

## **Borough Councillor Report – April 2026**

Full Council met on 7<sup>th</sup> April. This is brief feedback on the main agenda items.

Ubico's contract was up for renewal, and it was voted on unanimously to continue their contract, as we are very happy with their service.

The Councils have a statutory obligation under the Local Air Quality Management regime to monitor Air quality. TBC monitors Nitrogen Dioxide only. More urban areas monitor more and different things. The Air Strategy is a preventative measure to ensure we continue to improve air pollution. Traffic is the main problem. There is to be a 6-8 week consultation to follow. This is mainly promoted to the public via social media, but other ways of getting feedback are being looked into. County Council is doing a lot of work to promote sustainable travel, e.g., using public transport, bikes, electric cars etc.

Devolution, Foundation Strategic Authorities (FSAs) and Spatial Development Strategies (SDSs) – Strategic Context and Options for Gloucester. The Government is progressing a substantial programme of English devolution and planning reform. This will follow the move to Unitary Councils (either one or two, as not yet decided). Several Unitary Councils will be joined together, and the Councils are looking at the best options for Gloucestershire as a whole. The six Councils, other than TBC, are favouring joining up with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA). This decision, TBC felt, was made without fairly considering all the options and choosing the best option for Gloucestershire. TBC at the Full Council meeting agreed to look in more detail at the other options before deciding what they think is best. For example, they will look at what a combined Council with Hereford, Worcestershire, and Warwickshire would look like. More details will be on the intranet, under April Full Council. This is in the early stages at present.

The new Gloucestershire Cancer Centre has reached the planning stage and plans will be submitted this month. This will replace the facilities at the Cheltenham Oncology unit, which are over 20 years old now. They are still actively fundraising, but have enough to proceed with planning.

The UK Town of Culture 2028 is to take place to promote cultural activities in smaller towns. The Tewkesbury Culture Consortium was formed during the High St Heritage Action Zone programme. Their bid focuses on using the natural environment and heritage. Shortlisting will occur this spring. If shortlisted, the town will receive £60 000 to develop the detailed full bid. The overall winner will receive £3 million prize money.

8/4/26 JKS