

COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

20TH DECEMBER 2017

Present:

Councillor Julian Beale - Chairman
Councillor David Fowles - Vice-Chairman

Councillors -

SI Andrews	RC Hughes
AW Berry	RL Hughes
AR Brassington	Mrs. SL Jepson
T Cheung	RG Keeling
Sue Coakley	Juliet Layton
Alison Coggins	MGE MacKenzie-Charrington
PCB Coleman	RA Morgan
Andrew Doherty	Dilys Neill
RW Dutton	NJW Parsons
Jenny Forde	SDE Parsons
JA Harris	NP Robbins
M Harris (from 10.06 a.m.)	Tina Stevenson
C Hancock	Lynden Stowe
Maggie Heaven	R Theodoulou
Jenny Hincks	LR Wilkins
SG Hirst	

Apologies:

Mark F Annett

CL.48 WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Councillor RA Morgan to his first Meeting of the Council following his recent election as Member for the Grumbolds Ash with Avening Ward.

The Chairman also welcomed Honorary Alderman Mrs. Shelia Jeffery to the Meeting.

CL.49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(1) Declarations by Members

There were no declarations of interest by Members.

(2) Declarations by Officers

There were no declarations of interest by Officers.

CL.50 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 19th October 2017 be approved as a correct record.

Record of Voting - for 22, against 0, abstentions 7, absent 2, did not vote 3.

CL.51 LONG SERVICE AWARDS

The Chairman of the Council presented a long service award to Mike Clark, Corporate Planning Manager. Such awards were presented to staff who had achieved 25 years' service in local government, of which at least 10 had been with this Council.

The Chairman congratulated Mike on his service and commitment to the Council, and Members echoed those sentiments.

CL.52 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, LEADER OR HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

(i) Filming/Recording of Proceedings - the Chairman referred to the standing notification previously received from a member of the public of the intention to film the Council Meeting; and stated that, accordingly, the Council would make its own audio recording of the proceedings.

(ii) Children in Need - the Chairman wished to congratulate staff at the Council who, through a series of events had raised a sum of £1,052 for Children in Need, which he considered was a truly remarkable effort and achievement. The Head of Paid Service also thanked Members for their contributions.

(iii) Notices of Motion - the Chairman explained that (i) with the consent of the Proposer and Seconder, he wished to seek a deferral of Motion 11/2017 regarding Funding for Gloucestershire Constabulary so that detailed information could be provided in due course to enable a better informed debate; (ii) he intended to refer Motion 12/2017 regarding the national 'Believe in Blue' Campaign to the Cabinet for consideration; and (iii) he intended to allow Motion 7/2017, which had been held over from the last Meeting, to be debated at that Meeting. In this connection, he welcomed Hanna Doherty, a County Youth Parliament Member, to the Meeting, and looked forward to hearing her contributions on the matter later in the Meeting.

(iv) Standing to Speak - the Chairman announced that he intended to bring forward a Motion to the next Council Meeting regarding Council Procedure Rule 20.1, and the need to stand whilst speaking at Council Meetings.

(v) Poppy Appeal 2018 - the Chairman explained that, at the end of the Meeting, the Vice-Chairman of Council would provide details of progress relating to a number of planned events to mark the conclusion of the First World War

(vi) Community Awards - the Chairman stated that, through a cross-party initiative, a small working group had been created to progress an awards initiative for those that had given a high level of service to their communities. The Chairman would provide a regular update to Members.

(vii) Members' Christmas Lunch - the Chairman reminded Members that the day's formal Council proceedings would be followed by the traditional Members' Christmas Lunch, to which Honorary Aldermen and guests had been invited.

(viii) Special Council Meeting - the Head of Paid Service reminded Members of the Special Meeting that would follow the Ordinary Council Meeting, to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on former Councillor Jim Parsons (deceased).

(ix) On-Street Parking - the Head of Paid Service informed Members that confirmation had been received from the County Council Cabinet Member; that the County Council had agreed in principle to support a further review of on-street parking in Cirencester, but would be seeking certain assurances from the Town Council in this regard and for a protocol to be drawn up and agreed between the relevant parties.

There were no announcements from the Deputy Leader.

CL.53 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been received.

CL.54 MEMBER QUESTIONS

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

(1) From Councillor Jenny Hincks to Councillor Mark F Annett, Leader of the Council

'Next April, the Department for Works and Pensions is withdrawing help to residents to help pay mortgage interest or housing costs and replacing it with a loan.

This will affect the most vulnerable of our residents.

What is CDC doing to help mitigate the effect these new rules are having on people who need help?'

Response from Councillor Annett

The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) is switching the mortgage interest payments from a 'state benefit' to a 'state-backed repayable loan'. The loan, plus interest, will be secured against the claimant's property and become repayable once the property is sold. If, when sold, there is no equity, then the loan amount will be written off.

These payments have always been, and will continue to be, managed by the DWP. The Council has never paid housing costs to customers who own their own properties.

The Council can, and does, offer support to the most vulnerable of our residents through our Client Support Officers. These Officers are on hand to help with personal budgeting and housing advice and support, as well as ensuring customers are in full receipt of all benefits to which they are entitled.

If customers are at risk of losing their homes and we are aware of this, then we can work with them and do all we can to keep them within their homes. However, most do not approach the Council until it is too late and Repossession Orders have been served.

Councillor Hincks thanked the Leader for his response and stated that she felt there were currently too few Client Support Officers in practice. By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Hincks asked if the Council could be proactive and publish the help that was available, rather than, as at present, be reactive in response to an enquiry.

In the absence of Councillor Annett, Councillor Hirst explained that changes in Government legislation were awaited but that, with the launch of Publica, resources could now be made available. He also explained that the Council was expecting positive news with regard to Universal Credit and, further, drew attention to partnership working with Bromford Housing.

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

'Cheltenham Borough Council has recently introduced the kerbside collection of textiles, batteries and small electrical items.

We set up and share Ubico with Cheltenham so why hasn't Cotswold District Council introduced this service and does the administration plan for introducing it soon?'

Response from Councillor Coakley

Whilst we share a contractor, we have different collection vehicles. Our vehicles were configured with the correct number and size of stillages (compartments) which we required to provide the service as designed in 2012 when those vehicles were purchased. This means there are no spare stillages available to place these additional recycling materials in. We have just started reviewing the future service, as our recycling fleet is due for replacement in 2019; and this provides the opportunity to make changes to services and potentially add the collection of these materials. There will be public consultation on this in 2018.

Councillor Robbins thanked Councillor Coakley for her answer and explained that, within the response, he had noted there would be a planned public consultation in 2018. Councillor Robbins drew attention to a previous decision to consult, when it had taken two years to progress from consultation to implementation. By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Robbins asked if two years would pass from the consultation in 2018 to action being taken.

In response, Councillor Coakley stated that the consultation would take place in 2018, followed by the introduction of replacement vehicles in 2019.

(3) From Councillor NP Robbins to Councillor Sue Coakley, Cabinet Member for Environment

'Has Ubico noticed an increase in the collection of Tetra Pak cartons since the closure of the recycling centre at Kingsmeadow Tesco?'

Response from Councillor Coakley

The carton bring bank at Tesco was moved to the Waterloo Car Park, so there has been no loss in provision - it has just been relocated. It is too early to compare data from cartons collected at Tesco with the cartons now collected from the Waterloo site.

Councillor Robbins thanked Councillor Coakley for her answer and expressed his concern that residents were making less use of the tetra pak recycling facilities in the Waterloo Car Park. By way of a supplementary question, he asked if Councillor Coakley could provide more information on the recycling of tetra paks and the destinations materials were sent to.

In response, Councillor Coakley stated that the measure of materials recycled was available through the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Committee; but explained that not all materials, presented at the roadside, such as black plastic, could be recycled.

Councillor Coakley added that the Council achieved a 15% higher rate of recycling than other authorities that did not sort recycling and expressed her view that Members should remind residents of the three aims - to reduce, reuse and recycle - as opposed to just recycling.

(4) From Councillor Dilys Neill to Councillor Mark F Annett, Leader of the Council

'The Leader will be aware that an application for another care home in Stow was recently permitted by this authority.

The Leader will also be aware that Geoffrey Clifton-Brown recently told BBC Radio Gloucestershire that CDC need to do more affordable housing in Stow.

What plans does the administration have for delivering affordable housing in Stow?'

Response from Councillor Annett

Stow-on-the-Wold is a sensitive location, with limited opportunities for the development of housing. This affects the provision of affordable housing as the vast majority is delivered, across the District, as a result of Section 106 Agreement contributions on developer-led sites.

The Council's existing and emerging Local Plan policies support the delivery of affordable housing exception sites. The Council is actively seeking exception sites for this purpose, including in Stow-on-the-Wold, and would welcome suitable sites coming forward. Without suitable land opportunities coming forward that Housing Associations can afford, new affordable housing for local people cannot be delivered.

The Government's Written Ministerial Statement brought a change of policy which removed the need for smaller market schemes of ten units or less to provide affordable housing. Through the new Local Plan, the Council aims to introduce an Affordable Housing Commuted Sum contribution from smaller sites of between six and ten units within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which would include Stow-on-the-Wold. However, appropriate sites

will still need to be found to deliver affordable housing funded through these commuted sums.

The Council encourages the development of Neighbourhood Plans. We would encourage these Plans to put forward suitable sustainable sites for housing delivery.

The Council has received funding for community-led housing and would welcome again suitable land opportunities for local community housing trusts to deliver affordable homes for local people.

Councillor Neill thanked the Leader for his response and questioned what plans the Council had in place for the delivery of affordable and social housing. Councillor Neill suggested that Councillor Annett should meet with the Neighbourhood Plan Group in Stow-on-the-Wold.

In the absence of Councillor Annett, Councillor Hirst responded that there were concerns over the number of such housing sites in Stow-on-the-Wold and explained that lead Members would be very pleased to meet with the Neighbourhood Plan Group and other community housing representatives to consider plans for affordable housing in the town.

(5) From Councillor JA Harris to Councillor Mark F Annett, Leader of the Council

'The Leader will no doubt have seen the Social Mobility Commission's State of Nation report which ranked Cotswold District poorly in terms of general social mobility and the second worst in England in terms of social mobility for young people.

What plans does the Leader have to address this critical issue?'

Response from Councillor Annett

I read the recommendations of the Social Mobility Commission with interest. Alan Milburn, the Chair, made several recommendations that relate directly to local authorities as set out below:-

- *every local authority should develop an integrated strategy for improving disadvantaged children's outcomes and Pupil Premium funds should be invested in evidence-based practice;*
- *local authorities should support collaboration between isolated schools, subsidise transport for disadvantaged young people in isolated areas and encourage Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to follow the North East LEP's approach to improving careers support for young people;*
- *local authorities should all become accredited Living Wage employers and encourage others in their communities to do likewise;*
- *central government should launch a fund to enable schools in rural and coastal areas to partner with other schools to boost attainment;*
- *regional School Commissioners should be given responsibility to work with universities, schools and Teach First to ensure* *that*

there is a good supply of teachers in all parts of their regions;

- *the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy should match the Department for Education's £72m for the opportunity areas to ensure there is a collaborative effort across local education systems and labour markets;*
- *central government should rebalance the national transport budget to deliver a more equal share of investment per person and contribute towards a more regionally balanced economy.*

I think, as a Council, we would support all of these aims set out by the Commission and it should come as no surprise to us that, as a rural local authority, we suffer from a distinct lack of access to services.

Most of these recommendations relate directly to County Councils in their role as education authorities and, in these cases, I will write to the County Leader and ask him for his observations. I can, however, confirm that this Council is already working in partnership with the County Council on a range of initiatives to help disadvantaged children and young people in the Cotswolds and the following are examples of what has been achieved:-

- *youth activity funding has recently supported young disabled people, young people in need of mental health support, and young carers;*
- *we are involved in the Early Help and Safeguarding Locality Partnership convened by the County Council in the Cotswolds;*
- *working with the Voluntary Community Sector, we recently launched a Cotswold Youth Network to give better support to providers of young people's services;*
- *we are actively working with our Leisure Centres to open up access to vulnerable young people.*

In addition, through our partnership with Gloucestershire County Council, we are aiming to improve public transport within the resources available; in this regard, work will soon get underway to help understand how to improve local connectivity so as to reduce disadvantage and boost economic growth.

In respect of the things we can directly affect, I would say that as a Council we do pay our staff, as a minimum, the Real Living Wage of £8.75 per hour - not the National Living Wage - and that represents a significant improvement for staff. I have also sought the views of Publica, who of course now employ the bulk of our staff, and I can confirm that they have committed to seek accreditation a Living Wage employer.

Councillor Harris commented that he felt the response did not answer the question regarding what the Council could proactively do and, by way of supplementary question, asked if Cabinet Members could take a greater part in the economic development in the Cotswolds.

In the absence of Councillor Annett, Councillor NJW Parsons stated that he considered the answer provided by Councillor Annett to be very comprehensive and explained that, as Government policies were emerging, it was therefore not possible to comment further at the current time.

(6) Councillor JA Harris to Councillor Mark F Annett, Leader of the Council

'Conservative MP for the Cotswolds, Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, on BBC Radio Gloucestershire recently criticised Cotswold District Council saying 'the authority needs to 'get on with' implementing a Local Plan'.

He also said that current CDC policy could lead the Cotswolds to 'fossilise and die'.

Does the Leader agree with the MP?'

Response from Councillor Annett

No, I do not. Gregory Jones QC explained to Members, as part of the Housing Seminar session on 7th December 2017 that, although the Government expects Plans to be produced quickly, the planning system makes it virtually impossible for local authorities to achieve this.

The Local Plan examination hearing sessions have now finished. Unlike many examinations, the Inspector neither adjourned proceedings nor indicated any serious concerns regarding legal compliance or major soundness issues.

The Local Plan's development strategy supports a range of housing and employment policies and allocations, which will come on stream throughout the Local Plan period, for example:-

- *Housing tenures, including:-*
 - *Affordable and social rent;*
 - *Shared ownership;*
 - *Self and custom build;*
 - *Homes for elderly;*
 - *Open market housing.*
- *New employment sites;*
- *Policy support for key businesses;*
- *Contributions for apprenticeship schemes through Section 106 Agreement negotiations.*

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Harris asked Councillor NJW Parsons, in the absence of Councillor Annett, what he would say to Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP and whether he would tell him to 'wind his neck in'.

Councillor NJW Parsons responded that he felt the response provided by Councillor Annett clearly explained the Council's point of view on the issues, and that he was personally very pleased that the Local Plan Examination Inquiry had been completed.

(7) From Councillor AR Brassington to Councillor C Hancock, Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships

'Does the Council still have a purchasing policy? If not, why not and will it produce an environmentally-friendly one? If it has one, when was it last reviewed?'

Response from Councillor Hancock

The Council has Contract Rules which were last reviewed and approved by the Cabinet in October 2015. Environmental management is considered as part of the procurement process.

Councillor Brassington thanked Councillor Hancock for his response, but commented that he felt the response was minimal. By way of a supplementary question, he asked if the Council would consider setting up a small working party to produce a purchasing policy with the aim of making it one of the best local authorities in the country, based on ethical and environmental responsibilities.

Councillor Hancock responded that the Contract Rules had been established and were available on the Council's Website. Councillor Hancock also explained the Rules had last been reviewed in 2015 by all partner Councils and that, if a working party was to be considered, it should be set up when the Contract Rules were next due to be reviewed.

Councillor Hancock also drew specific reference to paragraph six of the Contract Rules 'Considering Social Value', as this dealt with environmental issues/requirements/agreements.

CL.55 PETITIONS

No petitions had been received.

CL.56 ISSUES/ REPORTS ARISING FROM CABINET

There were no other issues arising from the Cabinet.

CL.57 ISSUES/REPORTS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY AND/OR AUDIT

There were no issues/reports arising from Overview and Scrutiny and/or Audit.

CL.58 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

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

- (i) Motion 11/2017 re Funding for Gloucestershire Constabulary - Proposed by Councillor M Harris and Seconded by Councillor AR Brassington

'Council notes that Gloucestershire receives £85.30 per head of population from the main central grant. The national average is £104.50 per head of population. This means the lack of central government funding has to be met through local council tax precept which does not provide for inflationary pressures such as pay rises and inflation. £30m has been cut from Gloucestershire Constabulary in the past seven years and there are 250 fewer officers.

In the light of the spate of rural crime in the Cotswolds recently, this Council resolves to write to Nick Hurd MP, Minister of State for Policing and the Fire

Service, asking him to support the Police and Crime Commissioner's request for central funding commensurate with the national average.'

The Chairman referred to his comments made earlier in the Meeting relating to the suggested deferment of this Motion to a future Meeting of the Council, a course of action which was supported by the Proposer and Seconder.

- (ii) Motion 12/2017 re the National Police Federation's 'Believe in Blue' Campaign - Proposed by Councillor M Harris and Seconded by Councillor AR Brassington

'This council resolves to support the National Police Federation's 'Believe in Blue' campaign to show our support for the dedicated men and women in blue who work tirelessly to keep us safe.'

The Chairman of the Council stated that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12, he had decided that, once Proposed and Seconded, the Motion would stand referred to the Cabinet for consideration

In Proposing the Motion, Councillor Harris stated that he and Councillor Forde had attended a National Police Federation conference earlier in the year, at which the Campaign had been discussed. Councillor Harris informed Members that the Campaign was targeted at supporting Police Officers and explained he felt it was as important for the Council to show recognition and support to members of the Police, as the Council had done to members of the armed forces.

In Seconding the Motion, Councillor Brassington stated that he agreed with the comments made by Councillor Harris and fully endorsed the Campaign. He had first-hand knowledge of the issues faced by the Police, through his membership of the County Police and Crime Panel, and added that the Campaign sought to recognise British policing as the 'best in the world' and showcase the value of officers within society. In conclusion, Councillor Brassington quoted a statement from the Campaign's website - 'they (police officers) are the ones that run towards trouble while the rest of us run away from it'.

At this point, the Motion stood referred to the Cabinet; it being noted that, in accordance with the Council's procedures and custom and practice, Councillors M Harris and Brassington would be invited to attend the Cabinet Meeting to present and speak to their Motion.

- (iii) Motion 7/2017 re Lowering the Voting Age - Proposed by Councillor Jenny Forde and Seconded by Councillor Juliet Layton

'This Council notes that currently 1.5 million 16 and 17 year olds are denied the vote in public elections in the UK.

This Council recognises that 16 and 17 year olds are knowledgeable and passionate about the world in which they live and are as capable of engaging in the democratic system as any other citizen.

This Council believes people who can consent to medical treatment, work full-time, pay taxes, get married or enter a civil partnership and join the armed forces should also have the right to vote.

This Council therefore requests the Leader of this Council to write to the Member of Parliament for the Cotswolds asking that a letter be written to

county representatives of the Youth Parliament to express support in lowering the voting age to 16.'

The Chairman of the Council explained that this Motion had been held over from the Council Meeting on 19th October 2017, and that he intended to allow the Motion to be debated at the Council Meeting. In this connection, the Chairman stated that, when Councillors Forde and Layton had formally Proposed, Seconded and spoken to their Motion, he intended to invite Miss Hanna Doherty, a County Youth Parliament Member, to address Members.

In Proposing the Motion, Councillor Forde expressed the view that younger voters had the largest stake in British politics, but felt that society continued to have a negative attitude towards them. Councillor Forde explained her wish to offer the opportunity for students within school years twelve and thirteen to engage in politics, take political action and to ask questions of those who were elected. Councillor Forde believed that it was wrong to suggest that only those over the age of eighteen had a responsibility to take political action and vote.

In Seconding the Motion, Councillor Layton stated that she agreed with the comments made by Councillor Forde and explained that a number of countries had already agreed to allow voting by sixteen year olds. Councillor Layton added that, in her experience, younger voters often had a different, more enthusiastic, attitude to politics than some of an older generation.

Prior to the formal debate on the Motion, the Chairman of the Council invited Hanna Doherty, a County Youth Parliament member, to present her views, and those of the Youth Parliament to the Council. Miss Doherty stated that, as a Member of the Youth Parliament, she regularly engaged with many intelligent and politically engaged sixteen year olds and that, as a result, she supported the Motion and believed that the suggestion, and hopefully the views expressed, would be of interest to all political parties. Miss Doherty believed that the matter was of such importance that it should be the subject of debate by elected members throughout the country.

A number of Members expressed concern at the likelihood of those aged sixteen being politically unaware and disaffected in comparison to those at eighteen - although it was acknowledged that some younger people would be capable of exercising the judgement required to vote.. They stated that only a small number of countries had agreed to votes for sixteen and seventeen year olds and considered that there needed to be one sensible point at which a person was determined to be an adult. In this connection, attention was drawn to a number of significant constraints on what younger people were allowed to do before they were 18; and the fact that a number of powers that were available to 16 and 17 year olds were subject to parental consent.

Other Members felt that the arguments against change were similar to those expressed one hundred years ago regarding votes for women. These Members stated that political involvement should be granted and encouraged at the earliest sensible opportunity and that there were many responsible sixteen and seventeen year olds who would use their vote responsibly.

Miss Doherty and Councillor Forde were invited to respond to the debate, and reiterated their support for the Motion.

Upon being put to the vote, the Motion was LOST, with the record of voting being - for 12, against 21, abstentions 0, absent 1.

On behalf of the Council, the Chairman expressed his thanks and congratulations to Miss Doherty for contributing so eloquently to the debate, and wished her well and every success for the future. These sentiments were echoed by other Members present.

CL.59 DECISION TAKEN BY HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

It was noted that, following consultation with the Chairman of the Council, the Leader of the Council, the Group Leaders, and the relevant Ward Members and appropriate Officers/advisers, the Head of Paid Service had exercised his emergency powers (in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 38) to decide that the Special Council Meeting then scheduled to be held on Tuesday 12th December 2017 to consider further the BDL application would start at 10.00 a.m. (as opposed to the start time of the initial Meeting of 1.00 p.m.).

CL.60 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

RESOLVED 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.

Record of Voting - for 33, against 0, abstentions 0, absent 1.

The Meeting commenced at 10.03 a.m. and closed at 11.35 p.m.

Chairman

(END)