



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

AGENDA

Tuesday 17th May 2016, 10.00 a.m.

Council Chamber, Trinity Road, Cirencester

NOTES

(i) Questions Arising on the Agenda

If any Member has any questions regarding either (a) an update/progress report on a specific item contained in the Minutes of the previous Meeting or (b) a report contained within the Agenda, he/she is requested to give advance notice of such question to the Director/Officer originating the report or to an Officer of the Democratic Services Section so that a full response can be made available either prior to, or at, the Meeting. If no such advance notification is given, a full response to any question cannot be guaranteed at the Meeting.

With specific regard to the Minutes of previous Meetings, Members' attention is drawn to Council Procedure Rule 17.1 which provides that, once the Minutes have been signed, Members may ask questions to ascertain what progress has been made on a particular matter referred to in the Minutes, but may not make any other statement or generate discussion on the Minutes.

(ii) Mobile Phones/Pagers

All mobile phones/pagers should be **SWITCHED OFF OR SET TO SILENT MODE 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 before the start of the Meeting.

Recording/filming should not be disruptive or distracting to the good order and conduct of the Meeting. To assist with this, an area of the Meeting venue will be designated from which proceedings can be recorded/filmed, and 'roaming' around the venue while recording is not permitted. The Chairman will exclude anyone whose behaviour is disruptive.

Recording/filming should only be of Members and Council Officers, and not any members of the public (unless they are formally addressing the Meeting or unless specific permission has been given by those individuals).

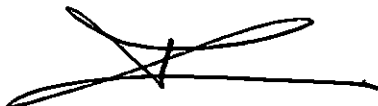
For further information, please read the Notices displayed inside and outside the Meeting venue and/or speak with the Committee Administrator.

(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 Nigel Adams on 01285 623202 who will be the Committee Administrator responsible for the Meeting.

Distribution:

All Members of the Council



Nigel Adams

Head of Democratic Services

9th May 2016

COUNCIL : 17TH MAY 2016

AGENDA

- (1) **Apologies**
- (2) **Declarations of Interest**
 - (a) To receive any declarations of interest from Members under:-
 - (i) the Code of Conduct for Members; and/or
 - (ii) Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (any Councillor who has Council Tax payments remaining unpaid for at least two months must declare an interest and not participate in any matter affecting the level of Council tax or arrangements for administering the Council Tax).
 - (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 the Council held on 23rd February 2016 (copy attached).
- (4) **Announcements from the Chairman, Leader or Head of Paid Service**
- (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.

The following questions have been submitted, all to Councillor NJW Parsons, Cabinet Member for Forward Planning, and relating to the Strategic Development Site at Chesterton, Cirencester:-

(1) **Question from Patrick Moylan of Cirencester re. OAN Numbers and AONB**

'The latest updated version of the Objectively Assessed Housing Needs is at least the fifth reiteration of the numbers in as many years. It is written by Neil McDonald who turns out these reports based on a standard template for local authorities across different parts of the UK including Kent, Essex, Norfolk and Gloucestershire. He uses a very basic methodology and the numeric outcomes depend on comparatively few variables. Small adjustments can produce significantly different housing needs targets.

Such simplicity suits vested interests, whether it is top down revisions from government or criticisms from developers. Mr McDonald himself acknowledges the subjectivity of some of his assumptions, admits concerns about data accuracy and differences between forecasting agencies over vital base data. As is the case with his other reports, there is hardly any local context and no mention of the nature of the Cotswold District which has many idiosyncrasies, for example a noticeable north/south divide in many material matters; nor is there any acknowledgement of the individual settlements and their general and housing specific differences. For example, Cirencester has

seen a sustained period of above average housing growth, has a large ageing population with particular needs and a propensity to attract to it people who will work elsewhere which itself belies sustainability. Such a mechanical approach to determining housing figures for the Cotswolds, against an exceptional circumstance of the AONB taking up 85% of the land, has led to Cirencester being allocated an unprecedented number of new homes.

Would the Council please explain why a proper verification of the latest OAN and supporting evidence should not take place to overcome the impression that the OAN figures have been too much taken at face value without proper rigour and, in thus doing, overcome the suspicion of Cirencester being wrongly allocated too many houses?

(2) Question from Tony Golics of Cirencester re. Prematurity

'The people of Cirencester who attended the various events organised by the developer were told that they were working in accordance with the Local Plan timetable in a spirit of community co-operation. Many members of the public were surprised at the submission of the BDL outline application in January and wonder why this happened so soon. In particular, the question to be asked is what the Council are going to do about objections that the application would be premature of the outcome of the on-going local plan and that Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning 1990 and Section 386 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 apply and that the current adopted development plan, policy 19, inhibits development on greenfield land outside defined boundaries?'

(3) Question from David James of Cirencester re. Land Grading

'The Local Plan Regulation 18 document published for public consultation in January 2015 omitted fundamental information on the Agricultural Land Classification grading of the Chesterton site - information that had been in the document when approved by the Cabinet in December 2014. The words "much of it Grade 2" were missing from an otherwise identical paragraph. The Cabinet Member for Forward Planning is authorised to make minor amendments to the Regulation 19 Submission Draft Cotswold Local Plan. The re-insertion of those 5 missing words, "much of it Grade 2", would be a minor amendment. Will he ensure those 5 words, "much of it Grade 2", are put back into the document and remain there when it is submitted for the formal inspection?'

(4) Question from Mark Pratley of Cirencester re. 'Another 800?'

'The Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) figure has been increased by a further 800. Given that the Chesterton strategic site is, in your terms, ring-fenced at 2,350 and so presumably cannot be allocated any more houses, where in the district will these extra 800 dwellings be located? Please specify sites and numbers.'

(5) Question from Fiona Uzzell of Cirencester re. 'The Wider Debate'

'The Bathurst application for 2,350 houses at Chesterton Farm is a departure from the Local Plan 2001-2011, which currently forms the adopted development plan for the Cotswold District. Given the extraordinary size of this application and the immense impact it would have on Cirencester, will the full Council be formally debating the issue in the chamber, or will it be left to the members of the Planning Committee to shoulder the burden of this controversial decision?'

(6) Question from John Nicholas of Cirencester re. Cirencester Growth

'Please state the number of houses in, and populations of, both Cirencester and the Cotswold District in 1974 when the Cotswold District Council came into existence (If 1974 figures are not available please use the 1971 census figures).

For 2031, at the end of the 2011-2031 Local Plan, please estimate the planned number of houses and population of both Cirencester and the Cotswold District, and for the proposed strategic site.'

(7) Question from Tony Golics of Cirencester re. Agreements

'Whatever the scale of the Bathurst development that is approved, it is likely to be very large and will bring sweeping change and potentially harmful impacts to Cirencester's cultural and social scene and physical landscape. It will also be implemented over a period of 10-15 years with on-going disruption. The community requires assurances and guarantees on promises made and conditions applied. It is to be expected that carefully prepared S106 agreements and other appropriate contributions will compensate the community. It is important that such agreements not only have "teeth" but are enduring, so avoiding examples elsewhere where these agreements lapse or otherwise not carried out. Does the Council intend to install any special measures to negotiate, manage and monitor such agreements and what degree of community involvement does it envisage?'

(8) Question from Patrick Moylan of Cirencester re. Additional Compensation

'We know that local planning authorities can secure an additional form of compensation, separate from and additional to the funds for the infrastructure upgrades required to mitigate the effects of a development's size.

Cirencester is in a unique and disadvantaged situation of being in the Cotswolds but not protected by the AONB status. It is therefore being expected to take a disproportionate number of houses - as evidenced by research on other similar sized towns. Because of this predicament, the exceptional scale of the development and the historic and cultural qualities of the town, is it not reasonable to expect additional compensation and that the uplift in the value of the land from farmland to residential makes such compensation both affordable for the applicant and deserved by the community?'

(9) Question from Mark Pratley of Cirencester re Densities

'We noted that the Civic Society in their submission have stated that the development is for too many houses on too little residential land; the land now being available to build on being reduced to 57-60 hectares. They point out and provide figures for misleading comparisons of housing densities in central Cirencester used as precedents to justify the density of the development's central area. Taking this, along with the experience of Kingshill Meadow where residents believe densities are too high, open space limited and a feeling of overall oppressiveness and the objections to four-storey buildings as not being in the Cotswolds vernacular, does the Council agree that the number of dwellings planned for the development should be reduced and explain how consideration of this will be dealt with?'

(10) Question from David Roberts of Cirencester re. Green Space and Dwelling Numbers

'The indicative design and site layout at the Chesterton farm development is distinguished by a large swathe of green space on the southern side. It is suspected that this arrangement is a case of trying to make a virtue out of necessity. For a number of reasons, some of which have arisen during the emergence of the plans, e.g. gas pipeline safety margins, the space unavoidably lost to building has increased and thus the space for dwellings has reduced to 57 hectares. The logical response to this situation would be to reduce the dwellings number, otherwise densities will inescapably increase to unacceptable levels and above the density benchmarks taken as precedents around other parts of the town. Moreover, the location of this open space on the southern side borders on open farmland and limits the value of such open space to fewer residents than it would benefit if there is either or both of more flexibility and more open space for the benefit of all. Surely the Council will accept that this unusual set of circumstances requires the design and site layout to be modified including a lessening of the number of dwellings and explain how it will take this on board?'

Note:

The above questions were submitted by the time by responses are guaranteed to be provided to the questioner at least 24 hours before the Council Meeting (by virtue of the Council's Procedure Rules). As such, written responses will be provided to all Members either in advance of, or at, the Council Meeting.

(6) Member Questions

Council Procedure Rule 11 - Not more than fifteen minutes allowed for written questions to be put by Members on any matter in relation to which the Council has any power or duties or which affects the District.

The following questions have been submitted:-

(1) From Councillor NP Robbins to Councillor Lynden Stowe, Leader of the Council

'In the light of the brave examples of the Prime Minister and the Chancellor publishing summaries of their annual tax returns, could the Leader who, we understand, owns a number of companies, tell us when he is going to follow suit?'

(2) From Councillor NP Robbins to Councillor Sue Coakley, Cabinet Member for Health, Environment and Communities

'The performance report presented on April 21st announced that the consultation carried out in Quarter 3 2015 about improving the bank recycling network has been analysed. We are now in Quarter 2 2016.

How much more time will elapse before the administration acts to arrest the drop in recycling rates?'

(3) From Councillor AR Brassington to Councillor Sue Coakley, Cabinet Member for Health, Environment and Communities

'Recently Stroud District Council announced that it is Carbon Neutral in terms of emissions associated with its operations. The Council originally set a target date of 2030 to reach its goal of becoming carbon neutral and have reached it a full fifteen years early.

In terms of actions, they developed a Carbon Management Plan in 2009 which focused on mitigation measures which were intended to reduce emissions while other Council programmes, used innovative approaches to reducing flooding which helped the District to adapt to climate change.

Will Cotswold District Council follow their example and consider developing their own plan and thus become carbon neutral by 2030 or earlier?'

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

'What mandate does the Leader of the Council have from the public to begin the process for creating a Unitary Authority with West Oxon District Council?'

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

'In the interests of transparency, would the Leader please release dates and details of all of the meetings, phone calls and discussions he has had with respect to the possible formation of a Unitary Authority?'

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The above questions were submitted by the time by responses are guaranteed to be provided to the questioner at least 24 hours before the Council Meeting (by virtue of the Council's Procedure Rules). As such, written responses will be provided to all Members either in advance of, or at, the Council Meeting.

(7) Petitions (if any)

Item for Decision

Page Number

(8) Submission Draft Cotswold District Local Plan Reg.19 - April 2016

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Other Matters

(9) Issues/Reports Arising from the Cabinet (if any)

(10) Issues/Reports Arising from Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit (if any)

(11) **Sealing of Documents**

To resolve:

“that the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to all contracts, conveyances and any other documents necessary for carrying into effect all resolutions passed by the Council.”

Note:

The Register of Sealing will be available at the Meeting for Members' inspection.

(12) **Other Business** - Such other business that, in the opinion of the Chairman, is urgent.

(END)