



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Tuesday, 12 March 2024

Tel: 01285 623181/623208

e-mail: democratic@cotswold.gov.uk

COUNCIL

A meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX on **Wednesday, 20 March 2024 at 6.00 pm.**

Rob Weaver
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Council

(Councillors Gina Blomefield, Claire Bloomer, Ray Brassington, Patrick Coleman, Daryl Corps, David Cunningham, Tony Dale, Mike Evemy, David Fowles, Joe Harris, Mark Harris, Paul Hodgkinson, Roly Hughes, Nikki Ind, Angus Jenkinson, Julia Judd, Juliet Layton, Andrew Maclean, Helene Mansilla, Mike McKeown, Dilys Neill, Nigel Robbins, Gary Selwyn, Tony Slater, Lisa Spivey, Tom Stowe, Jeremy Theyer, Clare Turner, Chris Twells, Michael Vann, Jon Wareing, Ian Watson, Tristan Wilkinson and Len Wilkins)

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Cabinet, and Committee Meetings to 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 prior to the date of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
To receive any apologies for absence.

The quorum for Council is 9 members.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive any declarations of interest from Members and Officers, relating to items to be considered at the meeting.
3. **Minutes (Pages 9 - 24)**
To confirm the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 21 February 2024.
4. **Announcements from the Chair, Leader or Chief Executive**
To receive any announcements from the Chair of Council, Leader of the Council and/or the Chief Executive.
- 4.1 **Presentation of Awards for Cotswold Photo Competition**
For the Chair and Leader to announce the winners of the Cotswold photo competition awards.
5. **Public Questions**
To deal with questions from the public within the open forum question and answer session of fifteen minutes in total. Questions from each member of the public should be no longer than one minute each and relate to issues under the Council's remit. At any one meeting no person may submit more than two questions and no more than two such questions may be asked on behalf of one organisation.

The Chair will ask whether any members of the public present at the meeting wish to ask a question and will decide on the order of questioners.

The response may take the form of:
 - a) a direct oral answer;
 - b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
 - c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.
6. **Member Questions**
A Member of the Council may ask the Chair, the Leader, a Cabinet Member or the Chair of any Committee a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the Cotswold District. A maximum period of fifteen minutes shall be allowed at any such meeting for Member questions.

A Member may only ask a question if:
 - a) the question has been delivered in writing or by electronic mail to the Chief Executive no later than 5.00 p.m. on the working day before the day of the meeting; or

- b) the question relates to an urgent matter, they have the consent of the Chair to whom the question is to be put and the content of the question is given to the Chief Executive by 9.30 a.m. on the day of the meeting.

An answer may take the form of:

- a) a direct oral answer;
- b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

The following questions were submitted in advance of the agenda publication:

Question 1 from Councillor Nikki Ind to Councillor Tony Dale, Cabinet Member for Economy and Council Transformation

Following the recent Local Government Association survey, which found that most councils are aware of the agreement between mobile operators and the Government to switch off 2G and 3G mobile networks by 2033, can you please confirm to what extent is Cotswold District Council reliant on these networks, as opposed to the faster 4G and 5G technologies, and if we are currently reliant, what is the plan for upgrading systems to avoid loss of service? Clearly, any upgrades will have a financial impact on our already stretched budget, and I would like to be assured that provision has been made for this work.

I am thinking primarily about parking meters, public toilets and alarm systems, but also waste in-cab technologies and telecare devices which may be being used by our residents.

Question 2 from Councillor Chris Twells to Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance:

The Leader appointed seven Cabinet Members following last year's local elections. Will the Deputy Leader tell us on how many days each Cabinet Member spent time on site here at Trinity Road since their appointment? I understand this data will be stored by the council via our security passes.

Question 3 from Councillor Chris Twells to Councillor Joe Harris Leader of the Council:

Many residents have contacted me to express their concern at the lack of progress with the Dolphins Hall project in Tetbury, which lies in my ward. The project was supposed to have been funded mainly via Section 106 contributions. There has been little obvious progress on site and the latest reports from Tetbury Town Council suggests that the project now requires at least another £50,000. In addition, the Town Council has admitted that a number of title deeds and other legal documents relating to the project have gone missing. Many residents share my frustration that TTC has failed to manage this expenditure or provide updates to residents.

Given that it was this authority that originally provided the S106 monies to TTC, will either the Leader or the relevant Cabinet Member chair a meeting with Town Councillors to discuss a way forward? It may be that we will have to commission an investigation by an external body.

Question 4 from Councillor Len Wilkins to Councillor Juliet Layton:

Under the revised local plan CDC is working closely with several partners, including the National Trust, to increase access to the countryside. A new policy EN18 is to be provided for the Sherborne Park Estate near Northleach. The policy enables the production of a masterplan for the estate, which encourages more people to experience and enjoy Sherborne. 10.20.4 of the plan states that this will offer a sustainable tourism offer close to Bourton-on-the-Water which could help mitigate its 'honey pot' status.

This particular honey pot has a large number of business owners who are worried about the effect of this new policy. Having just recovered from the effects of the Covid pandemic they are now suffering from the loss of the villages coach parking facilities and face have coaches banned from the village all together. What support, if any, can these business hope to receive from CDC as the local planning authority to ensure a level playing field and to ensure that any future development at Sherborne Park is supplementary to, rather than detrimental to, the vitally important businesses in Bourton?

Question 5 from Councillor Tom Stowe to Councillor Mike McKeown

Please can you confirm the number of households who have signed up to a contract for solar panel installation via "Cotswold Home Solar", the partnership between "Makemyhousegreen.com" and CDC?

Question 6 from Councillor Len Wilkins to Councillor Juliet Layton

At the Council's meeting on 24th January, changes were agreed to the planning scheme of delegation following recommendations by the Planning Advisory Service. These changes involve introducing a 28-day call in limit and will come into force on 1st April. These changes will involve significant changes to the way members work with, and engage with, Officers and Parish and Town Councils. Please can you confirm that an all member briefing by Senior Officers on the new process will be scheduled and confirm what engagement with Town and Parish Councils is planned?

Question 7 from Councillor David Fowles to Councillor Mike Evemy

At the recent budget meeting, the Council approved capital expenditure in excess of £150,000 to make urgent repairs to the Council owned Old Station building which is in a very poor condition and will continue to deteriorate and cost a lot more money if nothing is done to secure its future. Over the years various approaches about the future of this important asset have been made to the Council by local organisations including the now defunct approach from New Brewery Arts. What plans does this administration have to secure the future of this building?

Question 8 from Councillor Daryl Corps to Councillor Juliet Layton

Regarding the Local Plan update and the recent area 'open sessions' for members of the

Public. Firstly, I want to thank James Brain and Mathew Britton, two fantastic officers. From 10am until 8am they stood valiantly answering hundreds and hundreds of questions from very concerned Residents of Moreton in Marsh and the surrounding Villages in the Redesdale Hall on Wednesday 6th March.

The feedback I have been receiving from Residents is twofold.

One, they really want a clear and structured presentation of the proposed changes to the Local Plan, a properly structured meeting, chaired and minuted. They worry that the questions and concerns raised at the open day session were not properly documented. They worry this is not a genuine consultancy with Residents. They also saw the detailed, illustrated, clear and concise Masterplan for Cirencester and asked the question, why are we not getting one for Moreton? All they had were vague 'possible' proposals. For many residents the local plan document is confusing, its huge, it's not clear and concise, for many this can create suspicion over what's being hidden from them. A presentation in many resident's minds would at least go some way to giving the clarity that they want. The drop-in session was arranged with the best intentions, but is not enough for Residents, they deserve a proper presentation. Secondly, they are also asking why so many houses without a mention of any infrastructure? No environmental study or assessment on the potential impact on our services - our Doctors Surgery, Hospital, sewage treatment and the effect on our already heavily polluted Evenlode River? Cllr Layton, can the District Council reassure the people of Moreton:-

- a) This is not a done deal?
- b) They can have what they deserve, a properly chaired local plan update presentation?
- c) There will be a concise Town "Masterplan" including all the relevant public Health assessments for Air quality and water?
- d) this really the only option in CDC's mind for Moreton as the scale is just staggering. Residents have been very clear with me that this is not NIMBYism, it's the eye watering scale and numbers of the housing being proposed and without a single mention of INFRASTRUCTURE or a proper presentation to them?

7. Publica Review- Local Partnerships Transition Plan (Pages 25 - 60)

Purpose

To consider the Local Partnerships report and to approve the recommendations therein.

Recommendations

That Full Council Resolves to:

1. Approve the recommendations set out in the Local Partnerships report
2. Instruct the Interim Programme Director to prepare a detailed transition plan, building on the recommendations set out in the Local Partnerships report, for subsequent agreement by Cabinet and Council.

8. Amendments to the Constitution - Report of the Constitution Working Group (Pages 61 - 84)

Summary/Purpose

To consider proposals from the Constitution Working Group for amendments to the Constitution to update Part E2, the Employee Code of Conduct.

Recommendation(s)

That Full Council resolves to:

- I. Authorise the Director of Governance & Development (Monitoring Officer) to update Part E2, the Employee Code of Conduct in the Constitution.

9. **Report on Urgent Decision (Pages 85 - 90)**

Purpose

To report to Cabinet and Council on a decision taken by the Chief Executive Officer under urgency powers.

Recommendation

That Full Council resolves to:

- I. Note the decision taken as set out in Annex A.

10. **Council Tax Second Home Premiums (Pages 91 - 102)**

Purpose

To consider the proposals to introduce a Council Tax Premium on second homes and apply a premium to long term empty properties after one year.

Recommendations

That Full Council resolves to:

1. Agree from 01 April 2024, to levy the maximum level of premium for Empty Homes as set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.
 - a) Premium of 100% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) after 1 year up to 5 years of becoming empty;
 - b) Premium of 200% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) between 5 years and 10 years;
 - c) Premium of 300% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) for 10 years or more.
2. Agree in principle from 01 April 2025 to the implementation of a premium (Second Homes Premium) of 100% for dwellings that are no one's sole or main residence and which are substantially furnished as set out in paragraph 4.7 of the report.
3. Agree to issue the mandatory notice of 12 months to all owners of second homes that a premium will commence from 1 April 2025; and,
4. Note that where premiums are to be applied, the Council is mindful of the current consultation by government which recommends exceptions in certain circumstances outlined within this report. Subject to the outcome of that consultation, a further report may be presented to Cabinet and Council prior to the implementation of the Council's policy on premiums taking into account statute, the Council's requirements and any guidance given by the Secretary of State.

11. **Council Tax Reduction for Care Leavers (Pages 103 - 108)**

Purpose

To consider proposals to extend the age that Care Leavers can receive a reduction in Council Tax from 21 years to 25 years

Recommendations

That Full Council resolves to;

- I. Approve to extend the age that a care leaver can receive a reduction in their

- council tax from 21 years to 25 years;
- 2. Approve to include those care leavers from outside of Gloucestershire County within the offer;
- 3. Approve the amended Eligibility Criteria as set out in Annex A

12. **Pay Policy Statement 2024/25 (Pages 109 - 122)**

Purpose

To consider the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25.

Recommendation

That Full Council resolves to:

- 1. Approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25.
- 2. Agree that the Pay Policy Statement 2024/25 will be updated and republished to reflect any changes to the senior management structure at that point.

13. **Notice of Motions**

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

Motion A: The Unsung Heroes Award

Proposer: Councillor Lisa Spivey

Seconder: Councillor Nikki Ind

Recognising the invaluable contributions of unsung heroes within our communities, Council is inspired by the ethos of community service set by King Charles at the beginning of his reign.

Council should seek to encourage others to engage in volunteer work and acknowledge the essential role volunteers play in sustaining vital community services.

As more pressures are placed on our communities, it is so important to recognise those unsung heroes. Volunteering allows community members to be actively engaged and help address needs and issues they care about. This builds stronger bonds within a community.

Volunteering provides opportunities for people to gain work experience, build skills, and make professional connections. This can benefit volunteers individually as well as strengthen the overall workforce.

Volunteering often connects people from different backgrounds and builds understanding between diverse groups within a community.

Volunteering is associated with benefits like better health, lower stress, and a longer lifespan for those who volunteer. When people volunteer it not only helps the community but can also enhance the lives of the volunteers.

Acknowledging the cost-effective nature of this approach in the current economic climate and the rising cost of living, underscores the critical reliance on volunteers for community well-being.

Recognising the pivotal role volunteers play in sustaining essential services such as Citizens Advice, Cotswold Friends, food banks, Churn Project and many others, this

Council resolves:

1. To implement a process enabling members of the public to contact their respective ward councillors, with nominations of 'unsung hero' volunteers. At each Full Council, up to four unsung heroes will be announced by the chair/leader. These unsung heroes will be chosen following a review of all nominations at a meeting of the Chair, Vice Chair and portfolio holder for Cost of Living. The chosen nominees would then be invited to attend the council meeting. If they are able to attend, they would then be presented with a letter of thanks, signed by the leader and chair of the council and the Ward Member, alongside this, they would be also presented with an unsung hero pin badge.
2. To resource and host a biannual coffee morning to promote volunteering opportunities and express gratitude to those who selflessly serve. This would be open to all volunteers, regardless of winning.
3. To note that the programme shall stand as a testament to our deep appreciation for the hard work and dedication of the public in supporting and enriching our community.

14. **Next meeting**

The next meeting will be the Annual Council meeting on Wednesday 15 May 2024 at 6pm.

(END)