COLN VALLEY WARD

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT
JUNE 2025

Forthcoming Committee Meetings (underlined texts are linked)

The May Full Council Meeting is the Annual Meeting which is mostly about appointments. The next opportunity for Public Questions is 16 July as there is no full Council Meeting in June.

Thursday 6 June 6.00 pm Meeting of Cabinet
Wednesday 11 June 2.00 pm Meeting of Planning and Licensing Committee
Wednesday 21 June 6.00 pm Meeting of Annual Council, Council
Wednesday 25 June 2.00 pm Meeting of Licensing Sub-Committee (Taxis, Private Hire, and Street Trading

Recent Committee Meetings (underlined texts are linked)

Tuesday 6 May 4.00 pm Meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 6 May 6.00 pm Meeting of Cabinet
Wednesday 14 May 2.00 pm Meeting of Planning and Licensing Committee
Wednesday 21 May 6.00 pm Meeting of Annual Council, Council
Tuesday 27 May 4.00 pm Meeting of Audit and Governance Committee
Thursday 29 May 2.00 pm Licensing Sub-Committee (Taxis, Private Hire, and Street Trading

There will be no FULL COUNCIL MEETING in June 2025

No Members Questions at the May Annual Council Meeting

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING 21 MAY 2025

UPDATED: Cabinet roles and responsibilities

Role of a cabinet member:

- leading on developing council policy and make recommendations to the Cabinet
- providing guidance to the Cabinet on running activities
- giving guidance to the Cabinet on budget priorities
- monitoring performance and make sure policy is delivered
- leading on improving council services
- making sure that activities meet the council's overall vision, core values and guiding principles
- contributing to debate and decision-making
- working with councillors who are not members of the cabinet, members of the opposition and officers to make sure that the overview and scrutiny process works correctly
- appearing before and responding to overview and scrutiny committee reports
- representing the council at a national and local level

Each cabinet member is the spokesperson for the policy area or 'portfolio' they are responsible for.

Leader - Mike Evemy

Portfolio responsibilities

- Executive functions and corporate plan delivery
- Local government reorganisation and devolution
- Town and parish council liaison
- Communications
- Publica and UBICO
- Member development

	Deputy Leader - Juliet Layton Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning Portfolio responsibilities: • Strategic housing Homelessness • Forward planning and the local plan Development management, heritage and conservation Biodiversity emergency response Neighbourhood planning
	Cabinet Member for Finance – Patrick Coleman Portfolio responsibilities Financial strategy and management Property and assets Revenues and benefits Grant funding and Crowdfund Cotswold

Climate Change and Digital – Mike McKeown

Portfolio responsibilities:

- Climate emergency response
- Community energy and energy efficiency
- Council sustainability and sustainable transport
- Digital innovation, inclusion, and accessibility
- Adoption and governance of AI technologies
- Cybersecurity and data governance

Economy and Council Transformation – Tristan Wilkinson

Portfolio responsibilities:

- Economic development
  Council transformation
  Business liaison
  Flooding and sewage

Health, Culture and Visitor Experience – Paul Hodgkinson

Portfolio responsibilities

- Public health
- Parking operations and public toilets
- Leisure centres
- Culture and museums
- Tourism
- Community safety partnership

Communities – Claire Bloomer

Portfolio responsibilities

- Cost of living support
  Liaison with third sector
  Diversity, inclusion and young people
  Safeguarding
  Refugee and asylum response

Environment and Regulatory Services – Andrea Pellegram

Portfolio responsibilities

- Waste and recycling
  Environmental and regulatory services
  Street cleaning
  Public realm

UK Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)

This was only announced on 19 May with a deadline on 30 May. We raised this at Full Council and the deadline has now been revised to Monday 16 June, which is still very tight.
https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/business-and-licensing/business-support-and-advice/rural-england-prosperity-fund/
This fund is designed to support projects that boost rural communities and economies. The Council has been allocated £229,240 from the UK Government's fund, which supports capital projects which enhance rural businesses and communities.

CABINET DECISIONS - 8 May

Rural England Prosperity Fund 2025/26 (REPF) Update
To update Cabinet on award of Rural England Prosperity Funding for 2025/26, to seek approval for the approach to delivery of REPF projects in 2025/26 and to agree the necessary delegations.

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommend to Council to

1. Amend the capital programme for 2025/26 to include the Rural England Prosperity
Fund (REPF) scheme capital budget of £229,240, which is fully funded from the 2025/26 REPF grant allocation.
2. Approve the provisional allocations as set out in para 3.1.Notification of Draft Decisions Thursday, 8 May 2025
10. 3. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Environment and the Council's Section 151 Officer to allocate the funding, having regard to the recommendations of the REPF Assessment Panel.

Cotswold District Council Renewable Energy Study January 2025
To present the Cotswold District Renewable Energy Study and
to provide evidence-based advice to inform decisions on renewable energy deployment and achieving net zero, while also supporting the Local Plan Update. Cabinet endorsement was sought to use the study as an evidence base for Council policies going forward.

Cabinet RESOLVED to endorse the Renewable Energy Study for use as: part of the evidence base for the review of the Local Plan; part of the evidence base for future Council policies and procedures in regard to responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergencies.

Endorsement of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) Management Plan 2025-2030
The purpose of the report was to seek Cabinet's endorsement of the Cotswolds National Landscape (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - AONB) Management Plan 2025 – 2030 and seek endorsement of its use as part of the evidence base for the preparation and implementation of relevant Council strategies, policies and projects including but not limited to the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans.
Councillor Juliet Layton and Councillor Paul Hodgkinson declared an interest as they serve on the board of the CNL. Both Councillors left the Chamber for the debate.

Cabinet RESOLVED to endorse the recommendation of the report that the Cotswolds

National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025 be used as part of the evidence base for the review of the Local Plan; part of the evidence base for the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans; part of the evidence base for the preparation and implementation of relevant Council strategies, policies and projects; as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications (where compatible with relevant Local Plan and national policy); and to inform the development and delivery of the Council's services and activities.

CDC HAS A NEW LEADER

Councillor Mike Evemy has been elected as the new leader of the Liberal Democrat Group on the council and formally took over as council leader at the Annual Council Meeting on Wednesday, May 21.
He succeeds Councillor Joe Harris, who stepped down after six years in the role. Cllr Evemy represents the Siddington & Cerney Rural ward and has served as deputy leader and cabinet member for finance since 2019. He has led on financial strategy and projects including the Bourton car park levy.

RETROFIT ROADSHOW

On Thursday 22 May, CDC organised Retrofit event in Kemble Village Hall. This event was to learn about the latest technologies and issues as the Cotswolds have the second (to Westminster) highest number of listed properties and although beautiful, are hard to update in line with modern standards of insulation.

I understand it was a very interesting and rewarding event which could have been better attended if it had been published as a Cotswoldwide event and held at the Council Offices.

Justine Mallinson - the Retrofit officer at CDC made a superb presentation. Redbridge & Sons Property Services are working with CDC - (Showroom Hempstead, Gloucester) and their representative Craig has been installing for 18 years in business for 10 years.

Here are a few notes which may interest you:

- Solar PV generates electricity

- Solar heat panels heat hot water
- A change to LED lighting saves 60% to 70%
- Battery storage - 20% solar in winter average
- Solar PV and Battery pay for the investment, return in 7 to 8 years
- Private wind turbines are still not efficient enough so probably not worth the investment
- Book a home visit HOME ENERGY PLAN furbnow.com/gloucestershire *
- Old houses are moisture permeable - impermeable systems have been introduced (such as the wrong paint) which can create damp issues. Use vapour permeable paint.
- Damp homes lose heat faster
- In the Cotswolds, 20% of carbon emissions are from our homes
- Less than 100m loft insulation - GB Insulation Scheme might assist
- Heating & hot water use the most home energy
- We produce a lot of Moisture in our houses - washing, cooking, drying
- Current EPCs are a blunt tool, they are not detailed enough nor are they accurate. It doesn't make recommendations so limited uses
- EPC value methodology will be Updated on 15 June 2025, will take more into account.
- PAC2035 is the latest British Standard - it is tighter than building regs so we don't get failures and incorporates other British Standards. It is a Professionalised energy efficiency, a framework for professionals.
- External wall insulation has proved to be a FAILURE
- Eventually the Grid will be decarbonised
- To achieve Energy security if we need to be self-sufficient
- To prove 2050 target, all houses will need to be assessed
- PD Rights are changing for ground source heat pumps - size, noise, boundary

A Home Energy Plan is a blueprint to work from. It works out the economic sequence, e.g. prioritise guttering - the plan will put effective work in the right order, you don't have to carry it all out at once. Doors, windows, secondary glazing, draughty proofing etc. eg. 3% heat loss from each fireplace - chimney balloons/sheath vapour permeable all make a difference.

Other bodies who can help with further information:

Fairer Warmth/ Gloucestershire - Will bring up your house details or compare with your neighbour
FURBNOW - Retrofit consultant - ask them to put together a full house plan. They Use local installers
Make my house green
Warm & Well - charity in Gloucester offers advice and finds funding if income less than £36,000
Insulation materials — eg cellutex- holds onto the heat then eventually releases the heat after 2 to 3 hours, making a warm house hotter whereas wood fibre takes 7 to 8 hours, so overheating can be controlled as temperature will likely fall in the evening

WEDNESDAY 4 JUNE - 2 TO 6PM - TOWN & PARISH SUMMIT AT THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY

June 4th - Town & Parish Council Summit… Boutflour Hall, Royal Agricultural University.

This was a local government reorganisation (LGR) special. It detailed what opportunities there are and how do town and parish councils prepare themselves to deliver more for their residents, in the event of Gloucestershire becoming a Unitary Authority? The role of town and parish councils is set to become even more important in meeting the needs of local people, as local government sits on the cusp of fundamental change. The event featured a roster of speakers who have first-hand experience of local government reorganisation. Full details below, including the list of speakers. It was an informative, interesting and engaging session:

Special guests include:

- Jackie Weaver, social media star and Chief Officer, Cheshire Association of Local Councils
- Matthew Kirby, Deputy Chief Executive, Chippenham Town Council
- Andrew Tubb, Chief Executive Officer, Cirencester Town Council
- Barbara Pond, Head of Operations, Gloucestershire Rural Community Council
- Sabrina Dixon, Community Development Officer, Gloucestershire Rural Community Council

PLANNING

On 14 May, the planning committee had training before the Planning Committee meeting . The update of the NPPF has rendered the Cotswold Local Plan 'out of date' and therefore obsolete - specifically Policies DS1, DS2, DS3 and DS4 - other policies are still relevant. CDC either has to update the local plan (which will take 3-5 years) or do a partial update (2-3 years). This opens up opportunities to build against the existing Local Plan. CNL areas will still have the usual protections. At the time of writing, the Forward Development team has yet to advise on their recommendation. This update will be broadcast by CDC media in the next month or so.

CDC has a revised expected 5 Year Housing Land Supply 2024-2029 of 5,439 but can only demonstrate delivery of 1.8 years (1,908.

NPPF Paragraph 10 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Delivery - the 'Tilted Balance' of Benefits outweighing Harm has shifted - i.e. applications are more likely to be approved.

Other Paragraphs of the NPPF which are steering the new shift: In particular 11d, Footnote 8, 68, 84, 91, 110, 115, 129, 135, 139.

BINS & WASTE COLLECTION

Some villages continue to suffer from missed collections. Please report them to me at david.fowles@cotswold.gov.uk - you'll need the date of the missed collection, your address and what type of waste. I will report to the Cabinet Member for Waste and the contracts team. As many of you already know that if Ubico knows that they will not be making a schedule collection, you cannot report it on the Council's portal! My latest effo are focused on trying to be informed when Ubico KNOWS that your bins are not going to be collected so that you can be informed.

Please note that the new Cabinet Member for waste is Andrea Pellegram. She has experience in the waste industry so hopefully she might be able to bring about some solutions to our ongoing problems of non-collect, inability to report missed collections, regular missed collections and communication.

FLY TIPS

Please keep your eye out for lorries with loads parked in unusual places especially if they are in remote areas. Take a note of the number plate or other distinguishing signs and report to contracts@publicgroup.uk

FLOOD RESILIENCE & RIVER POLLUTION
SIR GEOFFREY CLIFTON BROWN PUBLIC MEETINGS
FRIDAY 27 JUNE

The Westwoods Centre, Northleach, GL54 3QJ
Flood Resilience: 10-12pm
River Pollution: 1-3pm

These meetings are an opportunity for residents of the North Cotswolds constituency to hear from and speak directly with key officials from Thames Water, Severn Trent, the Environment Agency, Gloucestershire County Council, Cotswold District Council, and other stakeholders involved in ongoing flood resilience work and addressing sewage and river pollution problems.

For those wishing to ask specific questions, Sir Geoffrey would be grateful if you could submit these in advance to cliftonbrowng@parliament.uk by Friday 20th June. We will forward any questions we receive to the relevant agencies to help them prepare answers in advance of the meeting.

As has been the case for previous meetings, we will be requesting written reports from the key stakeholders which will be circulated to those on the distribution list. A minute will be produced of the meeting which will also be circulated afterwards.

A417

Bridge beams for Stockwell Crossing, Cowley Crossing and Gloucestershire Way Crossing have all now been transported safely to site. These will be installed over the coming months as work on the scheme progresses at pace.

Members of the project team visited the A3 Hindhead Tunnel at Devil's Punchbowl, Surrey this month by invitation of the National Trust, to understand

what lessons could be learned about building a repurposed road, like that planned on the A417 scheme. This is especially important for the Missing Link project. We know that poor planning of disused old roads can lead to antisocial behaviour, failure to take up missing opportunities of repurposing and expensive servicing by both Gloucestershire County Council, Cotswold District Council, the Police and other bodies.

Innovative carbon-saving trail starts next phase
The Missing Links scheme has shared an exciting update about the innovative UK-first trial it's been running to explore how vegetation removed from the site can be reused to make significant carbon savings.

Biochar – a charcoal-like material produced by burning organic matter at extremely high temperatures – was produced from vegetation removed by the scheme, turning it back into a product that can be reused to fertilise new plants and catch microplastics. The study produced five tonnes of biochar on site, which is a saving of 13 tonnes of CO2 – the equivalent of roughly five flights from London to Perth.

The next stage of the trial is to use the biochar in different elements of the A417 project, turning waste from the project into a material that is being used to support the project.

- Landscaping: Biochar will be mixed into the soil when planting thousands of new trees, which will help them establish and grow quicker, while removing more carbon from the atmosphere.
- Green Bridge: Biochar will be used in the construction of the green bridge, which is going to be the largest green bridge in the UK at the time of building. On the deck of a green bridge, man made gels are normally used to help retain water in dry periods to stop plants dying. Instead, biochar will be used to store and retain the water to improve resilience.
- Microplastics: The biochar will be used to remove microplastics from highway runoff in the highway drainage system.

On completion of the trial, a case study will be developed detailing benefits, improvements and lessons learnt. This study could then be shared across National Highways and the supply chain to see if its implementation can help reduce carbon across future builds.

Celine Acard, Senior Project Manager for National Highways, said: “We’re always looking to improve how we design and build our major projects, especially in relation to the environment and our commitment to net zero. This trial is incredibly exciting because it means we can look in detail at new ways of repurposing and reusing site materials to cut down on our environmental impact.

“By investing in innovation, we can explore new technology and solutions to protect and enhance the environment and increase biodiversity benefiting communities that live alongside our roads.”

Biochar is created through the process of pyrolysis, when organic materials such as trees or vegetation are turned into solid carbon under extremely high temperatures in the presence of little or no oxygen. This biochar is then reused across the project in new elements such as soil, where it is proven to enhance plant growth, improve nutrient exchange and water retention.

This increases the chance of successful habitat establishment, provides climate change resilience, improves the soils’ ability to sequester CO2 and reduces reliance on synthetic materials such as swell gels.

Using pyrolysis to manage site biomass is a pioneering approach to capturing carbon in construction and reusing it onsite. The process of pyrolysis will reduce carbon emissions through carbon capture, reduction in vehicle movements and reduction in purchased materials, contributing to National Highways’ carbon reduction targets set out in the Net Zero Plan.

It will also support National Highways objectives to design, build, maintain and operate roads more efficiently and effectively by incorporating a site-won material into the design, reduce waste, reduce carbon emissions and reduce maintenance on the soft estate.

The study produced five tonnes of biochar on site, which is a saving of 13 tonnes of CO2 – the equivalent of roughly 5 flights from London to Perth

The successful completion of this project will provide National Highways with proof of concept for this approach and could allow for the technology to be

deployed across all other suitable highways schemes, supporting National Highways in their objective to deliver better environmental outcomes across all schemes.

Translocated adders doing well

Adders were translocated as part of the Missing Link scheme. High numbers have been seen to be in good health and have moved across their new receptor sites well.

The Customer Hub, located at the crusher compound at Shab Hill, continues to open every Tuesday and Wednesday from 10am until 2pm. You can visit any time during these hours, without pre-booking an appointment. Members of the team will be on hand to and answer any questions that you may have.
A417 Project Office, Birdlip, Gloucester, GL4 8JX

What3words: ///shaped.quietest.payback

Site restrictions must be adhered to, which is 10 mph. Please Reverse Park.

Site visits will begin again in June for members of the public. If you are interested, please contact A417MissingLink@nationalhighways.co.uk

All roadworks and planned road closures on motorways and major A roads, including the A417, are published on the Traffic England website: www.trafficengland.com.
Road Closure Reports, which includes a seven day look ahead of planned road closures, are updated twice daily, Monday to Friday except for bank holidays:www.nationalhighways.co.uk/travel-updates/road-closure-report/.

To find the latest information about local road closures, please visit:https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/roads/roadworks/.
Webpage: www.nationalhighways.co.uk/a417-missing-link/
Email: A417MissingLink@nationalhighways.co.uk
Phone: 0300 123 5000
X: @HighwaysSWEST
Facebook: @HighwaysSWEST

Cllr David Fowles

Conservative District Councillor

Coln Valley Ward, Cotswold District Council

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Coln Valley Ward PCs: Bibury, Coln St Aldwyns, Coln St Dennis, Eastleach, Hatherop, Quenington & Southrop

If you are contacting me as a local constituent please be aware I may need to share your personal information when contacting District Council officers or other agencies relevant to your query. *

For more information on how the District Council use personal data

visit http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-data/data-protection/

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