

Borough Councillors Report – January 2025

English Devolution White Paper was published a week or more ago. The main area of change will be to get rid of the two-tiered system of District/Borough Councils and County Councils, and replace them with a Unitary Council. 164 District/Borough Councils will be affected by this change. The next tier up will be a Strategic Authority, where whatever Gloucester looks like, will be joined with other Unitary Councils. This is all in the early discussion phase. It is not negotiable, it is for the 6 District Councils and County councils to decide how to implement this, and by when.

Ubico's Annual Report was very positive, with good staff retention and training provided. They now have 21 Hybrid or electric vehicles, and 18% of the fleet is run on Hydrotreated Vegetable oil, meaning emissions are down by 18% from the previous year. They are well-performing, with 99.97% collection rates in TBC.

Executive Meeting – The Treasury and Capital Management have to feed back 4 reports annually for the Council to adopt. Providing evidence of good use of the public purse. These are The Capital Strategy 2025/6, The Investment Strategy 2025/6, Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2025/6, and The Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2025/6.

Discussion was had of a review of the Winter Flooding Response and Recovery Strategy – Lessons Learned Report. This was developed by the Flood Management Group. Local lessons have been learned and action to prevent the same issues from occurring again taken. Local Borough Councillors are to be communicated to better. Discussions were had on wider distribution of sandbags, grants, signage for roads closed etc.

Full Council in December – A Tree and separate Hedge maintenance Policy was agreed.

An additional 9000 houses have to be planned for in Gloucestershire. TBC is planning for this rather than letting it happen.

TBC will increase the Council Tax by a maximum of 2.99% or £5 on a Band D property. Policing contribution will go up from £13 a year to £14. Parishes can impose what they find is necessary to run their Parish. Allocation of budgets nationally is being distributed differently. TBC gets £287,000 less whilst metropolitan areas get an 8.5% increase.

The TBC name change is to be reviewed as is the Strategic Local Plan in light of what can be achieved to benefit the residents in the time the Borough has left. I will keep you updated.

JKS 9/1/2025