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Date: Thursday, 6 February 2020 at 08:44
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Subject: CDC Budget

Gina

Comments from WsE Parish Council on the CDC budget.

Firstly, the period for consultation was unacceptably short – 3 weeks . This period fell between Parish Council meetings which meant that the PC was unable to debate the issues before the closing date. Other Councils were probably in the same position.

The information provided does not enable the PC (or the public)to see any detail of the budget. What does stand out is the proposal to increase car parking in Cirencester – a commitment of £16m!! What about the car parking issues in Chipping Campden, Moreton, Stowe, Bourton? I find this completely unacceptable and is to the detriment of CDC spend across the district.

How can almost 90% of the “budget” be committed to car park improvement in Cirencester?

On the document entitled “The Plan”, the second largest element at £850k is an update of the local plan, no doubt the bulk of that going to consultants. Why does it cost so much and what do we get for the money?

There is £20k earmarked for the Corinium museum – Cirencester again – what about the rest of the district eg being parochial: what about Chipping Campden?

There is nothing allocated to any smaller community.

Having made these points CDC should be developing the Northern part of the district as well as Cirencester – there is nothing specifically committed to the Northern area (Chipping Campden, Moreton, Stowe, Bourton) which has a vibrant tourist industry.

I am wary of comments in “The Plan” which say “*We need to invest in the economic development of the District to support businesses to grow. We also need to make more investments to improve the efficiency of the Council’s services. We’re also considering how we can borrow money to invest in delivering our priorities of renewable energy and housing for rent.*” - £350k – what exactly is planned (and costed)? There is no plan for the project .ie scope, what the cost plan is, what are the deliverables, when will the deliverables be available? These are good intentions but need detail as to how the intent is to be delivered.

“We want to develop an action plan to improve health and wellbeing and meet the leisure needs of our residents. We can then prioritise actions and seek grant funding from Government and other bodies to invest in facilities. “

What is the scope, cost plan, deliverables, when?

We also need to make more investments to improve the efficiency of the Council’s services. What will be invested in, how will efficiencies be measured? Will the figures be published?

Across “The Plan” there is nothing which precisely states what the money is planned to be spent on : much of “the plan” smacks of a wish list and is not a plan, and hence not a budget! It is merely a chunk of money with licence to spend as District Councillors see fit with no opportunity to hold them to account.

Eg if CDC spend £8650k on the local plan what do we get for the money and who determines value for money?

I hope these points can be raised, despite the lateness, at CDC.
Transparency demands more detail to be presented by CDC for public consumption.

Regards

Bill