

# TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at the Council Offices, Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Tuesday, 12 July 2022 commencing at 4:30 pm**

## **Present:**

Chair  
Vice Chair

Councillor J W Murphy  
Councillor K Berliner

## **and Councillors:**

G J Bocking, C L J Carter, K J Cromwell, P A Godwin, H S Munro, J K Smith, R J G Smith, S Thomson and M J Williams

## **OS.18 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 18.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was advised to those present.
- 18.2 The Chair welcomed the representatives from NHS Gloucestershire and Ubico to the meeting and indicated they were in attendance for Agenda Item 7 – Fit for the Future 2 Presentation and Agenda Item 8 – Ubico Report 2021/22 respectively.

## **OS.19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

- 19.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H C McLain, P D McLain, C E Mills and P N Workman. There were no substitutions for the meeting.

## **OS.20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 20.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 26 June 2012 and took effect from 1 July 2012.
- 20.2 There were no declarations made on this occasion.

## **OS.21 MINUTES**

- 21.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2022, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## **OS.22 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN**

- 22.1 Attention was drawn to the Executive Committee Forward Plan, circulated at Pages No.19-42. Members were asked to determine whether there were any questions for the relevant Lead Members and what support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could give to the work contained within the plan.
- 22.2 Accordingly, it was

**RESOLVED** That the Executive Committee Forward Plan be **NOTED**.

**OS.23 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23**

- 23.1 Attention was drawn to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme, circulated at Pages No. 25-34. Members were asked to consider the Work Programme.
- 23.2 The Head of Corporate Services advised that, following the last meeting of the Committee, a number of additional items had been identified for consideration at future meetings and these were now included in the pending items section of the Work Programme; he would work with relevant Officers to bring these items forward and include them at the appropriate point in the Work Programme. A Member noted that the use of mobile surveillance equipment for fly-tipping investigations was still included in the pending items and he asked when the trial was due to commence. In response, the Head of Community Services confirmed the cameras had been ordered and Officers were awaiting delivery. He pointed out that Officers had to be trained in deployment as they were quite complex to operate but he would like to think the cameras would be out by September. A Member questioned when Officers were likely to be trained and the Head of Community Services undertook to discuss this with the Environmental Health Manager and come back to Members with a response by the end of the week.
- 23.3 A Member noted that the Garden Town was not referenced in the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme and she asked who had oversight of that workstream and whether it was something which the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should have an awareness of. She also indicated that, at Council on 12 April 2022, Members had been advised that a session would be arranged to update them on the Golden Valley Garden Community and she asked if any progress had been made in relation to that. In response, the Head of Corporate Services advised that the Garden Town was a Council Plan priority and updates were provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis as part of the performance tracker. The Head of Democratic Services explained that the progress of the Garden Town was overseen by the Tewkesbury Garden Town Member Reference Panel which met frequently – these meetings were included on the Member Diary Sheet and any Member who wanted to attend could request an invitation. In terms of the update on the Golden Valley Garden Community, she indicated that she had spoken with the Head of Development Services following the Council meeting who felt that September or October would be the earliest this could be delivered but she undertook to firm this up following the meeting.
- 23.4 It was  
**RESOLVED** That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2022/23 be **NOTED**.

**OS.24 FIT FOR THE FUTURE 2 PRESENTATION**

- 24.1 The Chair introduced the Associate Director Engagement and Experience and the Fit for the Future 2 Programme Director from NHS Gloucestershire. The Associate Director Engagement and Experience advised that NHS Gloucestershire was currently engaging with the public as part of the consultation in respect of Fit for the Future 2 and all district councils in Gloucestershire had been offered the opportunity to start a dialogue in relation to the proposals. Tewkesbury Borough Council had been quick to take up this offer and had invited them to today's meeting to give a brief presentation and to answer any questions Members may have.

24.2

The following key points were raised during the presentation:

- What is Fit for the Future 2? – A part of the One Gloucestershire vision focusing on the medium to long term future of some of its health services; building on early engagement and consultation (Fit for the Future 1), it aimed to open up the conversation in relation to the continued development of the Centres of Excellence approach at Cheltenham General and Gloucestershire Royal Hospitals, including inpatient care and support for people in their own home, GP surgery or in the community.
- Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Priorities – Using the learning from Fit for the Future 1 and the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the aim was to: provide the very best care for people at each stage of their illness or injury; explore opportunities to join-up care – improving communication and making care simpler and smoother across services and communities; reduce health inequalities – ensuring that health outcomes were improved for everyone, regardless of where they lived in the county and their social, environmental or economic circumstances.
- Summary of Focus Areas and Proposed Ideas – The service areas being considered were very specific: Benign (non-cancerous) Gynaecology – Day-case - COVID-19 temporary change (majority of operations) made permanent at Cheltenham General Hospital; Diabetes and Endocrinology – Inpatients and Community – centralise inpatient service at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital; Frailty/Care of the Elderly – Inpatients and Community – improved assessment pathway at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, better integration of services and admission avoidance options; Non-interventional Cardiology – Inpatients – centralise remaining Cardiology inpatient beds at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, consultant referral service for Cheltenham General Hospital inpatients requiring Cardiology input; Respiratory – Inpatients – COVID-19 temporary change made permanent at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital alongside Respiratory High Care Unit, consultant referral service for Cheltenham General Hospital inpatients requiring Respiratory input; Stroke – Inpatients – COVID-19 temporary change made permanent at Cheltenham General Hospital, Hyper-Acute and Acute Stroke Units both at Cheltenham General Hospital.
- Benign Gynaecology: Our ideas – Following changes due to COVID-19, continue to deliver the majority of Benign Gynaecology Day Case surgery at Cheltenham General Hospital; continued choice of outpatient appointments across hospital sites, in the community and virtually as appropriate; potential benefits – Centre of Excellence approach with a greater focus on planned care in Cheltenham General Hospital; improved environment once new unit opens at Cheltenham General Hospital in December 2022; increased capacity and fewer cancellations; potential drawbacks – some patients will have further to travel for day case surgery.
- Diabetes and Endocrinology: Our ideas – Centralise inpatient Diabetes and Endocrinology Service at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital; continue to provide support to other hospital inpatients who happen to have diabetes at both Gloucestershire Royal Hospital and Cheltenham General Hospital; further develop community clinics and virtual ward; potential benefits – ensure safe, consistent and resilient staffing; create better training opportunities and joined-up working; fewer cancelled outpatient appointments and reduced hospital visits; potential drawbacks – increased travel times for some patients and their relatives/carers.

- Frailty/Care of the Elderly: Our ideas – To develop an integrated frailty service offering rapid access to services, support and treatment for people in their own homes and good pathways for hospital discharge; GPs and other professionals would be able to refer patients directly to the Frailty Assessment Unit; options for additional frailty services at Cheltenham General Hospital site; potential benefits – support people to stay well and independent; prevent unnecessary hospital admissions and reduce Accident and Emergency and ambulance waits; reduced length of stay in hospital with a return home with ongoing support; potential drawbacks – negative impact if outcomes and experience of patients fails to improve.
- Non-interventional Cardiology: Our ideas – Following changes agreed through Fit to the Future 1, centralise all Cardiology inpatient beds at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital; continued choice of outpatient appointments across hospital sites, in the community and virtually as appropriate; consultant referral service for inpatients at Cheltenham General Hospital in other speciality beds who may require review/input from Cardiology; potential benefits – reduced length of stay and likelihood of transfers between sites; improved staff cover, out of hours care and cross-speciality working; enhanced training opportunities and joined-up working; potential drawbacks – increased travel times for some patients and relatives/carers.
- Respiratory: Our ideas – Following emergency temporary changes due to COVID-19, continue to provide specialist Respiratory inpatient beds at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital as well as the newly developed Respiratory High Care Unit; Respiratory team consultation service for inpatients at Cheltenham Royal Hospital, in other speciality beds, who may require their review/input; potential benefits – current service showed improved quality of care and patient outcomes, respiratory admissions to intensive care; more efficient use of staff and improved cross-speciality working, easier to co-ordinate care and provide staff training; whilst the risk of COVID remains, this model provided flexibility to establish a controlled Respiratory ward; potential drawbacks – increased travel times for some patients and relatives/carers; additional investment will be required to deliver the new high care services on a permanent basis.
- Stroke: Our ideas – Both the Hyper Acute Inpatient Stroke Unit (HASU) and the Acute Inpatient Stroke Unit (ASU) remain permanently at Cheltenham General Hospital; these units were temporarily located to support the COVID-19 response; potential benefits – high quality inpatient environment supporting a seamless service and access to the right specialist staff at the right time; co-location of HASU and ASU provided improved staff cover and resilience; option of co-locating the HASU and ASU at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital would be very difficult due to limited availability of beds; potential drawbacks – increased travel times for some patients and their relatives/carers; patients with 'stroke mimics' taken to Cheltenham General Hospital may be required to transfer to Gloucestershire Royal Hospital; clinical protocols would need to be in place for any suspected stroke patient attending Gloucestershire Royal Hospital including safe transfer to Cheltenham General Hospital.

## 24.3

The Associate Director Engagement and Experience advised that consultation on the ideas had commenced in May with the engagement originally planned to close at the end of June; however, the survey within the engagement booklet had been extended until 31 July 2022 and conversations would continue over the summer. Any feedback received would be collated into an output report which would be considered by the Fit for the Future 2 Programme Director and his policy team as well as senior decision-makers in the NHS. Members would be kept up to date on progress. Regular updates were provided to the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to all projects involving potential service changes and the output report in respect of the Fit for the Future 2 consultation would be

provided at its meeting in October; she confirmed she would be happy to share the report with this Committee at that time. She went on to advise that information bus events were held across the county and the bus was often located at Morrisons in Tewkesbury which provided an opportunity to share information and help people to complete the survey. Representatives from NHS Gloucestershire also went out into the local community to talk to residents so she asked Members to make her aware of any events within their Wards which would benefit from their attendance.

- 24.4 A Member raised concern that Cheltenham General Hospital was not fit for continued adaptation due to the nature of the building and he was of the view that it was now necessary to consider a new purpose built hospital so he asked if that was something which was being proposed. In response, the Fit for the Future 2 Programme Director explained that this was on the table and the options would be considered; however, that would be an investment in the region of £750m and a lot of new hospitals had not lived up to expectations so, whilst those comments were reasonable, it was not a simple solution. COVID-19 cases were on the rise once again and, although it was unclear what the future would hold with regard to that, Gloucestershire was able to manage its performance better than other parts of the south-west through the way the two hospital sites were operated which meant that Cheltenham General Hospital could be deemed as a COVID negative site. The Member questioned whether the division of services between the two hospital sites had fostered competition among staff and the Fit for the Future 2 Programme Director explained that it was a relatively new way of working and, in his experience, as new staff came in and worked for a service rather than a site, it was actually becoming less competitive. He accepted that car parking was an issue but there were advantages of centralising services and building a single team broke down barriers - there were examples of teams working against each other and that culture needed to be addressed in the round. The Associate Director Engagement and Experience indicated that she had seen major change in the last six years as certain characters and personalities retired or moved on and due to the introduction of the Centres of Excellence approach – the shuttle bus provided between the two hospital sites had also helped.
- 24.5 A Member asked what was being done to get patients with manageable conditions back into their homes after time in hospital. The Fit for the Future 2 Programme Director advised that there were multifaceted reasons around the workforce for domiciliary care, for example, the impact of COVID on care homes and changes to risk assessment of patients; however, a very big problem within Gloucestershire which needed to be addressed was the flow through the whole system - 40% of people did not have a medical requirement to go into hospital - so measures needed to be put in place around admission avoidance and speed of discharge. He suggested this was a potential topic which NHS Gloucestershire could discuss with the Committee going forward. The Associate Director Engagement and Experience advised that a major piece of work had recently been commissioned in relation to this and communications had been sent out to Chief Executives across Gloucestershire. The Fit for the Future 2 Programme Director stressed that a lot of work was being done day-to-day to try to get patients out of hospital – some had been found to be in for over 70 days, which was not good for them, and that number had been halved, nevertheless, it needed to be further improved.
- 24.6 A Member noted that one of the proposals within the consultation was to centralise Stroke care and she raised concern there was no 24 hour Accident and Emergency department at Cheltenham General Hospital which was the proposed permanent site. In response, the Fit for the Future 2 Programme Director explained that it was standard practice for Stroke Units to be located on the emergency site; however, because of COVID, the ASU had been moved to the Woodmancote Ward at Cheltenham General Hospital which had been built as a Stroke-specific ward so there was more space for rehabilitation and performance metrics had improved during the temporary arrangement. It had been intended to move back to

Gloucestershire Royal Hospital once COVID allowed; however, there had always been an issue with space and, based on volume, it had been decided to establish why the units needed to be located at Gloucestershire Royal. It was considered that all of the positive reasons for having the units there was also true of having them in Cheltenham and it also meant that the emergency department was bypassed so the hospital was aware when a Stroke patient would be coming. Whilst traditionally Stroke units were located at the emergency site, arguably a better service could be provided at the Cheltenham site with the right team in place. It was noted that this was a proposal as opposed to a confirmed plan and, if it did become a permanent arrangement, it would be necessary to work with GPs to ensure that anyone having a Stroke was aware they needed to go to Cheltenham General Hospital as opposed to Gloucestershire Royal Hospital.

- 24.7 A Member queried what was being done in respect of dementia and other illnesses associated with an ageing population. He pointed out that people with dementia had specific requirements in terms of equipment, for example, orange clocks, and he understood through the Tewkesbury Hospital League of Friends that this had been difficult to obtain. The Fit for the Future 2 Programme Director advised that dementia was not part of the Fit for the Future 2 Programme but Frailty/Care of the Elderly was included as the Frailty Assessment Unit was not performing as well as it should. Consideration was being given to locating all frailty services on the Gloucestershire Royal Hospital site in the gallery wing where there was extra capacity and that included plans for a dedicated dementia-friendly area. Once this had been addressed, it was intended to look at what could be done on the Cheltenham General site. In response to the point about equipment, the Associate Director Engagement and Experience confirmed that this would be provided if needed. The Member also sought assurance that it was no longer the case that children were required to be transferred by ambulance from Cheltenham General to Gloucestershire Royal Hospital where the paediatrics department was located. The Fit for the Future 2 Programme Director confirmed there were no plans within the consultation to move the department from its current location and he undertook to find out if this was still happening and, if so, what action was being taken to address it. The Associate Director Engagement and Experience indicated that it would be interesting to hear any particular examples as paediatrics had all been located at the Gloucestershire Royal site for some time.
- 24.8 A Member indicated that work was ongoing in Brockworth with the local GP surgery to establish community needs and it was clear that a lot of people did not feel able to attend their local surgery for a number of reasons, for instance, they were reluctant to go to the surgery following COVID, they were unsure of the arrangements in place for face-to-face contact and were not able to access services online etc. As such, he asked what percentage of people attending hospital could have been dealt with by a GP. He pointed out that his local GP surgery in Brockworth was 50% oversubscribed and he asked what was being done to address that. The Associate Director Engagement and Experience advised there had been similar feedback from across the country, particularly post-COVID. She talked to a lot of patient groups linked to GP practices and there had been numerous restrictions to accessing face-to-face appointments during COVID with many people moving online – some had liked that change whereas others had not but, regardless of that, it was here to stay to some extent. Notwithstanding this, there would always be face-to-face appointments available to those who needed them. In terms of issues with isolation, a lot of work was being done across the county around introducing social prescribing services which offered solutions such as health walks, social groups, crafting etc. as opposed to medication or operations and this aimed to address factors affecting health which were related to lifestyle or opportunities. Brockworth had a fantastic patient participation group and she would be happy to talk about the potential options with the Member outside of the meeting. There had been a lot in the media about not being able to get a GP appointment

and this had been discussed at the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting earlier that day where a paper had been presented giving an update on the current position. It was noted there were 13% more appointments available than in 2019, albeit some of those would be online, so whilst there was increased demand there was also increased supply, although that was still not enough to meet that demand and every service was under pressure. In terms of the percentage of people who attended hospital that could have been dealt with in a local setting, she did not know if that was a statistic which was available but she suggested that members of the public be directed to the NHS Gloucestershire social media accounts which gave advice on where to go in an emergency or when unsure where to go. A Member raised concern that some patients were experiencing long waits which could be putting their health at risk and the Associate Director Engagement and Experience apologised if this was happening and indicated that, once the outcomes from the engagement were available, it would be beneficial to come back and share these with the Committee. The Fit for the Future 2 Programme Director explained that a lot of lessons had been learnt during the pandemic, one of which was around virtual wards which was about managing people at home with a safety net, for example, people being able to take their own blood pressure etc. with someone looking out for them – this would not be right for every patient but was a possibility for some. Another Member understood that in London it was possible to sign up for an 'online only' GP service and she questioned if there was any intention to introduce that in Gloucestershire. The Associate Director Engagement and Experience advised that the service referenced by the Member was one where the patient did not have a relationship with a particular GP practice so healthcare advice could be accessed regardless of location. Whilst this was not live in Gloucestershire, GP practices were looking at different options based on the learning about different ways of working during COVID, although she stressed that any such initiatives would be a choice.

24.9 In response to a query regarding staffing levels in Gloucestershire, the Associate Director Engagement and Experience advised that all areas were under pressure. A lot of the benefits associated with the Centre of Excellence approach were related to becoming more efficient and robust as well as improving staff wellbeing through improved training and supervision – an important outcome measure would be staff numbers and satisfaction levels.

24.10 The Chair thanked the representatives from NHS Gloucestershire for their informative presentation and looked forward to welcoming them back to report on the outcomes of the Fit for the Future 2 consultation later in the year. It was

**RESOLVED** That the Fit for the Future 2 presentation be **NOTED**.

## **OS.25 UBICO REPORT 2021/22**

25.1 Attention was drawn to the report of the Waste Contracts Manager, circulated at Pages No. 35-66, which provided the annual update on the Ubico contract for waste and recycling collections, street cleansing and grounds maintenance services during 2021/22. Members were asked to consider the report.

25.2 The Head of Community Services advised that, at the end of the financial year 2021/22, there was an underspend of £23,573 on the Ubico contract which was really positive. In terms of delivering frontline services, collection rates had increased slightly with Ubico achieving 99.96% which was above the very tough target of 99.95%. The grounds maintenance service had seen widespread improvement and all planned winter works had been completed along with the backlog from previous year; this had been achieved mainly through different ways of working introduced by Ubico's new Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing Supervisor. It was his understanding that the grass cutting season had commenced and was being delivered on a four weekly cycle. Fly-tipping and dead animal

removal times continued to miss the required targets; however, improvements were planned as part of the street cleansing project which aimed to free up capacity within the team by bringing existing workload onto the PSS live system. With regard to health and safety, there had been a significant reduction in overweight vehicles from 89 to 39; it was illegal for vehicles to be overweight but it did happen when crews were almost at the end of rounds and wanted to finish before tipping. Looking ahead, there were a number of big projects coming up over the next two years including fleet procurement with the whole vehicle fleet due to be replaced in 2024/25 having last been replaced in 2017; a piece of work was currently underway to establish whether this could be smoothed out to replace vehicles more gradually and avoid significant financial outlay every seven to eight years. Part of this project would involve looking at new technology and, whilst it was considered that it was not the right time to move to hydrogen or electric vehicles, this was being kept in mind for future. The Head of Community Services explained that this was a very complex matter, for instance, hydrogen and biofuel seemed to be a good idea but it was important to recognise that this could result in using more global energy due to the amount of energy it took to convert them into useable product.

- 25.3 A Member felt it was a very positive report but major savings were yet to be seen and he felt it was potentially time to take the next step in terms of achieving the economies of scale which had been promised when Ubico had been established. He recognised there were difficulties in that other areas ran different types of collections etc. but he felt it was necessary to look at cross-boundary collections in order to become more economical, both in terms of refuse and recycling and grounds maintenance – this may also mean it was possible to have a smaller vehicle fleet. The Head of Community Services agreed with this point and indicated that it may be possible for some of the smaller vehicles in the forthcoming round of procurement to be electric if the correct infrastructure was in place at the depot. In terms of grounds maintenance, prior to the pandemic, Officers had worked with partners at Bromford and Bishop's Cleeve Parish Council to establish who had responsibility for land within Bishop's Cleeve in an attempt to come up with a more efficient maintenance regime – those meetings had taken place in person but it had proved to be extremely difficult as so many different parties had an interest in the land. He was not saying it could not be done but it would be a significant piece of work and careful consideration would need to be given as to the level of support required. With regard to refuse and recycling rounds, cross-boundary working had always been an aspiration in order to achieve economies of scale but it was more complicated than dividing up the rounds and, whilst there was a will as a county to do this big piece of work, it should be borne in mind that the changes DEFRA was proposing to bring in could completely change the current way of working. In addition, consideration would need to be given to the Garden Town and whether those collections would be the same as technology would have moved on significantly by then. Notwithstanding this, the Member had raised a fair point and he provided assurance this was something being considered. The Ubico Director of Operations indicated that cross-boundary working was a high priority but assumed the same bins and sizes etc. In-cab technology was being introduced for all Ubico partners and that would help significantly with this as rounds would be planned digitally. The Member understood the responses but indicated this had been an aspiration for several years and he was keen to see it made reality. He considered the Garden Town to be an aspiration currently and felt that issues such as bin sizes could be sorted out along the way as opposed to being used as a reason for delaying the work. The Head of Community Services agreed and explained that a piece of work had been carried out with all partners at the end of last year to look at bin sizes and reducing carbon etc. Whilst it could be done, there would be some difficult choices to make, for example, reducing bin size would mean changing every household bin in order to increase recycling and reduce waste which was a big

project that would cost approximately £6.4m for the county. The Chair suggested that, if there were projects underway with associated project plans, it would be beneficial to take those to the Depot Services Working Group.

- 25.4 A Member drew attention to Page No. 37, Paragraph 5.1 of the report which stated that a positive trend from 2020/21 had continued into 2021/22 with 745 near misses or safety concerns reported which did not cause an accident but could have and Paragraph 5.2 stated that vehicle accidents had reduced by one from the previous year – whilst any reduction in accidents and near misses was good, she questioned what was being done to reduce these figures further. In response, the Ubico Head of Operations advised that any safety concerns and potential hazards were fed back to crews and relevant training was provided if necessary. An example of a safety concern that could lead to an accident would be a heavy garden waste bin at the side of the road – crews were given manual handling training and recognised it was not acceptable practice to put their own health at risk. In terms of vehicle accidents being reduced by one, this was a standalone figure so, across the year, there had been one less accident than the previous year. If a driver had an accident they would undergo a driving assessment the following day and, subject to passing, would be monitored going forwards with a further assessment every six months; if the driver had a second accident, the assessment would be required every three months; if they had a third accident they would no longer be employed by Ubico.
- 25.5 A Member noted that in-cab technology had already been rolled-out to two authorities and he asked when it would be introduced for Tewkesbury Borough. In response, the Ubico Director of Operations confirmed this was scheduled for 2023/24. Cotswold District Council had opted to procure the system for themselves; Ubico had procured the system for the rest of the partners with Gloucester City Council going first. The Member went on to draw attention to Page No. 36, Paragraph 3.2 of the report which referred to an underspend due to procurement of new policies coming in below expectations and he sought clarification as to what those policies were. The Head of Community Services confirmed this related to insurance policies. The Member was pleased to see that the 100% target for crew inspections had been achieved and he asked what those involved. The Ubico Head of Operations advised that the supervisory team went to the location where crews were collecting and carried out checks to ensure they were following the safety register; if they were not, they would be retrained or disciplined, depending on the severity of the situation. A Member queried whether the re-placement of bins on the pavement was assessed and confirmation was provided that this was part of the crew inspections but it was important to recognise this was just a spot check, it may be that the crew being inspected was replacing bins correctly but one around the corner was not – this was a problem for all partners but it was regularly communicated to crews to put bins back where they had got them from. The Ubico Director of Operations indicated that this could be monitored by the internal compliance team and he would be happy to look into this further.
- 25.6 With regard to Page No. 37, Paragraph 46 of the report, a Member noted that targets around fly-tipping and dead animal removals were being missed and she asked if there was a project plan for improvement and when it would be implemented. The Ubico Head of Operations explained that there had been a big change in the management structure within Ubico. This had included him moving to his current role which required him to assess each individual service and address the issues within those services; he had started with waste and recycling and moved on to grounds maintenance which was the current project underway. Fly-tipping and dead animal removal were part of that project but were difficult to tackle as reports were often vague in terms of location, for example, if there was a report of a dead fox on the A38 near Longford, the crew would drive up and down that road and may collect a dead fox but it might not be the one which had been reported. With in-cab technology, it would be possible to pinpoint the exact location so there should be an improvement in removal times when that was introduced. In

addition, this was a difficult service to recruit for due to the nature of the job so Ubico had been working closely with Tewkesbury Borough Council to promote fly-tipping prosecutions as this improved morale and made the crews feel valued. A Member queried whether the new technology would use 'What Three Words' and was advised this had been used for litter bins but would now move to GPS via satellite. The Member indicated that he had reported fly-tipping in his Ward in March/April which had still not been collected and the Head of Community Services undertook to discuss this with the Member following the meeting. He pointed out that, if fly-tipping was on private land, this would be the landowners' responsibility. Another Member noted that in-cab technology was not included on the list of Tewkesbury projects outlined at Page No. 58 of the report. The Ubico Director of Operations explained this was a Ubico-wide project which was why it had not been included but he recognised it was a significant project for Tewkesbury Borough Council and would include it in future.

- 25.7 A Member drew attention to Appendix 2 to the report in relation to grass cutting which did not have a title and asked who completed the table and whether it was a work programme or just used for complaints. In response, the Head of Community Services advised that Members had asked for information on grass cutting for several years and the table provided information on grounds maintenance inspections that had been carried out with the standard being aimed for set out at Page No. 63. The Member asked if it was possible to include this on the Council's website as it was something which members of the public regularly asked about and the Head of Community Services undertook to speak to IT to establish if there was a user-friendly way of putting this online. A Member raised concern that the notes within the table seemed to suggest there had been a problem with strimming and she asked if that was due to time or staffing levels. In response, the Ubico Head of Operations advised that the grounds maintenance team comprised 12 operatives and, unfortunately, it was not easy to replace any absences due to sickness or annual leave with agency staff due to the training and checks required to ensure they were proficient in using tools etc. This was something Ubico was striving to improve. A Member noted that Highgrove Park in Churchdown appeared several times within the table and he asked what was being done to ensure issues were dealt with after inspection. The Head of Community Services clarified that the report related to 2021/22 and there had already been significant improvements in respect of grass cutting since that time so he would be disappointed if the same issues appeared in the next report.
- 25.8 With regard to Page No. 48 of the report, a Member sought clarification on NI 191 – Residual household waste per head of population. The Head of Community Services advised that the kilograms of residual household waste per head of population had previously been monitored under NI 191 when the Council had been required to report on national indicators, similarly, NI 192 – the bottom graph on the same page – was the national indicator for household waste reused, recycled and composted. He accepted that this terminology was out of date and undertook to ensure it was changed going forward. In terms of the figures themselves, the Member queried whether these were accurate as the percentage reused, recycled and composted seemed to have decreased. The Ubico Head of Operations clarified these were monthly figures across the year so looked to be accurate and the Head of Community Services advised that there were seasonal variations – very few authorities had achieved the national target with some figures reduced by 30% so Tewkesbury Borough Council's performance continued to be very good. The Member asked whether any improvement could be made and the Head of Community Services provided assurance that attempts were always being made to increase recycling and there had been an increase compared to previous years. A Member raised concern that the figures within the report should be over the course of a year as opposed to monthly and was advised that the quarterly and end of year figures were reported in the performance tracker which gave a better overview. A

Member noted there was no mention as to the success of the small electrical equipment recycling scheme which had been introduced for kerbside collections and the Ubico Head of Operations undertook to provide exact figures but he believed in the region of 25 tonnes had been collected. He indicated that this would be included in future reports.

- 25.9 A Member queried whether carbon reduction ambitions would be reflected in fleet procurement and the Head of Community Services confirmed that would be a consideration and all options would be investigated. A Member felt it was important to consider carbon reduction as a whole – this was something he had raised previously in other forums and he pointed out that it would be necessary to factor in the carbon footprint of new vehicles at purchase and the savings, if any. The Head of Community Services agreed with this point. The Ubico Head of Operations advised that he was responsible for overseeing operations at Cheltenham Borough Council where an eco-driving trial was currently being undertaken – during the first five weeks there had been a 3.25 tonne reduction in carbon production by changing driver habits and it was intended to introduce this into the Tewkesbury Borough contract at some point.
- 25.10 In response to a concern regarding issues with bins which were the Parish Council responsibility, for instance, bins being left open and subsequently getting broken, the Ubico Head of Operations advised there had previously been an issue with a supervisor not passing on reports from crews; that particular supervisor was no longer working for Ubico and improvements were being seen at a Parish level as crews were going back to the same bins the following week and finding that the issues had been resolved. This was positive as crews felt it was worthwhile making the report. A Member queried what had been done about bins in inaccessible locations and was advised that Tewkesbury Borough Council had introduced a bin installation policy and a number of bins had now been identified and removed.
- 25.11 A Member questioned how often the Council reviewed what was being recycled given that new technologies were being introduced. He recognised that a lot of items indicated that they were recyclable but in practice could not be recycled locally. The Head of Community Services explained that Officers were in constant communication with the Materials Recovery Facility contractor as there needed to be a market for recycling; this was regularly reviewed and DEFRA was in the middle of a consultation on Extended Producer Responsibility etc. The Ubico Director of Operations explained that Gloucestershire as a whole was signing up to Waste Wizard which would provide a lot more local information about where to take items which could not be recycled at the kerbside – this was being led by Gloucestershire County Council and that information would be available on the County Council website, and linked to the other district council websites, before the end of the year. As well as Extended Producer Responsibility, the government would be introducing standardised labelling which would either say recyclable or non-recyclable based on a national system. A Member indicated that there was a lot of contamination within bins as people did not know where to put certain items, for instance, biodegradable nappies which were actually not biodegradable and ended up at the Energy from Waste plant. The Head of Community Services advised this was a national problem and it was important to note there was a difference between biodegradable and recyclable – biodegradable materials should be composted at home. A Member questioned why biodegradable items could not be put into the food waste or garden waste bins and was advised that was because that waste was turned into gas and there was a question mark over whether materials were truly biodegradable as food waste bags remained in compost heaps several years later.

- 25.12 The Ubico Head of Operations wished to highlight that Tewkesbury was the first contract to achieve 100% fleet compliance which was a significant achievement and meant that Ubico was working to the highest standard in terms of compliance. The Chair congratulated Ubico on behalf of the Committee and thanked the team for what was, overall, a very positive report. It was subsequently

**RESOLVED** That the Ubico report 2021/22 be **NOTED**.

## **OS.26 FINANCIAL OUTTURN REPORT 2021/22**

- 26.1 Attention was drawn to the report of the Head of Finance and Asset Management, circulated at Pages No. 67-78, which provided financial information for 2021/22 which would usually be included in the performance report that had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its last meeting. Members were asked to consider the general fund outturn for 2021/22, the reserves position and the financing of the capital programme.
- 26.2 The Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that the quarter three outturn position was reported with an estimated year end surplus of £3.6m; this had increased by £600,000 with the final general revenue fund outturn position for the full year showing a £4.2m surplus. The table at Page No. 68, Paragraph 2.3 of the report summarised the service performance which had generated the reported surplus and a number of items showed significant variance against the budget. Employee costs showed a saving of £700,000 largely due to staff turnover and vacancies in a number of service groupings; payments to third parties was overspent by £280,000 which was mainly due to planning appeals and there were £300,000 of gross costs against various activities which were supported by external grant funding and shown as part of the surplus on income. In terms of offsetting the expenditure, there was a £215,000 saving on the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) gate fee due to changing provider. COVID-19 expenditure amounted to £807,000 in total and the report included a breakdown as to where that had been spent. A line was included to highlight projects funded externally such as the Joint Core Strategy, Garden Town and Heritage Action Zone and this supplemented income by £1.6m, mainly through transport modelling for the Joint Core Strategy. Additional income of £1.4m had been generated during the year by service areas exceeding their budget, in particular, within Development Management, planning fees had exceeded budget by £434,000 and £277,000 grant funding had also been received for a range of activities including the planning application tracker. A full explanation of all variances exceeding £25,000 at a group subjective level was attached at Appendix A to the report.
- 26.3 In terms of corporate codes, the treasury outturn for 2021/22 was a £101,000 gain against budget as a result of increased investment income of £84,000 and savings of £17,000 on expected borrowing costs. With regard to commercial activity, the Council's property portfolio was performing well, although there had been a reduction in gross rental income circa £116,000 as a result of the re-letting of units at Clevedon at lower market rents and vacancies across the portfolio; however, all vacant units were now fully let and the commercial property reserve had been used to cover the shortfall. With regard to business rates, there was a surplus of £415,000 against budget. Members were advised that this was a volatile income stream – there was a gain of £290,000 from the Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool but there had also been a £2m refund to Virgin Media due to a reduction in rateable value. In terms of COVID funding, over £1m had been received in year - the Council had received a fifth tranche of general support funding totalling £424,927 in the first quarter and significant new burdens funding for its work on administering business grants, compensation for losses on sales, fees and charges and a direct allocation of Contain Outbreak Management Funding. Delivery of the budget in 2021/22 had required less use of reserves than envisaged as a number of

projects, such as the delivery of in-cab technology, had not moved forward in the financial year; however, the allocation for those projects would remain within the Council's earmarked reserves for draw down when they commenced. Overall, a £4.2m net underspend would go forward to support the Council's reserves, a breakdown of which was attached at Appendix B to the report.

- 26.4 Total revenue reserves of the Council stood at £29.55m as at the end of March 2022. Whilst £4.2m was transferred into the reserves from the general fund surplus, there was an overall decrease in revenue reserves of £2.06m as a result of expenditure against existing earmarked reserves in year. The general fund surplus allowed the Council to support a number of existing reserves as well as setting aside new reserves; two new reserves had been set aside this year for inflation – this had risen dramatically since the budget for the current year was set based on known costs in quarter three 2021/22 so a new reserve of £250,000 had been set aside to mitigate this – and the pay award – the current year budget included the assumption of a 2% pay award for 1 April 2022 but, given the current rates of inflation, the pay claim submitted by the Trade Unions which at the highest level totalled 11.1% and the impact of the projected rates for National Living Wage, a new reserve of £500,000 had been created. A lot of external funding had been received for specific projects and that had been set aside in ringfenced reserves which included transport modelling for the Joint Strategic Plan (JSP), homeless reduction, digitisation of the planning service, health-related projects and investigation of a development corporation for the Garden Town.
- 26.5 The Council's planned capital programme for 2021/22 was £3.9m but actual delivery had totalled £1.3m - £2.6m less than the budgeted amount. An underspend of £2.1m was reported against Council land and buildings which was due to delays with Ashchurch Bridge, mainly as a result of the High Court planning appeal, and there were savings in terms of the purchase of vehicles. The Council's Disabled Facilities Grant showed an overspend of £31,000; however, Members were informed that all expenditure was covered by capital grant funding from the government which was administered by the County Council. The summarised capital programme was shown at Appendix C to the report and the overall capital position as at year end was a balance of £1.54m.
- 26.6 A Member noted the reduction in business rates and raised concern about the refund to Virgin Media. He asked why lessons were not being learnt in that regard and whether this was there was still a risk of further reductions. The Head of Finance and Asset Management clarified that the Valuation Office Agency had agreed a reduction on one of two rates assessments so there was a further reduction in value following the significant reduction in 2013/14 – this dealt with all outstanding appeals; however, they could of course appeal again in future. Tewkesbury Borough Council had suggested to Government that, as Virgin Media was part of the national television network, it should be placed on the central list rather than local authorities which were disproportionately affected. The Government was considering some items being moved to the valuation list but this was one of many issues which needed to be considered and determined.
- 26.7 A Member drew attention to Page No. 75 of the report and asked what 'Projects Funded Externally' related to in respect of Development Services. The Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that £150,000 funding had been received from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to support development of a planning application tracker; this was progressing well and was expected to be delivered in September. The Member noted that the total savings against 'Projects Funded Externally' was £1.4m and clarification was provided that the planning application tracker was one specific project and the total savings included a range of grants, the main one being £1m in relation to the transport strategy for the JSP. The Member went on to draw attention to Page No. 69 of the report which showed that the Council was only spending a third of what

had been budgeted and he asked why the savings were not passed on to Council taxpayers. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management advised the savings were from a number of sources, for instance, in relation to COVID or external funding from other sources which had not been budgeted for. The £4.2m savings would go into the Council's reserves, for instance the Medium Term Financial Strategy reserve which could be used to support the Council's financial needs going forward – there had already been 12 years of austerity and the continued reduction in government funding meant that the Council would face significant financial challenges so that money may be necessary to ensure services could continue to run at the current level; Should that not be the case, it could be used to fund other ambitions. In response to a query as to why savings were all included in the general fund as this may be making the picture look more positive than it actually was, Members were advised this was the only fund for in-year expenditure – whilst it was fantastic that the Council received that amount of money, a proportion was from external funding and there were limitations as to how that could be spent. Another Member noted that not all of the COVID-19 grant had been spent and she asked if it was intended to spend that during 2022/23. The Head of Finance and Asset Management explained this was un-ringfenced and had been offset against direct expenditure in-year – some committed expenditure had been carried over into the next year and the rest would be used as seen fit to support the reserves balance at year end; the vast majority was spent directly on COVID.

- 26.8 A Member noted the £700,000 underspend on staffing services and asked if consideration had been given to using agency staff in areas which appeared to be struggling, such as Planning. The Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that most services were on target and the Deputy Chief Executive and One Legal had contributed two thirds of the savings; however, part of the impact was not having staff to attract extra income so one had offset the other. Tewkesbury Borough Council was one of four partners in One Legal and there were a number of locums, contractors and agency staff within the team – and across the Council – due to a higher level of turnover than in previous years, partly due to COVID and lifestyle choices as well as rising competition in the private sector. Vacancies were being backfilled with temporary staff where necessary and recruiting permanently where that was possible. Consideration was being given to a range of options to ensure the Council had the staff required to deliver services. In response to a query regarding staffing in Planning, the Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that a service review was being undertaken currently with further support going into the team. A Member felt that consideration should be given to outsourcing and was informed there were now less outsourcing contractors available in local government so opportunities were less prevalent – the biggest one previously used by the Council was in Revenues and Benefits and was no longer in the market for a deal. Nevertheless, where opportunities were available, assurance was provided that these would continue to be explored and he pointed out that consideration was being given to bringing in extra resources for peak workloads in a number of departments, for instance, to do a specific task or to deal with a backlog.

- 26.9 Having considered the information provided, it was

**RESOLVED** That the financial outturn report 2021/22 be **NOTED**.

## **OS.27 CARBON REDUCTION ACTION PLAN**

- 27.1 Attention was drawn to the report of the Head of Finance and Asset Management, circulated at Pages No. 79-103, which outlined the progress made during the second year of the Council's Carbon Reduction Action Plan and the recommended year three action plan. Members were asked to consider the report.

- 27.2 The Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that this was the second annual report on the Council's carbon reduction journey towards the 2030 target. Appendix A to the report provided the detail of the progress made over the last 12 months and gave an update on the baseline emissions and activity for year two. In terms of highlights, a lot of work had been done around funding and the Council had given generously to support the ambitions with a £100,000 delivery fund from its reserves as well as a contribution of £447,200 to support delivery of the solar canopy in the car park and ongoing funding to support the new Carbon Reduction Programme Officer post; the Officer had been in post since February and was delivering a number of actions. Members were informed that construction of the solar canopy was complete and sign-off was awaited from the Distribution Network Operators (DNO). As well as the achievements, there had been a lot of frustration with significant resource dedicated to an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to secure external funding for the replacement of the Council's heating system. Having secured funding in year one, the tender for its delivery in year two had seen a significant increase in cost of installation which resulted in funding being withdrawn. The team had then taken the opportunity to bid for further external funding which had required a lot of work within a short space of time and, although the bid was technically sound and had passed the assessment criteria, the fund had run out of money so could not make an award to the Council. This project remained a key target and it was hoped that a further round of Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding (PSDS) funding would be announced in due course so an early bid could be made using all of the information gathered in previous rounds.
- 27.3 In terms of the annual emissions report, there was a significant reduction of 538 tonnes (33.5%) against the 2019 baseline; however, it was important to remember the impact of COVID on working practices and energy demand during the timeframe and that the quality of data supplied by outside bodies was not as expected and needed to be checked for accuracy. There was effectively a new baseline for 2021 with just over 1,000 tonnes of carbon to be eliminated or offset over the next eight years. The action plan for the next 12 months included a number of activities such as branding, communication and training for Officers and Members as well as rollout of electric vehicle charging points, provision of a fully electric vehicle fleet and decarbonisation of the domestic property portfolio. The action plan also started to consider the strategies that would be required to deal with the Ubico fleet which represented 44% of the remaining emissions – this was a significant challenge and would take considerable commitment and resources to resolve by 2030. It was noted that the year three action plan would be reviewed if there was a successful bid for funding to replace the heating system at the Council Offices given the level of resources that would be required to deliver the project.
- 27.4 A Member expressed the view that, whilst it was clear Officers were doing a fantastic job, it was necessary to look at the whole carbon footprint rather than just the end result – this was something he had raised before. For example, in terms of the vehicle fleet, if this was replaced with electric it would not reduce the overall carbon footprint if the carbon cost of producing those vehicles was taken into account. The Head of Finance and Asset Management provided assurance that, although it was difficult to calculate, it was very much part of the plan to include this information in reports going forward. The Carbon Reduction Programme Officer advised that Officers would be looking at all of the materials which had gone into the solar canopy build in order to understand its carbon footprint and how long it would take to pay back. It was a complex area and training, which would be rolled out to in due course, would help Members to have those sort of discussions when decisions were being made. The Member indicated that, with regard to the vehicle fleet, technology was continually evolving e.g. hydrogen, biofuel etc. but the carbon footprint to produce those vehicles was getting bigger so, in his view, it may be more beneficial to retain the existing fleet for a longer period as it could be an easier decision to take in a few years when technology would have moved on even further.

27.5 Another Member noted that the feed-in tariff for solar panels was no longer as good as it had once been and he asked if consideration had been given to energy storage. The Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that, in terms of the solar canopy, the option of using batteries to store excess energy produced had been investigated but was not financially viable and it was found it would be better to export it to the Leisure Centre where there was a demand. He confirmed that the expectation was that the Council and the Leisure Centre would use all of the energy produced by the solar canopy.

27.6 A Member drew attention to Page No. 103, Action 18 in relation to maintaining and improving carbon reporting. She felt that the Council had done a brilliant job of reducing its carbon footprint but she raised concern there was no real sense of how much had actually been achieved in terms of the reduction over the 10 year period to 2030. She was pleased a metric was being developed in the next year and she asked if Members would have any input into what that would look like. The Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that the 2019 baseline established that the Council's carbon output was 1,600 tonnes and that had been reduced to just over 1,000 tonnes so although, it had come a long way, there was still much to be done to offset that. Officers had tried to include high-level detail within the report as the calculations were significant and involved a lot of spreadsheets; however, he was happy to share these if Members wished. In terms of improvement, it was intended to ensure that information was captured on a regular basis and that reporting and targets were consistent across Gloucestershire as there was currently no definitive format. The Member explained she was looking for less, rather than more, detail and favoured high-level simplicity. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management undertook to ensure more summary charts were included going forward. The Member went on to draw attention to Action 20 which was to support tree planting, tree protection and bio-diversity and indicated that, when the tree planting proposal had been put to the Climate Change and Flood Risk Management Group, she had understood that a tree planting strategy was being developed for 2023 so she asked what had happened to that. The Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that the Council had a Tree Management Strategy for its existing trees which included replacement of trees and that was in place currently. There was no plan for a tree planting strategy to come forward but the Borough Council would support the County Council with its ambitions and, where new trees could be accommodated, that was something Officers would look to do. The Member indicated that a tree planting strategy had been mentioned and she asked what the Borough Council's ambitions were in that regard. The Head of Finance and Asset Management undertook to discuss this with the Asset Manager following the meeting.

27.7 It was

**RESOLVED** That the progress achieved in year two of the Council's Carbon Reduction Action Plan, and the recommended year three action plan, be **NOTED**.

## **OS.28 ANNUAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY REVIEW**

28.1 The report of the Head of Corporate Services, circulated at Pages No. 104-127, set out the progress made against delivery of the Workforce Development Strategy. Members were asked to consider the report.

28.2 The HR and OD Manager advised that an update on the progress made against the 2021/22 actions and the proposed actions for 2022/23 were attached at Appendix 1 to the report. The main points to note were set out at Page No. 105, Paragraph 3.1 of the report, and particular reference was made to the introduction of the new Eploy system; development of systems to allow reporting on equalities data; and the COVID-19 response in terms of development and adjustment of policies, provision

of new training and welfare support for staff. Appendix 2 to the report set out the key performance measures outturn and attention was drawn to Page No. 116 which showed voluntary staff turnover was up to 14.5% from 6%; whilst a third of this was attributed to retirement, which was in line with other organisations, there was still a considerable amount which was unrelated to that. Alongside this, the Council continued to struggle to recruit to senior management roles. The HR and OD Manager advised there was a plan to address this - pay was one of the most frequently cited reasons for leaving during exit interviews and review of job evaluation processes and pay structures was planned during 2022/23 along with a further action around developing a strategy for recruitment management and retention.

- 28.3 A Member expressed the view that any changes to the pay structure needed to be carefully considered and suggested that other incentives should be explored. He pointed out that the local government pension scheme used to be a significant draw but that was no longer as enticing as it had once been. He asked whether staff who undertook training as part of their employment with the authority were required to stay for a period of time following completion – the Council was often used as a training ground to gain experience and qualifications before progressing to more senior roles in the private sector. In response, the HR and OD Manager confirmed there was a training agreement in place for that reason. Whilst she agreed it was necessary to look at the whole picture, with turnover as high as it was currently and with pay being cited so frequently as a reason for leaving, that was something which needed to be addressed and there was a balance to be struck with development opportunities and career pathways. A Member welcomed the Council's commitment to apprenticeships and indicated that he was aware of apprentices within the IT department but asked if there were opportunities in planning. In response, the HR and OD Manager advised there were now professional planning apprenticeships up to level four and level six/seven; however, there were not a lot of universities offering those currently and conversations were taking place with universities to identify what would best suit the Council's needs. The Member recognised there was a national issue with planning recruitment and he asked whether there were any national schemes which would assist with bringing people into local government, for instance, where they were placed with different authorities at different times. Members were informed there were schemes supported by the Local Government Association more broadly and that would be considered when looking at the wider strategic approach. A Member asked whether contractors and sub-contractors were being considered and the HR and OD Manager confirmed that everything was in scope and all options were on the table.

- 28.4 It was

**RESOLVED** That the annual Workforce Development Strategy review be  
**NOTED.**

## **OS.29 REVIEW OF CAPABILITY POLICY**

- 29.1 The report of the Head of Corporate Services, circulated at Pages No. 128-131, provided Terms of Reference for a review of the Capability Policy. Members were asked to approve the Terms of Reference as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.
- 29.2 The Head of Corporate Services advised that an annual report on policies and strategies due for review during 2022/23 was presented at the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Members had identified the Capability Policy for review by the Committee prior to consideration by the Executive Committee. Terms of Reference had been drafted for the review and were attached at Appendix 1 to the report. Due to the nature of the policy, a Task and Finish Working Group was not considered appropriate and it was instead proposed to conduct the review via a single workshop in August where Members would be given an overview of the

policy, the proposed changes and would have an opportunity to ask questions. Following consultation, the revised policy would be then be taken to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 October 2022 and to Executive Committee for approval on 16 November 2022.

- 29.3 A Member indicated that August may not be the best time to hold the workshop given that it was traditionally a holiday period and the Head of Corporate Services advised that if an appropriate date could not be identified during August, the workshop, and subsequent dates in the timeline, would be pushed back. Accordingly, it was

**RESOLVED** That the Terms of Reference for the review of the Capability Policy be **APPROVED** as set out at Appendix1 to the report.

### **OS.30 GLOUCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE UPDATE**

- 30.1 The Chair indicated that the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee had met earlier that day so the Council's representative had not had time to produce a written report as usual; however, she would give a brief verbal update of the salient points and the written report would be circulated by email following the meeting.
- 30.2 The Council's representative on the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised that an introduction had been provided on the Gloucestershire Integrated Care System which had been established on 1 July 2022. This replaced the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group and would be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day running of local NHS health and care services. The Committee had also received an update on local screening and immunisation services and had been advised that uptake within the county was thought to be good at 75% of the population. The South West Dental Commissioning Team had provided an update on NHS dentistry as there had been a 21.55% decrease in the number of patients being able to access NHS dental services. NHS dentistry was priced in units of activity and contracts and pricing was determined nationally. It was up to practices to decide if they wanted to provide NHS dentistry and a lot had opted not to due to the process being too complicated. This was a significant national problem, particularly as a lot of practices had closed during the pandemic and chosen not to reopen. It was reported that Gloucestershire had a shortage of 31 dentists and work was being done to attract students from the two dentistry schools in the south-west at Bristol and Plymouth. The Committee had also received an update from the South West Ambulance Service Foundation Trust and it was noted that the service covered a population of 5.5 million in the south-west with 23 million visitors, mainly during the summer. The key issues highlighted were the intense sustained pressure which meant that performance had not returned to pre-pandemic figures; difficulties with provision of the service commissioned; and massive handover delays at general hospitals - the service had lost 10,000 hours in handovers last week compared to an average of 350 hours in a previous year, 10% of which was attributed to hospitals in Gloucestershire. Hospital Liaison Officers had been appointed to speed up the process with extra triage staff to answer phone calls and signpost to other services where possible. In Gloucestershire, 37% had been redirected to other services.
- 30.3 A Member asked if it was intended to bring in more NHS dentists as minor issues could become more serious if left unseen, for instance, a sore throat could turn into an abscess, then septicaemia and a visit to Accident and Emergency which could have been avoided. The Council representative on the Gloucestershire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee confirmed that was exactly what was trying to be achieved. The Member went on to ask questions about the contracting arrangements and the Chair indicated that it may be more beneficial to wait for the

full written update and then direct any further questions to the Council's representative at that point. The Council's representative advised that the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be taking a more in-depth look at dentistry over the coming months so there would be more information in due course.

30.4 It was

**RESOLVED** That the verbal update from the Council's representative on the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on matters discussed at its last meeting be **NOTED**.

**OS.31 SEPARATE BUSINESS**

31.1 The Chair proposed and it was

**RESOLVED** That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**OS.32 TRADE WASTE PROJECT UPDATE**

*(Exempt – Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))*

32.1 Members considered an update on the progress made in relation to the trade waste project and the next steps.

The meeting closed at 7:48 pm