

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF WINCHCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT ABBEY FIELDS COMMUNITY CENTRE, BACK LANE, WINCHCOMBE AT 7.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2026.

PRESENT:

Mr J Mason-Chair	Mr S Maughan	Mr R Wakeford
Ms S Sturgeon-Vice Chair	Mr M Lennard	Mrs K Woodward
Mr D Chandler	Mr R Parker	
Mr D Gray	Mr B Rose	
Mrs G Madle	Mr D Tarling	The Clerk/Deputy Clerk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PRIOR TO MEETING COMMENCING. None.

1. TO NOTE APOLOGIES. Cllr R Stone.
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. Cllrs J Mason, D Gray and G Madle stated that they had also debated Item 5 in their capacity as Tewkesbury Borough Council councillors.
3. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS;
 - a) PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 4 FEBRUARY 2026. Proposed Cllr S Sturgeon, seconded Cllr B Rose, carried unanimously.
 - b) FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4 FEBRUARY 2026. Proposed Cllr D Tarling, seconded Cllr S Sturgeon, carried unanimously.
 - c) COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2026. Proposed Cllr S Sturgeon, seconded Cllr G Madle, carried unanimously.
 - d) FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2026. Proposed Cllr D Gray, seconded Cllr R Wakeford, carried unanimously.
4. TO RECEIVE MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING.

Mountview Cemetery	Tree Planting project – a huge thank you to the fifteen volunteers who gave their time on Friday 20 February to plant a new 200m long hedge. The plants were provided by Gloucestershire County Council Trees Team.
Winchcombe Park	Toddler Play area is now completed. The Proludic team have done a fantastic job and we hope the new farm themed facility will be much enjoyed by our community.
	Glebe Contractors have completed the standard tree planting around the pump track, with circa 70 mixed native species added to the area.

Gloucestershire County Council Update

GCC Cllr Cheryl Agg

Cllrs raised the ongoing issue of potholes and urged Cllr Agg to continue to champion this matter on the town's behalf, which she committed to do.

LGR

The government consultation is now open (access here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-gloucestershire>) and closes on **26 March 2026**. For further info and links to the proposals you can visit Future Gloucestershire - <https://futuregloucestershire.org.uk/>

Budget

We passed our landmark Budget at full council on 18 February. We are investing in the things that matter most to our communities. It hasn't been easy, but Liberal Democrats are making the tough choices needed to deliver a stronger future for Gloucestershire.

This is a budget that resets our financial foundations and invests in Gloucestershire's future. The provisional funding settlement left us £9.5 million worse off than we had expected in December and we also had to deal with the failures and lack of investment in key areas of the previous administration.

Our budget resets and invests. It deals head-on with the financial position we inherited and aligns us with the new Fair Funding landscape to put us on a strong stable footing.

However, we are also investing in the areas most important to our communities, including –

- £15 million extra for Highways, the largest cash boost for generations
- £2 million for road safety
- 3 new care homes
- 2 new special schools

We have also established £32 million in efficiency savings to make at the council.

Highways

We are working hard to improve our highways and have committed a whopping additional £15 million into roads over the next few years.

The incredibly wet weather over the last couple of months has hugely affected our roads. Teams are working as hard as they can, however, the wet weather makes it incredibly hard to fill in potholes and increases the likelihood of more evolving.

Peer Review

- The external team has completed the peer review and given very positive feedback.
- They highlighted areas to keep developing, such as member/officer relationships, work with town and parish councils, repair quality, and governance processes that can slow things down.
- An action planning day is being organised for March 2026.

Member Influence Process

- As set out in the budget papers, most maintenance work must follow a countywide, needs based approach so the network stays in good condition and investment is fairly spread.
- Officers are developing a process for members to influence local highway priorities. This may include:
 - Local surgeries or depot open days twice a year, with sessions on planned works and priorities.
 - LHMs contacting each member at least quarterly to discuss local issues.
 - Clear ways for members to suggest locations for deep cleans, impact schemes, and findandfix work.
- Feedback from the February Peer Review will also be included.
- More detail will be developed and brought to the Highways Board in March.

Resurfacing Coming Up

- See this webpage: [County Resurfacing Works | Highways](#)

Road Safety Needs Assessment

Gloucestershire's Road Safety Partnership published their Road Safety Needs Assessment urging every road user to take simple, life saving actions.

The assessment shows that the biggest factors behind serious collisions are speeding, distraction and impaired driving. Residents are being asked to:

- Slow down, particularly on rural and residential roads
- Watch for pedestrians and cyclists, especially at junctions and crossings
- Never drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Stay focused and avoid in-car distractions

These small changes can significantly reduce the likelihood of devastating collisions.

Read the full assessment here - [Road Safety | Inform Gloucestershire](#)

Gully monitoring pilot project to tackle flood risks

Radar sensors have been added to gullies along Cirencester Road in Charlton Kings, St Georges Road and Pittville Circus. The system uses sound waves to monitor water levels in key gullies. The devices, managed by Kaarbon Tech, will collate information and send automatic notifications to the Flood Risk Management Team. The aim is that it will reduce reliance on manual surveying and lead to improved operational efficiency and response times.

Coombe Hill development

Residents and local businesses are being invited to attend a public drop-in event to find out more about proposals Coombe Hill.

This is on **4 March 2026 from 3:30pm to 7:00pm at The Swan Inn, Tewkesbury Road, Coombe Hill GL19 4BA.**

The proposals would see 27 acres of Gloucestershire County Council land transformed into a modern, multi use site designed to deliver essential services and support future growth. Current proposals include:

- A new training facility for Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service
- A state-of-the-art highways depot
- A much-needed 80-bed care home
- The sale of a small parcel of land for the development of around 25 new homes

All the latest information on the Coombe Hill development can be found at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/coombe-hill, where you can also sign up to receive email updates.

We celebrated our foster carers at a special thank you event

The annual celebration, which was held at Tortworth Court near Wotton-under-Edge, was an opportunity for us to recognise the vital role foster carers play in keeping children and young people safe, by providing loving, stable homes for those in care.



The evening brought foster carers together to acknowledge their commitment, compassion and the difference they make to children's lives every day.

Anyone interested in fostering can find out more by visiting www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/fostering.

Boosting Apprenticeships

We pay into the national Apprenticeship Levy, and any unspent funds are reclaimed by the government after two years. So to keep this money in Gloucestershire, we transfer part of our unused levy to local employers so they can take on

apprentices or upskill staff at no extra training cost.

Since 2019, we've transferred over £1.5 million to local employers, mainly supporting adult social care and early years, as well as apprenticeships in health, construction, engineering, education and youth services.

Each year we publish our funding pledge on the national apprenticeship website, where Gloucestershire employers can apply online.

Our New Gloucestershire Business Board (GBB)

This replaces the previous Economic Growth Board and will take a more dynamic, business led approach to supporting growth, investment and innovation. It will provide strategic oversight of Gloucestershire's economic development agenda, ensuring that business insight directly informs countywide policy and major investment decisions.

The GBB will be co-chaired by Cllr Julian Tooke, cabinet member for business, economic development, planning and infrastructure at Gloucestershire County Council, and Rob Stemp, an experienced cyber security leader, entrepreneur and board advisor.

Our Local Nature Recovery Strategy goes live

Nature across the UK is under extreme pressure. The country is one of the most nature depleted in the world. The interactive online LNRS map shows how we can take action anywhere in the county to help nature recover.

The LNRS provides a vital tool for planners, farmers, landowners, organisations and communities to work together on shared priorities for nature.

From today all local councils will be required to have regard to Gloucestershire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy in decision and plan making. This means they have to consider the priorities set out in the LNRS when determining how relevant plans contribute to and enhance the local natural environment at a plan-making level. The LNRS and its map become a 'material consideration' in the planning system today, based on the individual circumstances of the case.

Access it here - <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/ecology-and-landscape/gloucestershire-local-nature-recovery-strategy/>

Fire safety guidance for hosts ahead of Cheltenham Festival

The four-day event from 10 to 13 March 2026 brings around 250,000 racegoers to the town each year, and many stay in short-term accommodation across the county.

GFRS is reminding property owners that hosting visitors, even for a short period, creates legal responsibilities under fire safety legislation. Owners are being given advice so they keep guests safe and reduce the risk of fire. They should ensure:

- Escape routes are clear, accessible and well signed
- Smoke alarms are fitted, tested and compliant
- Guests receive simple instructions on what to do if a fire starts or an alarm sounds
- Electrical appliances and wiring are in good condition and regularly checked
- Combustible materials are kept away from radiators, heaters and open flames

Further guidance and fire safety resources - <https://gloucestershire.gov.uk/glosfire>

Cheltenham Races traffic

In collaboration with local agencies, we have been working behind the scenes to accommodate the influx of visitors. We will postpone all planned roadworks in the area, including minor repairs and major projects such as the A435 cycleway. In the event of any urgent streetworks that cannot be postponed, we will coordinate with utility companies to minimise disruption as much as possible.

Arle Court Transport Hub will run a park and ride service to Cheltenham Racecourse every 15 minutes with Stagecoach. Buses depart from 9:15am to 2:30pm, with returns from 4pm to 7:30pm; the car park closes at 10pm. Tickets cost £15 per car per day and cover up to five passengers.

Celebrating over a year of Youth Hubs supporting young people across Gloucestershire

We are celebrating over a year of impact from our commissioned Youth Hubs, delivered in partnership with three notforprofit organisations working across the county. Together, these services form the Gloucestershire Commissioned Youth Service (GCYS) which is a coordinated network that offers early help, prevention, and positive opportunities for young people aged 11 to 25.

GCYS launched in October 2024 to ensure young people feel safe, supported, and able to thrive within their local communities. Over the past year, delivery partners The Children's Society, Family Action, and

Gloucestershire Gateway Trust, have created vibrant and welcoming youth spaces across the county that have welcomed over 14,000 visits from young people.



Fostering Service celebrates debut novel of young person in care

We were proud to celebrate the achievement of a young person in care as he published his debut novel at 17-years-old. Craigson Palmer held a book launch at Shire Hall for his novel *Deepfaded*, providing a chance to recognise the achievement and celebrate the potential of children in care across Gloucestershire.

A first draft of the book, which is a psychological thriller and coming-of-age story, was completed when Craigson was just 14 and all earnings from the sale of the novel will be donated to the charity Women’s Aid.

5. TO RESPOND TO THE GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON GLOUCESTERSHIRE’S LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION PROPOSALS.

Cllr J Mason ensured that all Cllrs were aware of the three unitary options and recommended that a preferred option be selected.

Councillors were asked to show hands:

7 in favour of One Unitary

3 in favour of Two Unitary (East/West split)

0 in favour of Two Unitary (Greater Gloucester City)

Cllr D Gray proposed that WTC complete the consultation with One Unitary as the preferred option, seconded Cllr S Sturgeon. Clerk to complete with the Chair.

6. TO CONSIDER A PROPOSAL FOR A FOOTBALL COACHING BUSINESS TO USE WINCHCOMBE PARK KICK AROUND AREA.

Sam Corder had provided a written proposal for review and presented a summary of this to councillors. Cllr J Mason suggested that King George V could also provide space if any reason prevents the park use. Cllr S Maughan proposed that WTC support the initiative as a really positive activity for young people, seconded Cllr S Sturgeon, carried unanimously.

7. TO REVIEW AND APPROVE THE FOLLOWING:

- a) ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT
- b) DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY
- c) DATA PROTECTION POLICY

Proposed Cllr D Gray, seconded Cllr G Madle, carried unanimously.

8. CIRCULARS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

NALC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hi Leanne, we've published a new online resource showcasing practical case studies on devolution. • NALC events 3 Feb 2025 • Chief executive's bulletin - 5 February 2026 • Study Tour: Taunton Town Council 20 May 2026 • NALC events 10 Feb 2026 • Hi Leanne, tickets are now on sale for our Annual Conference, the flagship event for parish and town councils. 24 June 2026 in London • Chief executive's bulletin - 12 February 2026 • NALC events 17 Feb 2026 • Chief executive's bulletin - 19 February 2026 • Star Council Awards 2025/26 winners announced! • Chief executive's bulletin - 26 February 2026
-------------	---

TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Strategy Consultation • Councils agree £6.6 million funding opportunities for infrastructure projects and approve £4 million for M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme • Garden Communities next meeting will be held on 1 April at 6pm as a hybrid session on Teams and at Tewkesbury Borough Council, and we look forward to seeing you there. • Council sets 2026/2027 budget to secure continuation of services • Parish Matters 2026 issue 1
Rural Services Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rural Bulletin - 3 February 2026 • RSN Rural Funding Digest - February 2026 Edition • The Rural Bulletin - 10 February 2026 • RMTG Roundup February 2026 • You're Invited! RMTG Meeting March 2026 • The Rural Bulletin - 17 February 2026 • The Rural Bulletin - 24 February 2026 • Have your say! - The impact of cuts on local public services 2025/2026 Survey
Your Community Alerts	<p>Been a victim of crime in our county? Fill in our survey to help shape victim services. Have you been affected by crime in Gloucestershire? We value your views and experiences. Your thoughts are wanted to help improve victim services in the county. The OPCC have tasked independent researchers to work with you to better understand the needs of victims of crime and how local support services can best meet those needs in the future. You can share your views by completing a short online survey before Sunday 8 February: www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/glovna/ All information shared will be treated confidentially.</p> <hr/> <p>A car was entered in Chandos Street in Winchcombe near Cheltenham. A Bluetooth connector was stolen. This is believed to have happened between 2130 hours on the 24th and 0700 hours on the 25th February. Anyone with any information please quote Incident number 65 25/2/26</p> <p>A Ford Transit van was entered in Chestnut Drive Gotherington. Power tools were taken. This is believed to have happened between the 26th and 27th February. Anyone with any information please quote Incident number 69 27/2/26.</p>
Winchcombe Welcomes Walkers	2025 Winchcombe Walking Festival now booking
GRCC	Gloucestershire Parish & Town Councils Update
Warm Homes Grant	Warm Homes Local Grant – Severn Wye
Keep Britain Tidy	<p>Join us for the 2026 Great British Spring Clean! We know that you are working hard 365 days a year for the good of your communities – thank you for everything you do. The Great British Spring Clean will take place from 13 to 29 March 2026. This is a great chance to encourage residents to get involved with our mission to tackle litter. Will you join us and help residents show they love where they live?</p>

	<p>Your town or parish council can sign up below, and once you've filled in your form, you'll receive our free digital #GBSpringClean kick-start kit.</p> <p>You can also tell us any information you want us to make available to your resident volunteers, such as if you will provide equipment.</p>
<p>CPRE</p>	<p>Your latest update on our countryside A once-in-a-decade chance to help shape national planning policy</p>
<p>Safe Avon</p>	<p>Here are blogs about the scandal of the Water White Paper going up on the Sewage Campaign Website on the Water Bill from members. Do take a look.</p> <p>23/24/25th February Dirty Business Channel 4. This will really ignite public outrage again. It is a great boost to the campaign and an opportunity for you to connect with local people. It tells the story of Ash Smith and Peter Hammond from Windrush Against Sewage Pollution, and the tragedy of a child's death from sewage pollution. As you can see the MP Briefing is timetabled to coincide with the docu-drama release.</p> <hr/> <p>I noticed on the 2024 data a number of CSO's were reporting less than the 90% required, so asked a few questions:</p> <p>“At what percentage level does the EA require water companies to report their spills for a full year?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current Environment Agency expectation for Water Companies is to report for a minimum of 90% of the calendar year. <p>“If there is a required reporting level, what action does the EA take when the water companies report below this level?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Environment Agency would require a primary reason for not meeting the required 90% reporting threshold as well as any actions they have taken or are going to take to resolve the issue. For the example of Lower Lode Tewkesbury WWTW (2024 Data) the reported issue was sensor failure which was rectified in January 2025. <p>I then asked for the reason for the CSO's that had fallen below the 90% reporting; interesting response (full response attached). EA CSO monitoring.docx</p> <p>Bidford on Avon STW 81% and River Isbourne; Winchcombe STW 53%. This information wasn't available and they were going back to ST after a year to find out?</p> <p>Evesham Hampton Syphon 63% and Tewkesbury Lower Lode STW 44% both had been off line, one 4 months and one just under 7 months, before a simple sensor could be replaced?</p> <p>It would appear to be that both Severn Trent and the Environmental Agency don't treat making us aware of untreated sewage dumping into our rivers as a serious enough issue.</p>

9. ACCOUNTS FOR REPORTING AND SETTLEMENT.

Winchcombe Town Council

Accouts for Reporting 1-28/2/2026

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
INCOME			
09/02/2026	Bank Interest (Gross)	Lloyds Bank - Bus. Bank Instant -	418.50
17/02/2026	Burial Fees	Alexander Burn	750.00
27/02/2026	ERoB - Exclusive Rights of Burial	Mr & Mrs Walton	250.00
EXPENDITURE			
02/02/2026	Public Toilet Electricity	Scottish Power	-135.05
05/02/2026	website maintenance	Peter Hampton	-120.00
05/02/2026	ReformIT Support	ReformIT	-1,113.60
05/02/2026	ReformIT Support	ReformIT	-559.05
05/02/2026	Printer Lease	Tower leasing Ltd	-382.80
05/02/2026	HMRC - Tax and NI	HMRC - Tax and NI	-1,235.90
05/02/2026	AFCC Room Hire	AFCC - Abbey Fields Community Ce	-31.00
05/02/2026	Scribe Cemetery Subscription (2024)	SCRIBE	-58.80
10/02/2026	NEST - WTC and Employees' Contributions	NEST Pension	-317.10
12/02/2026	Grounds Recharge	GCC (Gloucestershire County Council)	-152.51
12/02/2026	WCAG Website set up	Aubergine 262 Ltd	-288.00
12/02/2026	Water Supply	Water Plus	-128.98
12/02/2026	Mountview Cemetery Hedge	Russell Parker	-70.00
12/02/2026	Professional Services	SCRIBE	-154.80
12/02/2026	Chronicle System	TownsWeb Archiving Ltd	-501.18
12/02/2026	Bank Service Charge	Lloyds Bank - Main Bus. Account -	-8.50
13/02/2026	TBC litter bins	TBC - Tewkesbury Borough Council	-648.00
13/02/2026	Winchcombe Park Grounds Maintenance	Fairways Contracting Ltd., (Winchcombe)	-1,111.50
16/02/2026	Telephone and Internet	Talk Talk (Office 'Phone & Broadband)	-76.99
16/02/2026	Insurance	James Hallam Council Guard	-1,559.56
16/02/2026	Winchcombe Sports Hub Pitch Resurface	Bernhard's Sports Surfaces	-9,135.84
17/02/2026	Grave Digger Fees	Moonbeam (D M Jones)	-750.00
17/02/2026	Winchcombe Park Electricity	British Gas	-128.56
17/02/2026	Bank Service Charge	Lloyds Bank - Internet Bank Account	-8.50
19/02/2026	SLCC Membership	SLCC	-316.00
19/02/2026	Chairman's allowance	Tree Plannting Mountview Cemetery	-17.00
19/02/2026	First Aid Kit	Tree Plannting Mountview Cemetery	-20.97
23/02/2026	Grave Digger Fees	Moonbeam (D M Jones)	-750.00
23/02/2026	Water Supply	Water Plus	-94.90
23/02/2026	Office Supplies	Office Depot (Viking Raja Group)	-370.71
24/02/2026	Refreshments	Drapers 2 U Catering	-95.76
27/02/2026	Ian Humphries Work	Ian Humphries	-3,351.66
27/02/2026	Staff Salaries		-3,667.41
27/02/2026	Toilets maintenance	Donna Clarke - A Star Cleaning	-1,126.67

Proposed by Cllr D Gray, seconded Cllr B Rose, that the accounts be settled and the bank reconciliation signed, carried unanimously.

10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

None.

11. SEPARATE BUSINESS. THE CHAIR WILL MOVE THE ADOPTION OF THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960; TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FOR THE DISCUSSION OF ITEMS 9 AND 10 ON THE AGENDA, AS PUBLICITY WOULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST DUE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS, SPECIFICALLY THE SENSITIVE NATURE OF CONTRACTOR QUOTATIONS.
12. TO APPOINT AN INTERNAL AUDITOR TO CONDUCT THE 2025-26 INTERNAL AUDIT.
Cllr D Chandler proposed Rachel Brown be appointed, seconded Cllr D Gray, carried unanimously.
13. TO CONSIDER CYBER INSURANCE QUOTATIONS.
Following discussion councillors agreed that cyber insurance would provide a level of reassurance that WTC doesn't currently have, Cllr R Parker proposed that ReformIT Cyber Essentials package be adopted, seconded Cllr S Maughan, carried unanimously. Neil Smith be invited to present to full council on the full benefits of the Cyber Standard.

MEETING CLOSED 8.50PM.