

Council

Monday, 14th October, 2019
2.30 - 7.55 pm

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

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Flynn, Horwood, Stennett and Wheeler.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Sudbury and Cooke declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 as residents of Leckhampton, in the area of the proposed senior school.

Councillor Babbage declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 9 as an employee of an energy company. He would not participate in the debate of this item and would leave the chamber.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 July were approved and signed as a correct record.

4. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor wished to put on record his congratulations to Gloucestershire County Cricket Club in achieving promotion to the First Division of the County Championship.

The Mayor then reported on his latest mayoral highlights.

The Mayor invited the Leader to address Council with regard to the awards that the Council had recently received. He reported that at the 2019 APSE service Cheltenham Borough Council celebrated with its community partners being finalists in three categories: Best collaborative working initiative for 'Cheltenham Remembers' project, 'Best Service Team Cemetery and Crematorium service' and winning 'Best Commercial and Entrepreneurship Initiative'. He also reported that Cheltenham

Borough Homes had won at the Travis Perkins Managed Services (TPMS) 'My Community Awards 2019' for their Thrive project, a six month alternative provision programme where young people at risk of exclusion worked towards receiving their ASDAN Careers and Experiencing Work certificates.

The Mayor then went on to say that in October at the annual regional South West Councils Local Government Challenge, Cheltenham Borough Council entered a joint team with Gloucester City Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council achieving second place at the industry challenge, which aimed to give aspiring managers a first-hand experience of the challenges being faced by strategic leadership teams on a daily basis.

5. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Leader wished to remind Council that a member seminar had been arranged for 23 October on strategic planning and major infrastructure. He reported that Council was due to receive the CIL governance report for consideration at this meeting, however government had recently amended the regulations so officers were currently reassessing the balance with Section 106 funding.

Finally, the Leader wished to put on record his best wishes to Councillor Flynn who was currently unwell in hospital.

6. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS

There were none.

7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1.	Question from Amber Astron Christo to Cabinet Member Green Environment, Councillor Chris Coleman
	At the Council meeting I attended previously, you had said you would deal with the issue of lack of street <u>cleaning</u> . However, there seems to be little change. The impression I get is that there is no intent to keep the streets of Cheltenham clean. The town centre is one small part of the town. What exactly is the policy on street cleaning for Cheltenham? Are you intending to take proper action over this issue?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As Cabinet Member for Clean and Green Environment, keeping the town clean is a priority and residents in Cheltenham will see the two new 15 tonne mechanical road sweepers out and about and we are already seeing improvements in the cleanliness of our roads, not just in the town centre but out in the borough too. The previous two road sweepers were hire vehicles which kept breaking down and to maintain the high quality standards expected across the town new vehicles have been purchased and will be better able to deal with the impact of the changing weather patterns and leaf fall throughout the year. Street cleansing is being reviewed this year as part of our commitment to improve standards work has already started in the town centre. Positive feedback from businesses about the cleanliness in the town centre is welcomed and these improvements will be rolled out across the borough between now and the end of March 2020.

	<p>I can confirm there is a programme of mechanical street sweeping which starts in the town centre and along our gateway routes into Cheltenham early every morning and then moves out into the borough. The mechanical sweeper drivers have a list of roads each day to sweep which, over the period of a year, covers all roads in Cheltenham. Some areas need more mechanical street sweeping than others, particularly where there is heavier leaf fall. A programme of manual street sweeping/detritus clearing is also in place which includes a manual clean out of those gutters/gullies as necessary.</p> <p>Where drains are blocked, Gloucestershire County Council/highways are asked to assist in clearing out the drains however there are frequent difficulties with their availability and parked cars blocking gullies or drains. We will continue to work with residents and Gloucestershire County Council/highways to ensure our drains are cleared.</p> <p>The specific issues raised have been responded to separately but in all cases service visits took place between early August and the end of September.</p>
	Supplementary question from Amber Astron Christo
	Are you going to reverse the policy for cleaning residential streets, which at the moment only get cleaned when people make repeated complaints?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment clarified that a regular street cleaning regime was in place. He acknowledged that this process needed to be constantly analysed and revisited in order to maximise its effectiveness.
2.	Question from Amber Astron Christo to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Jordan
	<p>It has been reported that £37.5 million was paid for the 45 hectares of land for the Cyber Park.</p> <p>a) Was this figure calculated as industrial or residential land, or both, and were Government Land Estimate values used?</p> <p>b) Did the seller know the intended use of the land prior to the deal?</p> <p>c) How many of the 3000 homes to be built will be solely for Cyber Park workers, how many for local people, and how many will be affordable 1/2/3 bedroom properties?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>a) The land purchased is allocated for employment and residential. Therefore viability appraisals were undertaken based on office/mixed-use and residential values. Market data was used to indicate values. Government Land Estimate values were not used.</p> <p>b) Yes, the sellers were aware of the intended use of the land. The uses are identified under policy A7 in the Joint Core Strategy.</p> <p>c) Residential accommodation is unlikely to be restricted to Cyber Park workers. The Joint Core Strategy Policy states that 'within the</p>

	strategic allocation sites a minimum of 35% affordable housing will be sought'. Any development will be sought in line with planning policy.
	Supplementary question from Amber Astron Christo
	The response stated that affordable housing would be 'sought'. Who will that request be sought from, and why can the Council not just demand since it owns the land?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The Leader of the Council responded that this specific comment related to the planning process, wherein a Joint Core Strategy had been agreed. This stated that in the case of urban extensions, the Council would seek a minimum of 35% affordable housing. The Council would be keen to insist upon it, but the JCS required that certain viability criteria be satisfied first. The Council owned some of the land that will be involved, which offers a greater likelihood of achieving what it wanted.
3.	Question from Peter Clegg to Cabinet Member Clean & Green Environment, Councillor Chris Coleman
	<p>It strikes me that CBC will have difficulty meeting Net-Zero by 2030 if it does not work closely with other Glos councils whatever their political makeup. Is CBC actively pursuing working with other Glos Councils in respect of tackling all the issues associated with the Climate Emergency.</p> <p><i>Note on P37 The solutions that Cheltenham requires to achieve carbon neutrality will both support and be supported by activity in neighbouring District and City Councils, and at the County level. Existing relationships will need to be strengthened and new relationships formed to ensure that collaboration is smooth across the whole organisation. These will include other agencies, such as Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust, who will be critical partners to successfully deliver the target.</i></p> <p>Did CBC consider working partnerships with other Gloucestershire councils & GCC before commissioning an external consultant and additionally, the costs of 'going it alone' will be prohibitive for each council, yet there will be overlap of resources and projects. For each council to run its own Citizen's assembly, possibly including the same external experts this would be repetitive and costly. Have CBC considered this?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The Council has and will continue to work with other Gloucestershire councils, businesses, residents and community organisations to help meet the 2030 net-zero targets, which we acknowledge will be hugely challenging.</p> <p>The Council's lead consultant, Simon Graham, has engaged with a number of organisations prior to drafting his report, including other Gloucestershire Councils, businesses and community organisations when preparing its report.</p> <p>It is worth highlighting that Gloucestershire Councils have declared climate emergencies at different times and there was a target deadline for Cheltenham's high level plan to be presented to full Council, due to the agreed emergency.</p>

	<p>An external specialist consultant was commissioned to give the authority added expertise, insight and capacity to create a credible overview of the extent of change required to meet the 2030 targets requested by Council. Each local authority area has different opportunities and challenges depending on their geographical location and circumstances, but there are clearly opportunities for project collaboration, sharing of resources and expertise.</p> <p>Simon was selected to help the Council, as he knows Cheltenham well, having previously worked for a number of years at local company Commercial Ltd, driving the implementation of a very successful sustainability programme and achieving a number of 'firsts' for the company, including first in the sector to be Carbon Neutral and Zero Waste.</p> <p>Community and wider stakeholder engagement will be an essential element in meeting the 2030 target, because the authority cannot hope to achieve this without the buy-in of the public, the business community and the voluntary sector. The Council will be engaging with other Gloucestershire authorities to establish how best this can be done, including the option for a Citizens' Assembly.</p> <p>A meeting of senior officers from authorities across the county is taking place at Stroud on 5th November.</p>
4.	Question from Peter Clegg to Cabinet Member Housing, Councillor Peter Jeffries
	<p>The report discusses at some length the need for a range of renewable energy and Net Zero Buildings for new build, but as the report noted Cheltenham has a Regency legacy as well as a 60's legacy of poorly insulated properties. The consultants report mentions retrofit almost in passing, yet with such a large housing stock already existing these buildings, many in the private rental sector, have to be substantially improved for Net Zero carbon reduction.</p> <p>What measures will CBC take to ensure these poorly insulated properties, many in private ownership, are upgraded?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>See answer to Q5.</p> <p>In addition, the Council recognises the need for a step-change in the energy efficiency of the existing housing stock. This will need to include a reappraisal of the authority's own dwelling stock, the majority of which is currently heated by fossil-gas. One suggestion is that we should apply energy efficiency measures to a number of local authority dwelling types, to use as exemplars of what can be achieved to incentivise investment by home owners and landlords.</p> <p>Here again there are challenges for government, as rental formulas linking to housing benefit do not allow energy costs to be taken into account. This is another area where the government needs to consider how it can intervene to help encourage the changes required through financial incentives. It would also be helpful for VAT to be removed from energy efficiency measures.</p>

	<p>Ultimately through a combination of leadership, collaboration and enabling, home owners should be able to reduce their carbon footprint, we all must work continuously to maximise the number of homes within our communities reach the net zero target.</p>
	<p>Supplementary Question</p>
	<p>For many years, Vision 21 organised Cheltenham Green Open Doors, where local householders opened their homes to display their approach to sustainability issues (e.g. solar panels, insulation). Over two days, 500-700 visitors visit around 20 homes. Will the Council support this initiative? It halted due to a lack of financial support despite support from local businesses and newspapers.</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>The Cabinet Member Housing responded that collaborative work with communities is key. He indicated that he would be willing to support the initiative were he to receive more information about it.</p>
5.	<p>Question from Rose Lennard to Cabinet Member Development & Safety Andrew McKinlay</p>
	<p>Cheltenham has a high proportion of listed buildings which are both hard to insulate and heat, and which usually have a lot of planning (Listed Building) restrictions on what can be done to their fabric, making it hard for home owners to carry out improvements to help achieve the carbon neutral target. Does the Council have any proposals for how to tackle this problem?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>The Council has long supported energy efficiency initiatives in relation to both its own housing stock and through the promotion of grant incentives to private sector dwellings. The county-wide 'Warm and Well' project, which has operated for many years and is delivered in partnership with the Severn Wye Energy Agency, is a good example of this and has included initiatives in relation to 'hard to treat' homes.</p> <p>In respect of Listed buildings specifically, of which Cheltenham has 2,602, there are no universal quick and easy answers to this conundrum.</p> <p>To become carbon neutral means moving away from using fossil-gas as a heat source and re-thinking the required energy efficiency of existing and new-build housing. At the moment, there is nothing in place to force improvements to the existing building stock and Listed buildings have statutory protections, which probably need to be reconsidered in light of the climate emergency.</p> <p>Similarly, the Building Regulations set the minimum energy efficiency standards for new build and Cheltenham has previously fallen foul of the planning inspectorate by seeking to impose higher standards, resulting in cost awards against the authority.</p> <p>There is therefore a need here to ask the government to either raise the national standards, or provide more autonomy to local government to act at the local level without fear of financial penalty. We are likely to be writing to government if the recommendations in the climate report are accepted by Council and I would be happy to include a reference to this</p>

	issue.
	Supplementary Question
	You have said that you are likely to write to government if the recommendations in the report are adopted by the council. Can we take this as an assurance that you will be writing to the government?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The Cabinet Member Development and Safety confirmed that this would be the case.
6.	Question from Rose Lennard to Cabinet Member Development & Safety Andrew McKinlay
	Tree planting is a quick win and popular with the public. Letting trees plant themselves (natural regeneration) is very low or zero cost. Has the Council started to identify sites for more tree cover, and is the option of natural regeneration being considered as part of the approach?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	Yes, the authority is actively looking at both of these options and would encourage other landowners to consider how they might work in partnership with the authority and other organisations to help deliver on this ambition.
	Supplementary Question
	You say that local authorities are actively looking at both of these options and would encourage other landowners to consider how they might work with this partnership. How is the Council going to go about this – outreach, publicity, education or contact with local landowners?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The Cabinet Member Development and Safety responded that it was premature at this stage to confirm an exact plan. CBC would initially look at its own land and consider which sites would most benefit. Partners and other landowners would invariably be included in the process.
7.	Question from Dave Entwistle to Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Chris Coleman
	Question regarding Carbon Neutral Cheltenham - Leadership through Stewardship
	Section 6.1 3rd bullet point. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Some political groups in the area might be more progressive than others and therefore, there was a concern about establishing a joint assembly, where it might not be possible to secure agreement on targets.</i> Please would you explain the meaning behind this statement?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	I was not at the meeting referred to and cannot therefore comment on what the meaning was behind this statement. However, it is clear from the unanimous Council vote in relation to the climate emergency declaration, that there is cross-party support for local action to quickly reduce the carbon emissions of both CBC and the borough as a whole.
8.	Question from Dave Entwistle to Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Chris Coleman
	Question regarding Carbon Neutral Cheltenham - Leadership through Stewardship

	<p>Section 6.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.2 <i>The Chair felt that the fundamental problem was that those things that were killing the planet were also those things that made life more comfortable and certain people the most money. She felt that the carrot was always more successful than the stick, but acknowledged that this was something that would need to be tackled in partnership with other organisations.</i> <p>Who was the Chair and does the council agree with her statement, if so, does this mean that the council is unwilling to employ metaphorical sticks, despite the fact a Climate Emergency exists?</p>
Response from Cabinet Member	
	<p>The Chair, Councillor Klara Sudbury, was expressing a personal view and I understand from her that she is for instance keen to ensure more cycle infrastructure is in place to encourage people to feel safe cycling before complaining about not enough people cycling.</p> <p>However, it is reasonable to assume that delivering the 2030 net zero target will require a mixture of both ‘carrot and stick’.</p> <p>It is worth noting that the Council has shown a willingness to be proactive in the face of some local opposition, for example, in relation to traffic management changes at Boots’ corner, primarily aimed at improving public transport punctuality and the town centre environment for walking and cycling.</p>
9.	Question from Betti Stephens to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	<p>Question regarding Carbon Neutral Cheltenham</p> <p>Thank you to Cheltenham Borough Council for your efforts so far on this subject – a massive challenge as we see from the risk assessment table, but one that we have to tackle with urgency.</p> <p>The vision for Cheltenham as set out in the report by DCA states: ‘The vision for 2030, is that Cheltenham fulfils its vision to be a place: where all our people and the communities they live in thrive; where culture and creativity thrives, celebrated and enjoyed throughout the year; where businesses and their workforces thrive and where everyone thrives, in a setting that is net zero carbon and recognisably, iconically Cheltenham’.</p> <p>This doesn’t make any mention of other species, nature, biodiversity. Without a thriving natural ecology our own species becomes increasingly vulnerable in all sorts of ways. Can this vision be amended to explicitly embrace the wider natural world?</p>
Response from Cabinet Member	
	<p>A thriving natural ecology is very important and the Council is already working on issues such as encouraging greater biodiversity. I don’t believe the communities we live in will thrive if we don’t have a thriving natural ecology as well so the issues raised are implicit in the vision outlined which is taken from the existing Cheltenham Place Strategy.</p>

	See also answer to Qu 10 below.
10.	Question from Betti Stephens to Cabinet Member Clean & Green Environment, Councillor Chris Coleman
	Question regarding Carbon Neutral Cheltenham The ambitious plans and measures will require as much support and buy-in from the wider community. Has the Council considered ways to encourage the widest possible engagement from the local community and – most importantly – mechanisms to maintain this engagement in the long term?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	See answer to Q3 above.
11.	Question from Ed Saul to Cabinet Member Clean & Green Environment, Councillor Chris Coleman
	"While the Council report rightly focuses its attentions on carbon neutrality and sustainability, the international debate is now focusing on regeneration – such as the Common Earth initiative established on Fri 4th. Oct by members of the Commonwealth. There is a genuine risk that focusing only on industrial emissions and not proactive sequestering will make council initiatives obsolete long before they are completed. We have come to the point at which local governments must consider rewilding solutions such as Multistrata Agroforestry, Tree Plantations and Wildlife Corridors. What consideration, if any, has CBC given to regenerating natural resources and wildlife, the latter particularly in light of the recent State of Nature report showing that 40% of wild species in the UK have declined since 1970?"
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The climate change agenda presents us all with huge challenges and we have to be honest in accepting the contribution which Cheltenham and its citizens have and continue to make to environmental degradation, including habitat pressures on wildlife. This position cannot be easily reversed, but it is critical that we seek to do so. This will require political commitment for lifestyle changes across the planet on a scale which many will find difficult to accept. The Council has taken the initiative by publicly declaring a climate emergency and is reviewing its own activities in light of the cross-party commitment to work towards carbon neutrality for CBC and the wider borough by 2030. In addition to responsibility for many of the green amenity spaces across Cheltenham, including Leckhampton Hill, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the Council is undertaking lots of work aimed at maintaining and/or promoting natural resources and wildlife. To an extent this is 'business as usual' for the authority, but we acknowledge the scope for the authority to have a more significant impact on wildlife and carbon emissions in future years. Recent examples of demonstrable action would include moving towards

	<p>more wild flower and perennial planting in our gardens; creating a wildflower butterfly meadow as part of our new crematorium project and working with 'The Friends of Winston Churchill Gardens', who have secured trees from The Woodland Trust for planting on the Honeybourne Line.</p> <p>We are also looking to set up a project with volunteers at Benhall Open Space and Elmfield Playing Field in connection with 'The Big Climate Fightback' on 30th November, with the aim of planting 1,000 plus trees.</p> <p>We are also involved in a major project 'Connecting and Creating Habitat' looking to introduce more biodiverse spaces into the town centre, with the new planting areas in the High Street (in front of John Lewis) being an example of this. This scheme has received match funding from the European Structural Investment Fund.</p> <p>The Council's work is taking place despite recent austerity measures and cuts to local authority funding. It is therefore essential that we continue to press for more resources for local government to support the local action that will be essential to mitigate the potential severity of climate change and to prepare for the inevitable consequences of global heating that are already happening.</p>
12.	Question from Adrian Becker to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	<p>It is heartening to read that "CBC currently interrogates the climate change implications of every decision". This isn't however set out very clearly in committee reports. Will the leader of the Council instruct officers to clearly set out the total CO₂ emissions that will be emitted as a result of the decisions recommended in each committee report, including planning decisions?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>We recognise the significance of the authority's decisions on the environment and the pertinence of their CO₂ impact. As stated CBC does attempt to assess the implications of every decision.</p> <p>However, we have no current mechanism to calculate the exact CO₂ emission impact of every decision which the Council needs to make to carry out its business. Bearing in mind the financial pressures on local government we need to ensure the cost of reaching a decision is not more than actually implementing it, but are happy to investigate with others how this may be made more effective.</p>
13.	Question from Adrian Becker to the Cabinet Member Finance Councillor Rowena Hay
	<p>The report makes clear that investments made by pension funds to which CBC contributes are not included in the carbon emissions of the Council. Will the Leader of the Council make a member of the existing CLT responsible for coordinating lobbying of the Gloucestershire LGPS until the pension fund divests from the carbon economy?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Gloucestershire County Council Pensions Section are responsible for the administration of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for the 200+ employers and their employees within the geographical area of Gloucestershire.</p>

	<p>The LGPS is a statutory, funded, Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) pension scheme. As such the scheme is very secure as benefits are defined and guaranteed by law. Any changes to the legislation of the scheme are governed nationally by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).</p> <p>Cheltenham Borough Council, and most of the other Gloucestershire district councils and the county council have declared a Climate Emergency, as such I would expect our respective representatives to make clear our desire to move to a carbon neutral economy and that pension fund investments should reflect that. I have asked our representative to do this.</p> <p>I also asked the County's Pension Section for the current position and I'm still waiting for a reply, however the following may be helpful.</p> <p>Gloucestershire Pensions Committee is the decision-making body of the pension fund, in the past it would make the allocations of investments directly with investment fund managers. A few years ago, government required LGPS bodies to come together in partnerships and 'pool' their funds to increase economies of scale and be big enough to invest in infrastructure. Gloucestershire is part of the Brunel Pension Partnership, so now the Pension Committee choose the asset class and Brunel choose the investment fund manager.</p> <p>The Environment Agency Pension Fund, which has had a highly developed ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) and RI (Responsible Investment) strategy, has played a key role in shaping the ethos of the Brunel Partnership.</p> <p>I also know that moving towards a low carbon investment strategy has been discussed at the committee on a number of occasions and further debate is to be had on the subject. Recently around £50 million was invested in low carbon equities, however this is only just over 2% of the whole fund.</p>
14.	Question from Lorraine Du Feu to Cabinet Member Corporate Services, Councillor Alex Hegenbarth
	<p>At the Climate Assembly organised by Max Wilkinson in August a lot of people were asking for a Citizens' Assembly to be set up. Max stated that if that was what we wanted the council would do it.</p> <p>To avoid confusion, what we all meant by a Citizens' Assembly is a representative sample of citizens randomly selected by an independent body, informed by expert evidence, supported by experienced independent facilitators in their subsequent deliberations and compensated for their contribution to ensure that all invited are able to take part.</p> <p>It is important for the acceptance of what might be quite difficult measures that honest discussions are held openly so that there is a town-wide consensus on what needs to be done. It is crucial that party politics is taken out of the process and that people feel that the recommended measures have come from them rather than being foisted upon them by</p>

	<p>the council.</p> <p>Deliberative democracy of this type has been proved to be sensible, inclusive and effective and provides a model for doing politics better at a time when many people have lost faith with it.</p> <p>Both the DCA report and the council's Carbon Neutral Cheltenham report stress the need for engagement with the public, but neither recommends a Citizens' Assembly, which I would argue should be the first process.</p> <p>Will the council amend their report to recommend the setting up of a Citizens Assembly at the earliest opportunity?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Continuing to take the local community with us as we tackle climate change will be essential. We are considering with others the best ways to do this and I support the option of a Citizens Assembly to help do this.</p>
	Supplementary Question
	<p>'Considering with others' sounds like the council is operating behind closed doors. A meeting was held by Councillor Wilkinson in August to determine a way forward for the council, and a Citizens Assembly was overwhelmingly supported as a first measure. Since then, action has been delayed by the commissioning of a report. The public needs to be more involved. If the council is intending to take the public with it, why is it ignoring the clearly expressed will of the public?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The Cabinet Member Corporate Services responded that the council was engaging with a variety of different parties, including Gloucestershire County Council, the LEP, the Cheltenham Trust and companies within the town. He agreed that there should be an independent Citizens Assembly. This should be an organic process, set up by citizens, with representatives speaking to the council to ensure that they can successfully work in partnership.</p>
15.	Question from Peter Sayers to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>I understand, from an announcement made by Councillor Bernard Fisher at the SPRA meeting on 26th September 2019 that a TRO is being proposed that will restrict traffic entering St Paul's Road from Clarence Square. This will be handled by Highways of Gloucestershire County Council but affects a great number of residents of Cheltenham and thus is also a Borough matter. Please let me know where to find the details of this proposal and the traffic modelling that will accompany any such proposal?</p>
	Response from
	<p>My understanding is that County & Borough Councillor Fisher has been working hard over many years and liaising with Gloucestershire County Council highways colleagues regarding adjustments to St Paul's Road. Whilst initial ambitions, raised by residents in St Paul's included a '20mph' zone and access restrictions, we understand that at this time the request will focus solely upon the installation of a pedestrian crossing in St Paul's Road near the entrance to the University.</p> <p>GCC will be considering wider options and potential mitigation should the</p>

	<p>Boots Corner trial be made permanent. This is outside the existing commitment for 2020/21 financial to improve the traffic light synchronisation on the A4019.</p> <p>I have no further details at this moment but suggest that contact is made with GCC as the highways authority. I am however, confident that GCC will engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any formal proposal is being actively considered.</p>
16.	Question from Peter Sayers to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	In regard to the proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square into St Paul's Road, please let me know what pre-TRO consultation with the large number of residents in the surrounding areas that will be affected are to take place and how and, more importantly, when will this be conducted?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road.
	Supplementary Question
	I understand that there is no Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) at present for this particular junction. However, I cannot understand why those affected by the possible change have not been consulted. Why not? The questioner also suggested that it would be helpful for the councillor concerned (Bernard Fisher) to meet with residents to discuss the topic.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The Cabinet Member Development and Safety responded that this was because there was currently no proposed TRO. If the Boots Corner trial was made permanent, there would be a standard consultation process and a TRO, following the correct protocol. At this stage, the question was hypothetical.
17.	Question from Alan McDougall to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Minutes from a meeting of SPRA on 26th September 2019 state that a TRO is being proposed that will restrict traffic entering St Paul's Road from Clarence Square. There has been no inclusive consultation with residents of Clarence Square or surrounding streets regarding the proposed TRO. The south side of Clarence Square comes under the ward of St Pauls, as does Monson Avenue and Wellesley Road, however the majority of Clarence Square is in Pittville and to the best of knowledge there has been no advice given to local residents on the details of the proposal by either CBC/GCC in general or by Pittville's two CBC councillors specifically.
	In view of the fact there is a backlog in dealing with TROs will you confirm that in the interests of transparency all residents in these adjacent areas will be consulted prior to any agreement by CBC/GCC being made to the current proposal?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15 below, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road. I am confident that GCC, through Councillor Fisher, will engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any formal proposal is being actively

	considered.
18.	Question from Alan McDougall to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>The 'trial' closure of Boots Corner having led to increased traffic flows on the south side of Clarence Square and St Pauls Road itself as traffic avoids congestion on St Margarets Road A4019 has undoubtedly led to increased levels of NO2 in these residential streets thereby endangering public health. While the proposal to make St Pauls Road a one way system is probably intended to reduce traffic volumes the TRO is in fact being considered in isolation to present and future impact on these adjacent streets.</p> <p>Will you confirm that any increase to traffic volumes for Monson Avenue, already impossible to negotiate at peak times/weekends and seasonal extremes such as Christmas due to vehicle blockages at the NCP carpark entrance/exit and those planned for the imminent development of Portland Street/North Place carpark have been factored into the overall modelling success of the proposed scheme?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As I am not aware of any TRO proposal relating to St Paul's Road, other than a pedestrian crossing, I am unable to advise upon any traffic modelling that has or is taking place.
19.	Question from Robert Lees to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Could I please ask you to let me know where I can see the final details of the proposal that a TRO will restrict traffic access from Clarence Square into St. Paul's Road following the announcement made by Councillor Bernard Fisher at the SPRA meeting on 26/09/2019.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road.
20.	Question from Robert Lees to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	With regard to the proposed TRO mentioned above, when will there be a public consultation so that concerned residents can express their views.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road. I am confident that GCC, through Councillor Fisher, will engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any proposal is being actively considered.
21.	Question from Dr Charles Garcia-Rodriguez to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>Regarding the proposed closure of the Clarence Square access to St Paul's Road.</p> <p>Given that drivers will seek other routes if there is a traffic restriction, are physical measures proposed to stop vehicles using the narrow mews road of Clarrington Mews as a cut-through to travel between Clarence Square and Wellesley Road and then to St Paul's Road in a similar way as further north a narrowing along Wellesley road restricts cut through traffic to and from Wellington Road and Wellington Square?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member

	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road.
22.	Question from Dr Charles Garcia-Rodriguez to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Regarding the proposed closure of the Clarence Square access to St Paul's Road. I am a resident who lives approximately 100m from the proposed traffic restriction and as such will be profoundly affected by it. Why have I had no formal notice from the council or any other public body about this nor any ability to influence or modify the proposal?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	I can only assume that you have not been notified because no such formal proposal is being pursued. I am confident that GCC, through Councillor Fisher, will engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any proposal is being actively considered.
23.	Question from Sock Koh to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	What models of traffic flow have been or will be done to study the impact of this proposed TRO?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road and consequently I am not aware of any traffic modelling being undertaken regarding this proposal.
24.	Question from Sock Koh to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	What proper & meaningful consultations will be done with communities that will be affected by this TRO?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	I am confident that GCC will, through Councillor Fisher, engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any formal proposal is being actively considered.
25.	Question from Barbara Lees to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Re the proposed TRO restricting traffic entering St Paul's Road from Clarence Square, what consideration has the council given to public safety in the narrow streets that will become rat runs if this proposal goes ahead?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road. However, I can advise that a key component of any TRO consideration is safety and any proposals will be subject to a 'road safety audit'.
26.	Question from Barbara Lees to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	I live in Clarrington Mews and I would like to know when I will be consulted on the above proposal as I am bound to be materially affected by any changes.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road. I am confident that GCC will, through Councillor Fisher, engage with residents and CBC on

	matters affecting them when any proposal is being actively considered.
27.	Question from Tom Perris to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Regarding TRO in Clarence Square Are there plans to have a public consultation on any proposed alteration of traffic flow to involve residents who will be affected by them?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road. I am confident that GCC, through Councillor Fisher, will engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any proposal is being actively considered.
28.	Question from Tom Perris to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Regarding TRO in Clarence Square Has there been an assessment of the impact on surrounding streets, both main and residential with inevitable increased traffic and, given that local residents know little of this proposal, what measures are proposed to stop traffic using the cut-through routes, for example, via Clarington Mews?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15 I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road. I am confident that GCC, through Councillor Fisher, will engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any proposal is being actively considered.
29.	Question from Roland Jones to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	I understand from the announcement by Cllr Fisher at the SPRA meeting on 29/09/2019 that a TRO is being proposed to restrict traffic entering St Paul's Road from Clarence Square. Where can we find the precise details of the proposal? e.g. There will be an obvious effect on traffic going up Monson Avenue. Currently the lights only let 5 vehicles through at a time.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road. I am confident that GCC, through Councillor Fisher, will engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any proposal is being actively considered.
30.	Question from Roland Jones to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	What consultation will there be? And with whom?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road. I am confident that GCC, through Councillor Fisher, will engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any proposal is being actively considered.
31.	Question from Edward Hignett to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	I understand from an announcement made by Councillor Bernard Fisher

	at the SPRA meeting on the 26th September 2019 that a TRO is being proposed that will restrict traffic entering St. Pauls Road from Clarence Square. This will be handled by Highways of Gloucester County Council but affects a great number of residents in Cheltenham and thus is also a Borough matter. Please let me know where to find the details of this proposal and the traffic modelling that will accompany any such proposal.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road. I am confident that GCC, through Councillor Fisher, will engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any formal proposal is being actively considered.
32.	Question from Edward Hignett to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	In regard to the proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square into St. Pauls Road, please let me know what pre-TRO consultation with the large number of residents in the surrounding areas that will be affected are to take place and how and more importantly when will this be conducted? As a resident of Wellesley Road I foresee, as a result of this TRO, increased traffic on my road which is without pavement and unsuited to fast driving. During the recent road closure on St. Pauls Road for the street party Wellesley Road became a rat run of speeding traffic. Wellesley Road is also regularly used by parents and young children coming and going to Dunalley school. Also Clarington Mews which is a single track lane would also become a rat run should the proposed TRO go ahead.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road. I am confident that GCC, through Councillor Fisher, will engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any formal proposal is being actively considered. My understanding is that County Councillor Fisher has been liaising with GCC highways colleagues over a lengthy period regarding adjustments to St Paul's Road. Whilst initial ambitions included a '20mph' zone and access restrictions we understand that at this time the request will focus solely upon the installation of a pedestrian crossing in St Paul's Road near the entrance to the University.
33.	Question from Chloe Skinner to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	In regard to the proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square into St Pauls Road, please let me know how this will affect the traffic flow along Wellesley Road. We are concerned that Clarington Mews and Wellesley Road will become a rat-run for traffic. These two roads are unsuitable for anything other than light traffic.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road. I am confident that GCC, through Councillor Fisher, will engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any formal proposal is being actively considered.
34.	Question from Stacey Reynolds to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay

	I understand from an announcement made by Counsellor Bernard Fisher at The SPRA Meeting on 26 September that a TRO is being proposed that will restrict traffic entering St Paul's Road from Clarence Square. This will be handled by Highways of Gloucestershire Council but affects a number of residents of Cheltenham and thus I feel is also a borough matter. Please can you advise where I can find the details of this proposal and the traffic modelling that will accompany this proposals?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road. I am confident that GCC will engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any formal proposal is being actively considered.
35.	Question from Stacey Reynolds to Cabinet Member Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	In regard to the proposed TRO to restrict flow from Clarence Square into St Paul's Road, please let me know what pre-TRO consultation with the large number of residents in the surrounding area that will be affected are to take place and how and when they will be conducted?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As noted in Qu 15, I am not aware of any proposed TRO to restrict traffic flow from Clarence Square to St Paul's Road. I am confident that GCC, through Councillor Fisher, will engage with residents and CBC on matters affecting them when any formal proposal is being actively considered. My understanding is that County Councillor Fisher has been liaising with GCC highways colleagues over a lengthy period regarding adjustments to St Paul's Road. Whilst initial ambitions included a '20mph' zone and access restrictions we understand that at this time the request will focus solely upon the installation of a pedestrian crossing in St Paul's Road near the entrance to the University.

8. MEMBER QUESTIONS

1.	Question from Councillor Mason to the Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Coleman
	In the past few months numerous Lansdown residents have complained about missed collections both wheelie bin and recycling. They demand better, or at the very least that the standard of service meets those of any contract agreed with UBICO. Is there a penalty clause within the contract that provides a refund if standards are not meet? If so could the cabinet member confirm whether such discussions have started?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	Ubico Limited, our service provider, has experienced driver shortages over the summer period, as have other local authorities and service providers across the country, due to the national shortage in appropriately qualified HGV drivers. Unfortunately, this has resulted in some incomplete rounds and more properties missed by inexperienced agency drivers, who may not stay with Ubico for very long and do not become familiar with the rounds. Ubico is working with the Council to recruit more drivers and in fact, is looking to train

	<p>up an internal pool of agency drivers themselves, to overcome this difficulty in the longer term. In the meantime, measures have been put in place to try and reduce the impact on collections for residents in the short term and hopefully this will secure an improvement.</p> <p>If any residents are experiencing regularly difficulties with missed collections, these should be reported to cleansing@cheltenham.gov.uk</p> <p>Ubico Limited is a teckal company, wholly owned by local authorities. Cheltenham Borough Council pays a contract sum, agreed each year with Ubico, to deliver environmental maintenance services across the borough. Therefore, there is a more flexible partnership arrangement in place than a private sector contractor relationship, where penalty clauses might be more appropriate.</p>
2.	Question from Councillor Harman to the Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay
	<p>The Economic, Infrastructure and Skills Committee of the Welsh Assembly has called upon the Welsh Government to ensure that new housing development should include provision for electric vehicle charging. Will the Cabinet Member consider how Cheltenham Borough Council can use its powers to promote similar provision for new housing developments?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) encourages planning applications to be designed to enable charging of electric vehicles and JCS Policy SD4 requires development to “Incorporate, where feasible, facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles”.</p> <p>Local planning policy has to take its lead from national policy and guidance. In this context, the council can encourage, but not compel applicants, to include provision for electric vehicle charging. Officers will monitor national policy and look to strengthen the council’s position when the opportunity arises. In any case we will be lobbying government on issues such as this to allow us to strengthen policy where appropriate.</p>
3.	Question from Councillor Harman to the Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor McKinlay
	<p>When will Cheltenham Borough Council require Taxis and Private Hire vehicles that it licences to be carbon neutral?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>CBC introduced tighter environmental standards for taxis and private hire vehicles in 2018 and these must now meet a minimum Euro 5 emission standard for new licences, or when vehicle are replaced. The policy is next scheduled for updating in 2021 and we will start consultation with stakeholders, including the taxi trade next year in relation to this.</p> <p>I can confirm that we will be taking account of commitments in relation to the climate emergency and our aspirations for carbon neutrality for the borough by 2030, as part of that policy review.</p>
	Supplementary Question
	<p>Given that we have powers as a council relating to licensing and planning, do you think that the timetable set out could be sped up?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The Cabinet Member Development and Safety responded that the three year</p>

	review timetable set out was governed by statutory requirements. He added that when the O&S called in for review the policy on strengthening of controls on taxi emissions, the concerns were around over-regulation rather than under-regulation. He stressed that he was pleased by this shift in thinking.
4.	Question from Councillor Britter to Cabinet Member, Development & Safety, Councillor McKinlay
	Overgrown grass verges and central reservations along the busy A40 are “an accident waiting to happen” because they haven’t been cut. That is the claim from residents in Benhall. Some say the verges have grown so high that this situation could create a safety hazard. I appreciate that this authority is not responsible for roadside verges but with no cutting taking place this season is this residents and visitors have to expect on this main gateway into our town. Does this mean we have to accept a second class service from now on?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	I understand that grass cutting did not take place as scheduled by GCC as a result of the Highways England works on the Golden Valley. Grass cutting works were ‘suspended’ to facilitate the wider Highways England (HE) delivery strategy. Full grass cutting would have necessitated lane closures on routes already heavily impacted by the HE closures so over the summer grass cutting was restricted to roundabouts and visibility splays, which were cut for safety reasons. Now that HE has concluded that phase of the maintenance project, GCC will be re-instating the usual grass cutting regime this autumn.
	Supplementary Question
	The highways were not referred to in the reply. Despite the carriageway fully reopening in August, the verges have still not been maintained in mid-October. Does the Cabinet Member agree that this is unacceptable for a main artery leading into our town, and will he press GCC for an urgent response?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The Cabinet Member Development and Safety responded that the answer was provided by GCC. Given the time lapse referred to, officers would be instructed to take up the issue with their GCC counterparts, and hopefully a solution would be found in the near future.
5.	Question from Councillor Cooke to Cabinet Member, Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Given changes in shopping habits and the decline of the high street, what plans does Cheltenham Borough Council have to recategorise retail space in Cheltenham town centre for residential use?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	Changes in retail habits and the associated impacts on Town Centres are well documented. CBC does not categorise land uses as such – rather, the land use is determined by existing uses and relevant permissions. There are a number of initiatives underway to proactively manage change on the high street including: - The emerging Joint Core Strategy (JCS) will contain new policy on retail and town centres;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing proactive work is taking place with the Cheltenham BID, Landlords and other interested parties, to enable mixed use developments on the high street where appropriate and reduce vacancy rates; - Investments in the public realm in the Town Centre will enhance the experience for visitors, residents and the wider public; - Supporting development/redevelopment in the town centre through the development management process (recent examples include Metrobank, redevelopment at the rear of Regent Arcade, redevelopment of the Quadrangle, Oriel House change of use from business to residential). <p>Importantly, the work above and other initiatives are likely to encourage mixed use on the high street (a component of which will be residential) rather than conversion of retail to residential alone.</p> <p>The General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) already allows for a range of changes of use on high streets (for example retail to residential, in principle) without the need for planning permission.</p>
	Supplementary Question
	Would the council support initiatives such as having retail downstairs and living space upstairs as a way of regenerating the town?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The Cabinet Member Development and Safety responded that the council does support this, citing the example of phase two of the Brewery. Part of its development brief was to encourage the development of new accommodation in the town centre. He also pointed to the regeneration of the lower high street, where unused retail accommodation was converted into living space.
6.	Question from Councillor Cooke to Cabinet Member, Development & Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Although not as good for personal fitness or the environment as walking or cycling, electric powered scooters are being used as a means of reducing private car use in continental cities including Paris, Madrid and Lisbon.
	What is Cheltenham Borough Council's position on the use of electric scooters in Cheltenham?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	On the face of it, any form of transport which helps reduce private car use and the associated carbon emissions is to be welcomed. Provided they are ridden with care and at a sensible speed within pedestrianised areas, scooters should not give rise to a significant risk, but my understanding is that they cannot be used legally on the highway. Enforcement in relation to this matter rests with the police.
	In future, it is my ambition that we will have better segregated cycle-ways within the town and CBC has been lobbying for these through its consultancy work with transport specialist 'Systra' and associated discussions with the Highways Authority, Gloucestershire County Council.
	Supplementary Question
	You responded that electric scooters are acceptable provided they do not pose a risk to pedestrians. However, under the Road Traffic Act scooters are

	illegal both on pavements and the road, and pose a risk to pedestrians on the pavement. Would the council endorse a change in the law which would allow the use of scooters on cycle ways?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The Cabinet Member Development and Safety responded that there was not a simple answer to this. The types of scooters the Member mentioned were indeed illegal, though scooters used for aiding those with disabilities were within the law. The question of legality was also one of safety, and the council would not endorse any change that caused a risk to the public. The council could not enact relevant legislation changes itself but supported the general principle of moving people away from cars onto eco-friendly modes of transport, as long as public safety could be assured.

9. 'CARBON NEUTRAL CHELTENHAM - LEADERSHIP THROUGH STEWARDSHIP'

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services introduced the report. He explained that in February 2019, Full Council unanimously called on the Cabinet to declare a Climate Emergency. As part of the motion, Council requested that a report be presented back within six months, with the local actions the Council could take to help address this emergency. The report therefore outlined the actions needed and an indicative timetable.

He advised that the project was being undertaken by Simon Graham, who was the Head of Innovation at DCA and knew Cheltenham well having worked at a local company where he drove the implementation of a sustainability programme. The work had been split into two work streams, the first was focused on achieving a carbon neutral council and would be led by the Executive Director of People and Change and the Cabinet Member Corporate Services. The second workstream would focus on the development of a carbon neutral borough and would be overseen by Director of Environment and Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment.

He explained that, in order to develop the report, meetings and interviews were conducted with a range of officers from across the council, key Members, a number of external organisations including GCHQ, Superdry and the LEP and key partners including Gloucestershire County Council, Ubico, the Cheltenham Trust and the emergency services. A public assembly was also held to hear residents views.

The report outlined a number of initiatives that the council could take to become carbon neutral by 2030, these included introducing a zero carbon sports and leisure experience, upgrading the crematorium to zero carbon operation and rolling out zero emission fleet. The roadmap also outlined a number of major community initiatives such as a Cheltenham Standard, Cheltenham Green Deal and Cheltenham Energy. He acknowledged that the roadmap would need to be developed in to more detailed and deliverable action plans and they would need to establish what impacts the initiatives would have on the priorities already set out in the council's corporate plan.

He noted the steps that the council had already taken to proactively reduce carbon emissions, including the installation of PV systems on CBH housing stock which provide enough electricity to power around 350 homes and also offer savings to the customer. He also confirmed that the council had reviewed its electricity purchasing arrangements and all of the council's third party electricity now comes from renewable energy sources.

He highlighted that £150,000 of seed funding per year, had been recommended to fund additional staffing resources in order to create the capacity and capability to develop the business cases for the initiatives outlined in the roadmap and that the project would require a comprehensive approach to engagement involving residents, communities, businesses and partner organisations.

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

- They commended officers and Simon for a fantastic and thorough report. They felt it was an important step in highlighting the council's intention to achieve its target and become carbon neutral by 2030 and also showed that the carbon neutral target was achievable.
- One Member suggested having a Cabinet Member solely responsible for climate change.
- Whilst government intervention was essential in tackling the problem, they noted the steps that could be taken at a more local level and welcomed initiatives such as the Cheltenham Standard and Cheltenham Green Deal. Members felt that the borough council had a duty to remind the public of measures they could take in order to reduce their carbon footprint, such as reducing food miles, eating less livestock intensive diet, using public transport and taking fewer flights.
- The council had a duty to lead by example and travel by euro star as opposed to aeroplane for twinning visits.
- One Member stressed the importance of attributing timescales to the initiatives as soon as possible.
- Members acknowledged the potential for making improvements through the planning process by focusing on biodiversity and environmental standards when applications come before the planning committee.
- They noted that the European Union does a lot in terms of tackling climate change and lessons could be learned from countries all across Europe that have ultra-low emission zones.
- One Member felt that we should be developing these initiatives further and look at how we can actually remove carbon-dioxide from the atmosphere. They hoped that the Cyber Park could attract businesses that do biological and geological sequestration, which involves the net removal of CO₂ from the atmosphere.
- Members agreed that we need to start looking at hydrogen and the potential for using electric vehicles for the taxi fleet. Although, they acknowledged that the necessary infrastructure would need to be put in place to facilitate this.
- One Member highlighted that there would inevitably be many change projects running over the next decade that would impact on people's everyday lives and stressed the importance of advising members of the public on the benefits of any initiatives. They believed that the citizen's assembly concept had the potential to change the way in which the debate moves forward in Cheltenham. Members agreed that community engagement and involvement was key to meeting the targets.
- Members noted that a huge amount of money was being invested in hydrogen technology and retrofitting of social housing in the European Union and that the retrofitting of social housing has also received a significant amount of funding.

They hoped that if the UK were to remain in the EU that CBC would have the opportunity to bid for some of the funding in order to retrofit our social housing.

- One Member felt that there should be more of a focus on the key polluters as consumers do not have the choices and power that large corporate organisations do.
- One Member highlighted the positive steps that the council had already taken, including the fact that over 50% of domestic waste was now being recycled and the significant investment by CBH in solar panels. They noted that the changes at Boots corner had seen an increase in bus journeys by 250,000 trips per annum. A bid had also been put in to get electric buses in Cheltenham, which was an initiative that would be fully supported by the council.
- The Leader confirmed that they were in discussions with a view to appointing a Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Cabinet would be looking at funding for the initiatives at Cabinet on 5th November.
- One Member stressed the importance of having specific, measurable targets in place as soon as possible and also the importance of devising impact statements. For example, to identify the impact that reducing cars travelling in to the town centre would have on car parking income.
- One Member questioned what the benefit would be of creating a Cheltenham energy company as they reasoned that there are many commercial operators that would do that for us without the risk. They also questioned where the additional trees would be planted.
- One Member felt that there needs to be more of a focus on biodiversity and finding solutions that will work within the natural environment.
- One Member stressed the importance of drawing from work that has already been done i.e. Birmingham who are leading the way in hydrogen research and Cheltenham's twin town of Göttingen that has a fantastic green action plan.

The Executive Director People and Change explained that they were in the process of working on a council social value policy. He also advised that they were looking at the resources required to take the project forward as part of the council's budget setting process; once that had been confirmed they could start looking at putting the roadmap in to action.

In response to Members, Simon Graham advised that:

- With regards to energy companies, there are a range of different business models that have been worked through and the proposal is to explore the best way of providing energy to the people of Cheltenham that is equitable and draws upon the lessons that have been learned in the past.
- As part of the carbon footprint that is reported, all travel by council officers e.g. for twinning is included and when somebody chooses to travel more responsibly that would be reported as a reduction in carbon. Therefore, there are already mechanisms to encourage more environmentally friendly ways of travel.
- Proposals are already in place to encourage more responsible modes of transport available to the people of Cheltenham.

- Already a number of engagements are taking place with potential and existing partners within other councils and public sector organisations, as well as conversations with Vision 21.

In conclusion, the Cabinet Member Corporate Services noted that community engagement was the overriding theme and that the initiatives would require significant cultural change. He stressed the importance of the borough providing leadership in this area and engaging particularly with those in less affluent areas. He agreed that as the timeframe is so tight, it is important that they have clear timescales attributed to the initiatives in the roadmap.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY THAT:

Council endorses the findings of the ‘Carbon Neutral Cheltenham – Leadership through Stewardship’ report and its associated roadmap and recommends that Cabinet:

- **Writes to the relevant Secretary of State, setting out the Council’s climate concerns, ambition and roadmap to take action, formally requesting Government to provide the planning powers, guidance and resources to local government to make the 2030 target feasible;**
- **Subject to available resources, considers setting a challenging interim community-wide target for achieving a reduction in borough-wide carbon emissions by 2025, to provide a clear signal of the scale of the local ambition to take effective action;**
- **Considers, prioritises and identifies the resources needed to deliver the actions required to meet the 2030 carbon neutrality targets;**
- **Develops an annual reporting process to effectively track progress;**
- **Delegates authority to the Executive Director People & Change and the Director of Environment, to develop the roadmap into a realistic action plan for project delivery, with appropriate business case development taking account of the impact on the Council’s financial position.**

10. APPOINTMENT OF A NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE/HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

This item was taken in open session as announced by the Mayor at the start of the Council meeting.

The Chair of the Appointments and Remuneration Committee introduced the report and explained that an Appointments & Remuneration Sub Committee was established in August 2019 to progress the recruitment of the new Chief Executive. Penna, a recruitment consultancy, was engaged and advised the Sub Committee throughout the process including recommending suitable candidates for short-listing, the interview process and advising on final selection for appointment. She explained that to further

enhance the recruitment process and to ensure that as much information as possible was available to the Sub-Committee, key stakeholders were invited to meet the short-listed candidates as part of the interview process.

Six candidates were short-listed and undertook a technical assessment interview. At the Sub-Committee meeting on the 26th September 2019, a report from Penna was considered, with feedback from the technical assessment interviews. The Sub-Committee agreed unanimously that two candidates be shortlisted to progress to the final interview stage on 1 October which comprised a panel exercise and involvement of local community and business leaders as well as Members and the Executive Leadership Team over lunch.

The Chair of the Appointments and Remuneration Committee reported that the Sub-Committee was unanimous in its decision that, subject to the approval of Full Council, Gareth Edmundson should be offered the post of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service and outlined the reasons why. It was also agreed that the post would be offered on the agreed salary of £113,403 rising subject to satisfactory performance to £116,254 after 6 months in post.

She explained that the Chief Executive was accountable to the whole Council and the Leaders of each of the council's political groups would be responsible for monitoring performance through regular 1-2-1 meetings as well as through the annual appraisal process.

She confirmed that, in accordance with the constitution, the Leader and Cabinet were informed of the recommendation and gave their consent to the appointment.

Finally, she wished to put on record to the HR Manager, Julie McCarthy, for her advice and guidance throughout the process.

The Leader added that he had observer status on the Sub Committee and confirmed he had been consulted on the appointment. He wished to thank all involved in the process. He fully endorsed the recommendation and believed Gareth Edmundson had the right skills and experience for the role.

The Mayor also wished to put on record his thanks to the Appointments and Remuneration Sub Committee for their significant involvement.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT

- 1. the position of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service be offered to Gareth Edmundson.**
- 2. the post be offered on the agreed salary of £113,403 rising (subject to satisfactory performance) to £116,254 after 6 months in post.**
- 3. the Chair of the Sub-Committee, in conjunction with the HR Manager, be authorised to finalise the arrangements and agree the start date for the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.**

The meeting adjourned at 4.30 pm

The meeting reconvened at 4:50 pm.

11. APPOINTMENT OF THE ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER AND RETURNING OFFICER

The Chair of the Appointments and Remuneration Committee reported that these positions were both a statutory and constitutional requirement. She proposed that Paul Jones, Executive Director Finance and Assets, take on the role. She clarified that this would be independent and separate from his other roles at CBC, and that he would work closely with the council's elections team. Consultation had taken place with Paul Jones, and he had agreed to accept.

Members endorsed the proposal.

RESOLVED THAT

the Executive Director Finance and Assets, Paul Jones, be appointed as Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for the Borough Council with immediate effect.

12. TREASURY STRATEGY STATEMENT & CAPITAL STRATEGY 2019/20

The Cabinet Member Finance reported that the Treasury Strategy had been approved by full Council in March 2019. She emphasised that she was not revisiting the entire strategy, just requesting Members to approve small changes made since then. CBC had been focussing to a greater degree on investing in property within its boundary to generate a commercial yield in order to compensate for central government spending cuts.

She emphasised that Cabinet felt that the longer term approach to finding efficiencies to close the funding gap was fundamentally through economic growth and investment and the efficient utilisation of our assets; linking our Place and Commercial Strategies to 'Invest in Cheltenham, for Cheltenham'. This has seen a place focused investment approach offering long term investment, income through rents as well as other social and financial benefits.

She welcomed the fact that this authority was proposing to become the first council to lend via the award winning local business to business lender FOLK2FOLK, to help local small to medium size enterprises with straightforward access to finance to support their business growth. FOLK2FOLK matches local businesses looking for finance to grow, with investors looking to receive a return on their investment. By becoming a FOLK2FOLK lender, the council would be able to invest money locally whilst also benefitting local businesses.

She explained that more than £300 million of investor funds have been injected, via the Folk2Folk platform, into local businesses across a variety of sectors. There was often a flow-on of benefits to the wider community resulting from local investment, for example in the form of job creation, retention of local talent and the shoring up of local supply chains, but it could also attract visitors to the area, and result in improvements to local

facilities and services; all of which contribute to the sustainability of healthy local economies which are essential for Britain's future success.

The Cabinet wished to provide investment of up to £75,000 with FOLK2FOLK Interest rate returns of between 4.5% and up to 9% per annum could be achieved, but the aim was to help the businesses to start, grow or diversify, buy an asset or boost working capital. In return for investment, security against the asset would be provided.

She explained that if proposed investments were to be made other than on market terms, there would be state aid considerations, about which advice would be sought from One Legal before making the investment.

In addition, Cheltenham Borough Homes were currently pursuing a wide range of opportunities to deliver additional affordable housing within the Housing Revenue Account, as agreed by Full Council in October last year, Cheltenham Borough Homes were seeking to borrow from the Council up to £100m drawn down over the next 10 years.

The Cabinet Member Finance explained that modelling of the Private Rented Sector Initiative was carried out using a range of assumptions and, following further legal advice on state aid issues, it became clear that loan support from the Council needed to be restricted to 90% of acquisition costs and 75% of development costs. Officers from both the Council and CBH, working with their legal advisors, have recommended an innovative solution whereby the balance of required funding is provided by the Council through equity investment in the form of an unsecured loan note. Specialist legal advice has been received that the proposed equity funding agreement constitutes "Financial Assistance". She outlined the proposed terms for the Equity Funding Agreement as follows:

- Investment to be made in tranches accompanying loan advances as required.
- Return on investment to be calculated as 5% of turnover (after voids), equivalent to initial 2.5% p.a. This would rise marginally each year in line with rent increases.
- Repayment of investment triggered by disposal of property – CBC to receive premium on repayment, calculated as 25% of capital gain.
- Option to refinance through loans in the future should the capital appreciation of the property be sufficient to keep total loan below 90% of value.

She explained that a new venture in a competitive market, and it was essential that early results were closely monitored to ensure that acquisitions are meeting targets set in the investment template. The cash flow position would determine the pace of investment and this would be reviewed regularly to inform annual investment plans

The Cabinet Member then went to explain that the current HRA capital programme for 2019/20 and projections for 2020-22 were approved by Council on 18th February this year. These included the budgets for new supply. She explained that estimates were only based on schemes that were currently in progress. The report also confirmed that additional schemes would be brought forward during the period as new sites were identified. Contingency sums for market acquisitions and the purchase of new affordable units provided through Section 106 planning agreements were included in the overall budgets.

She stated that following the removal of the HRA debt cap last year it was anticipated that the Council would be able to significantly increase the scale of new build subject to the identification of appropriate sites and financial viability.

She reported that CBH was currently pursuing a wide range of opportunities to deliver additional affordable housing within the HRA. These included :

- Further development of Council owned sites, Acquisition of land for development, Acquisition and refurbishment of market properties, Purchase of Section 106 units from developers & Regeneration of existing sites.

As a result of progress to date it was now recommended that Council approve a significant increase in new supply budgets as follows:

2019/20 £8,700,000

2020/21 £20,000,000

2021/22 £30,000,000

2022/23 £25,000,000

It was anticipated that this investment could provide up to 500 new homes, but the timing of delivery would be dependent on issues such as the success of competitive bids, negotiating deals, obtaining planning approvals and the availability of Homes England grant.

This exciting programme would be complemented by the imminent start of the CBH private rented initiative which was being supported by Council finance.

The updated Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Capital Strategy have been recommended for approval by the Treasury Management Panel at its meeting on 23rd September 2019 to Council.

The Treasury Management Panel met regularly in order to monitor the performance of investments which need to be matched with performance against the corporate strategy action plan to ensure that resources are used to best effect and prioritised.

The Cabinet Member reported that in addition, treasury management activity and performance was reported quarterly to Cabinet as part of the budget monitoring report which was scrutinised by the Budget Scrutiny Working Group.

Members made the following comments:

- The strategy was supported, suggesting that it offered both a return on investment and strong support for the local community. It was asked whether it might be wise to attach conditions for investment: for example, that possible partners are required to meet certain environmental goals in order to qualify. He praised the continually increasing amounts of money invested.
- Reference was made to the trading losses suffered by Folk2Folk in the last few years and asked what would happen to the platform as a whole if the organisation were to continue to struggle. The Cabinet Member Finance responded that the partnership would be continually evaluated.
- A question was raised as to whether there was a risk involved in getting around the 90% lending limit. The Executive Director Finance and Assets, responded that the Council had consulted its legal advisors, and assured Members that the solution did meet legal requirements. The council could not offer a 100% loan because it would be considered state aid. Therefore a 90% loan and 10% investment was considered instead, or alternatively a 75% loan and 25% investment. He added

that housing was generally regarded as one of the most secure forms of investment.

- A Member welcomed the investment in social housing. He suggested that the report should have had a greater focus on indirect environmental consequences of council policy, though he acknowledged its referral to direct consequences.
- A Member queried the Folk2Folk connection, asking how the assets would be valued. He asked whether the 1% increase in the Public Works Loan would apply to the deal. The Cabinet Member Finance reported that it would, and that she had been surprised by news of the loan increase. She reported that CBH were looking at the figures and considering their position.
- A Member asked whether the strategy of building more homes might be reconsidered, in light of the climate emergency. The Cabinet Member Housing stated that the wider benefits outweighed the costs.
- It was asked whether the report was targeted as accurately as possible at the private rental sector. He asked whether there was any flexibility with regards to the 5 mile limit for FOLK2FOLK investment as detailed at paragraph 2.3 of the report and proposed an amendment to state that the limit would be within an approximately 5 mile radius. . The Head of Law advised that that a change could be made. The alteration of the recommendation regarding the 5 mile radius was unanimously approved.
- Clarification was sought as to how the increase in the interest rate on the Public Works Loan was made, making it more expensive to invest. The Cabinet Member Finance responded that this was the decision of the Treasury.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT

- 1. The updated Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2019/20 as shown at Appendix 2 to include £10m equity funding to Cheltenham Borough Homes and £75k investment through Folk2Folk for a peer to peer lending scheme be approved.**
- 2. The Authority enter into an equity funding agreement with Cheltenham Borough Homes.**
- 3. The authorised borrowing limit and operational boundary limit be increased to the new levels as shown in Appendix 2 – table 7.**
- 4. the revised HRA capital programme for 2019/20 to 2021/22 as shown at Appendix 4 be approved.**

13. CHELTENHAM PLAN MAIN MODIFICATIONS REPORT

The Cabinet Member Development and Safety introduced the report. He explained that the report sought authority to consult on Main Modifications to the Cheltenham Plan, following an examination into the Pre- Submission Cheltenham Plan by the Planning Inspectorate in February 2019.

He highlighted that work to progress the development of the Cheltenham Plan had been underway since 2012 and following Pre-Submission publication in early 2018 the Cheltenham Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination. Public hearing sessions were held for six days during February 2019. Following the close of the hearing sessions the Inspector provided the Council with a

Post Hearing Advice Note. The note raised a number of concerns around the Leckhampton School Site, Landsdown Industrial Estate, Oakhurst Rise and Local Green Space. He advised that officers had responded to the Inspector's advice note and outlined proposed actions in consultation with the Planning and Liaison Members Working Group and no objection to those actions had been raised by the Planning Inspector. The work proposed in the Inspector's Advice Note had therefore been undertaken and were reflected in Appendix 2.

The significant changes were as follows:

- Leckhampton School Site – a modification was required to ensure that the new secondary school could come forward in a way where it was capable of being delivered. This would in effect move the location of the school building to GCC owned land that had been previously designated as Local Green Space, this would increase the potential for housing on the Leckhampton Green Fields by 150. He noted that at a previous debate it was agreed that there was the potential for 400 houses on that site but because the school was to be located on part of it, that was going to be reduced to 250. He confirmed that GCC's decision to move the location of the school building now meant that site would return to a capacity of 400. He highlighted that the changes had been made as the inspector had recognised that CBC had no direct input other than as a consultee.
- Landsdown Industrial Estate – explained that the owners of the industrial estate were very happy for it to be re-designated as housing but were not putting forward any timescale for doing this and it therefore couldn't be included in the housing supply calculations.
- Oakhurst Rise – following the dismissal of the planning appeal, the inspector had asked CBC to look again at the capacity for this site. As a result, the policy had been revised to require a Masterplan to be included in any new applications that recognised the constraints of the site. A minimum number of 25 dwellings had also been included in the policy which was largely in line with what the planning committee had agreed as acceptable.
- Local Green Space –the inspector had requested that the council re-look at the Local Green Space and put forward her own qualifying criteria by which these should be addressed. A re-assessment exercise had taken place based on the new criteria and a number of sites had been removed from the Green Space allocation due to the lack of evidence to meet the new criteria. He confirmed that as a result, 16 sites were now being recommended for Green Space designation and those spaces that had been removed still retained their existing protections under the public green space policy. The Local Green Space designations at Swindon Village and Leckhampton remained largely in place with some alterations to comply with the inspectors criteria.

The Cabinet Member highlighted that there had not yet been an allocation for Green Space at the West Cheltenham development because at this stage the proposals were not sufficiently detailed enough to bring forward accurate plans for what would be designated. The Local Green Space allocation was being worked up as part of the masterplanning exercise that was taking place at present and they expected that to come back as a separate SPD.

He confirmed that the Main Modifications required a minimum six-week period of public consultation and subject to Council's approval, consultation would commence in November 2019. Following the close of the consultation all of the responses would be

collated and sent to the Inspector who would then prepare a final report on the Cheltenham Local Plan and determine whether the modifications made it legally sound. By not having an approved plan they ran the risk of developers putting forward applications that the council were less able to defend. The anticipated adoption of the plan was spring 2020. He stressed that making future developments carbon neutral was key to meeting the council's 2030 target, however, the current policy was not in a position to facilitate that as it relied on central government legislation. He hoped that the government would in the future amend its legislation so that the council would be in a position to amend the policy going forward and push for higher standards.

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

- They questioned whether the council intended to adopt the March 2015 DCLG technical housing standards.
- Regarding policy HD1, Christ College site B, one Member felt that the site description was inaccurate as it stated that the playing field was unlikely to come back in to use. They highlighted that there was a school for pupils that had been excluded directly adjacent to the site and their only external space was a multi-use games area. They, therefore, felt that the playing field could be used by the school if they entered in to some sort of agreement with the landowner. They also queried the source of the contaminated land. A Member had further concerns about the traffic lights at Gloucester Road and Tewkesbury Road and the fact they were already at full capacity and felt that there needed to be a further requirement that developers would pay for any signalling required.
- The Cabinet confirmed that they were hoping for some significant improvements in what was and wasn't required at West Cheltenham in terms of Local Green Space prior to the final document coming forward.
- One Member felt that one of the key ways that CBC could address the climate emergency was through planning policy and questioned what the Council were doing to raise this issue with national government.
- One Member wished to place on record their thanks that Cirencester Road had still been included in the Green Space allocation.
- Regarding Leckhampton Green Space, it was noted that there was significant development in that area and one Member was concerned that housing numbers hadn't been reduced on the Shurdington Road site to allow for the Green Space that was proposed on the senior school site. They felt that there was no significant, useable Green Space in the area and would have liked to see some inclusion of a proper park in that area.
- One Member had concerns about the number of brownfield sites in the town being used for retired properties and noted that there were a number of young professionals who couldn't afford to buy property in the town. They felt that the Council needed to lobby central government and safeguard some land in the urban centres for working age people.
- Members congratulated the planning team on their response to the inspector and the thorough consultation process.

- One Member questioned whether MM001 related only to things within the control of the borough or if it would apply to private open green space and if so, they suggested including it within the definition.
- On MM16, Oakhurst Rise, one Member requested that the section referring to Oakhurst Rise having good transport links be removed as they felt this was not factually correct given its location.
- One Member requested that supplementary flood risk guidance be produced which they felt would be beneficial given that flooding was an increasing problem in Cheltenham.
- Regarding MD3 Coronation Square and MD4 Royal Well, one Member wanted to clarify that mixed use did not rule out residential and felt it important that we retain residential as an option within mixed use developments.
- One Member had serious concerns around housing supply, they noted that they were over providing by over 700 houses in the whole plan period although it could not be guaranteed that that many houses were deliverable in the next 5 years. They questioned the number of houses difference between the 5 year supply and the 4.6 year supply and queried why the proposed houses at Bouncers Lane, North Plan, Portland Street and Leckhampton didn't fall within the 5 year supply.
- Regarding the allocation at the Northern Fields and Leckhampton, one Member noted that the previous scheme would have been preferable with the school on the Northern Fields and fewer houses. They questioned whether, if the school didn't go ahead, the land would revert back to Local Green Space.
- They felt that the planning committee needed to impose more conditions when granting planning applications given the climate emergency.
- They questioned the connection between the transport plan and the main modifications report.
- Councillor Clucas wanted to put on record her thanks to Helen Wells, Aaron Stibbey, Swindon Village Parish Council, Save the Countryside, Councillor Fisher, Councillor McKinlay and the officers for their efforts in Swindon Village. She also thanked the residents of Swindon Village who wrote in with letters of support for what the council wanted to do.
- One Member noted that the green space near Battledown Park could not come under this plan as there was still ongoing building work but they wanted to ensure that this area was not missed in the future. Similarly, some existing playgrounds, in particular Ewens Farm play area had also been missed. They questioned whether a process needed to be put in place to ensure that they didn't get missed in the future.
- One Member was of the understanding that as per the 2017/2018 amendments to the NPPF, anything that was an outline application didn't count towards the 5 year land supply and therefore reasoned that there were a considerable number of housing developments in Cheltenham that would not count.

The Planning policy officer offered the following responses to Members questions:

- He confirmed that they weren't looking at adopting the space standards within the Cheltenham Plan, because they didn't have the evidence to suggest that they

could impose it, and they would likely face a lot of back lash from the development industry if they were to do so without significant evidence. He confirmed that going forward, they could look to do that in the next iteration of the plan or in the JCS.

- With regards to Christ College, they had no indication that the landowner was looking at reusing the playing fields and they had supported the allocation of that site for housing. He stressed that it was a significant site within the town that could provide up to 60 houses. With regards to the contamination, at this stage of the plan they hadn't looked exactly at what was there, and a more detailed inspection of the site would come forward at the planning application stage. With regards to access to the site, he confirmed that they had consulted with GCC throughout the Local Plan process and in their opinion, there were mitigation measures that could be put in place to resolve the issues. He confirmed that, at the application stage the developers would have to pay some sort of contribution towards mitigation measures.
- He confirmed that you would not be able to designate Local Green Space at West Cheltenham through an SPD, however, they were hopeful that the masterplanning would provide enough protection and way to allocate useful Green Space. He explained that neighbourhood plans could also designate Local Green Space if necessary.
- With regards to switching Local Green Space in to the existing allocation in the North at Leckhampton, he advised that in order to allocate that as Local Green Space you would need significant evidence that isn't there at present. However, when the application for housing comes forward the developers are under obligation to provide open, public and green spaces for the community and the designs that had come forward included a significant amount of Green Space within it.
- He confirmed that the statements in MM001 apply to everything in the borough.
- He reasoned that removing the reference to good transport links for Oakhurst Rise would be a minor modification because it wouldn't make any difference to the policy itself.
- Producing a SPD on flood risk was a top priority for the planning team once they had capacity.
- He confirmed that mixed use does not exclude residential and they had to take the housing figures for Coronation Square and the other sites out of the plan because they did not have solid evidence that they would come forward.
- The difference between 4.6 and 5 years of supply was around 250 homes and the reason some of the sites weren't within the 5 year supply was because the most recent version of the NPPF had changed the definition of deliverable which has made it difficult to put lots of those sites in without evidence or up to date planning permissions.
- He confirmed that the land in MD5 South of Kidnappers Lane is for the school and the applications itself was for 350 houses North of Kidnappers Lane, he felt that the policy was strong enough to prevent any additional houses going on to those fields and they were extremely confident that the County Council were definitely going to build the school.

- The Head of Planning advised that in terms of retirement properties, there were a number that were empty and so he felt that the market would correct itself.
- The Local transport plan was due to be consulted on in Spring, and once adopted, would form part of CBC's development plan so would be taken in to consideration when making planning decisions.
- The 2019 NPPF states that if anything has outline permission, it should only be considered deliverable when there is clear evidence that housing completions begin on site within 5 years. Therefore, if it is only an outline application, the burden is on officers to go out and prove that it is likely to come forward in 5 years. It is possible to include outlines in the 5 year supply if the evidence is there.

Councillor Babbage informally proposed an amendment to remove policy HD4, Oakhurst Rise and add it on to the Local Green Space designation. He noted that the decision to leave it in as a residential site and not an LGS site meant that it had never been properly assessed for Local Green Space. He did not want to make a formal amendment, but hoped that Members would agree to carry out an assessment on the site for Local Green Space so that when they got to the latter stages of the process they would know whether it was suitable.

The Cabinet Member for Development & Safety highlighted that the intention was to protect as much Green Space as possible and that the proper mechanisms to ensure areas were not missed would need to be picked up by officers. He had concerns about accepting the proposed amendment as the planning inspector had specifically referenced Oakhurst Rise in her report and had already outlined what she thought the council needed do, he therefore could not support something that would negate what the inspector was saying.

On the point of HD4, the Head of Planning advised that in 2014/2015 there was a good amount of public consultation on Local Green Space and assessments were made that were then examined by the inspector. Policy HD4 Land at Oakhurst Rise had also been the subject of that consultation and so as it stands there was no evidence to support that as being a Local Green Space. As worded, policy HD4 retained the site as an allocated housing site but called for a masterplan to be developed for the site which would highlight all of the constraints on that site. He highlighted that there was considerable information that already exists that would enable a developer to come forward for that site, provide Green Space and protect the trees and heritage assets but also deliver housing in line with HD4. He confirmed that subject to the Council's decision, they would go out to consultation in November and December and collate all the consultation comments received, the comments would then be submitted to the local plan inspector who would confirm whether the plan was sound. Presuming the plan was deemed sound, it would come back to Full Council for a final decision, however, at this stage, it would not be possible to make changes to the policy or make decisions on what a piece of land should be used for.

The Leader highlighted that the Local Green Space reviews were carried out by the local community and therefore, it would be possible for the local parish council to conduct a review and submit this as part of the formal consultation process and explain their preference for the site.

Councillor Babbage formally proposed an amendment that was seconded by Councillor Harman, as follows:

To assess land at Oakhurst Rise (HD4) for Local Green Space designation, in parallel with the Cheltenham Plan.

The Cabinet Member Development and Safety rejected the amendment and felt that the Leaders suggestion was the appropriate way of taking the matter forward. He confirmed that the masterplanning would look at potential Green Space allocation on the site but would do so in the context of the agreed plan. He also confirmed that he was happy to remove the reference to good transport links for Oakhurst Rise as suggested during the debate.

Councillor Babbage withdrew the amendment on the understanding that outside Council they could progress the local Green Space designation and present it as part of the consultation process. The Cabinet Member agreed that this would be a sensible way forward.

The Cabinet Member agreed that the plan was not fit to drive forward the climate change agenda and that they were making representations to the LGA to lobby central government in this respect. He noted the contention around the fact that outline planning applications could not be included in the 5 year land supply as without a 5 year supply the council had considerably less control over what was allocated.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT

- **the proposed Main Modifications to the February 2018 Pre-Submission Cheltenham Plan as set out in Appendix 2 to this report (including proposed modifications to the Proposals Map and site maps/plans) as those it endorses and considers necessary to make the Cheltenham Plan sound be approved;**
- **Authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to make minor changes to the proposed Main Modifications and proposed modifications to the Proposals Map and site maps/plans in terms of formatting, presentation and accuracy prior to publication for consultation purposes.**

14. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, PLACES AND STATIONS

The Electoral Registration Officer, explained that the council had a statutory duty to review its polling districts, polling places and polling stations, to ensure that all electors had such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable and to ensure that the polling stations were accessible to all electors including those

with special needs.

He reported that a consultation exercise had been completed and consideration had been given to the views put forward.

The ward Member for Battledown wished to put on record his thanks for the sensible proposal.

RESOLVED THAT :

1. **Battledown Ward - polling district BC be created to vote at Holy Apostles Primary School, Battledown Approach. Polling district BC to consist of the following roads that are currently in polling district BB:**
 - **Battledown Approach**
 - **Battledown Drive**
 - **Birchley Road**
 - **Harp Hill;**
27, 29, 31, 33, Ashwold House, Craigmount, Homewood, Rambling Views, Sherwood, The Heights, The Lodge, Whitefield House, Widecombe & Woodbank
 - **Oakley Road**
 - **Stanley Road**

2. **That the full list of polling districts, polling places and polling stations as set out in appendix D and E are published for a further period of six weeks, during which time individuals have the right to make representations to the Electoral Commission.**

15. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Cabinet Member Corporate Services introduced the report and explained the background to the recommendations from the Constitution Working Group as outlined in the report.

He also requested Council to determine criteria for submitting public questions –with the report suggesting that this should match the criteria for signing petitions as per the council’s petition scheme, i.e. to live, work and study in the borough rather than the current criteria which restricted it to borough electors.

Finally, the Cabinet Member Corporate Services wished to thank the Constitution Working Group for their input and the officers involved in bringing this report forward.

The following points were raised and responses given :

- The Chair of the Constitution Working Group referred to paragraph 6 of the report and requested that at its next meeting the group should consider the use of secret voting on appointments to outside bodies
- One Member welcomed the recent increase in the number of young people becoming involved in politics and so wished the criteria to include the under 18 age group. This was accepted by the Cabinet Member.

A discussion ensued on the criteria for submitting public questions and the following points were made:

- A Member highlighted the importance of scrutiny, accountability and transparency in the way the Council conducted its business. He observed that any politically motivated questions should be regarded as opportunities for the authority to explain why it was doing the things it was doing. He also observed the fact that Members themselves could generate public questions. He believed that a requirement of submitting a question should be to disclose a business address so that the relevance and potential political motivation could be determined. He also suggested that the 30 minute time limit for questions be enforced and if necessary questions prioritised.
- Lengthy preambles should be discouraged
- The 30 minute allocation to discuss public questions could be viewed as stifling debate
- Recognised that the timing required for submitting public questions was tight
- Where questions were not relevant to this authority, for example those at this meeting relating to the Traffic Regulation Order should be redirected to GCC. In response the Cabinet Member Development and Safety said that in this instance it was appropriate to provide answers to the questions and would reflect badly on the authority if they were disallowed.
- The Leader explained that in terms of supplementary questions the Cabinet always answered as best it could but there was always the possibility to provide an answer in writing if further information was sought.

The Chair of the Audit Committee wished to thank officers for bringing forward the proposal to change the name of the Audit Committee to the Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee which more accurately reflected the role of the committee. He wished to encourage other Members to gain a better insight into its work which ensured that the correct processes and compliance issues were in place.

RESOLVED THAT

1. The criteria for submitting Public Questions be revised to apply to those living, working and studying in the borough and included under 18s (Parts 4A, 4B, 4C and 4D)

2. The revised:

1.1 Procurement rules in Part 4I Contract Rules and Article 14 Finance, Contracts and Legal Matters

1.3 Amendments to the Appointment of Substitute Members of Committees (Parts 4A and 4C)

1.4 Amendments to Voting on Appointments at Council (Part 4A)

1.5 Petition Scheme (Appendix H)

be approved.

3. The change of the name of the Audit Committee to the Audit, Compliance & Governance Committee be approved.

4. The Chair of the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee or its equivalent be

given authority where appropriate and in a case of urgency to suspend a Relevant Officer(as defined by the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001).

5. Authority be delegated to the Borough Solicitor to make any textual or other amendments which are necessary to ensure accuracy, consistency and legality of the Constitution when incorporating the revisions authorised by Council.

16. ANNUAL REPORT ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny, Councillor Chris Mason, introduced the report. He welcomed the acknowledgement by the authority that the Chair of O&S was an opposition Member. He referred to the valuable role of the chair's briefing group comprising himself, Councillor Sudbury and Councillor Payne who worked in a non political way. This way of working was very encouraging and he believed Overview and Scrutiny was now more effective as it posed challenging questions to both external guests and officers and requested concise reports in advance of scheduled meetings.

Finally, he wished to put on record his thanks to the Executive Director People and Change (ELT lead for scrutiny), Saira Malin, Democracy Officer and the Democratic Services team.

RESOLVED

To note the Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny 2018-19.

17. NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion A

Proposed by Councillor Clucas

Seconded by Councillor Fisher

In view of the warnings issued by scientists in relation to Climate Change and its effects, including the IUCN report, that points out the threat to native trees, plants and species, this council recognises the importance of LGS. This has been reflected recently by government, both in the NPPF and Ministerial statements, which have underlined the importance of green space in fighting climate change,.

It therefore asks officers to prepare a draft plan, in conjunction with SVPC, to look at planting indigenous trees in the Swindon Village buffer zone to encourage species protection and population growth.

In so doing, the effect of carbon reduction, through green space and tree planting, be noted and the potential to reduce further be included in the local plan.

In proposing the motion, Councillor Clucas clarified that the IUCN was the International Union for Conservation of Nature which represented 15000 recognised experts in their field. She explained that their recent report indicated that 400 tree species were at risk

of extinction, including the horse chestnut. She believed there was an opportunity to enhance what Cheltenham did in terms of tree planting and biodiversity. In the light of a major housing development planned for Swindon Village she wished that every school child in the ward receive an oak tree to plant and take ownership of it by watching it grow, develop and mature. Whilst this was a ward issue, there was potential for tree planting in the whole of the borough and she aspired to receiving a road map illustrating how this could be achieved.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Fisher believed this was a great opportunity for young people to be involved in planting trees as a positive environmental contribution, particularly in Swindon Village which was faced with a major housing development.

Councillor Britter supported the motion but proposed an amendment to remove specific reference to Swindon Village and replace with “across the borough” as he believed this was such an important issue that it should be town wide. He welcomed the proposal to get children in the borough involved.

Councillor Clucas accepted the amendment which was incorporated into the substantive.

The amended motion was supported by Members, recognising its importance for the whole borough.

A Member highlighted the fact that Local Green Space represented a small subset of green space and wished to emphasise that the motion should focus on all green spaces around the town.

In summing up, Councillor Clucas thanked Council for its support of the motion which would be of great value to the town.

RESOLVED (with one abstention) **THAT**

In view of the warnings issued by scientists in relation to Climate Change and its effects, including the IUCN report, that points out the threat to native trees, plants and species, this council recognises the importance of LGS. This has been reflected recently by government, both in the NPPF and Ministerial statements, which have underlined the importance of green space in fighting climate change.

It therefore asks officers to prepare a draft plan, in conjunction with local community groups, to look at planting indigenous trees across the borough to encourage species protection and population growth.

In so doing, the effect of carbon reduction, through green space and tree planting, be noted and the potential to reduce further be included in the local plan.

Motion B

Proposed by Councillor Baker

Seconded by Councillor Wilkinson

This Council recognises the huge amount of damage caused by plastics. Experts warn that they are one of the greatest threats facing our seas and oceans. It is estimated that 300 million tonnes of plastics are produced each year and 5 million tonnes of this figure is used by the UK (Plastic Waste, 2019). Roughly half is disposable and enters landfill or into waterways leading to our seas and oceans.

The impact upon our seas and marine life is appalling, a quite shocking example being a sperm whale found washed up on a beach with 6 kilograms of plastic trash in its stomach comprised of 100 plastic cups, four plastic bottles, 25 plastic bags and hundreds of other pieces of plastic.

These figures are shocking. Across the world over 1 million plastic water bottles are purchased every minute while up to 500 Trillion plastic carrier bags are used per year in the world (UN Environment, 2019)

We all need to do our bit, at a personal level, at a business level and at a Local and National Government level.

The motion :

This Council pledges to remove single-use plastics from its own premises and to work with partner organisations such as Leisure@, the Town Hall, the Pump Room and others to persuade them to adopt the same approach by 30th June 2020.

This Council supports the local Plastic Free Community in all the work they are doing and will actively work with them and encourage them. In addition a Councillor will be nominated to serve on the Steering Group of Plastic Free Cheltenham.

This Council, working with Plastic Free Cheltenham, will investigate the introduction of a scheme for local businesses to commit to being single use plastic free, those businesses will be publicised on the Council web site and will receive a certificate for display in their premises or shop front.

Councillor Baker proposing the motion gave a brief introduction to the matter. He explained that a lot had already been done on the council to reduce its single use plastic consumption and the reason for the motion was that the council doesn't have a policy on the matter. He was presenting it on behalf of the Plastic Free Cheltenham group who did a lot of work throughout the town. He explained that Plastic Free Cheltenham needed to attain 5 pillars to achieve a plastic free community status and the adoption of the motion was one of those pillars. So far, 70 communities had achieved plastic free status and 500 more were on track to achieve that, and he felt it was important that Cheltenham followed suit. He stressed the importance of working with the group once they had achieved plastic free status to promote it around the town.

Councillor Wilkinson seconding the motion highlighted the import work that Plastic Free Cheltenham do, which included litter picks, and working with local businesses to encourage them to reduce single use plastic.

Members fully supported the motion, and made the following comments:

- They requested that Ubico work with third sector organisations that normally have to pay for commercial recycling or waste collection to make sure that recyclable plastic is collected from them. One Member confirmed that third sector organisations are already being offered this facility.
- There needed to be more awareness throughout the town that cafes will refill your water bottle and suggested a campaign to make people dispose of cigarette butts.
- One Member nominated Councillor Baker to serve on the Steering Group of Plastic Free Cheltenham which was agreed by Members.

The motion was unanimously passed.

Motion C

Proposed by Councillor Willingham

Seconded by Councillor Atherstone

This Council notes with concern that just 17% of Tech/ICT workers in the UK are female, only one in ten females are currently taking A-Level computer studies, and yet there is a looming digital skills gap where the UK needs one million more tech workers by 2020.

Council further notes that the Tech Talent Charter (<https://www.techtalentcharter.co.uk/>) was founded by a number of organisations across the recruitment, tech and social enterprise fields and was supported in the government's policy paper on the UK Digital Strategy in March 2017 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-digital-strategy>). The Tech Talent Charter is run as an industry collective, in recognition that only through working together and joining forces, can any real meaningful change happen. There is no charge to join the Tech Talent Charter and the Tech Talent Charter Strategy group includes DDCMS and has over 350 organisations signed up as signatories.

The Tech Talent Charter encourages and supports signatories to tackle this lack of diversity and inclusion head-on by undertaking to:

- *Support attraction, recruitment and retention practices that are designed to increase the diversity of their workforce;*
- *Define their own timetable for change and implement the strategy that is right for their organisation (acknowledging that all signatories will have different starting points);*
- *Measure the diversity profile of their UK employees and to share this data for (anonymous) collective publication.*

Recognising our public sector equality duty pursuant to s149 of the Equality Act 2010, Council is concerned about this imbalance, and believes there should be a more diverse, inclusive, fairer and commercially successful tech workforce and industry. Ensuring that the processes, culture and ethos of this Council are inclusive is essential in tackling not just a lack of gender diversity, but also supporting under-represented groups such as those from the LGBT, BAME, disabled or neuro-diverse communities.

The Tech Talent Charter states that "To effect meaningful change, signatories of the Tech Talent Charter pledge to:

1. *Having a senior-level, named representative with responsibility for the Charter commitments;*
2. *Adopting inclusive recruitment processes, working toward a goal that, wherever possible, women are included on the shortlist for interviews;*
3. *Ensuring they have employment policies and practices that support the development and retention of an inclusive and diverse workforce;*
4. *Working collectively with other signatories to develop, share and implement protocols and best practice for the practical implementation of the aims of this Charter;*
5. *Contributing their employment diversity data into a common central anonymised database, for sharing amongst signatories bi-annually, and for publishing publicly in an annual report.*

In light of this Council's investment in, and commitment to, the Cyber Park, the Council should lead by example. Therefore, this Council resolves to support and sign up to the Tech Talent Charter in its own right, and through Officer and Member influence to also encourage the shared services providers that we work with (including, but not limited to: Cheltenham Borough Homes, One Legal, Publica, Southwest Audit Partnership, The Cheltenham Trust, and Ubico) to support and join the Tech Talent Charter too.

In proposing the motion Councillor Willingham said this was about the council acting and showing local leadership, particularly in light of the plans for the cyber park. He explained that only 17 % of the workforce of the tech industry were female which represented a massive disparity. He reported that 350 organisations had signed up to the Tech Talent Charter. Whilst ICT within the council was delivered by Publica, this motion, if adopted, this would be forwarded to them, and the Tech Charter could be included in our recruitment and retention practices. He emphasised that this did not only concern gender diversity and highlighted that if this was not addressed for gender it may not be addressed for other protected equality characteristics. The council could set its own timescale for implementation but it could learn and contribute and show also that this was something it would wish organisations coming to the cyber park in the future to aspire to.

In seconding the motion Councillor Atherstone highlighted the need for greater gender diversity in the UK's tech industry. Gender imbalance in this field was something that CBC and businesses in the town needed to address together. She quoted that in the UK alone only 1 in 10 girls took computer science at A'level last year and this was in the light of the tech industry being one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK with no apparent signs of slowing down. Demand for digital transformation was forecast to grow by 12 % by 2024. The tech industry was therefore critically important for business and the UK economy at large.

She believed that it was vital to act now with the mission of attracting, recruiting and retaining females to the industry to show that we are committed to diversity among the workforce and adopt the mindset for continuous improvement. Together with other organisations it was vital to capitalise the long term societal and economic benefits the tech talent charter could bring us.

Members supported the motion and believed that embedding the charter was key. It was recognised that there was, more widely, a huge deficit in girls wishing to study STEM subjects in general.

In summing up Cllr Willingham acknowledged that the Tech Charter did not represent a panacea solution but committed the council as an employer to try to address the

imbalance since many of the professions in the council required STEM qualifications. He requested that Members represented on outside bodies and officers representing CBC on external organisations also promote the Tech Charter.

Upon a vote, the motion was unanimously carried.

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

There was none.

Roger Whyborn
Chairman