and updates for Members and Officers. |
| | To publicise successes where appropriate. |
| **Human Resources** | To report any suspicions of fraud, corruption, bribery or theft to the Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer or Counter Fraud representative if reported directly to HR or if identified during any disciplinary or internal procedures. |
| | To ensure recruitment procedures provide for the obtainment and verification of significant information supplied by applicants in accordance with the HR Vetting and Recruitment Fraud Risk Report. |
| **Strategic Directors, Heads of Service, Service Managers or equivalent Senior Officers** | The primary responsibility for maintaining sound arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption rests with management. |
| | To promote awareness and ensure that all suspected or reported irregularities are immediately referred to the appropriate Senior Officer. |
| | To ensure that there are mechanisms in place within their service areas to assess the risk of fraud, corruption, bribery and theft.  To reduce these risks by implementing internal controls, monitoring of these controls by spot checks and to rectify weaknesses if they occur. |

| OFFICER / DEPARTMENT | SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES |
|---|---|
| **Staff / Employees / Officers** | To comply with Council policies and procedures when conducting their public duties.<br><br>To be aware of the possibility of fraud, corruption, bribery and theft and to report any genuine concerns. Officers may report suspicions as detailed below.<br><br>Referrals can also be made in confidence in accordance with the Council's Whistleblowing Policy. |
| **Public, Partners, Suppliers, Contractors and Consultants** | To be aware of the possibility of fraud and corruption within or against the Council and to report any genuine concerns or suspicions as detailed below. |

## 7. APPROACH TO COUNTERING FRAUD

7.1    The Council has a responsibility to reduce fraud and protect its resources by enabling counter fraud services to complete work in each of the following key areas:

7.2    **DETERRENCE**

The best deterrent is the existence of clear procedures and responsibilities making fraud and corruption difficult to perpetrate and easy to detect. As detailed already within this policy, the Council has a number of measures in place to minimise risk:

- Clear codes of conduct for Officers and Members.
- Register for declarations of interest / gifts and hospitality for Members and Officers.
- Clear roles and responsibilities for the prevention and detection of fraud, corruption, bribery and theft including an Audit Committee, an appointed Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer and trained Counter Fraud Officers.
- Effective ICT security standards and usage policies.
- The application of appropriate sanctions and fines as detailed below.

7.3    The existence of an effective Counter Fraud Team is a prime deterrent for fraud and corruption. Counter Fraud Officers and the Internal Audit Team analyse and identify potential areas at risk of fraudulent abuse with the assistance of the Council's Corporate Management, efficient and effective audits of principal risk areas can then be conducted.

7.4    The Council will promote and develop a strong counter fraud culture, raise awareness and provide information on all aspects of its counter fraud work. This may include advice on the intranet, fraud e-learning tools, publicising the results of proactive work, investigating fraud referrals and seeking the recovery of any losses.

7.5    **PREVENTION**

The Council will strengthen measures to prevent fraud ensuring consideration of the Fraud Risk Strategy, associated documents and fraud risk register. Counter Fraud Officers will work with management and policy makers to ensure new and existing systems, procedures and policy initiatives consider any possible fraud risks. Any

internal audit conducted will also consider fraud risks as part of each review and ensure that internal controls are in place and maintained to combat this.

7.6    Important preventative measures include effective recruitment to establish the propriety and integrity of all potential employees <span style="color:red">as set out within the HR Vetting and Recruitment Fraud Risk Report</span>.  Recruitment is carried out in accordance with the Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy and provides for the obtainment and verification of significant information supplied by applicants.

7.7    The Council will undertake any internal remedial measures identified by any investigation to prevent future recurrence at the first opportunity.

7.8    **DETECTION**

A record of fraud referrals received will be maintained by Counter Fraud Officers (and other departments as applicable).  This record helps to establish those areas within the Council most vulnerable to the risk of fraud.  In addition, a consistent treatment of information and independent investigation is ensured. A Council wide fraud profile is created which then informs any detailed proactive work.

7.9    The Council is legislatively required to participate in a national data matching exercise; the National Fraud Initiative (NFI).  Particular sets of data are provided and matched against other records held by the Council or external organisations.  Where a 'match' is found it may indicate an irregularity which requires further investigation to establish whether fraud has been committed or an error made.  An officer within the authority is designated as the 'Key Contact' for this process.  The initiative also assists in highlighting areas which require more proactive investigation.  The Council may engage in other data matching/sharing for the purposes of fraud prevention and detection, and for the recovery of monies owed.

7.10   Safeguarding and deterrent internal controls and monitoring procedures are established for financial and other systems within the Council, for example those set out within the Council's Financial Rules / Contract Rules.

7.11   The Council relies on employees, Members and the public to be alert and to report any suspicions of fraud and corruption which may have been committed or that are allegedly in progress.  Managers should be vigilant and refer any matters which may require additional monitoring to a senior representative within the Human Resources Department for guidance and further action.

7.12   **INVESTIGATION**

The Council will investigate all reported incidents of fraud or irregularity using its counter fraud resources.  The Council will ensure the correct gathering and presentation of evidence in accordance with the Criminal Procedures and Investigations Act 1996.

7.13   Investigations will make due reference to Employment Law as necessary and be conducted within a reasonable time in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998.  Investigations will also adhere to and comply with other applicable legislation such as the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, Data Protection Legislation and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as appropriate.

7.14   Officers may utilise investigative tools and gain intelligence utilising a number of legal gateways and data sharing agreements.  This may include membership to third party organisations such as the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN).

7.15   When investigating allegations of fraud and corruption, the Council may be required to conduct surveillance.  The Council must comply with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 which ensures that investigatory powers are used in accordance with human rights.  To ensure compliance the Council has a written procedure detailing

who may authorise covert surveillance and the use of covert human intelligence sources. Standard documentation has been adopted which must be used by an Officer when seeking such authorisation.

7.16 Officers may also need to acquire communications data when conducting an investigation. This is permissible however; the Council must adhere to the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 when applying for this information and the correct nominated single point of contact must be used. As above, specific details are set out within the written procedures.

7.17 The Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit Officers adhere to the appropriate legislation when investigating irregularities and allegations of fraud. This includes the need to:

- Deal promptly with the matter.
- Record all evidence received.
- Ensure that evidence is sound and adequately supported.
- Conduct interviews under caution when necessary.
- Ensure security of all evidence collected.
- Contact other agencies if necessary e.g. Police, Trading Standards, HM Revenue and Customs.
- Notify the Council's insurers.
- Implement Council disciplinary procedures where appropriate.
- Attend court and present evidence.

7.18 **SANCTIONS**

The Council will apply considered sanctions to individuals or organisations where an investigation reveals fraudulent activity. This may include:

- Appropriate disciplinary action in line with the Disciplinary Policy.
- Fines and penalties.
- Criminal proceedings.
- Civil proceedings to recover loss.

7.19 **REDRESS**

A crucial element of the Council's response to tackling fraud is seeking financial redress. The recovery of defrauded monies is an important part of the Council's strategy and will be pursued in line with internal debt recovery processes and legal redress i.e. Confiscation Orders and the application of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

7.20 **CONTROL FAILURE RESOLUTION**

In addition to the above, Internal Audit also prepares a risk based annual Audit Plan that details the key objectives and areas of work for the year. Within these work areas indicators for fraud are considered. Internal Audit will also respond to requests from management and Counter Fraud Officers where there may be concerns over the effectiveness of internal controls. The work plan is agreed and monitored by the Audit Committee and Section 151 Officer.

## 8. REPORTING, ADVICE AND SUPPORT

8.1 The Council's expectation is that Members and managers will lead by example and that employees at all levels will comply with the Constitution, Council Policies, Financial Regulations, Procurement Regulations, Financial and Contract Procedure Rules, codes of conduct and directorate procedures.

8.2 The Council recognises that the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with management. It is essential that employees of the Council report

any irregularities, or suspected irregularities to their Line Manager and if this is not appropriate then to a Counter Fraud representative.

8.3     The Council must create the right environment so that anyone can raise concerns in respect of irregularities with the knowledge that they will be treated seriously and confidentially.  The Council will provide all reasonable protection for those who raise genuine concerns in good faith, as confirmed in the Council's Whistle-Blowing Policy.

8.4     If the informant is a member of the public or external contractor, they can contact a Counter Fraud Officer at the Council to report the suspicion.  This can be done anonymously.  A hotline number for reporting suspicions may also be established and if so, can be found on the Council's website.  The Council's complaint procedure may also be utilised but may not be the most appropriate channel.

8.5     The above process does not relate to reporting Housing Benefit Fraud allegations (which are now dealt with by the Department for Work and Pensions) or to Council Tax Reduction Scheme offences.  The informant should contact the Officer nominated to deal with this; details can be found on the Council's website within the Revenues and Benefit Section information.

8.6     The Officer who receives the allegation (whether from a Member or a Council employee) must refer the matter to a Counter Fraud representative within the Council, to determine how the potential irregularity will be investigated and to whom the allegation should be discussed within the Council.  This is to ensure correct investigative procedures are adhered to and that any potential fraud enquiry is not compromised.

8.7     As appropriate, reports will be issued to the Monitoring Officer, Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer, Senior Officers, and Cabinet Members etc. where the irregularity is material and/or could affect the reputation of the Council.  Decisions will then be made with regard to the most appropriate course of action.  Communications and publicity will also be managed if the matter is likely to be communicated externally.

8.8     If the investigation relates to an employee then Human Resources will be engaged and the Council's Disciplinary Procedure will also be considered however this will be managed carefully to ensure any criminal investigation is not compromised.

8.9     The Council will also work in co-operation with the following bodies (and others as appropriate) that will assist in scrutinising our systems and defences against fraud, bribery and corruption:

- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.
- External Audit.
- The National Fraud Initiative.
- Central Government Departments.
- HM Revenue and Customs.
- The Police.
- Trading Standards.
- The Department for Work and Pensions.
- Immigration Services.
- The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).
- The Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV).
- Social Housing Providers and Charitable Bodies

8.10    As detailed within this document and the Council's Whistle Blowing Policy, any concerns or suspicions reported will be treated with discretion and in confidence. Referrals can be made in confidence to the Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit at fraud.referrals@cotswold.gov.uk who work on behalf of Cheltenham and Tewkesbury

## 9. FURTHER INFORMATION

9.1    Further information on Council policy can be found in the following documents (or equivalent documentation / codes):

- The Constitution.
- Code of Conduct for Employees and the Members Code of Conduct which include information in relation to gifts and hospitality and declaring and registering interests.
- Whistleblowing Policy.
- Corporate Enforcement (Prosecution) Policy.
- Proceeds of Crime and Anti-Money Laundering Policy.
- Recruitment and Selection Processes.
- RIPA / IPA Policies, Procedures and Guidance.
- Financial Rules.
- Contract Rules or equivalent.
- Fair Processing Statement.
- Disciplinary Procedure.

## 10.   POLICY REVIEW

10.1.   The appropriate department will review and amend this policy as necessary to ensure that it continues to remain compliant and meets legislative requirements and the vision of the Council in consultation with the Council's Chief Finance Officer, the Legal Department and Members.

10.2.   Review frequency as required by legislative changes / every three years.

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