

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF WINCHCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT ABBEY FIELDS COMMUNITY CENTRE, BACK LANE, WINCHCOMBE AT 7.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY 14 JANUARY 2026.

Attendees:	Mr Jim Mason (Chair)	Mr S Maughan	Mr R Wakeford
	Mr David Gray	Mr R Parker	Mrs Kiaya Woodward
	Mrs G Madle	Mr B Rose	Clerk/Deputy Clerk
	Mr M Lennard	Mr D Tarling	

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PRIOR TO MEETING COMMENCING.

Proposed to adjourn then meeting for ten minutes, Proposed Cllr SM, seconded DG, carried unanimously.

None.

1. TO NOTE APOLOGIES. Cllrs D Chandler and S Sturgeon.
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. Cllr B Rose declared on Item 12a as a member of the Winchcombe Youth Football Club management team.
3. TO CONSIDER APPLICATIONS FOR CO-OPTION OF A NEW COUNCILLOR. One application received from Mr Robert Stone, who was welcomed to join the meeting and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.
4. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:
 - a. HR COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 29 OCTOBER 2025. Proposed Cllr D Tarling, seconded Cllr D Gray, carried unanimously.
 - b. PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3 DECEMBER 2025. Proposed Cllr R Wakeford, seconded Cllr S Maughan, carried unanimously.
 - c. FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 3 DECEMBER 2025. Proposed Cllr G Madle, seconded Cllr D Tarling, carried unanimously.
 - d. FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2025. Proposed Cllr D Gray, seconded Cllr R Wakeford, carried unanimously, subject to one typing error to be corrected.
5. TO RECEIVE MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING.

Asset Mapping	Only Cllr D Tarling has so far completed his allocated zone for photographing assets and uploading them to the asset management system Civicly. Cllrs who volunteered for this have been resent the guidance email and are urged to complete this by the end of January.
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6. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE SAFE AVON PROJECT. Project member Stuart Pickles presented on progress and results since the four water testing kits were purchased by WTC. Project member Geoff Sallis also in attendance.

Key points:

- In previous years there have been significant sewerage spills and poor monitoring.
- Local data in Winchcombe was needed.
- Two years of testing enabled.
- Team of ten volunteers have been testing in four locations for the past 8 months.
- Looking for phosphates and nitrates levels:

Phosphates - High levels just above and below the sewage treatment plant.

Nitrates – High levels at the Corndean testing site.

- Testing will continue until April 2027.

Recommendation that WTC write to Environment Agency to raise concerns and to request investigation/regulation.

Recommendation to write to MP Cameron Thomas requesting him to advocate and ensure regulation.

Project team happy to support the letter writing.

Following questions and discussion members agreed to write the recommended letters, along with a letter to the water company. Letters to be drafted, with the support of the Safe Avon project team, for review by members ready to be sent in April/May, when a years' worth of data will have been collected.

7. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR.

January 2025

As we come to the end of the year, December has been a busy but reflective month at Gloucestershire County Council, with a continued focus on keeping communities safe, connected and supported through the winter period.

Strategic and Local Plan – Spatial Options

The planned Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic and Local Plan (SLP) continues to gather evidence and invite feedback as it progresses towards replacing the three existing local plans and the Joint Core Strategy (JCS).

This process has become more complex following government instruction for councils to collaborate on a countywide Transitional Spatial Development Strategy (tSDS). This would, in theory, combine all district local plans in preparation for potential unitary status in 2028.

The current focus is the consultation (open until 16 January) on the Spatial Options Topic Paper. This sets out four broad spatial approaches:

1. Options 1 and 2 – Development focused on transport corridors, both including urban fringe development south of Up Hatherley Way
2. Option 3 – Transport corridor focus without development south of Up Hatherley Way, with more growth in the north of the county around Winchcombe and Tewkesbury
3. Option 4 – A more dispersed rural development pattern, again including development south of Up Hatherley Way

It is clear that there is strong concern about further development being concentrated on the edge of Cheltenham. These options merit careful scrutiny, and I would encourage residents to review the documents and submit feedback through the online consultation platform.

Local Government Reorganisation

Gloucestershire County Council, along with Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council, and Tewkesbury, Cotswold and Stroud district councils, have now all voted on their preferred options for local government reorganisation.

The options submitted to government include:

- A single unitary council for Gloucestershire
- An east / west dual unitary model
- A Greater Gloucester / rest of county dual unitary model

All proposals have been accepted by government as compliant. Public consultation is expected in the new year, with a government decision anticipated by summer 2026.

The current theoretical vesting date for any new authority or authorities remains May 2028. On this timetable:

- Elections for a new shadow authority would take place in May 2027
- Councillors elected to Cheltenham Borough Council in May 2024 (following boundary changes) and due for re-election in May 2026 would serve only a further two years before abolition of the council

Grassroots Neighbourhood Fund

The Grassroots Neighbourhood Fund has been announced as the successor to the Build Back Better Fund.

- Each county councillor will have up to £20,000 to support projects in their division
- Grants will range from £250 to £5,000
- Projects must be broadly focused on public health and wellbeing
- The fund will operate over an 18-month period

Further information is available on the County Council website, and I will be sharing details locally as the scheme opens.

Gloucestershire County Council Budget 2026/27

The draft County Council budget for 2026/27 is now out for public consultation. This is subject to confirmation of the expected £168 million government settlement.

Headline proposals include:

- £15 million additional investment in roads and drainage
- £80 million for school maintenance and £21.1 million towards a new special school
- £6.35 million towards three new adult care homes
- £500,000 to establish a virtual Adult Social Care Academy

One change affecting councillors directly relates to the £30,000 Highways Local budget held by each member. Part of this may be redirected towards core highways spending, reflecting how it has been used in practice. In return, councillors would have increased input into wider highways spending decisions affecting their areas.

Residents are encouraged to respond to the budget consultation to ensure local priorities are heard.

County Council News Highlights

- Public consultation launched on the County Council's multi-million-pound spending plans
- Over £2 million boost for projects supporting local growth and innovation through the Strategic Economic Development Fund
- Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service awarded the highest honour by the Asian Fire Service Association for work on equality, diversity and inclusion
- Launch of a new three-year strategy to tackle domestic abuse, supporting a county where everyone can live free from harm
- Solidarity with Ukraine, with Gloucestershire signing an agreement to support a Ukrainian region and share expertise
- National recognition for active travel, with Gloucestershire achieving Level 3 status from Active Travel England — one of only six authorities nationwide and the only predominantly rural council to do so
- Winners announced in the gritter-naming competition, including Gritting McQueen, Grit-fire and Feathers McGrit

County Council Business

December marked the final full cycle of formal council meetings before the new year. Early discussions on the 2026/27 budget have continued, with difficult decisions ahead due to sustained pressures on adult social care, children's services and highways maintenance.

I continue to argue strongly for preventative spending, particularly where early intervention can reduce long-term costs and improve outcomes for residents.

Highways, Winter Maintenance and Road Safety

With colder weather setting in, I have been in regular contact with highways officers regarding gritting routes, drainage issues and surface deterioration.

Freeze–thaw conditions are especially damaging to weakened road edges and verges. I am continuing to raise concerns where repeated encroachment is creating safety risks for pedestrians and drivers.

Winter maintenance remains a priority, and I would encourage residents to report urgent defects via the County Council website so they can be logged and prioritised.

Community Engagement

Despite darker evenings and challenging conditions, I have continued to meet residents, respond to casework and work closely with parish councils on local priorities.

I would like to thank community volunteers, wardens and local groups who continue to give their time and energy to support our villages and towns throughout the winter months.

Looking Ahead

January will bring renewed focus on:

- Budget scrutiny
- Highways priorities
- Continued work to improve safety and accessibility across the division

If you have an issue, you would like me to raise, or concerns about a local matter, please do get in touch.

School Crossing

An application has been received for the position of school crossing officer. Cllr Agg has requested a meeting with the Head Teacher.

Cllr Cheryl Agg

Gloucestershire County Councillor

Winchcombe & Woodmancote Division

Questions from members:

Parking restrictions implementation – members requested an update on when to expect completion. Cllr Agg will follow up.

Gritting of Sudeley Hill – councillors expressed severe concerns as this is a dangerously steep road which is not gritted. Cllr Agg will request a review.

20s Plenty – when will the consultation with Towns and Parishes commence – Cllr Agg assured members that GCC consultation is scheduled for some time next financial year.

8. TO REVIEW THE STRUCTURE AND PURPOSE OF WTC COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS, AND TO IMPLEMENT CHANGES THAT WILL BEST ALIGN WITH DELIVERY OF WTC FOUR-YEAR PLAN.

Cllr G Madle presented an overview of the current situation, and a proposal for consideration.

Key points:

- Move from 7 committees to 5.
- Recommended by GAPTC (Gloucestershire Association of Parish & Town Councils).
- To streamline councillor time/effort and to better enable implementation of four-year plan ambitions.

Following review and discussion members agreed with the proposal subject to changing Green Spaces to Park & Cemeteries and having a Chair and Vice Chair rather than co-Chairs.

Proposed Cllr G Madle, seconded Cllr J Mason, carried unanimously. Clerk to email new committees list to team to sign up to by the end of this week.

9. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE OLD BOYS SCHOOL.

Group members G Madle and S Wynne met with Gloucestershire County Council Property Team to finalise Heads of Terms, draft lease will be amended, and it is hoped that the final draft will be ready by March.

Charitable set up will then commence, along with addressing the building/structure/internals needs.

Joint press release with GCC will be issued.

10. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM WINCHCOMBE SPORTS HUB.

Cllr G Madle noted that a detailed update will be provided for members on Teams.

Accounts are being completed, small profit has been made this year, with a small sinking fund.

Cllr D Tarling will be taking over from Cllr G Madle as Director in due course.

Replacement tractor required to enable essential regular sweeping.

Building ownership transfer and new lease in negotiation.

Exploring introducing automated systems and income generation potential.

Members expressed sincere thanks to Cllr Madle for all of her efforts and the resulting achievements.

11. TO DISCUSS RECENT CRIMINAL ACTIVITY IN THE TOWN.

Cllr J Mason explained that there has been a recent spate of burglaries, break-ins, theft and vandalism across the town. There is a severe lack of police resources to both prevent, act upon and support victims of crime.

WTC has a duty to speak to someone about this.

Neighbourhood Watch does exist across the town.

New Police Point at fire station is never staffed and/or open.

Police could/should be a visible presence more often which may act as deterrent.

Winchcombe is seen as an easy target as police response time is at least 20 minutes.

999 calls not being acted upon.

Cllr G Madle wrote to police in May 2025 with questions in relation to correspondence received from the police regards changes to local policing. A reply has never been received.

It was suggested that WTC write to Police Commissioner and invite to a public meeting in Winchcombe.

Residents are not reporting to the police due to the lack of response and lack of respect from those officers who do respond, however it is vital that incidents are always reported.

Cllrs urged to attend the Police Advocacy Scheme meetings.

Cllr R Wakeford proposed that WTC invite the Tewkesbury Chief Inspector to a meeting to discuss rural crime and plans to tackle it, seconded Cllr R Parker, carried unanimously.

12. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:

- a. TO AWARD A COMMUNITY GRANT TO ISBOURNE ARTS. A grant of £15,425.00 will enable income generation and additional activity including private hire and an extended events programme. Proposed Cllr D Gray, seconded Cllr S Maughan, carried unanimously.
- b. TO AWARD A COMMUNITY GRANT TO WINCHCOMBE YOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB.

Cllr B Rose left the meeting.

A grant of £3756.00 would enable the club to purchase a new machine required to enable white line painting. Proposed Cllr S Maughan, seconded Cllr R Wakeford, carried unanimously.

Cllr B Rose rejoined the meeting.

13. TO REVIEW AND APPROVE THE 2026-27 BUDGETS AND PRECEPT.

Cllr D Gray presented an overview of budgets and precept over the last three years. Along with commitments and four-year plan ambitions, driven by the key themes identified from the community survey feedback.

The Finance Committee presented three options for consideration. Following review and discussion, members agreed to set the 2026-27 precept at £294,000.00.







This represents a 5.75% increase on last year's precept and an increase of 2.98% per household.

Proposed Cllr D Gray, seconded Cllr S Maughan, carried unanimously. The Clerk will submit the request to Tewkesbury Borough Council.

14. CIRCULARS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

NALC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chief executive's bulletin - 27 November 2025• Star Council Awards 2025/26 finalists announced today!• Events newsletter 2 Dec• Events newsletter 9 Dec• Events newsletter 16 Dec• Chief executive's bulletin - 18 December 2025• Chief executive's bulletin - 11 December 2025• Events newsletter 23 Dec• Hi Leanne, our chair has penned an open letter to parish and town councils.• NALC events 6 Jan
TBC	<p>Healthy habitats - Tewkesbury Borough Council commits to sustainable policies</p> <p>Tewkesbury Borough Council has taken decisive action at its council meeting on Tuesday, 18 November 2025. The council adopted two new policies to protect the environment: a peat-free policy and a new pesticide policy. Both sit within the council's 2025 - 2028 plan priority of 'Caring for our environment' and strengthens its response to the climate and ecological emergencies.</p>

	<p>The UK Government will ban peat-containing products from 2027, with some exceptions until 2030. Tewkesbury Borough Council is acting earlier, committing to ban the use of peat-containing products - specifically potted plants purchased for council land - by December 2025.</p> <p>The council has also formalised its long-standing practice of avoiding pesticides. The new pesticide policy confirms that harmful chemicals will not be used on council land, protecting biodiversity and public health.</p> <p>Cllr Cate Cody, Lead Member for Climate and Ecology said: "Peatlands are the UK's largest carbon store, so leaving peat in the ground is vital and this policy ensures that we do just that. Although we have been peat-free for some time, this makes sure that all our contractors adhere to our policy too. We also take the use of pesticides very seriously due to the harm they cause to humans, wildlife, our soil, rivers and more. We are interested in helping our wildlife and ecosystems to thrive and this policy will also strengthen this."</p> <p>Both policies are available on the council's climate webpages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New information published today (1 December), will help shape how Cheltenham Borough, Gloucester City, and Tewkesbury Borough will grow. • Community Orchard and Community Growing Grants - Tewkesbury Borough Council • Successful prosecution for council tax reduction fraud • Funding boost to help prevent homelessness in Tewkesbury Borough • Have your say on proposed changes to Street Trading Policy • Get 2026 off to a green start by recycling your 'real' Christmas tree at one of 10 locations around Tewkesbury Borough. • Parish Matters 2025 issue 4 • Tewkesbury Borough Council secures ministry support for Garden Communities <hr/> <p>Winchcombe EV Chargers</p> <p>The chargepoints and associated electrical infrastructure have been installed in Winchcombe Back Lane car park alongside the bay marking and signage. We are now waiting for the national grid works which are scheduled to begin 28 January to connect the chargepoints to the electrical grid. Following this an electricity meter will be installed and the final connection and commissioning will follow.</p> <p>We are expecting them to be live towards the end of February.</p>
GAPTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GAPTC December Newsletter: Important information for Parish & Town Councils • GAPTC January 2026 Newsletter

<p>AFCC</p>	<div data-bbox="609 58 940 201">  <p>Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust</p> <p>garden</p> </div> <div data-bbox="940 132 1425 163"> <p>Abbey fields community centre rain</p> </div> <div data-bbox="561 268 833 373"> <p>At the back of the planter: Overflow pipe outlet will come out and into the drain At least a 15cm gap between planter and wall</p> </div> <div data-bbox="561 401 833 604"> <p>What it can be made from</p>  <p>Railway sleepers</p> </div> <div data-bbox="561 619 833 760">  <p>Or a metal tank which uses less space and can be coloured</p> </div> <div data-bbox="857 262 1393 760">  <p>Downpipe/drain pipe cut and diverted into rain garden</p> <p>Overflow pipe</p> <p>Keep the drain free</p> <p>Information board on the front or side</p> </div>
<p>GCC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councils Connected: December 2025 • Budget consultation 2026-27 Gloucestershire County Council • Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service's CRMP Consultation  
<p>Rural Services Network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rural Bulletin - 2 December 2025 • RSN Rural Funding Digest - December 2025 Edition • The Rural Bulletin - 9 December 2025 • The Rural Bulletin - 16 December 2025 • RMTG Roundup December 2025 • Your Exclusive Christmas Gift – resources from our 2025 Seminar Programme, attended by 450 delegates, these resources showcase the discussions, evidence and learning we've gathered across the year. • The Rural Bulletin - 6 January 2026 • RSN Rural Funding Digest - January 2026 Edition
<p>Your Community Alerts</p>	<p>Our News December 2025-compressed.pdf</p> <p>A burglary into a shed occurred at Back Lane Winchcombe. This took place at about 0315 on the 19th December. Nothing was taken. Anyone with any information please quote Incident number 35 19/12/25. <i>Please consider using a battery shed alarm to protect your property. They are inexpensive and effective</i></p> <p>2 offender(s) have been seen on CCTV entering a workshop after snapping off the padlock. A blue Polaris Sportsman quad bike has been stolen without keys. Postlip, Winchcombe. At approximately 01:00hrs on 31/12/2025. Incident 058 of 31/12/2025.</p>

	<p>4 unknown males have been seen on CCTV to exit a vehicle after driving down a track. The males were carrying bolt cutters which they have used to enter various out buildings. Nothing has been stolen and the males have left empty handed. All the offenders had scarves covering their faces, 2 larger and 2 smaller men. Dumbleton, Evesham. At approximately 02:00hrs on 07/01/2026. Incident 108 of 07/01/2026.</p> <hr/> <p>Report Fraud service goes live</p> <p>From 4 December 2025, the existing Action Fraud support will be replaced by our new Report Fraud service. All City of London Police digital channels will confirm this go live and we will pin the update to the top of all our account pages.</p> <p>If you previously received alert messaging from Action Fraud this will change to advice on cyber crime and fraud from Report Fraud. Report Fraud is the new service that has now replaced Action Fraud. You should report cyber crime and fraud here from now on - reportfraud.police.uk.</p>
CPRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your latest update on our countryside • We've done it! Thank you for your support • A pivotal year behind us, a landmark one ahead • Happy New Year and happy birthday to us! 🎉
Glouc Playing Fields Association	<p>GPFA Annual Report 2024-25.pdf</p>
Strategic & Local Plan	<p>Dear Consultee</p> <p>New topic papers and evidence studies have now been published to the Strategic and Local Plan (SLP) engagement platform. These will help shape how Cheltenham Borough, Gloucester City, and Tewkesbury Borough will grow over the next 20 years, and everyone's views are needed.</p> <p>The latest publications include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vision and Objectives Topic Paper • A Settlement Hierarchy Topic Paper • A Spatial Options Topic Paper • The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) methodology & map <p>The engagement will be open until 16th January 2026.</p> <p>You can explore topic papers and evidence studies, and sign up for notifications about new papers as they are released on the Strategic and Local Plan Engagement Platform.</p> <p>Kind regards, The Strategic and Local Plan Team</p>
Cotswolds Classic	<p>Event Plan for The Cotswolds Classic Road Cyclo Sportive that we are organising to take place on Saturday, 15th August 2026.</p> <p>The Cotswolds Classic 2026 Event Plan.pdf</p>

15. ACCOUNTS FOR REPORTING AND SETTLEMENT.

Winchcombe Town Council**Accounts for Reporting 1-31/12/2025**

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
INCOME			
09/12/2025	Bank Interest (Gross)	Lloyds Bank - Bus. Bank Instant	464.91
15/12/2025	ERoB - Exclusive Rights of Burial	Mr & Mrs Tidmarsh	250.00
18/12/2025	Burial Fees	W S Trenhaile Funeral Directors	1,000.00
30/12/2025	ERoB - Exclusive Rights of Burial	Michael & Marna Curnock	500.00
EXPENDITURE			
01/12/2025	Public Works Loan	Public Works Loan	-12,889.97
01/12/2025	Public Toilet Electricity	Scottish Power	-135.05
02/12/2025	Greening Group	Winchcombe Greening Group	-96.00
03/12/2025	ReformIT Support	ReformIT	-590.52
03/12/2025	website maintenance	Peter Hampton	-232.29
03/12/2025	Scribe Cemetery Subscription (2024)	SCRIBE	-58.80
03/12/2025	AFCC Room Hire	AFCC - Abbey Fields Community Centre	-20.00
03/12/2025	Winchcombe Park Grounds Maintenance	Fairways Contracting Ltd., (Winchcombe Park)	-1,111.50
03/12/2025	Dog Poop Bags	JRB Enterprise Ltd	-548.40
09/12/2025	Chairman's allowance	The Corner Cupboard Inn Limited	-150.30
10/12/2025	Grounds Recharge	GCC (Gloucestershire County Council)	-152.51
10/12/2025	HMRC - Tax and NI	HMRC - Tax and NI	-1,235.90
10/12/2025	NEST - WTC and Employees' Contributions	NEST Pension	-317.10
10/12/2025	Winchcombe Park Pump Track	James Waller	-10,734.00
10/12/2025	Mountview Cemetery Hedge	Russell Parker	-70.00
10/12/2025	Cleaning	Initial	-114.28
11/12/2025	Supply & Install 2no meter boxes at Mountview C	James Taylor	-5,040.00
12/12/2025	Bank Service Charge	Lloyds Bank - Main Bus. Account	-8.50
15/12/2025	Telephone and Internet	Talk Talk (Office Phone & Broadband)	-77.18
15/12/2025	Playgroup redecoration	Stephen Charles (Decorating)	-915.00
17/12/2025	Ian Humphries Work	Ian Humphries	-2,831.66
17/12/2025	Toilets maintenance	Donna Clarke - A Star Cleaning	-1,126.67
17/12/2025	Winchcombe Park Electricity	British Gas	-141.06
17/12/2025	Photography	MCL - Midshire Communications Ltd.	-144.00
17/12/2025	Supply & Fit Safety Doors	Kenelm Joinery Ltd	-1,800.00
17/12/2025	Community Grant	Music Guru Academy CIC	-4,000.00
19/12/2025	Salaries		-3,667.41
19/12/2025	Bank Service Charge	Lloyds Bank - Internet Bank Account	-8.50
19/12/2025	Playgroup redecoration	Workplace Interiors Company Cheltenham Ltd	-1,612.80

Proposed Cllr D Gray, seconded Cllr G Madle that the accounts be settled and the bank reconciliation signed. Carried unanimously.

16. SEPARATE BUSINESS. THE CHAIRMAN WILL MOVE THE ADOPTION OF THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION: UNDER SECTION 100(A)(4) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, THE PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEY INVOLVE THE LIKELY DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN PART 1 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE ACT.

17. TO CONSIDER A QUOTE FOR LEGAL SERVICES.

It was proposed that Loxley Legal solicitors are instructed to pursue a refund of a deposit paid to contractors, who failed to deliver on the commissioned works. Proposed Cllr R Parker, seconded Cllr B Rose, carried unanimously.

Meeting closed 9.55pm.