

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

27 NOVEMBER/5 DECEMBER 2019

**27 November 2019**

Present:

Councillor Nigel Robbins - Chair  
Councillor Dilys Neill - Vice-Chair

Councillors -

Stephen Andrews	Stephen Hirst
Mark Annett	Roly Hughes
Julian Beale	Sue Jepson
Claire Bloomer	Julia Judd
Tony Berry	Juliet Layton
Ray Brassington	Andrew Maclean
Patrick Coleman	Nick Maunder
Rachel Coxcoon	Richard Morgan
Tony Dale	Richard Norris
Andrew Doherty	Gary Selwyn
Mike Every	Lisa Spivey
Jenny Forde	Ray Theodoulou
Joe Harris	Steve Trotter
Mark Harris	Clive Webster
Nikki Ind	

Apologies:

Robin Hughes	Richard Keeling
	Claire Bloomer

**5 December 2019**Present:

Councillor Nigel Robbins	- Chair
Councillor Dilys Neill	- Vice-Chair

## Councillors -

Stephen Andrews	Mark Harris
Tony Berry	Stephen Hirst
Ray Brassington	Andrew Maclean (from 7.16 pm)
Patrick Coleman (until 7.16 pm)	Nick Maunder
Rachel Coxcoon	Ray Theodoulou
Mike Every	Steve Trotter
Jenny Forde	Clive Webster
Joe Harris	

Apologies:

Mark Annett	Nikki Ind
Julian Beale	Sue Jepson
Gina Blomefield	Julia Judd
Claire Bloomer	Juliet Layton
Tony Dale	Richard Morgan
Andrew Doherty	Gary Selwyn
Robin Hughes	Lisa Spivey
Roly Hughes	

Absent

Richard Keeling	Richard Norris
-----------------	----------------

**CL.48 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Webster declared an interest in Agenda Item 15, Property Matter - Moreton-in-Marsh, as he was a Member of Moreton-in-Marsh Town Council.

There were no declarations of interest by Officers.

**CL.49 MINUTES**

The Council was requested to approve as a correct record the Minutes of its previous Meeting held on 25 September 2019.

In this connection, details of a number of proposed amendments to the Minutes were tabled at the meeting. It was noted that such amendments sought not only to correct a number of perceived inaccuracies/omission but also to include other text to enable the Minutes to be read as a stand-alone document without the need for cross-referral to supporting material. Attention was also drawn to a number of further amendments that were required.

**RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 25 September 2019 be approved as a correct record, subject to:**

- (i) the amendments tabled at the meeting;
- (ii) the amendment of the second announcement from the Leader (page 45 of the unconfirmed Minutes) to reflect the fact that Jan Britton was not at the meeting on 25 September 2019;
- (iii) the deletion of the words 'the Conservative Group had rescinded their own Corporate Plan' from the third complete paragraph on page 62 of the unconfirmed Minutes and their substitution by the words 'the Council had rescinded the previous Corporate Plan';
- (iv) the figure of £600,000 in the part paragraph at the top of page 68 of the unconfirmed minutes being amended to read £400,000.

**Record of Voting - for 24, against 0, abstentions 7, absent 3.**

Note:

Copies of the amendments tabled at the meeting are attached to the signed copies of the Minutes of 25 September and these Minutes.

#### CL.50 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR, LEADER OR HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

##### (i) Chair's Announcements

- Exempt Items of Business - The Chair reminded Members that there were exempt items on the agenda, at Items (14) and (15), and that these items would require a vote by Council to exclude the public and press from the meeting prior to discussion and decision on these items.
- Pledge - The Chair explained that the Council had not yet decided upon the introduction of a pledge, but felt that, in the light of recent meetings, it could be useful as guidance at the beginning of a meeting. He asked for suggestions with words and phrases to be forwarded to him; and also asked for Members to treat each other with respect.
- Former Councillor Greg Phillips - The Chair reported, with regret, the recent death of former Councillor Greg Philips, who had been a Councillor between 1991 and 1999 representing Fairford Member. Councillor Theodoulou remarked that he was sorry to hear the news, and commented that Mr Phillips was an example of how to work with people in politics.
- Schedule of Meetings 2020/21 - The Chair explained that the calendar of meetings for 2020/21 was being considered, and asked for comments from/views of Members on the timing and days of meetings that had been introduced for the current Civic Year.
- Jan Britton - The Chair welcomed Mr Jan Britton, soon to be the new Managing Director of Publica, to the meeting. The Chair also gave a welcome to the public and officers in attendance.

##### (ii) Leader's Announcements

- Jan Britton - The Leader also echoed the words of welcome to Jan Britton and explained that Jan would start his new role as Managing Director for Publica on 1 December 2019. Mr Britton commented that he had been meeting Members

across the four partner Councils and was looking forward to meeting all Members over the next few months. He had undertaken a long induction and had been working with Officers and Members since October 2019, looking at key local issues such as branding and identity.

- Corporate Peer Challenge - The Leader highlighted that the LGA Corporate Peer Review had taken place, and thanked Members for contributing to this review. He also thanked the Personal Assistant to the Leader and members of the Corporate Management Team for the work which they had carried out in organising the review. He drew attention to the Council's strong track record of delivery, and the capacity needed to be built into the organisation to be able to carry out the significant work identified by the new administration around place shaping. Whilst there were areas of improvement, the overall message from the review team was positive and there were exciting opportunities ahead.

#### CL.51 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No Public Questions had been submitted.

#### CL.52 MEMBER QUESTIONS

- (a) Question from Councillor Stephen Andrews to Councillor Rachel Coxcoo, Cabinet Member for Planning Policy, Climate Change and Energy.

*'In July 2019 the Council declared a state of Climate Emergency and committed to carbon and energy targets.*

*At its last meeting in September 2019 the Council approved that funding of £70,000 be provided to Publica for the recruitment of a Strategic Climate Change Manager in this Financial Year. At the same meeting, the Council also approved funding of £105,000 for specialist consultancy aimed at establishing the Council and District emissions baseline, a credible emissions reduction trajectory and a district-wide renewable energy study, again in this Financial Year.*

*Given the urgency associated with addressing what has been agreed is an Emergency, would Cllr Coxcoo please provide an update on the progress being made to achieve these outcomes within this Financial Year?'*

#### Response from Councillor Coxcoo

*'The Council has run a successful recruitment campaign for the Climate Change Manager post and received 50 applicants, the majority of whom were very high calibre. Officers have now shortlisted the applicants and will be interviewing on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. I am very confident we will be able to appoint a suitable candidate and will be delighted to update Members following that appointment, with a start date, which will of course depend on the applicant's circumstances.*

*In the absence of the Climate Change Manager, the Council has still driven ahead plans to procure specialist consultancy and specifications have been prepared and reviewed by key staff. These specifications are now being finalised and passed to the procurement team. There has also been dialogue with partner Councils to explore the opportunities for joint procurement and whilst we intend to leave the door open for other Councils to join we will be pressing ahead so we do not delay this essential work.'*

Councillor Andrews thanked Councillor Coxcoon for her response and, in light of the declared climate emergency, questioned what action would be taken to ensure that the declaration was publicised throughout the district and to town and parish councils.

Councillor Coxcoon highlighted that the response to the declaration needed to be holistic, with the starting point being a need to recruit officers and a culture change in the organisation. An event had been planned for Parish and Town Councils, although this had been delayed until the New Year due to the upcoming parliamentary election.

(b) Question from Councillor Nikki Ind to Councillor Mark Harris, Cabinet Member for Car Parks and Town and Parish Councils

*'Given the recent Climate Emergency declaration, as well as the car parking plans for Cirencester, are there any plans for developing with the County Council reliable, regular rural public transport services for the Cotswolds? Services which will allow rural residents to travel to work and shop without the need for a car?'*

Response from Councillor Mark Harris

'Thank you very much for your question. There are two strands to the reply and they relate to community transport, which addresses those with difficulty accessing transport, and modal shift, which addresses getting people out of cars, which is where your question is rooted.

I can assure you that Councillor Jenny Forde is exploring community transport. Conversations with the Citizens Advice Bureau have highlighted particularly acute issues in Tetbury, for those without transport accessing services further afield and we are seeking to address this with both Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) and existing voluntary groups.

In terms of getting people out of cars, or modal shift, I can assure you we are meeting regularly with GCC and other partners to identify ways in which we can achieve this. Indeed, I recently met with the MP, GCC and Councillor Berry to discuss this and other transport issues.

You may also be aware that I am helping to promote the reopening of train lines in the Cotswolds, again with Councillor Berry.

The Cotswolds is the most inaccessible in the entire County for access to services and we believe this is not good enough. However, given technological advances, modal shift and the challenge of ensuring our climate resilience, we don't believe that fighting for more buses is the only solution. We want to set up a cross party rural transport working group to work fast to solve this so we can ensure economic, environmental and social vibrancy. We would welcome you to join this group?

It should be noted that in England, the £220m allocated to buses is less than 1% of that allocated for new road building. Scotland has allocated £500m. If England was to provide a proportionally similar amount to English buses, the next Chancellor would have to find £5bn. There is nothing in the manifestos on investment in this area. So, a lot of political will nationally needs to change to address rural transport that car drivers will consider good enough to want to change their habits.

The Council engages constructively with GCC to help promote accessible and reliable rural public transport services across the District. GCC, as the local transport authority, has an established working relationship with; rail franchise operators, commercial bus operators and the community transport sector to ensure

cost effective travel choices are available to the public, within the resources available.

In terms of policy, GCC's adopted Local Transport Plan (LTP) contains numerous commitments, for example, within the Bus (PD1) and Rail (PD5) policy documents. Both policies focus around improving travel choice and improvements to the bus and rail network. The Connecting Places Strategies for the North and South Cotswolds identify key places and transport links across the county and a range of key priorities.

The LTP is currently being reviewed and subject to GCC Cabinet approval (expected in December 2019) will be out for consultation early in the New Year. This provides local communities a good opportunity to engage with local and county wide transport issues and help shape the emerging policies covering bus and rail, amongst other issues.

A pilot scheme is being developed by GCC for transport in rural areas. This will involve offering an enhanced, pre-book demand-responsive service that aims to serve more people than the current rural bus network and to give them a wider range of days and times to travel. This pilot will likely be operated in two rural areas of Gloucestershire, which may include parts of the Cotswolds.

As a member of the North Cotswold Line Task Force, GCC is actively seeking to deliver an increase in rail services and reduced journey times between Worcester – Oxford – London calling at Moreton in Marsh. This will improve connectivity for residents living in the north of the county. The December 2019 rail timetable will introduce an hourly direct service to London, on the South Cotswold line calling at Kemble. There will be earlier trains in the morning to London as well as a later train back. This combined with longer trains means there will be an extra 5,000 seats a day to London.

GCC has commissioned a Rail Investment Strategy in conjunction with the LEP and other Gloucestershire District Councils. It will look at the economic value of routes in the county and will identify service enhancements that will benefit residents, visitors and businesses alike in the Cotswolds.'

In thanking Councillor Harris for his comprehensive response, Councillor Ind commented that she would like to join the cross party group. She had also met with local GPs relating to access to services for residents and they welcomed the cross party approach to address issues across the District.

(c) Question from Councillor Stephen Hirst to Councillor Rachel Coxcoon, Cabinet Member for Planning Policy, Climate Change and Energy

*'Energy efficient affordable homes can be more expensive to build when compared with traditional build houses, and this situation will have a negative effect on the viability of sites when S106 Agreements are put together. This will in turn result in developers being able to offer a lower number of affordable homes which will in turn affect the delivery of affordable homes of all types in the district. For instance, what will the effect be on the Siddington development if many affordable homes are built to energy efficient specifications?*

*Has the administration calculated the effect of energy efficient homes on our housing delivery achievement and what measures are being employed to mitigate any reduction in the number of affordable homes due to effects on site viabilities?'*

Response from Councillor Coxcoon

'The Council has not undertaken this work to date. However, the Council successfully bid for £30,000 from the Housing Advisors Programme to develop a carbon neutral guide and supportive local plan policies to help inform developers and applicants to deliver cost effective carbon neutral homes.

Reading Borough Council's recently adopted Local Plan\* provides a good example of where an authority has successfully demonstrated that it is possible to require developers to deliver carbon neutral homes as well as affordable housing and supporting infrastructure. A key priority of this Council is to present a Local Plan that is green to the core and matters such as these will feature in an update to the adopted Local Plan, which currently places no requirement on developers to make homes carbon neutral.

The Council is also aware of work carried out by the West of England Authorities in 2018 to provide robust data on the cost of building to higher energy standards, which provides a useful evidence base for other Councils setting local policy. The work shows that domestic dwellings can be built to much higher standards of energy efficiency for the same cost as building to current Building Regulations, making it difficult for developers to rely on a viability argument to argue down an affordable housing target.

Finally, it is worth noting that energy efficient housing results in very low running costs for future tenants and owners, a hugely important issue for low-income households. Your question has therefore prompted some initial thoughts on how the Council can make the most of this aspect of insisting on high standards of energy efficiency housing. In particular, where social housing providers are to be the ultimate landlord of the social housing provided on a new development, it would be interesting to explore whether their increased confidence in being able to collect rent from tenants with very low utility bills would have any impact on the price they are able to pay for the properties in the first place. I would welcome further discussion on this matter.

\*See Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing)

[https://www.reading.gov.uk/media/10410/Reading-Borough-Council-Local-Plan/pdf/Local\\_Plan\\_Adopted\\_November\\_2019.pdf](https://www.reading.gov.uk/media/10410/Reading-Borough-Council-Local-Plan/pdf/Local_Plan_Adopted_November_2019.pdf)

[https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sitedocuments/Planning-and-Building-Control/Planning-Policy/LP20162036/cost\\_of\\_carbon\\_reduction\\_in\\_new\\_buildings\\_report\\_publication\\_version.pdf](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sitedocuments/Planning-and-Building-Control/Planning-Policy/LP20162036/cost_of_carbon_reduction_in_new_buildings_report_publication_version.pdf) '

Councillor Hirst thanked Councillor Coxcoon for her response and commented that there was a need to address the changes in viability which would greatly reduce the increased cost of environmentally-friendly homes.

Councillor Coxcoon commented that the delivery of affordable homes in relation to energy efficient buildings was possible and developers should be able to deliver both affordable and energy efficient buildings.

- (d) Question from Councillor Stephen Hirst submitted to Councillor Rachel Coxcoon, Cabinet Member for Planning Policy, Climate Change and Energy

*'In all but one of our Market Towns there have been large numbers of homes built, in some instances there have been increases of over 30% in the number of houses*

*that these communities have to accept. At the same time rural communities need new homes to ensure that the current local facilities are sustainable into the future.*

*Exception housing developments are one way to provide rural sustainability and there are first class examples of such developments in Bibury and North Cerney involving up to 12 affordable homes per development. Is the current administration planning to work with local housing associations to seek and develop a good number of rural sites where affordable homes can be built to maintain local sustainable communities?'*

#### Response from Councillor Coxcoon

'The Council has recruited two community-led housing enablers (one FTE) to work with local communities and housing associations to identify rural sites and bring forward development across the district. As a result, the Council will be delivering double the number of parish needs surveys planned in this financial year - that will inform need. The Strategic Housing Team aim to deliver a land-owners' seminar in the New Year to encourage rural sites to come forward, as the availability of affordable land has been identified as one of the main barriers to delivery.'

Councillor Hirst commented that he was concerned about new houses in rural areas and queried whether the Council was working with housing associations and other bodies to provide exception sites, given the need to have to develop new communities.

Councillor Coxcoon explained that most of the exception sites were requirements of the Local Plan, and the role of the new community enablers would be to develop the new sites.

#### CL.53 PETITIONS

No petitions had been received.

#### CL.54 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES IN-CAB TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM

The Council was requested to consider the allocation of finance associated with the procurement and on-going operation of an in-cab technology system for the environmental services fleet.

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Flooding and Environment Health introduced the report and recommendations of the Cabinet on this matter. In so doing, he drew particular attention to the business case on the costs and benefits of procuring such a system. The system ran on an app from a tablet which would communicate back to systems within UBICO ensuring there was 'real time' knowledge of issues within the District, of where vehicles were, and any bins that had been missed. It was considered that this would save time and fuel in being able to pin-point issues and would be transformative and positive for the service.

Members supported the benefits that would accrue from the system and the positive service transformation potential in terms of efficiency; environment-friendly/carbon reduction; help with security and safeguard staff operating the vehicles; reducing service failures; and reducing costs.



**RESOLVED that:**

- (a) **An allocation of up to £142,000 be approved, from the Invest to Save Fund, to procure the Environmental Services In-Cab Technology system from Yotta;**
- (b) **Revenue growth of £26,000 per annum be approved for software licences and maintenance, to be offset by savings in the Ubico contract costs of at least £42,000.**

**Record of Voting - for 30, against 0, abstentions 1, absent 3.**

**CL.55 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2019/20**

The Chair of the Audit Committee introduced the report and recommendations of that Committee in relation to mid-year treasury management performance. In so doing, he thanked officers for their work in relation to treasury management activity and monitoring.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance explained that treasury management was an important subject in terms of how the Council could look to the future for investments; and explained that this would be a topic for discussion by both the Audit Committee and the Cabinet in the coming months.

**RESOLVED that the Treasury Management mid-year performance report 2019/20 be approved.**

**Record of Voting - for 29, against 1, abstentions 0, absent 3.**

**CL.56 SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS TAKEN AT CABINET – 7 OCTOBER AND 4 NOVEMBER 2019**

The Council received a report detailing decisions taken by the Cabinet at recent meetings.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

**CL.57 SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS TAKEN AT AUDIT COMMITTEE - 26 SEPTEMBER AND 14 NOVEMBER 2019**

The Council received a report detailing decisions taken by the Audit Committee at recent meetings.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

**CL.58 NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

The Chair stated that he intended to allow both Motions to be debated at the Meeting.

- (a) Motion 12 of 2019/20 - Position Statement on Glover Review

Proposed by Councillor Clive Webster, Seconded by Councillor Joe Harris;

*'This Council notes that:*

- (i) *The Government recently commissioned a review of National Parks and AONBs, led by Julian Glover; and that the findings of this Landscapes Review were published in September 2019.*

- (ii) *The Cotswolds AONB, which already has Conservation Board Status, receives approximately 23 million visitors each year, with tourism worth around £900m to the local economy.*
- (iii) *The Cotswolds Conservation Board is an appointed body, with no directly elected members.*
- (iv) *The Landscapes Review identifies the Cotswolds (with a combined Dorset and East Devon area) as "strong candidates, alongside The Chilterns, to be considered for National Park status"; and it further states that the lack of a single Local Plan is a "challenge" for the Conservation Board.*
- (v) *The Landscapes Review recommends extra responsibilities and funding for all AONBs to recover lost biodiversity and protect and enhance 'National Landscapes', with actions to be developed and delivered through partnership working.*

*This Council further notes, however, that:*

- (i) *Cotswold District is 80% covered by the Cotswolds AONB, and that the appeal of this AONB is as much informed by its built character as its natural landscape.*
- (ii) *Cotswold District is not entirely reliant upon tourism for its economy - it is also a thriving area for a wide range of businesses and technologies, with more than 40 established employment sites, many of which are located within the AONB.*
- (iii) *GFirst LEP's draft Local Industrial Strategy identifies that Gloucestershire (which contains 64% of the Cotswolds AONB) has a higher spend on research and development than the national average (3.3% GVA vs 2.4%) and a higher innovation activity level than the national average (70.3% of local businesses vs 55.1%, the second highest percentage of all LEP areas).*
- (iv) *Despite being a 'hot housing market', Cotswold District has a chronic affordability crisis.*
- (v) *Further, National Park designation tends to introduce a 'price premium' on housing while limiting the potential to develop high-skill, high-wage, innovation-driven employment.*
- (vi) *While the Landscapes Review recommends a single statutory planning regime for the Cotswolds AONB, it does not consider the new planning tools and powers implemented by the Government in its February 2019 update to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).*
- (vii) *The Landscapes Review ignores the concerns raised by the Chairman of the RSPB in March 2019 that failings in the current governance arrangements of National Parks risk many of them losing their UN Nature Reserve status.*
- (viii) *The Landscapes Review also ignores the value of National Landscapes to contribute to sustainable energy generation, in line with local and national ambitions to address the climate breakdown emergency.*

*This Council therefore resolves to write to Natural England, the new MP for The Cotswolds Constituency (once elected) and relevant Government Ministers (once appointed) to:*

- (i) *Support the recommendations of the Landscapes Review to increase biodiversity recovery and enhance the 'national landscape' of the Cotswolds AONB through partnership working and increased Government funding.*
- (ii) *Confirm that Cotswold District Council is taking a leadership role among the Cotswolds AONB Local Authorities to find quicker, cheaper and easier methods to deliver these benefits.*
- (iii) *Support the creation of a National Landscapes Service to act as a co-ordinator, facilitator and ombudsman for National Parks and AONBs.*

(iv) *Advise that Cotswold District Council has concluded that, on current evidence, the case for the Cotswolds AONB to be considered for National Park status is very weak - on the basis that doing so is likely to:*

- *take 10-20 years of costly consultation and technical work to deliver;*
- *exacerbate the chronic affordability crisis;*
- *limit or reduce economic, research and development potential;*
- *not significantly increase the benefits of tourism; and*
- *hinder the Government's ability to deliver 300,000 new houses annually in the UK;*

*and the Council therefore urges that no further work be undertaken on this proposal.'*

In proposing the Motion, Councillor Webster explained that he had serious concerns that the creation of a National Park was the right solution for the Cotswolds. He explained that there was no mention in the report of the loss of planning powers; the proposal could cause administrative chaos; and the affordability of housing would be in crisis. He urged the Council to support the Motion and make a clear argument.

In seconding the Motion, Councillor Joe Harris explained that a similar motion had been considered, and unanimously supported, by Gloucestershire County Council (GCC). He explained that 44% of the Cotswolds AONB fell within Cotswold District; the area attracted 38 million visitors each year, which contributed up to £1 billion to the economy; and 140,000 residents lived in the area. He considered that the Cotswolds AONB should not be turned into a National Park, as this would mean handing powers over to an 'unelected quango'. In his view, the area's decision-makers should be elected by people within those communities, and should be focussed on those areas, ensuring that they were vibrant and active. He thanked Councillor Webster for pulling the motion together and the work carried out by the Heritage and Design Manager.

A Member considered that the wording of the motion should be amended as (i) he considered that the Review had had regard to the National Planning Policy Framework Update; and (ii) that it did not accurately reflect the most up-to-date position of the RSPB. The Member was concerned that the Cotswolds had an expensive housing market and if the National Park went ahead, evidence of this needed to be accurately put forward. In conclusion, he suggested that the Council should consider endorsing the wording of the motion/resolution agreed by GCC.

In response, the Leader explained that GCC had resolved to write to Natural England and Ministers to reject the notion of a National Park for the Cotswolds; whereas the Motion before Members had been developed for the Cotswolds specifically.

In general, and on the basis of the information currently available, Members considered that there did not appear to be any benefit for the Cotswolds to become a National Park and felt that no further work should be undertaken on this. An alternative option was suggested, for the establishment of a cross-party working group to look at the report in more detail to find out what opportunities it could bring for the Cotswolds.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance commented that this was a detailed motion which, he considered, the Council should support in its entirety; and a commitment from the Government was necessary to ensure that a Cotswolds National Park would not be instigated. He did not feel that a working group should be set up as that could be seen by the Government that the Council wanted the National Park to go ahead; but, instead, it was more important to gather the opinions of the other Gloucestershire/AONB authorities.

In responding to the debate, Councillor Webster urged the Council to support the Motion, with its strong request that the Government should undertake no further work on a National Park for the Cotswolds.

**RESOLVED** that the Council writes to Natural England, the new MP for The Cotswolds Constituency (once elected) and relevant Government Ministers (once appointed) to:

- (i) Support the recommendations of the Landscapes Review to increase biodiversity recovery and enhance the 'national landscape' of the Cotswolds AONB through partnership working and increased Government funding.
- (ii) Confirm that Cotswold District Council is taking a leadership role among the Cotswolds AONB Local Authorities to find quicker, cheaper and easier methods to deliver these benefits.
- (iii) Support the creation of a National Landscapes Service to act as a co-ordinator, facilitator and ombudsman for National Parks and AONBs.
- (iv) Advise that Cotswold District Council has concluded that, on current evidence, the case for the Cotswolds AONB to be considered for National Park status is very weak - on the basis that doing so is likely to:
  - take 10-20 years of costly consultation and technical work to deliver;
  - exacerbate the chronic affordability crisis;
  - limit or reduce economic, research and development potential;
  - not significantly increase the benefits of tourism; and
  - hinder the Government's ability to deliver 300,000 new houses annually in the UK;

and the Council therefore urges that no further work be undertaken on a National Park for the Cotswolds.

**Record of Voting - for 30, against 0, abstentions 1, absent 3.**

- (b) Motion 13 of 2019/20 re parking spaces allocated to new build apartments and houses

Proposed by Councillor Richard Morgan, Seconded by Councillor Sue Jepson:

*'This Council notes that the number of parking spaces allocated to new build apartments and houses that have only communal parking provision is subject to national guidance; and it is our understanding that such guidance is as follows:*

- (i) *Bedsit and 1 bed apartments = 1.25 (unassigned spaces per dwelling) or 1.50 (assigned spaces per dwelling).*
- (ii) *2 bed apartments = 1.50 (unassigned spaces per dwelling) or 1.75 (assigned spaces per dwelling).*
- (iii) *3 bed apartments = 1.75 (unassigned spaces per dwelling) or 2 (assigned spaces per dwelling).*
- (iv) *1 & 2 bed terraced house = 1.5 (unassigned spaces per dwelling) or 1.75 (assigned spaces per dwelling).*
- (v) *3 bed terraced house = 1.75 (unassigned spaces per dwelling) or 2 (assigned spaces per dwelling).*

*This Council also notes that:*

- *Many parts of the Cotswolds are very rural, and public transport is limited in some areas, so residents are highly dependent upon car ownership.*
- *Some residents have commented that some new housing developments do not have enough car parking spaces in relation to the size and scale of the development. This is particularly visible in communal parking areas where pavements and roads are often blocked by parked cars.*

*The Conservative Group notes that the Lib Dem administration at CDC has indicated they may be reopening the Cotswold local plan.*

*Should the local plan be reopened, this Council resolves to:*

- *review its policy on communal parking and the ratio between dwellings and parking spaces.*
- *to amend its policy and ask developers to provide a higher number of parking places per dwelling than national guidelines stipulate, with a suggested ratio as follows:*
  - (i) *Bedsit and 1 bed apartments = 1.75 (unassigned spaces per dwelling) or 2.00 (assigned spaces per dwelling).*
  - (ii) *2 bed apartments = 2.00 (unassigned spaces per dwelling) or 2.25 (assigned spaces per dwelling).*
  - (iii) *3 bed apartments = 2.25 (unassigned spaces per dwelling) or 2.5 (assigned spaces per dwelling).*
  - (iv) *1 & 2 bed terraced house = 2 (unassigned spaces per dwelling) or 2.25 (assigned spaces per dwelling).*
  - (v) *3 bed terraced house = 2.25 (unassigned spaces per dwelling) or 2.5 (assigned spaces per dwelling).*

In Proposing the Motion, Councillor Morgan explained that proposed housing within the District would not have enough parking spaces, which would result in on-street parking with its associated issues. He considered that the Cotswolds was a unique area and people needed cars to get to local services.

In Seconding the Motion, Councillor Jepson explained that the lack of parking provision at dwellings had been a problem for several years and, with electric cars being introduced, more and more homes would need on-site space to charge their cars. She hoped that this would be considered in the review of the Local Plan.

The Cabinet Member for Planning Policy Climate Change and Energy, Councillor Rachel Coxcoon, explained that the review of the Local Plan would be looking at the evidence base around parking, parking standards, and electric vehicle charging in general. As a result, the Cabinet Member tabled an amendment to the Motion, with the effect of deleting the third and fourth paragraphs (i.e. from the text starting 'The Conservative group notes ..'), and replacing that text with the following:

*'The Liberal Democrat administration has pledged to review and update the local plan. Council therefore commits to reviewing the soundness of the nationally-derived parking standards evidence that underpins policy INF 5 as part of this process. This will be done as part of a wider contextual review of movement-related planning policies to ensure that new housing developments are genuinely sustainable. This broader context will entail integration of a review of the parking standards evidence*

*with evidence to underpin policies that will encourage modal shift, such as improved walking and cycling infrastructure, traffic regulation methods that address pavement parking, secure cycle storage provision, provision of communal spaces for car club vehicles, and delivery of electric vehicle charging infrastructure.'*

The Proposer and Secunder of the original Motion signified their acceptance of the amendment.

It was suggested that residential parking problems were due to a number of factors, including the need for young people to live with parents; the poor provision of public transport; and the high rate of conversions of garages into living space.

**RESOLVED that, as part of the review and update of the Local Plan, the Council commits to reviewing the soundness of the nationally-derived parking standards evidence - which will be done as part of a wider contextual review of movement-related planning policies to ensure that new housing developments are genuinely sustainable (and this broader context will entail integration of a review of the parking standards evidence, with evidence to underpin policies, which will encourage modal shift, such as improved walking and cycling infrastructure, traffic regulation methods that address pavement parking, secure cycle storage provision, provision of communal spaces for car club vehicles, and delivery of electric vehicle charging infrastructure).**

**Record of Voting - for 31, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 3.**

**CL.59 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and Press be excluded from the Meeting for the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involve likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph (3) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the said Act (Information relating to financial or business affairs) and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information concerned.**

**Record of Voting - for 31, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 3.**

Note:

At this juncture, the meeting was briefly adjourned (between 8.00 pm and 8.10 pm).

Following the break, Councillor Theodoulou made a statement of apology for a comment he had made earlier in the meeting, and explained that he had not wished to cause offence to anyone.

**CL.60 PROPERTY MATTER - CIRENCESTER**

Further to the Special Meeting of the Council held on 27 June 2019, the Council was asked to consider an alternative bid for the strategic acquisition of a property in Cirencester and, if agreed, to determine the basis on which to seek to progress the acquisition.

The circulated report set out detailed background information, including the circumstances that had led to an alternative bid being sought; the elements sought in such bid; the strategic nature of the potential acquisition; the financial implications, including market valuation; legal implications; key risks; alternative options; and a recommended way forward.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced this item and amplified various aspects of the circulated report. He also drew attention to the reasons behind an alternative bid being sought; the desired timelines in respect of any completion; and a communication received from a third party. He also responded to a number of questions relating to the financial aspects of the proposed bid.

The Head of Paid Service reiterated that extensive due diligence would be carried out in order to protect the interests of the Council and its residents. He gave his personal assurance that he would not exercise any powers delegated to him if outcomes were not going to be met, if the financial burden was to increase, or if the Council was to be placed at greater risk. In essence, any variations would be brought back to the Council.

**RESOLVED that:**

- (a) the Council agrees to progress with an alternative bid for the purchase of the identified property, as detailed in the circulated report, as a strategic asset for future economic development purposes with the purchase price as stated within such report;**
- (b) subject to such bid being successful:**
  - (i) a further sum (as identified within the circulated report) be included in the Council's Capital Programme for 2020/21 for associated works to the site, to be funded from Usable Capital Receipts;**
  - (ii) subject to the grant of planning permission and satisfactory tenders for the works, the Council progresses with the proposals;**
- (c) delegated authority be granted to the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, Chief Finance Officer, Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council to:**
  - (i) finalise terms for the alternative bid for the acquisition of the property; and**
  - (ii) agree final terms and complete all legal documentation for the purchase of the property, in support of the overall strategic objectives of the site as set out in the circulated report.**
- (d) it be noted that the following Council decisions taken on 27 June 2019 still apply under the alternative bid:**
  - (i) a relevant sum (as identified within the circulated report) be included in the Council's Capital Programme for 2019/20 for the purchase price and associated purchase costs, with the capital to be funded from Usable Capital Receipts, revenue reserves and prudential borrowing;**
  - (ii) the Council allocates £175,000 from the revenue part of the approved funding for the Waterloo car park to progress the associated planning application;**
  - (iii) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Finance Officer to update the Capital Strategy, Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy to reflect the earlier use of Usable Capital Receipts and prudential borrowing;**

**(iv) the revenue budget be updated to include income and costs of ownership.**

**Record of Voting - for 17, against 11, abstentions 3, absent 3.**

Note:

The Head of Paid Service reminded Members and others present that, given on-going discussions/negotiations, the matter remained confidential and should not be discussed in the public arena.

**CL.61 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

At this juncture, it was duly **MOVED** and **SECONDED** "that the Council do now adjourn", in accordance with Standing Order 13.

Upon being put to the vote, the Motion was declared **CARRIED** and, accordingly, it was

**RESOLVED that the Council do now adjourn.**

**Record of Voting - for 31, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 3.**

Note:

At this juncture (9.05 pm), the Meeting was adjourned. The Meeting was reconvened at 7.00 pm on Thursday 5 December 2019 to complete the remaining business as set out below.

**CL.62 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Webster declared an interest in the item 'Property Matter - Moreton-in-Marsh', as he was a Member of Moreton-in-Marsh Town Council.

Councillors Hirst, Robbins and Theodoulou declared similar interests as they were Members of Gloucestershire County Council. Councillor Joe Harris highlighted that this interest was registered on his register of interest form.

The Head of Paid Service explained that advice sought from the Monitoring Officer had confirmed that dispensations had been granted for those Members who were District, Parish or County Councillors so that they could participate in the matter.

**CL.63 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and Press be excluded from the Meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph (3) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the said Act (Information relating to financial or business affairs) and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information concerned.**

**Record of Voting - for 31, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 3.**



**CL.64 PROPERTY MATTER - MORETON-IN-MARSH**

The Council was asked to consider the strategic acquisition of a property in Moreton-in-Marsh and, if agreed, to determine the terms on which to seek to progress the acquisition.

The circulated report set out detailed background information, including the strategic nature of the potential acquisition; redevelopment options in the short and longer terms, and other identified viable uses for the site; the financial implications, including valuation advice; legal implications; key risks; and potential collaboration by way of a joint bid with one or more partners.

The Leader thanked Members for their attendance at this reconvened Meeting, and explained that the previous adjournment had largely related to the fact that the papers had been provided to Members at short notice and it was felt that Members should have an opportunity to read through the papers given the significance of the decision being considered. He also referred to the opportunity afforded by the acquisition to enable economic/infrastructure/transport benefits for the town; and the advantages of the Council securing future control of the site.

Officers amplified various aspects of the report; updated Members on updated valuation advice and the current position, and conditions, in respect of the potential collaboration options; and responded to various questions.

Following an adjournment to enable Members to consider the updated details and information, it was duly Proposed and Seconded that the Council should pursue a joint bid for the acquisition of the property, at the revised maximum figure agreed at the Meeting, and subject to, inter alia, an equal split of costs and income with the partner bidder.

**RESOLVED that:**

- (a) the Council agrees to progress with a bid for the purchase of the identified site in Moreton-in-Marsh as a strategic site for economic development purposes up to the maximum purchase price authorised at the Meeting, on condition that the bid is a joint one with the partner agreed at the Meeting;**
- (b) in light of the agreement to pursue the purchase of the property, the Council agrees to:**
  - (i) include a relevant sum in the Council's Capital Programme for 2019/20 for the acquisition and development of the site;**
  - (ii) fund the investment (purchase and development costs) in line with the arrangement agreed at the Meeting, with the final sums/contributions to be subject to negotiation between the parties;**
  - (iii) notwithstanding (ii) above, limit this Council's contribution to the purchase cost to the maximum figure endorsed at the Meeting;**
  - (iv) fund the balance of this Council's share of the investment from internal borrowing;**
  - (v) allocate £100,000 from the Council's Priorities Fund to progress the associated planning application for the site;**

**(vi) fund the cost of ownership in years 1 and 2 jointly with the identified bid partner on a pro rata basis, with this Council's contribution to be met from the Council Priorities Fund;**

**(vii) grant delegated authority to the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, Chief Finance Officer, Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, to:**

- **conclude negotiations with all parties;**
- **finalise the terms of the bid for the acquisition of the property; and**
- **complete all legal documentation for the purchase of the property, including any collaboration agreements or leases to support the overall strategic objectives of the site as set out in the report;**

**(viii) grant delegated authority to the Chief Finance Officer to update the Capital Strategy, Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy to reflect the decision;**

**(ix) update the revenue budget to include income and costs of ownership in line with the final details of the transaction.**

**Record of Voting - for 16, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 17.**

Note:

The Head of Paid Service reminded Members and others present that, given on-going discussions/negotiations, the matter remained confidential and should not be discussed in the public arena.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm on 27 November 2019, adjourned between 8.00 pm and 8.10 pm, and then adjourned at 9.05 pm on that day

The meeting re-convened at 7.00 pm on 5 December 2019, adjourned between 8.10 pm and 8.40 pm and closed at 9.05pm on that day.

Chair

(END)