

**(5) PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Council Procedure Rule 10 - Not more than fifteen minutes allowed for written 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.

Questions have been submitted, and responses provided, as follows:-

From Mr AR Brassington of Cirencester to Councillor Nick Parsons,  
Deputy Leader of the Council and cabinet Member for Forward  
Planning

'Why has it been decided that there should be one massive residential development in the Chesterton area of Cirencester when it would be better to distribute the housing evenly across the Cotswolds towns and villages? And what improved infrastructure does CDC propose for Cirencester if this development goes ahead?'

Response from Councillor Parsons

'The rationale for prioritising Cirencester in the Strategy is explained in the Second Issues & Options Supporting Information and, more extensively, in the Development Strategy Evidence Paper (which supported the Preferred Development Strategy).

Cirencester has been recognised for many years as the pre-eminent centre in Cotswold District where "*most of the District's development requirements should be met.*" [E.g. Gloucestershire Structure Plan Second Review, November 1999].

Chesterton and other potential 'strategic' areas around Cirencester were assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal process and performed better in sustainability terms than the other locations. [Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report May 2013].

The questioner doesn't state why it would be '*better to distribute the housing evenly across the Cotswolds towns and villages*'. I would ask, better for whom? Only a small proportion of the District's settlements have more than limited access to every-day services and facilities; and only a handful of rural parishes expressed any desire for more development in response to the Preferred Development Strategy.

A recent appeal decision concluded that: "*...To approve schemes in locations such as (Cowley) has the potential to seriously undermine planning policies designed to create sustainable patterns of development...the construction of this single dwelling...remote from facilities and services would not satisfy the Framework's definition of sustainable development.*"

The questioner's idea of an '*even distribution*' suggests an indiscriminate allocation of development across the District, regardless of sustainability considerations, such as the AONB national landscape designation (80% coverage).'

Notes:

(i) If Mr Brassington is present at the Meeting, he 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.

(ii) The Member to whom any supplementary question is addressed will try and answer any supplementary question at the Meeting; but if this is not possible, then the 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)