

**(5) MEMBER QUESTIONS**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, questions have been submitted, and responses provided, as follows:-

**(1) From Councillor JA Harris to Councillor Lynden Stowe, Leader of the Council**

'Whilst your register of members' interests notes your pecuniary interest in Vale Press Ltd & Cotswold Media Ltd it fails to inform the public that both organisations play a pivotal role in owning, publishing & distributing 'Barringtons' magazine. This glossy magazine, as you'll be aware, is exclusively dedicated to the promotion & marketing of Cotswold houses via local estate agent advertising. In view of your Cabinet's vast Local Plan numbers for new housing will you be updating your declaration to, specifically, include your links to 'Barringtons'?'

**Response from Councillor Lynden Stowe**

'I am satisfied that my declaration contains all relevant information that I am required to disclose.'

**(2) From Councillor JA Harris to Councillor Mrs. SL Jepson, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities**

'The London based public relations agent for Bathurst Development Ltd promotes the following services:

"Local support is instrumental in the success of any scheme and it is important to understand the local political landscape in which you are operating. Contact with political stakeholders can be complicated. Politicians often wield considerable local influence over the direction of a scheme. We help our clients to develop strong relationships with political stakeholders, which can be critical in securing support" Jeremy Handel, Political Developments Ltd

What "strong relationships" do you & this Council have with Earl Bathurst & Bathurst Development Ltd?'

**Response from Councillor Mrs. SL Jepson, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities**

'In my Councillor role, I have no strong relationships with either Earl Bathurst or Bathurst Development Ltd. To the best of my knowledge, I have not met Jeremy Handel.

As a Council, we will obviously engage from time to time with local stakeholders, across a variety of issues.'

(3) From Councillors Jenny Forde and M Harris to Councillor Lynden Stowe,  
Leader of the Council

'As members of the parking board we are well aware that a lot of good work is being done by officers to secure temporary and medium to long term solutions to solving Cirencester's parking problems.

What assurance can the leader give me that that:

- 1) this will remain a top priority until resolved?
- 2) that Officers will have additional man-hours and expertise where needed?
- 3) the parking board is empowered to cut through any bureaucracy? and
- 4) we do not wind up in the same situation in 15 years' time?'

Response from Councillor Lynden Stowe

'I will address your queries in the order raised:

- 1) The issue features specifically within the Council's Corporate Strategy 2016-2019, under our priority of 'Protecting the local environment whilst supporting the local economy'. One of the key tasks within that priority is to 'assess future car parking demands in Cirencester, and deliver solutions to meet those needs'. We have already delivered a number of short-term initiatives to ease the current situation, and have taken various decisions with the future in mind. The creation of a cross-party Parking Board is an example of the priority that we are affording the issue, as is the fact that one of the two new Cabinet Members is specifically designated as the lead Member for the car parking project in Cirencester.
- 2) Resourcing has been considered and it was felt that the most effective way of ensuring this project proceeds with sufficient resource and without delay was through the appointment of consultants (Carter Jonas). Existing Officers will manage the parking projects and work closely with the consultants, and resourcing will be continually reviewed to ensure that any additional resource requirements are identified quickly and then put in place.
- 3) Whilst we are governed by our Constitutional requirements, and the Parking Board itself cannot have any decision-making powers, our governance arrangements means that decisions can be taken swiftly and effectively, either by the Cabinet as a whole or via the relevant Cabinet Member, or even by Officers in cases of urgency (subject to relevant consultation). The Parking Board enables detailed discussions to take place between formal Decision-Making Meetings.
- 4) The work being undertaken by the Board aims to ensure parking provision for at least the life of the Local Plan but we will also be looking to future proof parking provision - as such, we will seek to identify sites and options which may not need to be taken forward now but could be brought on line in the future and developed to meet longer-term parking needs.'

Notes:

- (i) The above questions were submitted by the deadline by which a response was guaranteed to be provided at least 24 hours in advance of the Meeting - and the responses were duly sent to the Members concerned.

(ii) If any of the questioners is present at the Meeting, they will be entitled to ask one supplementary question in respect of each original question. Any supplementary question must arise directly out of either the original question or the answer given thereto.

(iii) An immediate answer cannot be guaranteed to any supplementary question, but the Cabinet Member will try and answer any supplementary question(s) at the Meeting. However, if this is not possible, then the Cabinet Member will answer as much as possible at the Meeting and then provide a full response within five working days. If, for any reason, a full response cannot be provided within those five days, then a holding response will be sent to the questioner, along with the reason for delay and a likely timescale for the full response.

(END)