

(6) MEMBER QUESTIONS

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

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

'What plans have the administration got to better inform District residents about what can and cannot be recycled efficiently within the current recycling offer that CDC provides?'

Response from Councillor Coakley

When the current waste and recycling collection service was launched, the Council provided an information guide to all households which explained how the new service would operate and how residents could take part. All of the information contained within this guide is available on the Council's website, which is reviewed and updated to reflect any changes such as the increased focus on recycling food waste.

The Front of House team send out copies of the guide to new residents moving into the Cotswolds.

The Council, supported by the Joint Waste Team, regularly send out promotions about recycling which always signpost the Council's website for further information.

We have provided new "No Food Waste" stickers for the residual waste bins and the green Bin Licence includes information on what items can and cannot be recycled in the Green bin.

In addition, the Ubico collection teams place information stickers on any recycling containers presented with incorrect materials to advise the particular household of the items which can, and cannot, be recycled by way of the kerbside recycling service.

As part of the process of commissioning our new collection vehicles in 2019, we will undertake consultation with residents and members and revise our system in line with the feedback received and associated business cases. We will use the introduction of the new service as an opportunity to provide a new information guide to all households and to further encourage more recycling.

This work will also support the Joint Waste Partnership's aspiration of closer alignment of collection services and could lead to this Council leading the way in implementing the chosen service model for Gloucestershire.

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

'Could the Cabinet Member please indicate when the recycling opportunity for tetrapaks will be extended and improved?'

Response from Councillor Coakley

I am pleased to confirm that the service has already been enhanced by expanding the materials collected at the Tetrapak bring banks to include single use coffee cups so that they can also be recycled. They have the same issues with the use of plastic coating on paper, so the complex process required to recycle the materials is very similar.

As part of the process of commissioning our new collection vehicles in 2019, we will undertake consultation with residents and Members and revise our system in line with the feedback received and associated business cases. The service provision through all Bring Banks will be included in this review, as the Bring Banks complement the kerb-side collections.

This work will also support the Joint Waste Partnership's aspiration of closer alignment of collection services and could lead to this Council leading the way in implementing the chosen service model for Gloucestershire.

In the meantime, there are no plans to increase the provision as the focus is very much on reducing the use of plastic, encouraging consumers to choose glass or card packaging rather than plastic, and to avoid packaging such as tetrapaks which are especially difficult to recycle.

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

'Please can the Cabinet Member give an update as to the future of Cirencester's Old Train Station building?'

Response from Councillor Annett

Periodic surveys continue to be carried out on the Old Station building to ensure that its structural and fabric integrity are maintained. Subject to survey findings, both reactive and planned works are carried out as required in line with its listed status to preserve its current condition. At present, there are no plans for refurbishment or improvement works to the building.

At the Council Meeting on 23rd February 2016, it was announced that the Council would be marketing sites for additional parking and mixed use commercial and residential development, and £75,000 was allocated for this purpose. The Old Station site was included in this work, but was not a priority site.

Officers are currently working on proposals for the Cirencester Master Plan with a view to progressing the future use of a number of Council sites, including the Old Station site. This work will build on the site allocations and policy within the emerging Local Plan, together with parking requirements.

(4) From Councillor Juliet Layton to Councillor SG Hirst, Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure

'What are the figures of people denied homeless accommodation?'

Response from Councillor Hirst

In all cases where the Council has had a duty to house, and the people are of priority need, access to accommodation has been provided (in accordance with the Council's legal duty). The figure is therefore zero.

Under Homeless Legislation, we do not have a duty to assist anyone who does not fall within any of the priority need categories. In such cases, people would be expected to resolve their own housing situation, e.g. they would need to look for privately rented accommodation. However, with non-priority need cases, we would always provide them with all the help and support that they needed and signpost them to housing options other than homelessness. This could include the Rent Deposit Scheme, Homeseeker Plus (housing allocations scheme), or other support agencies.

(5) From Councillor Juliet Layton to Councillor SG Hirst, Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure

'How much is the discretionary housing fund? Is it increasing or having larger demands on it?'

Response from Councillor Hirst

For 2017/18, the sum of £115,595 was available for discretionary housing payments. For 2018/19, we will have £110,281. Although there has been a high demand for this money, we are managing to help most customers who approach us for assistance. It is envisaged that there will be an increase in applications during the further roll-out of universal credit.

(6) From Councillor Jenny Forde to Councillor SG Hirst, Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure

'How much has been spent each year on emergency accommodation by Cotswold District Council since 2010?'

Response from Councillor Hirst

Data is only available from 2012/13, and those figures are as follows:-

2012/13	-	£23,767.66
2013/14	-	£21,317.01
2014/15	-	£18,778.29
2015/16	-	£18,236.02

2016/17 £62,850.40

As a generality, the costs incurred in providing emergency accommodation are recovered by the Council through housing benefit subsidy.

(7) From Councillor Jenny Forde to Councillor SG Hirst, Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure

‘On average how long are people staying in emergency accommodation that Cotswold District Council are funding?’

Response from Councillor Hirst

Over the last six years, the average stay has been 40 nights.

However, for 2017/18, it is 24 nights; and we have placed 15 families.

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

‘The people of Stow are not happy about an apparent lack of support which they have received over the areas that CDC can influence in Stow. Having spoken to members and officers alike there appears to be a consensus that some of this is down to the fact that CDC are so late in implementing a local plan.

Why has it taken the Conservative administration so long to produce the emerging local plan?’

Response from Councillor Annett

The Council’s approach has been to front-load the plan-making process with the objective being on earliest date for adoption of the Local Plan rather than early submission of what is then judged to be unsound. The plan-making process has been a focussed exercise that has been based on proportionate and robust evidence and public scrutiny.

The public examination of the Local Plan was a critical stage in the plan-making process, where the measure of effectiveness of Local Plan preparation was whether or not it is found sound and legally compliant at examination. The Council has been mindful of neighbouring authorities that have encountered delays at examination and it is clear that soundness and legal compliance issues can lead to a timely and costly delays.

The Cotswold District Local Plan was submitted in July 2017 and is expected to conclude within 12 months of it being submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. Should the timetable continue to be followed this would see the examination concluding approximately 12 months earlier than the local average, which includes authorities that have continued with a Core Strategy style plan (and therefore still have the task of preparing their local borough/district plans) and authorities that have yet to progress their Community Infrastructure Levy.

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

'Who decides on the content of the section 106 agreements and why are Town and Parish Councils often not consulted? What review is undertaken of the section 106 after the development has taken place and why is no provision made to obtain further contributions from developers who make much larger profits than was originally anticipated?'

Response from Councillor Annett

The consideration of Section 106 (S106) contributions (otherwise known as planning obligations) is dictated by national planning policy guidance. Para 204 of the relevant guidance states that:-

"Planning obligations assist in mitigating the impact of unacceptable development to make it acceptable in planning terms. Planning obligations may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission if they meet the tests that they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development, and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind. These tests are set out as statutory tests in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 [the CIL Regulations] and as policy tests in the National Planning Policy Framework."

In the context of the above, the content of S106 agreements is determined by firstly applying Local Plan policy requirements, for example in respect of affordable housing provision or other specific policies where there is a requirement for contributions. The need for policy-related contributions results from consultations with technical bodies, such as the County Council (e.g. in respect education). The latter contributions are usually calculated on the basis of well-established formulae. In addition to technical consultations, the Council will also have regard to responses from the local community, primarily through the town and parish councils, in terms of the impacts of a proposed development, and will therefore consider opportunities for contributions to local projects to mitigate those impacts provided that seeking those contributions would meet the test set out in the CIL Regulations. To ensure that contributions to local projects stand up to potential challenge, the projects need to be appropriately costed and defined. Any S106 provisions that are not robust run the risk of being overturned on appeal or legal challenge. It is also important to note that contributions are subject to demonstration of impact on the viability of the development.

The obligations set out within a S106 agreement are subject to triggers, e.g. the occupation of a certain number of dwellings. This is monitored by the Council or, in the case of education, library and highways obligations, by the County Council.

S106 agreements can include a "review mechanism" which enables the viability of a development to be reviewed at certain stages. However, the inclusion of a review mechanism within a S106 agreement can actually have a negative impact upon the viability of a development because they cause

uncertainty for prospective developers purchasing development sites, resulting in lower land values. This, in turn, can have implications for the amount of affordable housing that can be secured or other obligations. Review mechanisms can also result in delays to the delivery of housing.

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

‘Please can the Leader supply me with figures for each year since 2010 detailing how much money the government have cut from the revenue support grant to this Council?’

Response from Councillor Annett

The attached table compares the value of Revenue Support Grant funding from 2010/10 to 2018/19. The Local Government funding model changed significantly in 2013/14 with the introduction of 50% Business Rate Retention and the move from Council Tax Benefit to Local Council Tax Support. In order to make a like for like comparison of core central government funding, the table includes the value of cash grants paid to the Council which were subsequently rolled into Revenue Support Grant and Retained Business Rates. The cash grants are shown for the years when a cash payment was made. In the following years the funding is included in either Revenue Support Grant or Retained Business rates. This provides a clearer picture of cuts to core government funding.

The impact of New Homes Bonus, Rural Services Delivery Grant and the 100% Business Rates Pilot for 2018/19 is not included.

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

‘How much have CDC made from Parking Charges in Cirencester since May 2015?’

Response from Councillor Annett

Car park income and expenditure figures are published on our website.

However, the figures for the whole years 2015/16 and 2016/17, apportioned to relate to Cirencester car parks only, are set out below:-

<i>Financial year</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>	<i>Net</i>
<i>2015/16</i>	<i>£2,123,938</i>	<i>£888,740</i>	<i>£1,235,198</i>
<i>2016/17</i>	<i>£1,960,763</i>	<i>£889,317</i>	<i>£1,071,446</i>

Figures are therefore from April 2015.

The full-year figures for 2017/18 are not yet complete/available.

Notes:

(i) 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.

(ii) If the questioners are present at the Meeting, they will be entitled to ask one supplementary question arising directly out of either the answer given or their original question.

(iii) 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)

AGENDA ITEM (6) - TABLE REFERRED TO IN RESPONSE TO MEMBER QUESTION (10)

Comparison of Core Government Funding	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
										Ignores impact of Business Rates Pool Pilot
Revenue Support Grant	5,262,289	5,360,402	4,281,639	3,644,152	2,466,458	2,003,593	1,510,389	856,353	386,362	100,724
Business Rates Baseline	0	0	0	0	1,640,867	1,672,382	1,704,797	1,719,003	1,754,099	1,806,797
Grants Received as Cash Grants										
Council Tax Support Grant into RSG/BRB from 2013/14	572,959	572,929	572,959	572,959						
Homelessness Grant into RSG/BRB from 2013/14	50,185	50,185	50,185	50,185						
Council Tax Freeze Grant 2012/13 rolled into RSG/BRB 2013/14				136,680						
Council Tax Freeze Grant Rolled into 2014/15 RSG					54,612					
Council Tax Freeze Grant Rolled into 2015/16 RSG						52,173				
Total comparable central government funding	5,885,433	5,983,516	4,904,783	4,403,976	4,161,937	3,728,148	3,215,186	2,575,356	2,140,461	1,907,521
Growth/(Reduction) in funding		98,083	(1,078,733)	(500,807)	(242,039)	(433,789)	(512,962)	(639,830)	(434,895)	(232,940)
Growth/(Reduction) in %		1.7%	-18.0%	-10.2%	-5.5%	-10.4%	-13.8%	-19.9%	-16.9%	-10.9%