

Cheltenham Borough Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Meeting date: 13 January 2025

Meeting time: 6.00 pm

Meeting venue: Council Chamber - Municipal Offices

Membership:

Councillor Tabi Joy (Chair), Councillor Jackie Chelin (Vice-Chair), Councillor Graham Beale, Councillor Julia Chandler, Councillor Stan Smith, Councillor Chris Day, Councillor Richard Pineger, Councillor Juan Carlos Garcia Clamp, Councillor Sandra Holliday and Councillor Frank Allen

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1 Apologies

2 Declarations of interest

3 Minutes of the last meeting (Pages 5 - 14)

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2024.

4 Public and Member questions, calls for actions and petitions

5 Cabinet Briefing

18:05 10 mins

Briefing from Councillor Hay, Leader (if she has an update, or if O&S Members have questions for her)

Objective: An update from the Cabinet on key issues for Cabinet Members which may be of interest to Overview and Scrutiny and may inform the work plan

6 Matters referred to committee

7 Feedback from other scrutiny meetings attended (Pages 15 - 16) 18:15 15 mins

[Gloucestershire Health O&S Committee](#) - update attached from Councillor Bamford following the meeting on 26 November 2024. The next meeting will take place on 28 January 2025.

[Gloucestershire Economic Strategy Scrutiny Committee](#) – the next meeting will take place on 23 January 2025

[Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel](#) – the next meeting will take place on 4 February 2025

8 Golden Valley Social Value Strategy (Pages 17 - 38)

18:30 45 mins

Objective : Understanding the delivery of social value in the Golden Valley development

Paul Minnis, Director of Major Development and Regeneration
Amy Keates, Head of Construction

9 2025/26 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Budget proposals 19:15 15 mins

Objective – Update from the Chair of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group on the group's response to the [2025/26 General Fund and HRA interim budget proposals](#)

Councillor Adrian Bamford, Chair of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group

(Extract of the minutes of the meeting to be held on 8 January TO FOLLOW)

10 Updates from scrutiny task groups

There are currently no active scrutiny task groups.

11 Review of scrutiny workplan (Pages 39 - 40)

19:30 15 mins

12 Any other item that the Chair determines to be urgent

13 Date of next meeting

24 February 2025 (Members to note the cancellation of the scheduled meeting on 3 February)

Informal de-brief

What went well? Can we identify opportunities for improvement or training needs?

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Cheltenham Borough Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee Minutes

Meeting date: 25 November 2024

Meeting time: 6.00 pm - 7.35 pm

In attendance:

Councillors:

Tabi Joy (Chair), Jackie Chelin (Vice-Chair), Stan Smith, Chris Day, Richard Pineger, Juan Carlos Garcia Clamp, Frank Allen and Paul Baker

Also in attendance:

Claire Hughes (Director of Governance and Customer Services and Monitoring Officer), Martin Chastney (Senior Development Manager, Place & Economic Development), Martin Stacy (Housing Strategy and Partnerships Manager), Hannah Leatherland (Air Quality Education Projects Officer), Gareth Jones (Senior Environmental Health Officer, Environmental Protection) and Ewan Wright

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Chandler, Beale and Holliday.

2 Declarations of interest

There were none.

3 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2024 were approved as a true record (with one or two minor typos noted).

4 Public and Member questions, calls for actions and petitions

There were none.

5 Cabinet Briefing

The Leader reported that interviews for the post of Director for Housing – Investment, Repairs and Decarbonisation were taking place this week, boosting the transition of housing services back to CBC. She had no further updates, but was happy to take questions.

The Chair said that in view of the complex issues and public interest surrounding the proposed closure of Swindon Road Household Recycling Centre, she was considering adding it to the workplan for January and possibly forming a scrutiny task group to consider the transition. The Leader said that there was no decision to permanently close the HRC, and the report made a recommendation that scrutiny measures were undertaken throughout the review of all the options.

6 Air Quality Update

Gareth Jones, Senior Environmental Health Officer, and Hannah Leatherland, Air Quality Education Projects Officer, introduced their work briefly, the details of which were set out in the report. They were happy to take questions.

Members were impressed with the report and very pleased with the progress being made, particularly with the schools project. They were also given an opportunity immediately before the meeting to examine the equipment being used and to ask questions in relation to it. In response to questions, officers confirmed that:

- although particulate matter from electric vehicles is nowhere near as bad as that from diesel, it is acknowledged in most reports as it is still a source of PM2.5;
- they were unsure whether road-sweeping vehicles have extra filtration to protect drivers from the particulate matter picked up from the roads;
- regarding air pollution at the junction of Gloucester/Shelburne/ Lansdown Roads, this area sees peaks from short-term traffic and trains, but data from monitoring close by – where the housing starts – shows that levels do not give undue cause for concern and fall within national legal limits. The council doesn't have many of the monitors which measure short-term peaks but could consider deploying one in this area;
- identifying which of the different sources of PM2.5 - including diesel and wood-burning fires or stoves - are worse for the environment and for individuals is expensive and requires specific expertise that equipment that CBC cannot access, so unfortunately we cannot undertake closer examination of this.

A Member thanked officers for the update and good progress made, particularly the education initiative. He would like O&S to be involved in the creation of the new Air Quality Strategy and the review of the smoke control zones, and felt that the update would benefit from some further definition of environmental pollution, which for air pollution purposes relates mostly to NO2 and PM.

In response to further questions from Members, GJ confirmed that:

- there is overlap between his work and that of the climate change team, who will be presenting to O&S in the new year and explain further;

- regarding the positioning of monitoring stations and the suggestion that monitoring air pollution for safety and for climate change reasons would be useful in the Kingsditch Lane area, officers try not to move these around too much in order to maintain continuity of data. There is currently a monitoring station for NOX on Swindon Road which cannot be moved, and one near St Paul's Medical Centre, which indicates that NOX is decreasing. This is significant because it is easy to measure and a proxy for other pollutants, therefore helpful in identifying areas of concern;
- regarding the possibility of introducing a clean air zone in Cheltenham, as has been done in Bath, this would have to be a collaborative initiative between CBC and GCC, and would probably not work in a town of this size, scale and lay-out. The main aim of the Boots Corner scheme was not specifically to improve air quality but would probably have done so with the right support structures in place. Clean air zones need the support of many agencies, and although officers keep a watching brief on what is happening in other towns and cities, it is not felt to be a priority in Cheltenham;
- regarding educating users of solid fuel to use the right sort of fuel in the least destructive fashion, there are more efficient ways to use appliances, and campaigns to encourage and endorse this, including Clean Air Night in January, focussing on burning the right fuels in the right way, which can make a significant difference.

In response to Members' questions about the engagement with schools, officers confirmed that:

- the education officer post is a temporary one, and with regard to sustainability and on-going training for teachers, officers hope that the projects will continue as schools and individuals have been very engaged and we would like to continue in a working relationship with them into the future. It is difficult for teachers to manage the workload however, and they really need a dedicated point of liaison and case worker to facilitate, research and maintain links. Officers hope an important legacy will be left in some schools, with culture changes and new ideas and processes becoming embedded even without further engagement from CBC now that operations are in motion;
- a lot has been achieved in schools already, but much more is possible if the time and manpower was available, not only around air quality but potentially around other public health-related work such as healthy eating and exercise – the possibilities are endless, and officers are never short of ideas to make the subject interesting and engaging for children of all ages, including smoke zone reviews and self-built pollution monitors. Some elements, like cycling update or actions to encourage outdoor play and walking, would also address air quality by reducing reliance on cars.

In response to further Member questions, GJ said that:

- the council has very limited power against noise from idling vehicles outside people's homes, despite its negative health impact, although it may be that dealing with idling vehicles from an air pollution point of view will contribute to controlling the noise problem as well. He agreed that it is a real nuisance for

some residents but not something that can be dealt with under Environmental Health powers since it is almost impossible to enforce against;

- some of the latest equipment includes acoustic data and can be used in specific places where there is an issue that can be monitored – although officers are more likely to deal with any matters informally before taking any formal action.

A Member thanked officers for an interesting report and Members for a good discussion. He noted that the emphasis in the report is about focussing resources on education and awareness rather than enforcement, which he felt was the right track, although difficult. The officer said the council has some powers of enforcement but the law regarding idling, for example, is not very helpful and not up to the task. He said education in the first place is far more effective, and the county council had provided a grant to roll out more engagement with schools where idling is a problem in the new year but unfortunately the education officer will be on maternity leave. He said officers are unlikely to have capacity to deliver the campaigns, although education is the key and far more effective than trying to pin fixed penalties on idling vehicles.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions.

7 Understanding Barriers to Affordable Housing Delivery

Ewan Wright, Senior Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer, thanked Members for the opportunity to present this critical area of the council's work, meeting local housing needs, supporting residents to reach affordable home ownership, and creating thriving communities. The report has been jointly produced with colleagues in planning policy and the major developments and regeneration teams.

He highlighted the following:

- the government definition of affordable housing is very wide, and covers homes for rent, discounted market sale and affordable home ownership. Rent means social and affordable rent delivered largely by the council and housing associations; this definition is found in the latest National Planning Policy Framework;
- the Corporate Plan includes a key corporate objective to deliver 450 affordable homes between 2023/24- 2027/28, and key planning policy requirements around affordable housing are also set out in the JCS, policies SD12 and SD11;
- the 2020 Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment tells us CBC should deliver 194 affordable homes per year up to 2041, and the housing register shows that the number of households needing affordable housing has risen from 2,200 in 2018-19 to 2,667 this year. CBC and housing associations delivered 477 affordable homes between 2018 and 2024, so it will clearly be a challenge to meet our targets;
- the key issues holding us back are broadly:
 - o planning – delivering large sites is problematic and takes a long time, there are issues with S106 delivery both locally and nationally. Updating

the JCS through the Strategic and Local Plan is a huge piece of work, requiring much internal work and work with GCC and TBC;

- financial – issues are preventing CBC from delivering more homes through the HRA, and there are many pressures on housing providers to improve the quality of existing homes, for example by remedying damp and mould and improving energy efficiency;
- construction – due to inflation, costs associated with this have spiralled, and viability issues mean affordable housing sometimes cannot be delivered on site. In addition, Net Zero objectives, while laudable, come at a cost, and are another of the issues holding back affordable housing delivery;

He said there are, however, opportunities to address the issues:

- continuing to focus on additionality – ie CBC and housing associations working to provide affordable homes delivery above and beyond what the market would normally deliver through our affordable housing policies;
- delivery of affordable housing on S106 sites – policy requirement is generally 40%, with 35% on strategic allocations – and looking to stalled sites such as Pittville School;
- Planning policies give a great opportunity to improve existing policies and add new ones, such as updating the Strategic and Local Plan, JCS Affordable Housing Guidance Note, and First Homes Technical Advice Note;
- there is a lot of positive talk nationally about delivering affordable housing, with a new affordable housing programme promised for Spring 2025, an outstanding NPPF consultation, and talk of higher housing targets. It remains to be seen how all this will pan out;
- if the sites at North and West Cheltenham deliver, this will make a huge difference to affordable housing delivery across the borough;
- under the acquisitions programme, CBC is looking to buy 20-25 affordable houses each year and this could focus on buying back larger properties to meet the acute need for 4-5-bedroomed rented affordable homes by making use of existing stock;
- with the marketing and planning policy teams, officers are looking to make the best use of town centre spaces, to ensure a vibrant town centre where people can afford to live, and including the delivery of affordable homes.

Members thanked officers for their detailed and interesting report, and had many questions and comments.

A Member calculated that the failure to hit the 40% target in some major developments due to viability issues, has resulted in a loss of 169 affordable home – with commuted sums of £2.2m for some, which doesn't equate to 169 homes. Developers are allowed to make 15-20% return on developments and not provide any affordable housing. This isn't ideal – is there anything the council can do to push back on that?

EW said the profit margin developers are allowed to make is taken from national planning policy guidance, and is typically a minimum of 15-20%, depending on the nature of the development and the risks involved. Viability assessments across the borough will be updated to link in with the policies; it is a lengthy, detailed and technical exercise, but once complete should be in line with planning policy guidance, ensuring policy-compliant delivery, with no need to go down the viability route – although there are some situations where even policy-compliant developments struggle to provide enough affordable homes, such as brownfield sites.

Regarding the acquisition strategy and the yield on buying, a Member noted that the 5.1% available is just about enough to cover interest, and wondered whether the burden of loan repayments would hinder the council's affordable housing aims. He noted that developers can wriggle out of affordable housing requirements, still make a healthy profit, and put homes in the pool which the council then buys back at market value. Developers therefore reap all the rewards, while the council tries to do the right thing by its residents in providing affordable housing.

TB said it was important to break the misconceptions around viability assessment. When an application is submitted, independent viability experts are appointed, and consider every element put forward from the cost of land to abnormal construction costs. If there was no headroom, developers would not put schemes forward. She said officers work very hard on numbers but developers have to make a profit. She said work around CIL and S106 agreements includes the cost of the land; developers work closely with the council, and are robustly challenged around those costs.

The Cabinet Member for Major Developments and Housing Regeneration agreed that allowing developers 15-20% headroom while the council operates on nothing when buying properties in the open market is out of balance. He said the acquisitions programme was originally around buy-backs of ex-council houses, and the acceleration of that scheme around the open market came further down the line in response to the refugee crisis and was partly funded by government. He conceded that buying from the open market to provide for need was ludicrous, but said that unless the government system changes, the council will continue to do this if it is the only way to deliver affordable housing.

Another Member had three questions, as follows:

- he asked if the acquisitions, buy-backs and commuted sum figures for affordable housing were brought into the overall totals for additionality or considered separately, and whether extra affordable housing bought by those schemes fit into S106 or additionality figures. EW confirmed that acquisitions and buy-backs are broadly the same thing, and included in additionality. Where commuted sums translate into delivery, with buy back or assisting with supporting additionality on a certain scheme – this would also be counted as part of additionality. All this is difficult to present, but where buy-backs, acquisitions and commuted sums equate to delivery, these are included in the additionality totals;
- he noted that the report states that acquiring empty homes is an area to capitalise and wondered if the limitations in pushing forward with this are due to

staffing and resource issues. EW confirmed that housing officers are working with the private sector housing team to consider how to move forward, but there are resource issues, with pressure on the private sector housing team significantly increased, partly due to the Ukraine crisis, and pressures of improving standards in the private sector, with further pressures anticipated going forward in light of the supported housing act requiring new licensing of exempt properties; officers have to work out their priorities from a policy point of view and find finance to deliver against all these schemes if required;

- as the Strategic and Local Plan provides an opportunity to consider new policies, he asked whether it would be possible to stratify housing delivery targets further: rather than the current 35/40% targets, could the requirement be 30% on developments of 10-50 houses, 35% on developments of 50-100, and 45% on developments of 500+? The officer said this could be done in theory, but there would be complications – it would need to be viability tested, with a number a typologies/apologies tested to see which strikes the sweet spot. It would also need agreement with Tewkesbury and Gloucester.

Another Member welcomed the sense of innovation in the report, and all the ideas of how to get more out of the system. He hoped that the housing team was permanent.

Following up the comments of TB, he noted that some councillors were not happy with the developer making 20% profit from Stone Crescent, but pointed out that developers, like everyone else, need to make money. He had three questions:

- the local housing needs assessment suggests that CBC needs to build 194 homes a year but has failed to do this so far, and would need to build 275 a year up to 2030 to get back on target. EW stated that the likelihood of achieving that is small, though if we get strategic allocations on line, this will go some way to meeting the need. With outline applications for strategic allocations submitted, he is confident that numbers will rise, although the 194 affordable housing figure should be taken with a pinch of salt, as it uses a different methodology from a few years ago. The housing list shows that we are going in the right direction, though not as quickly as we would like;
- regarding the number of people in B&Bs paid for by CBC, following the introduction of the new law on no-fault evictions in February, the officer was pleased to say the council makes very few placements, and length of stay is very short, with families accommodated for just a few days, and single people for less than a month before being moved to more secure long-term accommodation. CBC is also looking at innovative schemes to avoid using B&Bs, such as working with the YMCA to provide emergency accommodation.

A Member noted the huge transition of CBH to CBC and wondered how well-resourced the council currently is, to enable it to deal with any challenges. The officer confirmed that there is definitely a resource issue, despite great staff, and there are further pressures coming down the line, with the delivery of first homes and the admin following on. An officer of the major developments and regenerations team concurred that resourcing was challenging and difficult, nationally and locally, and but with the return of CBH, three new starters were now in position to help

deliver projects, which is great news for 320 Swindon Road and Monkscroft School. He said the team was not looking to expand further but to consolidate and define, and strategically consider the right way forward for the team.

The Member had three further questions:

- he wondered about the £180m for new house-building and where the council has got to with that. The Cabinet Member for Major Developments and Housing Regeneration said that spending on current projects is around £40-50m; this will ramp up with projected delivery at West Cheltenham;
- he noted that the Pittville School scheme had stymied and that there were other outstanding permissions affecting the five-year housing supply, and wondered what the council is doing to bring forward schemes such as this which include affordable housing. EW confirmed that the council is doing what it can to help bring forward these applications, in particular the critical scheme at Pittville School. He was pleased to say that 320 Swindon Road and Monkscroft School are progressing well;
- there are three definitions of affordable housing, but the key one, and one we need most, is social housing. He asked whether planning applications which include social housing against other types of affordable housing are being prioritised. EW said the through negotiation with developers, the council tries to achieve 70% rental properties – social housing as councillors would term in – and generally prioritise the delivery of this, the most genuinely affordable tenure for our residents. However, he said that compromise is sometimes necessary, for example at Shurdington Road, where the greatest need is for one-bed and four-bed properties. As a compromise, these are being included at social rent (50-55% of the market rate), with the remaining two-bed and three-bed properties at affordable rent (about 80% of the market rate). So yes, we are prioritising social rented housing, and this will come forward in the affordable housing guidance note as well as in the Strategic and Local Plan policies.

Councillor Chelin thanked everyone for a good airing of the issues, and officers for their report and responses. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services also thanked officers, and Members for their excellent questions. She said if they had any further questions to ask, they should get in touch with the team – this is the whole point of Overview and Scrutiny.

8 Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2023-2024

Councillor Chelin took the chair, and presented the report. She said it included an explanation of how the structure of O&S fits in the council's governance, a foreword from the Chair, a list of activities undertaken over the previous year, including scrutiny working groups and task groups. She invited questions and comments from Members.

One Member welcomed the report, saying it was well put together and accurately summarised the work of the committee. Another Member also found the report useful and had a question relating to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – is this a

live risk assessment which is monitored regularly? The Vice-Chair confirmed that there is a lot of activity in this area, and the paragraph would be updated to make this clear.

Members voted unanimously to recommend the report to Council.

9 Feedback from other scrutiny meetings attended

The Vice-Chair confirmed that Councillor Bamford had provided his usual comprehensive report from the Gloucestershire Health O&S Committee. A Member noted that the wait for elective procedures was 65 weeks – a high figure but showing improvement – and asked whether patients know that if they have to wait more than 18 weeks for treatment, they have the right to choose, and their healthcare provider has to provide private options. The Vice-Chair said this question would be passed on to Councillor Bamford.

There was no update from the Gloucestershire Economic Strategy Scrutiny Committee, as the next meeting of that group is on 28 November 2024.

Councillor Atherstone's report from the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel was added as a supplement.

Any questions or comments on any of the above will be welcome.

10 Review of scrutiny workplan

The Vice-Chair thanked everyone who had fed into the workplan, and hoped it accurately reflected what had been discussed.

The Monitoring Officer said that the presentation from the Cheltenham Trust, previously due in the January meeting, had been rescheduled. She advised that, in its absence and depending on the outcome of the Cabinet meeting on Tuesday 26 November, the Chair proposed considering the terms of reference for a task group around the closure of the Household Recycling Centre. Members agreed that this would be a timely addition.

11 Any other item that the Chair determines to be urgent

There were none.

12 Date of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 13 January 2025.

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Report to January 2025 Meeting of CBC Overview and Scrutiny Committee**Summary of 26th November 2024 Meeting of GCC Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

A full recording of this meeting is available in the “Online meetings” section of the GCC website. The public information pack which includes all presentations is also available on this website. The minutes are not yet available, so this paper is based solely on notes I took at the time.

1. Scrutiny Items –**1.1 Living Well and Ageing Well in Gloucestershire Urgent**

The Committee was presented with a model for dealing with frailty in Gloucestershire. The focus of the model was on keeping these vulnerable patients out of hospital as much as possible.

Whilst the assessment/ diagnostic phase may require a brief hospital stay the aim would be to provide personalised care as close to home as possible with ‘complex’ care at home teams and virtual wards enabling clinical teams to monitor patients remotely.

2. Information Items – see presentations for full details:**2.1 Gloucestershire Integrated Care System (GICS) Performance Report**

Diagnostic performance has plateaued after the improvement in waiting times seen in the summer. Gastroscopy, colonoscopy and echocardiography have failed to meet their recovery targets whilst most of the radiology modalities have been successful in doing so. Increasing demand for all diagnostic services shows no sign of abating. For example referrals for CT and MRI have doubled over the last 5 years.

A new provider for non-acute urgent care services is now in place. This new integrated urgent care service (IUCS) combines the provision of NHS 111, a new CAS (a GP led Clinical Assessment Service) and the GP out-of-hours service all within one organisation. It’s impact on our overall emergency services is yet to be seen.

Elective waits of more than 65 weeks have fallen dramatically since my last report from over 500 to just 78 but it should be remembered that the target is for patients to be seen and treated within 18 weeks. Only 66.2% are achieving that standard and given the massive numbers failing I requested information on those waiting 6 months, 9 months as well as 12 months to get an overall picture of the scale of the problem.

The impact of the winter plan presented to the previous HOSC meeting remains to be seen. None of the figures presented to this meeting gave any clues about the effectiveness of the many proposed measures which we hope have now all been implemented.

Again, the performance against the crucial cancer 62 day wait target from referral to treatment failed to improve, remaining static at 67%, failing even to reach the interim target of 70%. It is still miles away from the national target of 85%.

Improvements have been made to the Urology pathway, which along the colorectal cancer pathway provided most of the breaches of this target. Sadly 42 or 98 patients on the urology pathway still did not reach the target.

I have previously indicated in these reports that this is a national problem which is primarily due to a lack of capacity in cancer pathways, increase in demand (i.e. the number of people with cancer that is treatable) and the wider range of treatment options now available (i.e. the number of potential treatments available to any one patient) which has not been matched by a sufficient increase in resource.

The failure to achieve this target represents a great deal of anxiety for each patient as they wait for treatment, and it is inevitably the case that this will sometimes lead to worse outcomes.

From the trend information currently, available there is no evidence that significant improvement is likely in the near future which is why I requested an investigation into the harm suffered by patients subject to these long waits. A harm report is already being produced for each urology patient waiting over 104 days but this surely doesn't appropriately represent a full analysis of harm from continuing failure to meet this target.

2.2 NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB) Update – this report is now divided into 3 sections

- Section 1 an update on national and local commissioning issues
- Section 2 an update on primary care issues from the commissioner perspective (see 1.2 above)
- Section 3 an update from the 3 provider Trusts; Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust (GHC), Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (GHT) and South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SWAST)

These are reports presented for information rather than direct scrutiny, but it is encouraging to note a net increase in midwifery numbers of approximately 25 WTE in the first 6 months of the year. This has gone some way to addressing the shortfall, but the report indicates that more are required before the Aveta Birthing unit can be safely reopened.

Information/Discussion Paper

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 13th January 2024

Golden Valley Social Value Strategy

This note contains the information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Committee, but where no decisions from Members are needed.

1. Why has this come to scrutiny?

- 1.1 The social value workstream plays a significant role in the Golden Valley Development scheme. The overview and scrutiny committee has requested the opportunity to discuss the Golden Valley team's approach to social value throughout the project's duration.

2. Summary of the Issue

- 2.1 The Social Value Strategy will be central to the Golden Valley scheme, creating many opportunities to drive meaningful and positive change for Cheltenham and the wider region. The committee will have the opportunity to review the Strategy to gain insights, ask questions and offer feedback on how this will be delivered.

3. Summary of evidence/information

- 3.1 The Social Value Strategy has been submitted to the committee for review. It outlines the long-term legacy goals of the Golden Valley Development, detailing how the team plans to achieve them and track success.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 The Golden Valley team welcomes feedback and questions on the strategy. While the strategy is a working draft and will evolve, the main elements of delivery—such as the Social Value Charter and the Construction phases—will remain consistent. However, the specifics of how and what we deliver are still being developed, agreed upon, and may change over time.

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Accountability

Councillor Peter Jeffries, Cabinet Member for
Major Projects and Housing Delivery



Social Value Strategy v.2

2024

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1. Executive Summary

At Golden Valley, integrating social value into every stage of development is key to building a strong, inclusive community. Social value means that the Golden Valley Development (GVD) will create positive impacts for Cheltenham and surrounding areas. It will create opportunities, support local talent, and help the community grow in ways that benefit everyone. By focusing on education, jobs, and community collaboration, Golden Valley will improve quality of life and bring businesses and residents closer together for lasting change.

The Golden Valley Development, led by Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) and developer Henry Boot Development (HBD), is designed to blend seamlessly into West Cheltenham, offering a new part of town that fits well with its surroundings. Located next to Hester's Way and Springbank, these are areas facing significant income and employment challenges, the project aims to make a positive impact on these communities.

To understand the needs of the community and to kickstart our social value journey, we launched a 3-month community engagement program, meeting with 10 local community groups to discuss how the development can support them. These discussions have resulted in 10 social value activities, which are already being implemented (see Appendix 1).

The scale of the development should match its positive impact. The new buildings must not feel exclusive or separate from the wider town; everyone should benefit from housing, jobs, education, sustainability, and community support. This document outlines how the Golden Valley Development team and businesses using the site will follow social value goals and manage their contributions.

For social value to succeed, we will continue engaging with community partners, local groups, schools, and Councillors to gather feedback. All actions will align with the Council's priorities, including the No Child Left Behind Charity. This updated strategy, originally created by HBD in 2022, will be reviewed regularly to ensure it stays on track.



2. Introduction to Social Value

Social value is about the positive impact a project has on society and the community. It's becoming more important, especially in technology and research projects. When a new campus is built, it can have a big effect on the local area and economy.

Social value focuses on creating lasting growth, improving communities, and being responsible. Modern developments care about more than just making money—they aim to benefit society, support innovation, and protect the environment.

Benefits of Social Value:

- **Community Benefits:** Creating jobs and offering skills training to improve life for local people.
- **Environment:** Using sustainable practices to reduce waste and protect the planet.
- **Inclusivity:** Making sure everyone can take part and benefit, no matter their background or ability.
- **Partnerships:** Working with local schools, businesses, and groups to support community goals.
- **Long-term Impact:** Creating lasting benefits that make the community stronger.
- **Quality of Life:** Improving the well-being of individuals and families in the area.

A clear social value strategy connects the work done on campus with the needs of the local community, like creating jobs, teaching skills, and supporting local businesses. For Golden Valley, this means building a diverse workforce, offering training and apprenticeships, and providing job opportunities for all skill levels — from maintenance workers to tech experts.

By working with our local schools, colleges, and organisations, Golden Valley can help create a skilled workforce that meets the needs of both the community and the growing tech and research sectors.

Environmental responsibility is also important. Sustainable practices like energy-saving, waste management, and resource conservation show a commitment to protecting the environment. Green initiatives, such as nature-friendly public spaces and using renewable energy, make sure the project benefits both the community and the environment.

Adding social value to a technology and research campus like Golden Valley helps to support people and protect the planet, helping to build stronger local economies and a more connected society. We want to work closely with our Councillors, local community groups, and schools to make sure the right projects and initiatives are in place, ensuring the Golden Valley Development has a positive impact.

3. Long-Term Vision and Legacy

The Golden Valley development aims to make Cheltenham a leader in innovation, community strength, and sustainability. Focused on long-term benefits, it aligns with Cheltenham's values, emphasizing sustainable growth, community involvement, and investment in people and the environment. Golden Valley seeks to create a positive legacy, benefiting both Cheltenham and the wider county. The following outlines CBC's and HBD's aspirations for this development:

Leading Innovation:

Golden Valley will invest in technology and cyber industries, making Cheltenham a top destination for high-tech businesses. This will attract talent and companies from across the UK and beyond.

Creating Jobs and Skills:

The development will create ongoing job opportunities, especially in technology, cyber, and green industries. It will also offer a range of support roles and entry-level positions to help local residents build careers and support long-term economic growth.

Building Stronger Communities:

Golden Valley will strengthen local networks by providing accessible facilities, cultural programs, and community support services, helping residents feel connected and engaged in Cheltenham's future.

Caring for the Environment:

Golden Valley is committed to environmental sustainability with green spaces, biodiversity programs, and eco-friendly design. These efforts will protect natural areas and create vibrant outdoor spaces for the community.

Promoting Inclusivity:

Golden Valley will ensure the development is inclusive, with public spaces and workplaces that support fairness and equality for all, including underrepresented groups.

Supporting Cheltenham's Culture:

Golden Valley will invest in local arts, festivals, and community programs, helping Cheltenham remain a place where innovation and culture thrive together.

Boosting Local Economy:

The development will support local businesses and encourage new enterprises, ensuring the project benefits both current and future generations economically.

4. Social Value Principles

Our five principles of social value are designed to guide every aspect of the Golden Valley development, shaping how we engage with the local community, environment, and economy. These principles were set through a careful review of Cheltenham's unique needs and aspirations by key members of CBC and HBD, aiming to build a sustainable, inclusive, and thriving community hub.

Each principle serves a distinct purpose and together, these principles form a roadmap for responsible development, helping us create a legacy of social and environmental value.

Our strategy sets our 5 clear principles for GVD's Social Value:

- 1) Provide life-changing employment and skills opportunities to increase aspiration, opportunity, and accessibility for Cheltenham's residents.**
Fostering accessibility and ambition.
- 2) Support Cheltenham's and the wider region's economy to thrive and prosper with a focus on innovation.**
Allows Cheltenham to thrive as a forward-thinking hub of progress.
- 3) Contribute to Cheltenham's rich cultural offering and invest in, and collaborate with, community partners to address key societal challenges.**
Enriching Cheltenham's vibrant social fabric.
- 4) Deliver exceptional standards of health, safety, and wellbeing.**
Ensures that the development is a safe and supportive environment for all.
- 5) Protect and enhance Cheltenham's natural environment and biodiversity.**
Reinforces our role as stewards of the region's biodiversity, ensuring a positive ecological impact and mitigating any challenges from construction.

5. Social Value Charter

To help Golden Valley achieve our Social Value goals, we will create a Social Value Charter that all occupiers and tenants must agree to as part of their lease. This Charter will protect the Council's vision for the future, ensuring a lasting, positive impact on Cheltenham and beyond.

The Charter will provide a clear framework for businesses to contribute to the environment, economy, and local community, supporting both their long-term success and the wider area. This will include a Social Value Fund, which will be a small, optional annual contribution from tenants to support ongoing social value projects. However, we still need to finalise the details on how it will be managed and whether it will be included as a suggestion in the Charter. We are confident that future occupiers will be keen to contribute. This money will be reinvested directly into the local community and managed under agreed governance, with CBC involvement. The fund would support initiatives like skills training, local scholarships, and community improvements and target resources to areas with the greatest need.

The Charter will outline the commitments occupiers must follow while operating within Golden Valley. We will work closely with the Cheltenham community to ensure their needs are reflected in the Charter, with engagement already underway through workshops, site visits, and presentations.

The Charter will cover key areas such as:

1. Community Engagement

- **Supporting Local Initiatives:** Encouraging businesses to get involved with local charities, community projects, and social enterprises.
- **Job Creation:** Promoting local hiring practices and creating job opportunities for people in the surrounding area.

2. Environmental Sustainability

- **Energy Efficiency:** Committing to sustainable practices that reduce energy use, manage waste, and conserve water.
- **Carbon Footprint Reduction:** Taking action to reduce carbon emissions, including using renewable energy and promoting eco-friendly transport.

3. Inclusive and Accessible Spaces

- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Ensuring equal opportunities for people from all backgrounds, including underrepresented groups in the workforce.
- **Accessibility:** Making sure that workplaces are accessible to people with disabilities and offering fair access to services and facilities.

4. Workplace Well-being

- **Health and Well-being:** Promoting a healthy work environment that supports employees' mental and physical health.

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- **Workplace Flexibility:** Offering flexible working options and creating a positive, inclusive workplace culture.

5. Economic Impact

- **Supporting Local Businesses:** Encouraging occupiers to buy from local suppliers and hire local contractors.
- **Investing in Local Skills:** Offering training, apprenticeships, and mentoring to help develop the local workforce.

6. Long-term Positive Impact

- **Commitment to Sustainability:** Aligning business practices with long-term social, economic, and environmental goals.
- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Tracking and reporting on the social and environmental impacts of business activities.

The Social Value Charter will give occupiers the tools and guidance they need to contribute to a positive, lasting impact on Cheltenham and the wider region.

We plan to have the Charter ready by the end of Phase 1 of construction, so it will be in place when tenants and businesses begin moving into the Innovation Centre and Mobility Hub.

Benefits of the Occupier Social Value Charter:

- **Enhances Reputation:** The Charter shows our commitment to economic, social, and environmental responsibility in the local community.
- **Attracts High-Quality Tenants or Partners:** Golden Valley will attract tenants who share these values, giving us a competitive edge.
- **Boosts the Local Economy:** The Charter supports local jobs, businesses, and community projects, helping build a stronger economy.
- **Fosters a Positive Work Environment:** We are committed to creating a workplace culture that focuses on well-being, inclusivity, and sustainability.

The Social Value Charter will help ensure that Golden Valley is a place where businesses thrive while benefiting the local community and the environment.

6. Construction

Incorporating social value during the construction phases benefits the local community, environment, the developer HBD, tenants, and CBC. By focusing on sustainability, the buildings become more than just workplaces—they help create long-term success for the community.

As part of the tender process, we are setting clear targets for the main contractor. Together, we will develop and implement a Social Value Plan throughout each of the construction phases. Here are the key elements of the Social Value tender requirements:

1. Community Impact and Engagement

- **Job Creation:** Offering local job opportunities during construction through apprenticeships and by using local businesses, where possible, for various construction tasks.
- **Education:** Visiting schools and colleges to talk about construction jobs and career paths. We'll also arrange site visits for students.
- **Skills Development:** Providing training and apprenticeships to help build a skilled local workforce and reduce unemployment.
- **Support for Local Businesses:** Sourcing materials and services from local suppliers to support small businesses.
- **Building Community Connections:** Hosting community events and collaborating with local organisations to strengthen ties with the area.
- **Cultural Integration:** Creating spaces for cultural events or supporting local artists to connect the development with the community.
- **Positive Local Perception:** Showing a commitment to social value can improve public perception, strengthening relationships with local residents and businesses.

2. Environmental Sustainability

- **Reduced Carbon Footprint:** We aim to use sustainable construction methods, energy-efficient materials, and minimising waste to protect the environment.
- **Green Building Certifications:** We want our contractors to work towards earning special eco-friendly certificates that show they are using the best sustainable building practices.

3. Improved Building Performance

- **Operational Efficiency:** Using sustainable building methods to lower long-term operating costs, such as energy and water bills.

By including these Social Value commitments in the tender process, Golden Valley will not only deliver sustainable buildings but also create lasting benefits for the local community, economy, and environment. After each construction phase is finished, we will review all the Social Value goals and achievements to understand and share the positive impact that was made.

7. Measurement, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Governance

To make the Social Value Strategy at Golden Valley successful, we will set clear goals and track progress with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These KPIs will help us measure social, economic, and environmental outcomes. The following areas will be tracked:

1. Employment and Skills Development

- **Local Jobs:** Track how many jobs are filled by Cheltenham residents, with a focus on diversity.
- **Apprenticeships/Internships:** Measure the number of local apprenticeships and internships.
- **Educational Partnerships:** Track workshops and partnerships with local schools and colleges.

2. Community Engagement and Accessibility

- **Event Participation:** Measure attendance and feedback from community events.
- **Facility Access:** Monitor how often local residents use the facilities to ensure accessibility.

3. Environmental Sustainability

- **Carbon Reduction:** Track carbon offsets from energy-efficient practices and renewable energy.
- **Waste and Recycling:** Measure waste diversion and recycling rates.
- **Green Space:** Track the area of green space preserved and monitor biodiversity.

4. Charitable Contributions and Volunteering

- **Donations:** Track monetary donations to local charities.
- **Volunteering:** Measure the number of volunteer hours contributed to community projects.
- **Pro-bono Services:** Record the amount of pro-bono work provided to charities.

We will set specific KPIs for each phase of the project, tailored to the activities and goals of that stage. For example, KPIs for construction will differ from those for the businesses moving in. As the project progresses, KPIs will evolve to reflect the growing social value efforts.

Social Profit Calculator (SPC)

HBD and CBC will use a Social Profit Calculator (SPC) or a similar tool to track and measure social value throughout the project. This will help us see how well the project is meeting its goals and show its impact over time.

Governance and Oversight

A Social Value Project Team was established in November 2024 and will manage all social value activities. The project team includes social value leaders from CBC, Plexal and HBD and members of the CBC and HBD communications teams. Any important decisions will be escalated to Councillors for review and guidance. The team will meet regularly to track progress and make sure there are enough resources to achieve the goals.

We will report on KPIs every quarter, sharing progress with the Project Steering Group and Project Board. These reports will help us find areas for improvement and make any adjustments as needed.

Communication and Public Relations

Both CBC and HBD communications leads will be part of the Social Value project team and will work together to share success stories and positive updates about the project. Monthly project meetings will ensure good news is communicated to the public, building a positive image of the development.

By tracking KPIs and using the Social Profit Calculator, we'll ensure Golden Valley creates a lasting, meaningful impact on the community, economy, and environment, staying transparent and accountable.



8. Appendices

Appendix 1.

The following table outlines the short- and long-term social value activities that have already begun or are due to start and have been guided from discussions with local community groups in the Summer 2024.

Short term activities (deliver by June 2025)

NO	ACTIVITY
1.	Provide free event space for community events – such as the Lives of Colour 10th Anniversary of Black History Month
2.	Help digital skills providers that will directly upskill local children through digital programmes such as Code Ninjas and Jam Coding.
3.	Support community initiatives such as the pantries by running food collections at Hub8 MX
4.	Start to circulate the HBD monthly GVD newsletter to local community groups to keep them informed and updated.

Long term activities (deliver by end of Phase 1 construction)

NO	ACTIVITY
1.	Help young people to build careers in tech by providing work experience through our occupier networks
2.	Create a Community Social Value Charter for all businesses inside Golden Valley
3.	Develop the proposition for the Social Value Fund for Golden Valley members
4.	Set up appropriate networks within Golden Valley – e.g. Neurodiversity, BAME, Women's' Early Careers etc
5.	Ensure priority is given to local postcodes when applying for jobs in running/maintaining Golden Valley

Appendix 2.

The following tables outline the actions we intend to include in the Social Value Charter and as part of the Social Value Plan our main contractors will aim to deliver during construction phases. This was gained from feedback and discussions with potential Golden Valley occupiers and local community groups. Each table aligns with a Social Value principle.

1. Provide life-changing employment and skills opportunities to increase aspiration, opportunity, and accessibility for Cheltenham's residents.

Skills and education for local people	Description
Construction Apprentices and T-Levels	The development will aim to hire several construction apprentices throughout the process of development. Partnering with local education providers such as Gloucestershire College to promote these opportunities and support students with the application process will enhance its impact.
Local Hiring	The development will aim to generate new employment opportunities for the benefit of Cheltenham's residents. The new positions will be employment opportunities linked to the scheme and some will be offered to those in vulnerable groups which could include jobseekers, NEET, care-leavers, refugees, ex-forces or those experiencing homelessness.
Funded Work Placements of Internships	GVD will promote short-term paid work experience placements aimed at giving residents skills and experience required to get into longer term employment. Placement students would work with either the principal contractor or sub-contractors to offer a range of experience.
Short-term work placements of pre-employment courses	Working with local education providers, GVD will promote and support students to apply for short term placements or pre-employment courses aimed at offering them experience and skills to support their future careers.
Visits to site for local education providers	GVD will arrange for site visits to the scheme throughout the duration of the construction phase. Visitors will experience the site and interact with those delivering it, to showcase the range of career opportunities in construction and to create local engagement with the project.
Educational Curriculum-based activities and engagement	Partnering with local education providers, GVD will deliver careers education outreach workshops. These could include careers talks, project updates, mentoring, women in construction, curriculum-linked challenges or volunteering partnerships.
Work and interview Assistance, Career Guidance	The development should aim to work alongside the local Job Centre to deliver at employment workshops for local jobseekers. These workshops could include an introduction to careers in construction and employment pathways, CV writing workshops, mock interviews, and "Meet the Employer" events.

2. Support Cheltenham's economy to thrive and prosper with a focus on innovation.

One of the clearest pathways to contributing to the local area is to provide routes for jobs and skills development. Many of the communities within West Cheltenham experience a high level of deprivation and community needs, and this development allows for us to address some of those, particularly with providing those out of work with a route back in, and to open up new career pathways for young people.

Skills and talent	Description
Apprenticeships	The development should encourage tenant companies to hire apprentices, particularly from the local talent pool, to provide inclusive, alternate pathways into technical roles.
Internships	The development should encourage tenant companies to provide summer internships, year in industries or similar opportunities that help those earlier in their careers gain critical exposure to industry.
Work Placements	Working with industry partners to provide work placements within suitable companies, whether these are technology/digital jobs, or opportunities to work within chosen amenity providers for Golden Valley
School Outreach	Each company within Golden Valley should commit to providing time and resource towards working with local schools across Cheltenham and Gloucestershire. This could include talks at careers days or fairs, or support for mentoring children in their development where applicable.
Local Hiring	Each company in GVD should commit to hiring a percentage of their new hires from the local area. A suitable figure will need to be determined on what is achievable from the current and predicted talent pipeline.
Reskilling	Companies should be highly encouraged to engage and partner with the GVD skills hub and to support programmes delivered to help those looking to reskill to get into the digital and cyber sectors. Individuals could be those not in work or those looking to change career.
The GVD Skills Hub	The Skills Hub is a proposed support network run by Gloucestershire County Council, The University of Gloucestershire and Golden Valley, along with industry partners. It seeks to make it simpler for any individual from any background to get into a digital role. Companies in GVD will be encouraged to be involved and to hire from this programme.
Networks	By integrating local community networks in Golden Valley, we can create an active support system that addresses both resident needs and business interests, fostering a sense of shared community and collaboration. This will include partnerships with organisations that provide local employment resources, skills training, community events and inclusivity and accessibility requirements.

3. Contribute to Cheltenham's rich cultural offering and invest in, and collaborate with, community partners to address key societal challenges.

Social and Community Integration

Community integration is key to ensuring that the Golden Valley development becomes a positive presence in Cheltenham, and particularly West Cheltenham, blending seamlessly with the needs of local residents while meeting the demands of occupier businesses. Golden Valley will prioritise initiatives such as local discount programmes to support residents, shared community spaces for events and clubs, and outdoor quiet zones for reflection and relaxation. The development could also create well-lit running and cycle routes and open its spaces to schools, cultural groups and sports activities, promoting engagement and healthy living across the community.

Social and community integration initiative	Description
Local Discount Program	GVD could work with amenity organisations to provide discounts to certain resident groups in the area, potentially partnering with groups such as the West Cheltenham Pantry, to achieve this. This would allow those in deprivation to acquire good quality food for a more achievable price.
Outdoor Quiet Zones	Part of providing an accessible space, but also a useful support for residents, outdoor quiet zones in green spaces could be a good place to give mindful, reflective areas and provide a place for people to go to if the main campus environment proves too busy.
Community Health Engagement	Golden Valley will promote healthy living by investing in accessible facilities and programmes for exercise and sport, including potentially partnering with local health organisations to provide wellness programmes.
Cycle/ Running/ Dog-walking Routes	Routes that encourage people to be active or provide a mentally easy choice for a run or cycle. Marking out these routes so people have a clear route to follow, particularly useful who may be less familiar with the area, and ensuring they are well lit to ensure safety.
Community Networks	By integrating local community networks in Golden Valley, we can create an active support system that addresses both resident needs and business interests, fostering a sense of shared community and collaboration. This will include partnerships with organisations that provide local employment resources, skills training, community events and inclusivity and accessibility requirements.
Schools	Ensuring that GVD's spaces, both event spaces, indoor and outdoor, and green spaces are useable by schools, and also any possible educational spaces (museum, labs, skills hub etc) to help inspire the next generation.
Sports	GVD should contribute towards the provision of space, but also the funding of healthy living and exertive exercise for residents in the local area.
Clubs/ Activities	GVD can work with local charitable and community groups to allow for the use of GVD spaces outside of core working hours and at weekends for the delivery of community health, meetings and clubs.
Cultural	GVD can open its event space to activities promoting the needs of other cultures in Cheltenham and Gloucestershire, such as through the Lives of Colour group.

Social and community integration initiative	Description
Charitable Engagement	Golden Valley will actively support local charities through a combination of financial contributions, employee volunteering and skilled pro-bono services, fostering a culture throughout the development of community involvement.

Development of a Golden Valley Social Value Fund

As described on page 6, a Social Value Fund will be part of the Social Value Charter, with the aim to reinvest directly into the local community. Managed under agreed governance, with CBC involved, the fund would support initiatives like skills training, local scholarships, and community improvements.

An independent Social Value Committee, made up of key stakeholders including members of CBC, will oversee the fund to ensure transparency and target resources to areas of greatest need, ensuring a lasting social impact.

Social Value Fund initiative	Description
STEM	The social value fund should utilise part of its money to invest in sponsoring skills development in the local area particularly supporting those from deprived areas across Cheltenham and Gloucestershire.
Facilities Management	The fund can also use part of its funding towards maintaining and enhancing top-grade community facilities, ensuring they remain accessible and beneficial to all local residents and businesses.
Community Infrastructure	The social value fund should spend some of its money on helping to build local community infrastructure for health, sports, skills and to reinvigorate community assets.
Charity Support	Some funding from the SV fund should be put towards supporting the activities of local charities. This work can be undertaken prior to the construction of the buildings, and that money could be spent on skills for local people, job applications, or other uses.
Broader SV Activities	There may be other social value activities captured in the process of engaging with occupiers and existing community groups which can be prioritised under one of these existing pillars or under a new focus of activity.

4. Deliver exceptional standards of health, safety, and wellbeing.

Inclusivity and accessibility are central to creating thriving workspaces at Golden Valley. By prioritizing accessible facilities and inclusive environments, businesses can build a diverse workforce that supports people with different needs, abilities, and backgrounds. This fosters innovation, equity, and a healthier workplace culture.

Golden Valley will design spaces that accommodate neurodiversity, provide wheelchair access, offer quiet zones, and support flexible working. The design will also consider childcare needs and mental health initiatives, ensuring spaces are welcoming, safe, and easy to navigate for both staff and residents.

Accessibility and inclusivity initiative	Description
Inclusive Workplaces	Workspaces should be designed for equitable use, incorporating Universal Design and Inclusive Design principles. It is important to incorporate an element of flexibility to adapt for varying needs (for example the ability to adjust height of desks or being able to change light intensity).
Indoor Quiet Zones	Ensuring there are areas of calm and relaxation, where individuals can sit undisturbed, whether that be to work quietly, to take a break or engage in mindfulness and meditation.
Covered Outdoor Spaces	Providing covered outdoor spaces in the development will increase the accessibility of outdoor spaces whatever the weather, ensuring there are places of shelter.
Occupier & Resident Safety	Close attention should be paid to the safety of residents and those employed within the development. Standard safety procedures should be followed including CCTV networks, secure entry systems and appropriate lighting. However further consideration should be given through initiatives such as safe nighttime walking routes, community watches and designing open outdoor spaces so they do not create hiding spaces.
Protected Characteristics	To support people with protected characteristics, Golden Valley will foster an environment of fairness and equity, ensuring inclusive policies and accessible opportunities for all. For individuals with wider disabilities, we are committed to designing accessible spaces and providing resources that allow everyone to fully participate in the community and workplace.
Disabilities	
BAME	To champion BAME communities, we will promote cultural inclusivity and representation through outreach, equitable hiring practices and support networks, reinforcing diversity as a strength within our development.
Amenity Opening Hours	The development should accommodate for a range of working hours with the opening time of amenities. It is important that individuals working within the development are able to pick up shopping on their way home from work or get food into the evening if working late.
Networks	The development should have a range of networks available including, but not limited to, LGBTQ+ Network, Women's Network, Disability Network and Neurodiversity Network. These networks provide a crucial platform for individuals to connect and advocate for their needs as a collective.

5. Protect and enhance Cheltenham's natural environment and biodiversity.

Environment and sustainability are at the core of the vision for the Golden Valley campus, ensuring that the development is not only a hub for innovation and technology but also a model for environmental construction and stewardship. The project aims to achieve BREEAM Outstanding and NABERS 5.5 Star

ratings on the National Cyber Innovation Centre, demonstrating its commitment to the highest standards in sustainable construction. Golden Valley will prioritise energy efficiency through the use of renewable energy and green technologies, while also creating biodiverse spaces like green roofs, public parks and outdoor quiet zones. These initiatives will promote well-being and reduce the environmental footprint.

Sustainability and environment initiative	Description
Energy Efficiency	Energy Efficiency throughout the construction process, in terms of the materials used and the method of construction is highly important, but so also is the lifespan of the building. Utilising energy efficiency techniques, but also holding occupiers to a proscribed set of energy-saving activities is key to achieving the campus' sustainability goals.
Sustainable Transport	Encouraging and incentivising electric and other sustainable transports options are extremely important. The use of public transport to also reduce the number of individuals driving to and from GVD could be incentivised with a GVD members pass which discounts bus travel along that single route.
Biodiversity	Biodiversity should be considered in both the design and delivery of green spaces, and all occupiers and nearby residents should be aware of their roles that they play in helping to maintain the biodiversity.
Green Spaces	Provision of secondary green spaces has been considered under the planning for GVD. However, the utilisation of the green spaces within the campus should also be considered, and there should be the option for fitness classes, outdoor walking groups and other community uses.
Recycling	There should be requirements for each occupier to recycle their waste where appropriate in line with current regulations and requirements from Cheltenham Borough Council.
Local Produce for Amenity	GVD will aim where achievable, to source produce for its amenities such as cafes, bars and restaurants from local providers, whether that is direct from source, or through local delivery partners. GVD will also commit to selecting local companies to provide the amenities on campus.
Community Networks	By integrating local community networks in Golden Valley, we can create an active support system that addresses both resident needs and business interests, fostering a sense of shared community and collaboration. This will include partnerships with organisations that provide local employment resources, skills training, community events and inclusivity and accessibility requirements.
Zero Carbon Construction Practices	Ensuring that all construction undertaken minimises carbon emissions during both the building phase and the lifecycle of the structure, including using energy-efficient machinery and sustainable materials.

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2025

Title	Objective	Format	Officer/Interested Party/Partner
24 February 2025 – (Deadline 14th February)			
Reconciling the challenges of heritage protection with sustainability measures	Identifying factors to develop a workable balance between protecting heritage and implementing environmental solutions (retrofit); Receiving feedback from the community retrofit project and other initiatives to meet our climate net zero targets.	Information/Discussion Paper	Head of Development Management, Enforcement and Compliance Climate Emergency Team
Sports and Physical Activity Action Plan	To ensure that youth inclusion is effectively being considered and integrated into the Plan . To provide the opportunity for scrutiny to feedback any gaps in provision across the borough.	Draft Plan examination	Head of Communities, Wellbeing and Partnerships
Review of Collection Development Policy	Current policy – how it categorised, accessed and what is the retention, loaning arrangements.	Draft policy	Head of Communities, Wellbeing and Partnerships
31 March 2025 – (Deadline 21st March)			
Climate Impact of Waste Disposal	Javelin Park and emissions	Briefing Note	Environmental Partnerships Manager/GCC
Culture Board	Assessing outcomes of the activities and measuring success against original objectives	Information/Discussion Paper	Head of Communities, Wellbeing and Partnerships
28th April 2025 – (Deadline 18th April)			
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and Accessibility update	Present impact of new EDI policy Identifying good practice and reviewing targets	Report	Director of Governance and Customer Services (Monitoring Officer)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2025

Title	Objective	Format	Officer/Interested Party/Partner
7 July 2025 onwards – (Deadline 27th June)			
Safeguarding – Safety for Women and Girls in the Borough	Acting on suggestions and recommendations from the St Giles’s report and the ‘In Their Own Words Event’	Information/Discussion Paper	Safeguarding and Partnerships Manager
Minster Exchange	Update on first year of operation. Assessing the impact against original objectives	Report	Chief Executive
Housing Transition	An update on progress following the integration of housing services into CBC one year ago	Information/Discussion Paper	Chief Executive
Devolution	Assessing the opportunities and threats of devolution and how officers are prioritising/responding to these.	Information/Discussion Paper	Chief Executive
Draft Procurement Strategy	To consider the emerging CBC procurement strategy	Information/Discussion Paper	Strategic Procurement Manager
Empty Homes	Evaluating data and measures to encourage putting back in use and respective barriers	Information/Discussion Paper	Private Sector Housing
Cheltenham Trust	Assessing priorities and income targets including the impact of the collection development policy on user attraction	Information/Discussion Paper	Head of Communities, Wellbeing and Partnerships