

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

1<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2014

Present:

Councillor Lynden Stowe - Chairman  
Councillor NJW Parsons - Vice-Chairman

Councillors -

John Burgess Mrs. SL Jepson  
David Fowles Mrs. CH Topple  
BD Gibbs

Observers:

PCB Coleman (from 4.08 p.m.; invited to speak on Minute CAB.125) BS Dare (from 4.15 p.m.)  
Ms JM Layton

CAB.115 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest under the Code of Conduct for Members or Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

There were no Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct from Officers.

CAB.116 MINUTES

**RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2014 be approved as a correct record.**

**Record of Voting - for 6, against 0, abstentions 1, absent 0.**

CAB.117 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been received.

CAB.118 MEMBER QUESTIONS

No questions had been received from Members.

CAB.119 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements from the Leader.

CAB.120 LOCAL PLAN MATTERS(1) Cotswold District Council Statement of Community Involvement

The Cabinet Member for Forward Planning introduced this item.

The Cabinet was reminded that the Statement of Community Involvement had been adopted in January 2007. Minor amendments to the Statement had been made in May 2010 and January 2012 and the Cabinet was requested to consider approving a revised Statement which would be subject to further public consultation. It was reported that the content of the revised Statement had been 'streamlined' to accord with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); the issue of Neighbourhood Plans had been addressed in the Statement; and it could be used at 'Cotswold Conversations'. In response to a question on joint working, it was reported that the original Statement had been written as part of the previous Local Development Framework process, in accordance with guidelines that were current at that time and that it should, therefore, be broadly similar to the West Oxfordshire District Council Statement of Community Involvement.

**RESOLVED that the revised Statement of Community Involvement be approved, and made available for public consultation for a period of six weeks.**

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

(2) Five-Year Supply of Housing Land

The Cabinet Member for Forward Planning introduced this item.

It was reported that the Council had achieved and exceeded the Government's requirement for a five-year housing land supply, and a 20% 'buffer'. It was considered that this would relieve pressure on the Council to permit speculative applications for housing development in the market towns. The Cabinet Member commented that the shortfall in the five-year supply of housing land was a result of the recent economic recession and that there would still be a requirement for a five-year housing land supply, even if the Council had already adopted a Local Plan.

It was noted that the five-year housing land supply statement was robust and was correct as at 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014. However, the statement could be open to challenge in the event that houses were not delivered in accordance with it and any significant changes would be subject of reports to future Meetings of the Cabinet.

The Leader of the Council reminded the Cabinet that the Council had only achieved a five-year housing land supply and 20% buffer because a number of settlements had accepted developments which they had not necessarily wanted. Such developments had had an impact on those settlements and the Leader hoped that the Council could now direct development to suitable locations. It was noted that, as the Local Plan process progressed, more weight could be attributed to the emerging policies. In response to a question, the Chief Executive reported that West Oxfordshire District Council currently had a shortfall in its five-year supply of housing land but was not subject to a 20% buffer because of its good reputation in respect of delivering houses.

The Cabinet Member referred to the work involved in preparing the statement and reminded the Cabinet that a presentation in that respect would be given to Members either prior to or after the Council Meeting which was scheduled to be held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014. It was reported that, at the recent High Court challenge in respect of the development proposed at Highfield Farm, Tetbury, the Judge had upheld the Council's methods of calculation and the evidence submitted and the developer had congratulated Officers on the robustness and strength of that evidence.

The Leader of the Council thanked Officers for their work on the five-year supply of housing land and commented that it had been very useful in a recent Meeting with the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Planning and the local M.P.

**RESOLVED that the latest Five-Year Housing Land Supply position, detailed at Appendix 'A' to the circulated report, be endorsed as a 'material consideration' for the determination of planning applications for residential development.**

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

CAB.121 SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND/OR INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBERS

The Cabinet noted a Schedule detailing decisions taken by the Leader of the Council.

CAB.122 ISSUE(S) ARISING FROM AUDIT AND SCRUTINY

There were no issues arising from Audit and Scrutiny.

CAB.123 OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business that was urgent.

CAB.124 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

**RESOLVED that 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 7, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 0.**

CAB.125 PROPERTY REVIEW - CIRENCESTER

The Deputy Leader of the Council introduced this item.

The Cabinet was requested to consider whether to dispose of a property in its ownership in Cirencester, which was surplus to requirements, and, if it was minded to dispose of the property, the options for that disposal. The Cabinet's recommendations would be considered by the Council at its Meeting which was scheduled to be held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014.

The Cabinet agreed unanimously that the property should be disposed of. Some Members expressed a preference for disposal by auction while other Members expressed their preference for disposal by private treaty for social benefit. Officer amplified aspects of the available options for disposal and it was

**RECOMMENDED that:**

- (a) disposal of the Council-owned property identified in the circulated report be by way of auction, as detailed in paragraph 7.2 of the circulated report;**
- (b) the Strategic Director (Corporate Resources), in consultation with the Leader of Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council and the Joint Head of Legal and Property Services and Monitoring Officer, be authorised to agree the auction reserve; final terms for the disposal; to withdraw from auction should there be a lack of interest; or alternative marketing/disposal solutions should an auction approach fail to result in asset disposal;**
- (c) the receipt from the disposal of the property be reinvested in commercial property or a property fund;**
- (d) the sum identified in recommendation (d) of the circulated report be allocated from the Council Priorities Fund for surveys etc. and other costs etc. in connection with the disposal of the site.**

**Record of Voting - for 5, against 1, abstentions 1, absent 0.**

Notes:

- (i) A Member reminded the Cabinet of the need to maintain the confidentiality in respect of exempt items of business at all times, following the recent publication of an item of confidential information in the local Press.
- (ii) Councillor PCB Coleman was invited to speak on this item. Councillor Coleman suggested that additional information be included in the report to be circulated to the Council in respect of security of the building and the potential to provide housing on the site.

The Meeting commenced at 4.05 p.m. and closed at 5.05 p.m.

Chairman

(END)