

ERMIN WARD

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

APRIL 2026



@ErminWard

I post helpful information, including road closures for infrastructure repair etc., on my Ward Councillor Facebook page. Please could you mention this in your Parish News and Village Website. **Underlined text is linked.**

Cllr Julia Judd, Ermin Ward District Councillor

julia.judd@cotswold.gov.uk

07853 383874

Parliamentary constituency is North Cotswolds CLIFTONBROWNG@parliament.uk

County Division is Cirencester North with Ermin - Mark.Harris@gloucestershire.gov.uk

except Coberley which is in Bourton-on-the-Water & Northleach

Paul.Hodgkinson@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Forthcoming Committee Meetings (underlined texts are linked)

Wednesday 8 April	2.00 pm Meeting of Planning and Licensing Committee
Thursday 9 April	4.00 pm Meeting of Audit and Governance Committee
Monday 13 April	4.00 pm Meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 16 April	6.00 pm Meeting of Cabinet
Thursday 23 April	2.00 pm Meeting of Licensing Sub-Committee (Taxis, Private Hire, and Street Trading)

Recent Committee Meetings

Monday 2 March	4.00 pm Meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 5 March	4.30 pm Meeting of Performance and Appointments Committee
Thursday 5 March	6.00 pm Meeting of Cabinet
Wednesday 11 March	2.00 pm Meeting of Planning and Licensing Committee
Monday 18 March	2.00 pm Meeting of Council
Thursday 26 March	2.00 pm Meeting of Licensing Sub-Committee (Taxis, Private Hire, and Street Trading)

COUNCIL MEETING - 18 MARCH

CABINET MEETING DECISIONS - 5 MARCH

Biodiversity Action Plan

To present the Biodiversity Duty report to Cabinet

Cabinet RESOLVED to:

1. Approve the Biodiversity Duty Report within Annex A for publication.
2. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director – Planning Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning to make presentational

and minor editorial changes for publication.

Gloucestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy

To endorse the Gloucestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

(LNRS), a statutory strategy introduced under the Environment Act 2021 and approved by Gloucestershire County Council in January 2026. The LNRS had been developed collaboratively with local authorities and partners, including the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership, and provided a spatial framework identifying opportunities for habitat creation, restoration and expansion at a landscape scale to support nature recovery. The report further outlined the statutory requirement for local planning authorities to have regard to the LNRS in fulfilling their biodiversity duties.

Cabinet RESOLVED to:

1. Endorse the Gloucestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Infrastructure Funding - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Project

To seek delegated authority for the Associate Director of Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing, to implement enhancements to the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding bid process.

Infrastructure Levy (CIL), adopted in 2019, was collected from most developments to fund strategic infrastructure. Drawing on experience from the first two funding rounds and stakeholder feedback, the report proposed enhancements to improve transparency, strengthen alignment with the Council's Corporate Plan and Infrastructure Development Plan, introduce a year-round bidding process with assessments between October and December, and improve monitoring and reporting. It was noted that these changes related only to the allocation process and not the charging schedule

Cabinet RESOLVED to:

1. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director, Planning Service in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing to implement a CIL Enhancement Programme detailed at Section 3 of this report.

HomeSeekerPlus Policy Review

To present to Cabinet an updated HomeSeekerPlus Policy to replace the policy which had been in place since 2016 and had last been reviewed in 2022.

Now updated to reflect legislative changes, national guidance, and operational learning. Revisions addressed statutory duties, updated case law, and clarified definitions on eligibility, priority need, and housing circumstances. The update strengthened operational processes, verification, and reassessment, supported consistent decision-making, incorporated best practice for safeguarding and vulnerable households, and aligned with national expectations. The policy was expected to remain in place until after local government reorganisation, providing a stable framework during structural change.

Cabinet RESOLVED to:

1. Approve the draft Policy amendments for public consultation.
2. Delegate authority to the Business Manager for Housing, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning and the Public Executive Director – Operations, to adopt the new policy following consideration of the consultation responses.

Delegated Approval to Award Contract (Parking)

To seek approval of delegated authority to award the contract for pay and display machines for car parks.

The existing machines were increasingly outdated, required frequent maintenance, and were difficult for users, necessitating a full refresh of the parking estate. The tender process

was outlined and it was noted that procurement was being accelerated to enable the timely replacement and operation of machines within the current budget year. Cabinet resolved to delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Health, Culture and Visitor Experience to award the contract for the supply, installation and on-going services to the most advantageous supplier.

Cotswold District Council's Local Plan update

Following the Government's revised housing policy, an up-to-date Local Plan is needed as soon as possible to protect against speculative development and ensure new homes come with the infrastructure our communities need. If the Local Plan is agreed by Full Council on 12 August, the next stage of consultation would begin in the week of 24 August 2026.

CDC has published a summary of consultation responses - and is continuing to consider feedback, assess sites and complete technical evidence before publishing the next draft Local Plan later in the summer.

More than 3,500 comments have been received and published. More detailed analysis is ongoing to ensure the responses are fully considered to inform the next draft of the Plan, which will be published in the summer.

Over 2,000 people and organisations took part in the consultation at the end of last year, which sought views on high-level, indicative options to meet a target of building 18,650 new homes over the next 18 years.

The Council also invited landowners and communities to propose potential development land through a district wide "Call for Sites", resulting in more than 2030 sites being submitted for consideration. All sites made available for potential development now require assessment – some in considerable detail – before being included in or excluded from the final version of the updated Plan.

Many residents said the high housing requirement is unrealistic given that more than 80 per cent of the district is in the Cotswolds National Landscape, which has a high level of protection. They warned that directing development into the remaining areas could lead to unsustainable growth.

People across the district also highlighted longstanding infrastructure pressures – from sewage and water supply, to roads, public transport, schools and healthcare – stressing that major upgrades must come before new homes. Concerns were also raised about landscape and heritage impacts, flooding, biodiversity loss and the character of villages. Responses showed that while some supported focusing growth near services and public transport, others doubted whether existing infrastructure can cope with the scale proposed.

Views on housing density were mixed: there was support for well-designed, affordable homes on brownfield land, but caution about higher-density schemes in sensitive rural locations.

In the summer, the Council will present the next draft of the Plan and publish the consultation comments in full, alongside all supporting evidence. At a summer meeting of Full Council, members will consider the next draft ahead of further public consultation, known as the [Regulation 19 consultation](#).

Given the volume of responses and the number of sites requiring assessment, members at Wednesday's March meeting were asked to agree to set that summer meeting for 12 August instead of 17 June.

A draft of the Local Plan, along with a substantial amount of technical evidence, will be published this summer.

Please email me if you would like a pdf of a summary of the responses.

[Update on Local Government Reorganisation 'Mercia' combined authority idea](#)

Discussions are being made that Gloucestershire could join Warwickshire and Worcestershire in a "Mercia" combined authority with a directly-elected mayor.

Once Local government is reorganised the plan is for districts to merge with Shire Hall to create one or more unitary authorities. The idea is that the area would become part of a combined authority which allows two or more councils to work together on key regional decisions like economic development, transport and housing. The Government has asked council chiefs in Warwickshire to begin talks with counterparts in the two neighbouring counties as they look to create combined authorities with populations of around 1.5 million.

This came to light earlier this month as Stratford District Council's deputy chief executive Tony Perks received a letter from local government minister Matthew Pennycook. Cllr Tom Stowe (my CDC Conservative Group leader) who represents Campden Vale said being grouped with places as far away as parts of Somerset is "mind-boggling". GCC's cabinet and CDC leader, Cllr Mike Evely have both confirmed that their preferred options would be to join WECA (West of England Combined Authority).

My preference would be to join up and go north to link in with Worcestershire and/or Hertfordshire/warwickshire

A link to the consultation is here: [Local government reorganisation in Gloucestershire - GOV.UK](#)

Details on all three proposals are available at: [Future Gloucestershire : Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation in Gloucestershire](#)

We've also published information on the new-look member portal: [Councillor Portal - CDC Portal](#), where you can also find lots more on LGR: [Local Government Reorganisation in Gloucestershire - CDC Portal](#)

A decision is expected in summer 2026, with elections for the new unitary authority or authorities planned for May 2027. Any new structure will come into effect no earlier than April 2028.

FUNDING FOR VILLAGE HALLS

With the end of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund, it is one funding source still open for these projects, albeit at a maximum of 20% - but it all helps.

<https://acre.org.uk/village-halls-small-grants-fund/>

BINS AND MISSED COLLECTIONS

PLEASE continue to keep me informed, I cannot help if I do not know that your bins have not been collected. It seems to me that the misses in the North of Ermin Ward have now been shifted to the South! Many of you are reporting that your green waste bins are not being collected and I have been told that some green bins have been replaced with new, smaller ones in some areas. As you pay a licence for these which should cover the cost of the collection, I asked if there are grounds for compensation and I have been told there are none.

WASTE AND MISSED BIN COLLECTION UPDATE

A key area of the Council's Capital Programme Budget for 2026/27 to 2029/30 of investment includes Environmental Services (£8.454m) for the investment in waste and recycling infrastructure, such as up to 31 new collection vehicles (including an electric vehicle) and fuel bunkers to support the use of Vegetable Oil (HVO), a low carbon, sustainable fuel derived from used cooking oil and industrial by-products.

This is due in part to extensive lobbying and questions at Council about missed bin collections in Ermin Ward. Without so many of you keeping me informed about your missed bin collections since June 2024 (when the schedule of bin collections was moved to Fridays to allow for three waste vehicles to be taken out of service).

I would not have been able to do this without your persistent feedback to me, especially after reporting on the Council's portal was usually not possible. I greatly appreciate your perseverance, thank you.

20mph speed limits

Gloucestershire County Council is set to begin introducing community-backed 20mph speed limits and other road safety measures as part of a major new road safety programme.

Initial programme phasing

Phase 1 – 2026/27

Pre-planned schemes on individual A and B roads and early community 20mph schemes including Tuffley, Dursley and Cheltenham Central.

Phase 2 – 2027/28

Initial engagement beginning with:

- Cirencester and surrounding areas
- Cheltenham (parished and unparished areas)
- Stroud and Cainscross
- Tewkesbury, Ashchurch and Wheatpieces
- Cinderford, Ruspidge, Soudley and Littledean

Phase 3 – 2027/28–2028/29

Engagement is beginning in Gloucester and further towns and parishes.

A417 MISSING LINK

The A417 Missing Link WCH/PC forum originally planned for Tuesday 7 April at 2pm has been rescheduled to Wednesday 22 April at 2pm. Kier apologise for any inconvenience. You are welcome to join them at the Crusher compound. I might see you there.

Any updates will be communicated on the project website nationalhighways.co.uk/a417-missing-link.

Check the National Highways website for updates and other works in the region.

Access for emergency services will be fully maintained during the closures.

Fully signposted diversion routes will be in place during the closure. Please follow the official, signed diversion route and not satnav.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dZMn6iutH0>

To receive National Highways updates, opt in to ensure compliance with GDPR, [please follow this link](#).

Visit the [A417 Missing Link web page](#).

The Customer Hub, located at the crusher compound at Shab Hill, is open every Tuesday and Wednesday from 10am until 2pm. You can visit any time during these hours, without pre-booking an appointment. Members of the team will be on hand to answer questions. 10 mph and site restrictions. Please Reverse Park.

A417 Project Office, Birdlip, Gloucester, GL4 8JX

What3words: <https://what3words.com/shaped.quietest.payback>

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

All roadworks and planned road closures on motorways and major A roads, including the A417, are published here: <https://www.trafficengland.com/>

Road Closure Reports, which includes a seven day look ahead of planned road closures, are updated twice daily, Monday to Friday except for bank holidays: <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/travel-updates/road-closure-report/>

To find the latest information about local road closures, please visit: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/roads/roadworks/>

Webpage:

<https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/south-west/a417-missing-link/>

Email: A417MissingLink@nationalhighways.co.uk

Phone: 0300 123 5000

X: @HighwaysSWEST Facebook: @HighwaysSWEST

Please report highway issues, such as potholes, and track their progress online at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/fixmystreet Or download the app: FixMyStreet

Cllr Mark Harris is your Gloucestershire County Council councillor, responsible for Highways - Mark.Harris@gloucestershire.gov.uk except Coberley which is in Bourton-on-the-Water & Northleach Paul.Hodgkinson@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Cotswold District Council [NEWS](#)