

Council

Monday, 18th July, 2022
2.30 - 4.30 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Sandra Holliday (Chair), Matt Babbage (Vice-Chair), Glenn Andrews, Victoria Atherstone, Paul Baker, Adrian Bamford, Garth Barnes, Graham Beale, Angie Boyes, Nigel Britter, Jackie Chelin, Barbara Clark, Flo Clucas, Mike Collins, Bernard Fisher, Wendy Flynn, Tim Harman, Steve Harvey, Rowena Hay, Martin Horwood, Peter Jeffries, Tabi Joy, Alisha Lewis, Paul McCloskey, Emma Nelson, John Payne, Richard Pineger, Julie Sankey, Diggory Seacome, Julian Tooke, Simon Wheeler, Max Wilkinson, Suzanne Williams and David Willingham

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Bassett-Smith, Dobie, Fifield, Oliver, Savage and Tailford

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 June were approved and signed as a correct record.

4. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor outlined her recent engagements.

5. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

On behalf of Council, the Leader wished to send her condolences to Councillor Dobie (and his family) who recently lost his wife.

The Leader reported that, by comparison to the other five Gloucestershire local authorities, Cheltenham has seen the largest number of sponsors offering to host Ukrainian guests through the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. She wished to put on record her thanks to the Housing Strategy & Partnerships Manager and his team for their commitment on top of the day job.

She then reported that another exciting milestone was reached last week with the Golden Valley project with the conclusion of the contract with HBD X Factory as the council's development partner. Consultation would now take place with residents more widely.

The Leader congratulated Cllr Wilkinson and Judith on their recent nuptials, and she welcomed the three work experience students here today to watch democracy in action.

Finally the Leader wished to thank Tim Atkins, Managing Director Place and Growth, for his service to the council over the last six years. The Golden Valley project would not have happened without his leadership, commitment and drive. She wished him all the best for the future.

6. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS

There were none.

7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1.	Question from Roger Whyborn to the Cabinet Member Cyber, Commercial Income and Regeneration, Councillor Mike Collins
	<p>I note from the motion unanimously passed by this Council on 25th March 2019 that it was recommended that CBC officers and the Cabinet Member work with all the relevant agencies to study and determine the appropriate size, scope, and location of a properly equipped transport hub for Cheltenham, and how good connectivity can be delivered, and that they also work with the LEP and others to explore (other) funding streams to provide financing where appropriate.</p> <p>In the light of that motion, and now that a measure of normality has returned to the transport scene post-pandemic, can the cabinet member please advise us what steps are being taken towards achieving the goal of a having a functioning effective transport hub which:</p> <p>A) addresses the increased need for even more focus on the subject due to climate emergency,</p> <p>B) contributes to a public transport network with much better interchanges</p> <p>and C) hence increases the proportion of local journeys made by public transport, and reduces congestion and pollution on town centre roads?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>I would like to thank Mr Whyborn for his question and good to see he retains his keen interest in transport and the well-being of Cheltenham. Whilst he is correct in that the pandemic has led to disruption, this has not limited our engagement with key partners.</p> <p>In regards to a central transport hub, as recognised in the council motion of 2019, CBC is neither a transport operator nor a transport authority; our role therefore is within the wider place shaping of the town. Below I have outlined the strategic schemes we have been supporting. Collectively these will have an impact on modal shift and understanding this will be key to investigating future options for a transport hub.</p> <p>Mr Whyborn was very much a part of the work of the Connecting Cheltenham Strategy https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/61/climate_and_sustainability/1649/connecting_cheltenham. This strategy informed the council's response to the review of the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan and includes recommendations around interchange facilities. We will continue to work with partners on identifying the right solutions for this. However, understanding the evidence is key and we will need the wider context of modal shift from the strategic schemes to help better understand the whole town picture of movement.</p> <p>Mr Whyborn is right to recognise the continuing importance of the work between CBC and GCC</p>

on managing strategic projects across the Central Severn Vale and crucially the planned developments in west and north-west Cheltenham. These projects include all elements of the Housing Infrastructure Fund which is funding the M5J10 Scheme, incorporating the proposals for the Arle Court Transport Hub.

Considerable progress has been achieved on this project element since the contract with Homes England was signed in October 2020. Since then, and with the backdrop of extraordinarily challenging times, the development of the outline design has taken place with input from key stakeholders, including CBC. The focus of which was a series of workshops held with a range of stakeholders in attendance including bus operators, GCC and CBC officers, local employers, Cheltenham BID and GFirst LEP. The purpose of the workshops was to present outline plans and provide opportunity for comments and suggestions. Successful outcomes include the decision to incorporate coach parking within the facility to provide greater flexibility of use and help attract additional tourist coaches to the town. Conversations have also taken place to investigate possible additional funding streams for this element of the works. A key theme from the discussions was a focus on the quality of the hub and the services on offer, to ensure the best opportunity for increased number of users transferring to more sustainable modes of transport. For example, understanding from operators the requirements for long distance coaches as well as local services to future proof the facility and provide improved access and interchange from one service to another. Elements such as the importance of changing places standing of toilet facilities has also been captured

In addition to the workshops, written engagement in the form of email briefings took place with the MP, elected members, business, environment and disability groups. Liaison also took place with the CBC planning team through a series of meetings and who provided input and comment to the communications strategy. This included the suggestion to increase the number of residents engaged with locally and submission of the scheme to the Cheltenham architects panel to provide feedback, both of which were completed prior to planning submission. A more detailed summary of the stakeholder input on the scheme can be found in the planning document 'statement of community involvement' available on the planning portal GCC Planning Application Associated Documents (gloucestershire.gov.uk)

One of the key objectives of the scheme is to promote sustainable modes of transport and remove unnecessary car journeys from the network. The aim is to appeal to the maximum number of users as possible and provide a range of options to switch to bus, coach, e scooter or active travel modes. The project also includes allocated electric vehicle charging points and photo-voltaic cells to generate energy on site. We will continue to develop the detail of these proposals through detailed design.

Highway works have now begun on site at Arle Court, and detailed design - a product of the above engagement process - is being finalised for the main works. The aim remains to deliver high quality, sustainable infrastructure, to support the transition and acceleration of modal shift to public and active transport.

Mr Whyborn may have recently seen local media where I recently joined GCC in recognising the completion of the West Cheltenham Transport Improvement Scheme - a £26.3M investment designed to accelerate the initial phases of development of the 45 hectares of employment land allocated within the West Cheltenham area. For the present, the funding has delivered a comprehensive suite of improvements to the transport network along the A40 corridor between M5 Junction 11 and the Benhall Roundabout, with cycling and walking infrastructure improvements linking all the way to Lansdown Rail Bridge.

Mr Whyborn may also be aware that the Mass Transit project has recently completed pre-

	feasibility and feasibility studies, which have concluded that there is benefit in progressing the scheme to the next stage of development. This means a move into the Options Appraisal phase, whereby the location of a mass interchange such as Arle Court, will be a key consideration in making a routing decision. The Mass Transit project will be a key action for supporting Gloucestershire's drive to decarbonisation.
	Supplementary Question
	<p>Referring to the Connecting Cheltenham Strategy, Roger Whyborn fully accepted that CBC was not the statutory transport authority and that present realities may require prioritisation to be given to a basic approach of minimal works and moving bus stops, rather than elaborate hub infrastructure. He asked whether the cabinet member reiterated CBC's commitment to the aims and intentions of delivering the vision of good transport connectivity in a hub area within the town centre in full collaboration with other partners and importantly including working with other partners to explore suitable funding streams to deliver this. He requested his response to be put in writing.</p> <p>In his response, the Cabinet Member explained that CBC had no statutory responsibility for highways or transport. Gloucestershire County Council was the statutory body and it must lead on any of the county local transport plans.</p> <p>Transport intervention requires significant funding and therefore must have an informed and robust evidence base before anything can be done.</p> <p>Any future transport options will be heavily influenced by the wider climate emergency which in turn will effect our wider transport strategy. CBC will continue to work with all its partners to deliver any future transport strategy and explore suitable funding streams that may become available. Finally, he added that this response would form part of the minute record for this meeting.</p>

8. MEMBER QUESTIONS

1.	Question from Councillor Tim Harman to Cabinet Member Climate Emergency, Councillor Alisha Lewis
	Will the cabinet member work with officers to develop a performance indicator to monitor the Councils progress on delivering on its pledges and targets on its Climate Change agenda which could be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>I can confirm that we are developing our performance indicators for the climate priority to supplement the annual reporting of carbon emissions which is already happening. These indicators, as well as details of the key projects being delivered, are being recorded on our performance management system Clearview, which it is planned will be made available to members for 'view only' access. There is also extensive information on the council's web pages www.cheltenham.gov.uk via the A to Z under the heading 'Climate change'.</p> <p>We are being as transparent as we can be regarding reporting our climate pathway challenges and actions; the climate team recently updated the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress to date, as well as projects in the delivery pipeline.</p> <p>One of the key challenges we have, is reinforcing the fact that the borough target to reach carbon zero by 2030 will not be met without the necessary tools and financing from central government and the co-operation of other agencies, businesses and households. Regrettably, the cost of living crisis is going to make this task even harder,</p>

	<p>as in the short term for example, many households will not be able to invest in energy efficiency measures and moving away from fossil fuel use for heating.</p> <p>On a more positive note, we are participating in a range of innovative partnerships to deliver a step change in carbon reduction over the coming years, including leading on the planning theme for Climate Leadership Gloucestershire and supporting work to promote biodiversity net gain.</p>
2.	Question from Councillor Tim Harman to Cabinet Member Waste, Recycling and Street Services
	Will the cabinet member meet me with the appropriate officers to view the Rowena Cade play area to discuss how it can be upgraded
	Response from Cabinet Member
	Yes. I understand Cllr Tim Harman met with the Green Space Development Officer in December 2021 to discuss improvements to the play area, and funding opportunities. I would be happy to take part in any meetings at a future date to further support this process.
3.	Question from Councillor Diggory Seacome to Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing, Councillor Max Wilkinson
	Yet again the ruling administration has demonstrated its Philistine attributes by relegating the annual art exhibition, traditionally held in Imperial Square in front of the Quadrangle building, to a series of small tents. This does not showcase the artworks to their best advantage, and restricts viewing to a few people at a time. Can the Cabinet member assure me that next year greater thought will be given to the siting of this exhibition?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Thank you to Cllr Seacome for celebrating the work of the art exhibition.</p> <p>Cllr Seacome will be aware that before the redevelopment of the Quadrangle, the art exhibition was presented on scaffolding and metal sheeting. This served a purpose for a number of years; it had a rather brutal appearance and did not stand up well to poorer weather.</p> <p>When the Quadrangle was redeveloped, this council negotiated the small but attractive plaza on the gardens side of the building. This links the Gardens, the Garden Bar and The Quadrangle to the wider area and has been well received.</p> <p>In developing the plaza, there were long negotiations with the developer of the Quadrangle. This included numerous engagements with the organisers of Art in the Park to find the appropriate solution for maintaining their event in this location, given the changes to The Quadrangle and the introduction of the plaza. The tents now being used were the agreed solution and are used not only by Art in the Park for their annual event, but also by other groups and organisations in a 'pop up' environment.</p> <p>The tents, whilst providing a different offer, have the advantage of providing shelter from rain and wind. I am aware that there were some issues with the tents last year regarding the tent seals, but this was rectified by the developer at their cost.</p> <p>Finally, I would like to address Cllr Seacome's wider point: working with Cheltenham Culture Board, we are currently running Cheltenham's broadest ever consultation on the arts to inform this borough's culture strategy. This is happening at the same time as we prepare for the reopening of The Wilson art gallery and museum, which will include new</p>

community art spaces for local artists as part of a wider effort to support the arts in Cheltenham. Therefore, while I cannot claim to match Cllr Seacome's wealth of knowledge, experience of and expertise in the arts, I feel confident in contesting his broader accusation of philistinism.





Supplementary Question

In response to a supplementary question on whether the Art in the Park would be incorporated into the Wilson, the Cabinet Member clarified that a community arts space was being developed in the Wilson. Art in the Park was a popular attraction and he would explore with the organisers whether the number of tents could be expanded and what ideas they had for the future.

4. Question from Councillor Tabi Joy to Cabinet Member Customer and Regulatory Services, Councillor Martin Horwood

The council (and the public) should be aware that Cheltenham's Air Quality Action Plan expired in 2019. Questions chasing the preparation of the new AQAP have been asked at the January 2020 Cabinet; the February 2021 Council; the April 2021 Cabinet; and most recently at Cabinet in February 2022.

At the Cabinet meeting on 15 February 2022, Cllr Max Wilkinson said that the long-delayed new Air Quality Action Plan would be published before the end of March 2022. I can't see any reference to it on the council website: When will the AQAP be published?

Response from Cabinet Member

I thank Cllr Joy for her question again as she highlights the issue of air quality in Cheltenham, which is a priority for me as it was for the previous cabinet portfolio holder, Cllr Wilkinson.

In 2020 the council had examined data from 21 sites across Cheltenham, consulted with Defra and agreed to change the statutory Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) to

	<p>rightly focus on the relatively small area where the Air Quality Objective of 40µg/m³ for NO₂ was being exceeded. Therefore, the earlier Cheltenham Air Quality Action Plan was made obsolete by changes to the Air Quality Management Area. The focus on smaller AQMAs follows common practice by other boroughs such as Sutton and Brighton.</p> <p>However, it did then require a new statutory Air Quality Action Plan focussed on that most polluted area in the vicinity of Swindon Road, Poole Way and the Lower High Street but at a time when all staff were under pressure during the pandemic.</p> <p>Clean Air Cheltenham have nevertheless lobbied for a town wide plan and we agree with them. Air quality affects us all and WHO have recently recommended much lower threshold levels not only for nitrous oxides but for particulate matter as well.</p> <p>So we are maintaining air quality monitoring beyond the statutory AQMA and Cllr Wilkinson told Clean Air Cheltenham in June last year that we would go beyond the statutory minimum, produce a town wide plan, engage with the county council highways authority to tackle the major cause of air pollution which is traffic, and also with other partners like the NHS and local business. But, he rightly pointed out that this path “would take a little longer” and this has indeed proved to be the case.</p> <p>Cllr Wilkinson did say in February 2022, that he anticipated both the statutory AQMA action plan and the wider strategy would be published together and that this might happen in March but this has not proved possible. A lot of work has been done for us by consultants but given portfolio changes at both officer and cabinet level, new WHO guidelines and possible changes in levels of pollution as we recover from the pandemic, I would now like to take the time to review this area and make sure that the town-wide plan is right rather than produce an earlier but more limited document. I’m sure I will have all colleagues’ support in doing it right rather than too quickly.</p> <p>But in the meantime, Cllr Joy can be reassured that we continue to monitor air pollution levels across Cheltenham which are overwhelmingly within the Air Quality Objective level, that we continue to engage with Gloucestershire County Council to pursue strategies such as the cleaner transport plans set out in the Connecting Cheltenham report and that we will do everything in our power and resources to make the air that we all breathe cleaner and safer.</p>
	<p>Supplementary Question</p>
	<p>Firstly, the Cabinet Member referred to the supplementary question that Cllr Joy had raised at the recent Cabinet meeting which was whether the authority had approval from Defra to extend the period for submitting an air quality action plan. He confirmed that this was the case.</p> <p>In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that it was not ideal that last year’s ice rink was powered by diesel. The event was warmly welcomed by many and generated business in the town. He emphasised that in terms of CO₂ emissions, the council had committed to using sustainable fuel for future ice rinks.</p> <p>On air quality, the Cabinet Member undertook to ask officers to check the feasibility of air quality monitoring of particulate matter could be focussed in parts of the town centre acknowledging that Imperial/Montpellier Gardens was a relatively open area. It was areas where traffic was closer to where people lived and in more constrained areas</p>

where there was a greater risk to people's health and safety.

9. FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2021/22

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets introduced the report and explained that in approving its budget in February 2021/22, Council had identified efficiency savings and additional income of £400k. The budget provided a contingency of £540k to mitigate this uncertainty and support the COVID recovery strategy.

He reminded Members that in October 2021 there was a forecasted budget overspend of over £1m which meant that not only was the full contingency expected to be required but an additional £500k needed to balance the budget as key income streams, in particular car parking income, was not recovering to pre pandemic levels.

He reported that officers and the Cabinet worked hard to develop a savings strategy in the 2022/23 Medium Term Financial Strategy which reduced the council's reliance on some of these income streams to provide greater stability in post pandemic years. The revised budget presented to Full Council in February this year reflected these changes as well as the changes in customer behaviour and used the full contingency and required a contribution of £12k from general balances to balance the budget for 2021/22.

The Cabinet Member reported that the outturn position at 31 March 2022 comprised an underspend of £229,116 against the revised budget. Faced with the most significant cost of living emergency in a generation, inflation is expected to continue to increase, and the potential impact on the council could be up to £2m of unbudgeted pressures based on our energy usage, temporary borrowing, anticipated staff pay awards and other contractual costs. These pressures are in addition to the £1.5m of savings which were approved by Full Council as part of the 2022/23 budget.

The Cabinet Member stated that this represented a once in a generation cost of living emergency which is impacting communities, residents, and officers at a time when the economy was only just starting to recovery from the pandemic. This year called for a different approach and £60,000 of the reported underspend will be committed to supporting Cheltenham's food network, specifically those organisations providing direct food support, either through a food pantry or food bank.

It is recommended that the remaining underspend be used to strengthen general balances and provide resilience in coming years to manage rising costs.

Finally, the Cabinet Member stated that the focus during these increasingly unpredictable economic and political times; needed to be on staff who are delivering core services for our residents, whilst continuing to deliver the four key priorities for our town :Cyber central in west Cheltenham, £80m housing investment plan, Net zero Cheltenham and No Child Left Behind.

In response to a Member question, the Cabinet Member confirmed that at the

current time no support from Government was forthcoming.

The following points were made in the debate which ensued :

- Officers from CBC and CBH were thanked for their support to the Budget Scrutiny Working Group;
- The finance team and CBC officers were commended for the outturn given the difficult economic circumstances and particular credit was paid to the revenues and benefits team for council tax and business rate collection rates;
- Thanks were given to the council for supporting local community initiatives;
- Residents should be assured that this town was well managed, financially prudent and doing its best to deliver;
- The foodbank contribution was welcomed, acknowledging the increased demand on these services, given the squeeze on incomes which also affected donations. The work of the food network was to extremely valuable;
- The entrepreneurial approach to investment and prudent use of reserves by the finance team was welcomed.

Finally, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets also wished to put on record his thanks to the finance team and officers both at CBH and CBC.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT

- 1. the financial outturn performance position for the General Fund, summarised at Appendix 2 be received, and it be noted that in delivering services in 2021/22, there was an underspend of £229,116 against the budget approved by Council on 21 February 2021**
- 2. the £656,218 of carry forward approved by the Section 151 Officer under delegated powers at Appendix 5 be noted and that £48,500 of carry forward which require Member approval be approved.**
- 3. the proposal for the use of the underspend after the carry forward requests outlined in Section 3 of this report be approved and fully delegated to the Executive Director of Finance and Assets in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and Assets to ensure the underspend is used in line with this proposal in Section 2.8.**
- 4. the financial outturn performance position for the General Fund, summarised at Appendix 2 be received, and it be noted that in delivering services in 2021/22, there was an underspend of £229,116 against the budget approved by Council on 21 February 2021**
- 5. It be noted that £656,218 of carry forward approved by the Section 151 Officer under delegated powers at Appendix 5 and approves £48,500 of carry forward which require Member approval.**

6. The £656,218 of carry forward approved by the Section 151 Officer under delegated powers at Appendix 5 be noted and £48,500 of carry forward which require Member approval be approved.
7. the proposal for the use of the underspend after the carry forward requests outlined in Section 3 of this report be approved and authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Finance and Assets in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and Assets to ensure the underspend is used in line with this proposal in Section 2.8.
8. the annual treasury management report at Appendix 7 be noted and the actual 2021/22 prudential and treasury indicators be noted.
9. the capital programme outturn position as detailed in Section 6 and Appendix 8 be noted, the carry forward of unspent budgets into 2022/23 and the inclusion of two new projects in the 2022/23 capital programme with a funding commitment of £50k be approved.
10. the year end position in respect of Section 106 and CIL agreements and partnership funding agreements at Appendix 9 be noted.
11. the outturn position in respect of collection rates for council tax and non-domestic rates for 2021/22 in Appendix 10 be noted.
12. the financial outturn performance position for the Housing Revenue Account for 2021/22 in Appendix 11 be received and the carry forward of capital budgets in 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 12 be approved.

10. GLOUCESTERSHIRE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and explained that the Gloucestershire Statement of Common Ground (GSoCG), has been prepared by the six local planning authorities of Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire County Council, and GFirst LEP with the process overseen by the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) since 2019. Since the initial draft produced in May 2020, numerous revisions have been subject to further discussions at Gloucestershire Leaders Board, more locally the GSoCG has been reviewed by the council's Planning and Liaison Member Working Group.

The statement, as now presented, includes a series of 37 very broad and high level agreements dealing with a range of environmental issues and land use matters including addressing the climate and ecological emergencies, housing and economic needs, the Green Belt, transport provision, the natural environment and green infrastructure, health and social infrastructure, infrastructure delivery and minerals and waste. The 37 broad agreements are

those highlighted in the yellow boxes throughout the document contained in the appendix.

The Leader highlighted that reaching agreement on how to address these strategic planning matters has been a long and challenging process. Identifying the key issues for collaborative action is a key milestone in partnership working and provides us with a platform against which to drive positive change.

The Leader advised that currently there is still the Duty to Co-operate, local planning authorities are required to prepare and maintain several statements of common ground, which document the cross-boundary matters being progressed and progress in co-operating on them. The GSoCG is one of these statements. She reminded Members that through the JCS and the Cheltenham Plan examination stages a variety of statements of common ground were agreed on a variety of topic areas. These form part of the overall management and delivery of these plans.

The Leader advised that once the statement has been approved by all signatory bodies, the intention is that an action plan will be developed and reported to the GEGJC. Progress on collaborative and any relevant joint working will be reflected in future iterations of the statement which should be kept up to date. Any proposals for changes to current strategic planning arrangements or changes will be reported for decisions to Cabinet or to other meetings of this Council, as appropriate. She undertook to ensure that Cheltenham member engagement is used to advise progress on this through the Planning Member Liaison Group and the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Strategic Plan member group.

Finally, the Leader committed to providing briefings as appropriate through Cabinet and Council.

The following responses were given to questions :

- Local Green Spaces were covered in the Local Plan, not the Joint Strategic Plan;
- The next review would be the Joint Strategic Plan enquiry-the planning liaison member working group would be kept informed;
- The industrial strategy, which had been led by the Local Economic Partnership, incorporated education in terms of facilitating employment opportunities into the area.

In the debate that followed, Members acknowledged the significant efforts of the Leader and officers in contributing to the statement which had taken a significant amount of time to arrive at. It was recognised that there was still work to be done on persuading other JSP parties to reach consensus on detailed matters on the environment and the climate emergency. The document would mature over the coming years and it was hoped that agreement would be found.

RESOLVED THAT

The Gloucestershire Statement of Common Ground as set out at Appendix 2 be approved.

11. NOMINATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Chief Executive introduced the report and explained that subsequent to the publication of the Council agenda Councillor Flynn has withdrawn her nomination to Friends of Leckhampton Hill and Councillor Jeffries has withdrawn his nomination to West Cheltenham Partnership. The Mayor explained that Council is therefore asked to note that under the Constitution at Part 3E Table 5 the Leader has the power to confirm an appointment subject to the agreement of all the Group Leaders. The nomination for Sandford Park Lido should therefore be decided by the full meeting.

The nominees, Councillors Baker and Flynn, were invited to make a short statement supporting their nomination prior to voting.

Following this, the Mayor moved to the vote.

RESOLVED THAT

Councillor Paul Baker be nominated to Sandford Parks Lido

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

The Interim Monitoring Officer advised that democratic services had received notice of a proposed amendment to the motion submitted which included a request to refer the motion to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration and then be reported back to Council at a future meeting as soon as is practical. In those circumstances, according to the the council procedure rules (5.6 (2) in the constitution, the meeting should consider to refer the matter to O&S on that basis. If this was decided, the motion would be referred without debate but the proposer of the motion, Councillor Flynn would be able to briefly introduce her motion at this meeting.

A Member queried how a vote could be taken on the deferral, when the amendment had yet been formally moved with no explanation as to the reasons for the amendment. Yet, the proposer of the motion still had the possibility to introduce the motion. The Interim Monitoring Officer clarified that this was proposed for the efficient dispatch of council business. As the Member concerned continued to express dissatisfaction with the process proposed, the Interim Monitoring Officer stated that there was no reason why the amendment could not be proposed but the constitution was quite clear on this matter where referral was being considered. Following further discussions, it was put forward that Councillor Flynn propose the motion, followed by the introduction of the amendment and then a vote on referral to the O&S committee.

Proposed by Councillor Flynn, seconded by Councillor Joy

Council notes that to achieve UNICEF's child-friendly status, Cheltenham Borough Council will have to show that it is a place where more children feel safe, heard, cared-for, and able to flourish.

Council believes that members of our communities and town will only benefit through the principles of child friendly city/community status being adopted. These include:

- **Non-discrimination**
- **Best interests of the child**
- **The inherent right to life, survival and development**
- **Respect for the views of the child**
- **Equity and inclusion**
- **Accountability and transparency**
- **Public Participation**
- **Effectiveness and responsiveness**
- **Adaptability and sustainability**

Council believes that the adoption of these principles will allow all sectors of the council structure to deliver more play space, safer roads, cleaner and greener neighbourhoods, cycle infrastructure, better education, child safety – all areas which will benefit families and communities and allow Cheltenham to become an even better place to live and work.

Council recognises that there is an inter-dependence on the County Council, NHS, schools and police to deliver aspects of the framework – particularly in relation to social care, health, education and safety. It further recognises the great work done by No Child Left Behind in creating a foundation of child-centred partnership working that can be built on to achieve UNICEF child friendly status.

UNICEF's child rights-based approach to public services has consultation with children and young people at its core. Council believes that consultation is vital to developing our communities, where children and young people can:

- **Have a say about decisions that affect them.**
- **Express their views freely and are encouraged and supported to do that.**
- **Access good health, education, transport, and other service.**
- **Feel safe, prioritised, and protected from discrimination and harm.**

- **Enjoy public spaces and meet other children and young people freely**

Council resolves to:

- **Promote the benefits of the UNICEF Child Friendly city/community status to partner organisations.**
- **Work with partners to agree a timetable for signing up to the UNICEF programme and begin the process to become a recognised Child Friendly city/community.**
- **To implement/ improve the principles of the UNICEF status, within this motion, as soon as possible**
- **To develop a consultation strategy which includes the principles of young people inclusion as stated above.**

In proposing the motion, Councillor Flynn commended the Council on its No Child Left Behind project which had seen schools, Gloucestershire Constabulary, the County Council, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Cheltenham Borough Homes, various charities and local businesses come together to highlight the issue of children growing up in poverty in Cheltenham and address the inequality gap between them and their more affluent peers.

But she felt that it was now time to widen the scope of what we do and how we do it in light of the disruptions of Covid, the climate-challenge, and the cost-of-living crisis.

Whilst work still need to be progressed on reducing the inequality gap, it was important to recognise the impact the current issues were having on ALL children and our policies and operations should be child-centred. Engagement with children should also be more considered as the earlier young people are provided with opportunities to participate, the greater the benefit is to both themselves and the wider society.

Recognising that UNICEF Child Friendly status can only be achieved by working with other organisations, she urged Members not to let that be a deterrent to supporting this motion and Cheltenham Borough Council had the potential to be a catalyst for the whole of Gloucestershire achieving UNICEFs Child-Friendly status. Passing this motion would see the council working

towards the UNICEF status and ensuring we have a child rights-based approach to our policy making.

The good track record CBC has of working with partners to achieve aims that benefit the community can be utilised to help achieve UNICEF's status. Passing this motion would focus minds and services locally and set a benchmark for other councils and would ensure Cheltenham is a family friendly town, one that retains its young people and attracts new families. Councillor Flynn queried the input of children in the Place Strategy and also asked what efforts are being made to ensure young people's views are included in the consultation on the Culture Strategy and representation of youth on other bodies, panels and boards that develop strategy for the town.

Councillor Flynn believed that, if passed, this motion would see not just real, meaningful engagement with young people, but a change in culture, where gathering the views of the younger generations is more than a tokenistic, although well-meaning, exercise. She highlighted that it takes between three-to-five-years for a city or community to be eligible for recognition as a UNICEF Child Friendly City or Community. During that time UNICEF UK's team of experts in children's rights, public policy, social work and participation provide training and technical assistance to councils and their partners – from local politicians and social workers, to urban planners, community organisations, the police and health services. This support is based on evidence from over 20 years of the global UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiative, including in the UK, which shows that weaving children's rights into local policy, practice and planning can dramatically improve conditions for children.

In seconding the amendment Councillor Joy explained that this would provide the council with access to an international framework and use resources to invest in our own young people. It would bring children in to the ecosystem of participating in democracy-it was an exciting opportunity.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Clucas as follows :

The amendment replaces 'Council resolves to...'

"The Motion raises some interesting points. UNICEF is a great organisation and I will declare an interest as a contributor. However, the timescale outlined and the amount of work that might be required during that time needs to be scrutinised and a report come to Council.

Officers are needed to deliver the work that is ongoing, particularly in the current circumstances and given the financial and cost of living forecast for the next two years.

Therefore Council resolves to refer the Motion to O&S. O&S will be able to look at the situation, proposal and implications and report back to Council for a decision to be taken.”

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Jeffries.

In proposing the amendment, Councillor Clucas detailed the immense work and successes of the No Child Left Behind initiative which included debates with children and significant partnership working.

The Interim Monitoring Officer advised, that now the amendment had been put, the meeting should vote on the request for the referral of the motion to O&S as contained in the amendment.

RESOLVED THAT

the Motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a report be brought back to Council as soon as practicable.

13. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 -EXEMPT INFORMATION

RESOLVED THAT

in accordance with Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972 the public be

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

Paragraph 1; Information relating to any individual

14. APPOINTMENT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

The Chief Executive introduced the report and firstly wished to put on record his thanks to the Interim Monitoring Officer, Howard Norris, who had been in the interim post for a longer period than envisaged, due to the length of the recruitment process for the permanent appointment. On behalf of the Council, he thanked him for his advice over the last 10 months.

The Leader briefed Council on the interview panel and announced that Claire Hughes was proposed as the successful candidate.

In the brief debate that followed, Members thanked the Interim Monitoring Officer for his support and advice to the Council.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT

1. **Claire Hughes be appointed as Monitoring Officer for the Borough Council in accordance with section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.**
 2. **Review and approval of references and satisfactory completion of necessary recruitment/HR documentation in partnership with Stroud District Council be delegated to the Chief Executive in Consultation with the Chair of the A&R Committee.**
- 15. ANY OTHER ITEM THE MAYOR DETERMINES AS URGENT AND WHICH REQUIRES A DECISION**
None.

Sandra Holliday
Chairman