



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL AGENDA

Wednesday 15 July 2020, 6.00 p.m.

To be held virtually, due to social distancing requirements and guidance relating to Coronavirus Regulations 2020 – Part 3 -
Modification of meeting and public access requirements

NOTES

(i) Questions Arising on the Agenda/Minutes of previous meeting

Questions regarding an update on progress on a specific item contained in the Minutes of the previous meeting, should be forwarded to the reporting officer prior to the meeting. If no advance notice is given a full response to any question cannot be guaranteed at the meeting. Once the minutes have been signed Members may ask questions to ascertain progress on issues.

(ii) All Mobile Phones/digital devices should be **SWITCHED OFF OR SET TO SILENT** before the start of the meeting.

(iii) Recording of Proceedings

The public proceedings of Council, Cabinet, and Committee Meetings may be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Committee Administrator know prior to the date of the meeting. The Chair will exclude anyone whose behaviour is disruptive.

(iv) Committee Administrator

If any Member has any general questions about the Meeting or the associated agenda papers, or is unable to attend, he/she is asked to contact Democratic Services on 01285 623210.

Distribution:

All Members of the Council

Christine Gore
Head of Paid Service

7 July 2020

COUNCIL: 15 JULY 2020

AGENDA

(1) **Apologies**

To receive any apologies for absence.

(2) **Declarations of Interest**

- (a) To receive any declarations of interest from Members under the Code of Conduct for Members.
- (b) To receive any declarations of interest from Officers under the Code of Conduct for Officers.

(3) **Minutes**

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 26 February 2020 and the Annual Meeting of Council held on 3 June 2020.

(4) **Announcements from the Chair, Leader or Head of Paid Service**

(5) **Public Questions**

Council Procedure Rule 10 - Not more than fifteen minutes allowed for questions to be put by members of the public on any matter in relation to which the Council has any power or duties or which affects the District.

Any member of the public wishing to ask a public question is requested to contact Democratic Services by no later than 5.00pm the working day before the Meeting.

(6) **Member Questions**

The following questions have been submitted:-

- i. **Question from Councillor Nikki Ind to Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance**

‘Could you please confirm when the Electric Vehicle Charging Point procurement tender process is due to re-commence for Tetbury and can you also confirm that the Town Council will be consulted and involved in the selection of suitable sites and equipment?’

- ii. **Question from Councillor Stephen Andrews to Councillor Joe Harris, Leader of the Council**

‘Officers and Staff of the Council are to be congratulated on the way that they responded to the COVID-19 emergency whilst at the same time ensuring that “normal business”, such as that of dealing with Planning Applications and Planning Enforcement, continued.

One such area of “normal business” has been that the Government has continued with its consultations on key aspect of policy, including areas key to the future of Cotswold District.

Would the Leader list those consultations that have been responded to since the 11th March and provide members with a copy of the submitted responses that have been provided on their behalf?’

iii. Question from Councillor Tony Berry to Rachel Coxcoon, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning

‘At the Council meeting held on July 3rd 2019, a motion to investigate installing solar panels on the Trinity Road Office building was unanimously approved by this Council, based on a review that was to have been concluded in 6 months. We are now 12 months on and I am unaware of any plan being in place and would ask Councillor Coxcoon what action will take place to carry out the Council’s decision?’

iv. Question from Councillor Tony Berry to Councillor Lisa Spivey, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness

‘At least a year ago we were preparing to design and build 8 sheltered properties in Kemble at the Community Gardens. Since then discussions have taken place but plans do not appear to have moved forward. Please could Councillor Spivey kindly give us an update on this site and given the prominence given to sheltered housing in this administrations manifesto, when will we see some action in this direction?’

v. Question from Councillor Julia Judd to Councillor Andrew Doherty, Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste and Recycling

‘Residents continue to regularly contact us with complaints of missed rubbish collections. Could you please explain the reasons behind the resurgence of failed collections?’

vi. Question from Councillor Julia Judd to Councillor Andrew Doherty, Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste and Recycling

‘Please could the Cabinet Member clarify why the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on waste collection services in the Cotswold District has been so much worse than for neighbouring authorities?’

Items for Decision

- (7) **Declaring an Ecological Emergency**
- (8) **Covid-19 Community Awards**
- (9) **Report of the Constitution Working Group**

Other Matters

- (10) **Notice of Motions**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12, the following Motions have been received:-

(i) **Motion 1 of 2020/21 re Fairer management of public open space and waste collection on new developments**

Proposed by Councillor Coxcoon, Seconded by Councillor Maunder

Council notes that:

Prior to 2011, public open spaces, dog waste bins, litter bins and play facilities on new housing developments were generally taken on by Parish or Town Councils for management.

As average development size (and thus the scale of associated landscaping) has greatly increased since 2011, there has been an increasing tendency for parish and town councils to decline to take on the management of public open spaces, bins, street furniture and play equipment.

It is now common practice for developers to hand over the long term management of public facilities on new housing estates to private management companies, for which new residents must pay a surcharge over and above their council tax. These charges vary, but an example is the Moreton Park estate, where each dwelling contributes an average of £181 per year.

Combined, the residents of new housing in the Cotswolds, constructed since 2011, are therefore likely to be paying in the region of £770k per annum, over and above council tax, for public open space management. With a government imposed housing target of over 400 homes per year, this figure will only increase.

Council believes that the situation as it stands is:

Unfair: New residents pay full council tax, but pay an excess over and above this for the public open spaces nearest to their homes to be maintained. Other local residents can, and do, use these spaces free of charge.

Divisive: The move away from parish and town council delivery of public open space management has created an 'us and them' atmosphere. New residents feel aggrieved that they are treated as outsiders and must contribute more than residents of older parts of town.

Unethical: Residents on new estates repeatedly tell ward members that they cannot get redress or response from private management companies or developers where they pay a standard service charge. Worse still, in situations where an 'Embedded Management Company' (EMC) is imposed, annual costs can rise without cap, and EMCs can interfere with the sale of homes where back-payments are due.

Uneconomical: In towns with several estates built by different developers, there are limited economies of scale in the delivery of services. Different personnel, driving different vehicles, turn up on different days of the week to mow grass and empty bins within very short distances of each other. As much as 25% of the management fee is devoted to 'administration'; managing mailings and address lists that could be centralised. CDC customer service staff deal with repeated enquiries about green spaces the council cannot control, wasting CDC time and money.

Of limited environmental and social benefit: Multiple vehicles visit towns, where one would suffice. Private management companies often employ least-cost management techniques, rather than those that would maximise biodiversity, actively sequester carbon, and deliver a high quality green environment. Opportunities for community

events and community access to funding for green space initiatives are limited by the private delivery structure.

Council therefore commits to instruct officers to:

1. Carry out an evidence review and satisfaction survey, to produce an accurate picture of:
 - (a) the sums being paid for public open space management by residents on new housing estates across the district;
 - (b) the levels of service they are receiving for the fees paid, and the variation in service cost between developments;
 - (c) the levels of resident satisfaction with the services being provided by private management companies or other forms of site management;
 - (d) the identity and operating location of the management companies and contractors delivering the services, to better understand the economic value to the district of the services being delivered (i.e. how much money is leaking out of the local economy to contractors based elsewhere);
 - (e) the biodiversity and environmental value of the green space management practices generally applied across the district's new estates, and whether these are in line with agreed management plans;
 - (f) how green space management in the district compares with other Council areas, to establish best-practice from elsewhere.
2. Produce a report to Cabinet for April 2021 outlining the range of options open to the District that that would allow the Council to ensure that new public open spaces are managed effectively and to a high quality, in a way that:
 - (a) is fair to all residents, existing and new;
 - (b) produces high quality outcomes for biodiversity, climate emergency response, and the quality of the public realm;
 - (c) strengthens the local economy, by keeping money local and creating local employment opportunities;
 - (d) creates opportunities for bringing existing housing estates out of private management;
 - (e) sets out the level of provision and management expected of a high quality public open space;
 - (f) promotes inclusive communities and the use of public open space by all sectors of the community, to deliver health and wellbeing benefits;
 - (g) identifies costs, commercialisation opportunities, and potential funding sources.
3. Establish what mechanisms the council can use to prevent future use of 'Embedded Management Companies' and similar arrangements that limit accountability to residents on new developments.

Council also commits to allocate a sum of up to £25,000 from the Council Priorities Fund for additional resources (increased internal capacity and/or external consultants and specialist advice) to support the delivery of this work. Officers to investigate grants and whether there are existing partnerships of local authorities and green space experts actively looking into these issues, and partner where possible to minimise this spend.

(ii) Motion 2 of 2020/21 re Coronavirus COVID-19

Proposed by Councillor Joe Harris, Seconded by Councillor Forde

This Council notes that:

- (a) Despite the suffering and tragic loss of life caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, this crisis will also be remembered for the enormous acts of kindness and generosity exhibited by residents of the Cotswolds.
- (b) Within hours of setting up Gloucestershire Help Hub, the County and District Councils were flooded with offers of help from businesses, organisations and residents, totalling over 3,500 to date.
- (c) Nearly all communities across the Cotswolds established their own support networks to ensure that no resident went without.

This Council also notes that:

- (a) Council staff rose to the challenge of the situation, with many staff changing roles to support the Council's response and many officers increasing their hours of work to protect our District's most vulnerable residents.
- (b) Without the work of volunteers from outside the Council, Cotswold District Council could never have hoped to respond to the thousands of calls for support, including delivering food parcels, collecting prescriptions and combating isolation and loneliness.

Council therefore requests that officers begin work to establish a permanent memorial in the District to those Cotswold residents who have lost their lives and to honour the outstanding effort of NHS staff, council staff, key workers and volunteers, reporting back to the full Council in September.

(iii) Motion 3 of 2020/21 re Car Parking Charges

Proposed by Councillor Morgan, Seconded by Councillor Berry

This council should abandon plans to increase parking charges by almost 30% in council owned car parks across the Cotswolds.

Retail shops and small business owners across the Cotswolds have been hugely impacted by Coronavirus and the subsequent lockdown. On top of COVID-19 many of our high streets were already having to react to changing consumer behaviour and new large online competitors. Given how under pressure our retail shops and small business owners are, this council should do everything that we can to support these entrepreneurs and their staff to keep our high streets and car parks as accessible as possible.

This council should abandon its plans to raise parking charges by 30%.

(11) **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

To consider, and if so agreed, to

RESOLVE that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and Press be excluded from the Meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph (1) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the said Act (Information relating to any individual) and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information concerned.

Items of Exempt Business for Consideration and Decision

(12) **Property Matter**

(13) **Senior Management Structure**

(END)