

Cowley (& Birdlip) Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs. E. Lavington | 07941258052 | cowleypc@hotmail.co.uk

MINUTES

Minutes of virtual meeting - the Annual Public Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 21st April 2021

Present: Cllrs. Julian Lavington, Eileen McKay, Peter Ritchie, Dawn Collins, Tim Knox, Paul Vogel and 4 members of the public.

- 1. Apologies** Cllr Linda Dawson
- 2. Minutes of last meeting** Minutes of virtual meetings held on 21st April 2021 were agreed and signed.
- 3. Co option of Member to the Parish Council** Dawn Collins was co opted as a member of the Parish Council.
- 4. Declarations of Interest** None
- 5. Matters Arising not included as an agenda item.**
None
- 6. Returning to Face to Face Meeting and the Annual Meeting of the Council** It was agreed that the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council should be brought forward to the 5th May to allow meeting to be held virtually under current restrictions.
- 7. Flooding Cowley** The Clerk will contact Gloucestershire Highways for update.
- 8. Zurich Insurance** It was agreed to continue purchasing insurance from Zurich with the three year discount.
- 9. A417 Missing Link** No further update
- 10. GAPTC Annual Subscription.** Agreed
- 11. Future Royal Protocol** It was agreed that the Clerk should purchase two books of Condolence for future use. Clerk to write to Parish Churches to agree placement of books when needed.
- 12. Bus Shelters & defibrillators:** To note that the 3 bus shelters, defibrillators and kiosks have been inspected since the last meeting. Noted.
- 13. Planning:**

Ref. No: 21/00974/OUT Outline application for 5 dwellings with all matters reserved except scale and access High Green Farm Birdlip Gloucester Gloucestershire GL4 8JH **Objection**

The Parish Council Objects to this application. The proposed development is contrary to the Cotswolds District Council Local Plan and the conditions set for small scale development in Non-principle Settlements As Birdlip is a Non-principle Settlement, Policy DS3 sets out the requirements - all of which must be met for development: " 3.21.In Non-Principal Settlements, small-scale residential development will be permitted provided it: 3.22. demonstrably supports or enhances the vitality of the local community and the continued availability of services and facilities locally; 3.23.is of a proportionate scale and maintains and enhances sustainable patterns of development; 3.24.complements the form and character of the settlement; AND (emphasis added) 3.25. does not have an adverse cumulative impact on the settlement having regard to other developments permitted during the Local Plan period.' The Parish Council believes the proposal does not meet the above tests as: Birdlip does not have the local facilities and services to support further expansion. The village has no shop or medical facility; the primary school is already oversubscribed and there is already problems with the local potable water supply resulting in water pressure reductions which are more frequent following other housing developments in the area. Local public transport links are poor and there is only a very infrequent twice weekly bus service The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) militates against the application. Paragraph 78 states: "To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services." The proposed development is not of proportional scale for the former brown field site as the development of 5 houses now encroaches onto active agricultural grazing land. The historical form and character of the village is that of a coaching and trading settlement with most buildings located along a central High Street, bound by farm land and agricultural buildings. This development contributes to the a recent trend to infill the village outside of the historical layout and build compact high density residential properties behind the High Street within the boundary of the village. This is contributing to the change in the form and character of the village to that of an urban settlement. The village of Birdlip has doubled in size in 25 years without investment in supporting infrastructure. Recently development has been permitted, despite the objections of the Parish Council for 5 dwellings at the Kellands site opposite, 4 dwellings on this current site and 4 further dwellings on the nearby Blacklaines Farm site are also under planning consideration. Therefore this proposal is considered to have an adverse cumulative impact on the settlement of Birdlip. Highway access and parking The Parish Council believe that its objection to the original application on this site for 4 dwellings for reasons of hazards from access to the site from a narrow highway is now more relevant due to the current application increasing to 5 dwellings. In particular the impact on traffic approaching the development around the blind bend, when

entering the village from the direction of Brimpsfield, the proximity of the village school and the hazard to children and parents from the increased local traffic and the further increase in traffic through the narrow village high street and out across the busy junction with the B4070. Furthermore Parking is a considerable concern in the village and the proposal to increase to 5 dwellings will increase the parking from excess vehicles and visitors to the development which will need to use the narrow highway or the wider area which has no adequate public parking provision. Cowley Parish Council would like to put on record that if this application is permitted the conditions made with regard to materials used for construction are made on the granting of any detailed planning permission and such conditions should be approved prior to construction commencing. Our reasons for this are that the discharge of Planning Consent Conditions is the most critical stage of any development because at that stage you [The Council] has the ability to ensure that the palette of materials 'noted' on the Application are the correct ones to be used for construction. In this regard we draw your attention to the Approval No. 18/01936/FUL [Kellands Farm] and the statement issued by CDC reading..... 'The details submitted are required to satisfy the requirements of a planning condition..... To ensure that the Council gives proper consideration to condition details it must expedite the processing of condition compliance applications.'. The critical condition of agreeing materials was not discharged by CDC on the Kelland Farm site until all walls and roofs had been completed. We respectfully requested at that time that CDC consider the discharge without any financial effect on the developer but on materials alone. You then agreed with the stone and timber composition and, particularly, their colour. The colour of the natural stone in the Birdlip area is GREY. The completed dwellings on this site have ORANGE stone and timber which we know, given experience in the construction industry, will not weather down nor change.

Ref. No: 21/00931/FUL Proposed change of use to Class E (Commercial Business and Service) and erection of building Green Gables Cowley Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL53 9NJ **Supported**

Ref. No: 21/00968/FUL Earth works to garden and erection of retaining wall (part retrospective) Spring Barn Cowley Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL53 9NJ **Supported**

Ref. No: 21/00503/LBC and Ref. No: 21/00502/FUL Free-standing new-build pavilion for 4 new family guest bedrooms set within the unused NW Courtyard Terrace (Former Swimming Pool) Cowley Manor Cowley Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL53 9NL **Supported – The Parish Council would ask the Planning to consider restrictions on parking, access, noise and build times if application is permitted.**

14. Finance:

- I. **Agree and Sign Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2020/21 (part 2)** Agreed and signed
- II. **Issue cheque to GAPTC £105.61** Agreed and signed
- III. **Issue cheque for Clerks pay and expenses** March £200.80 & £26.00
- IV. **To Note Pata Payroll invoice will now be issued annually not quarterly** Noted
- V. **Issue Cheque to Community HeartBeat Trust Defibrillator maintenance** £302.40 Agreed and signed
- VI. **Issue Cheque to PATA Payroll service** £23.85 Agreed and signed
- VII. **To note first precept had been received £3807**

1. **To take any questions from the public.**

2. **Items for next agenda, Standing Orders, Risk assessment, Internal Audit,**

3. **Date of next meeting which will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council 5th May 2021 Virtual Meeting**

The meeting closed at 8.15pm and was Followed by Reports From Chairman and Cllr Judd attached closing at 9.01pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Annual statement by the Chairman.

Last Year

Looking back at what has dominated the business of the PC in the last year there are a number of key themes:

A417 Missing Link

It's been a theme for a few years now but I think we are nearly at the point of making progress into resolving the problem of the "Missing Link". The Consultation of the Option 30 proposal concluded with the need for some redesign and a further Supplementary Consultation was held last summer.

This saw the removal of the Green Bridge and the direct connection between Barrow wake view point and SSSI and the Crickley Hill Park with replacement by smaller pedestrian bridges. However despite our protests and disappointment the redesign has maintained key elements such as the new Air Balloon Way and addressed other concerns raised by residents such as access from the new Cowley Roundabout to Cowley village due to the potential for rat-running through Cowley and also has removed the proposed car park for Air Balloon Way which was planned to be close to residents to the east of Birdlip.

Since the supplementary consultation there have been a series of meetings with Highways England to look at the changes to the WCH rights of way in the Parish and as of now the consultation period has now ended and the final DCO application I understand is now about to be submitted.

However the delay last year has probably added 12 months to the date for opening and I doubt that we will see construction start before 2023 and overall completion before 2025. However before construction starts there will inevitably be issues with the detailed design which will need the input of the PC and its residents. On a positive note HE have secured access to a national pot of Designated Funds of circa £50M some of which could be made available to cover community and legacy projects within the area affected by the Missing Link Project.

With this in mind I presented last month at a HE meeting attended by over 20 local organisations a number of legacy proposals including ideas to support improved traffic safety in Birdlip and address the long standing issue of speeding that has been a regular agenda item at PC meetings for at least 25 years. There were also a number of proposals submitted by other community groups such as a children's playground, fully inclusive changing facilities at the cricket ground and other projects for environmental improvements and improving public car parking. Also in Birdlip we have for a while now been looking to restore the historical Ermin Street finger point sign to the village and replace the unsightly collection of trunk road signage.

What else last year:

Some of our local maintenance projects such as painting the phone box in Birdlip and installing new dog waste bins were held up due the coronavirus restrictions but the one area which was not impacted severely by the pandemic seemed to be a renewed wave of planning applications. Some of this is perhaps a trend for improvements to existing properties which is understandable given the time everyone has been spending in their homes. However we have seen a number of new developments proposed especially in Birdlip. We have also had a number of issues reported to us about compliance with planning regs that has led to action by the planning enforcement team.

All in all I believe that any sustainable development in rural areas needs to be located only in areas where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of our rural communities. Any development, be it new build or improvements to current properties, is both inevitable and, if it enhances the vitality of our rural communities, it should be welcomed. I also believe it needs to be measured and above all it has to have the support of our communities.

The Parish Council also needs to consider the type and affordability of any new development and if it is of value to its residents. As an example, in Birdlip, the development at Ridgeway Close provided a significant number of new smaller dwellings which are now homes to young families with children who attend the village school. These families in many cases would like to stay in our community but need larger homes and any opportunity to move in the village has been constrained as recent applications for developments tend to

be for large executive homes which are not affordable to the very families that the village originally hoped to attract and retain.

The conclusion is that communities need to be sustainable and attract young families who will maintain the vitality of the community as the older generation passes on. Therefore further development opportunities that are agreed need to consider such issues and maintain the balance of young and older residents and the needs of families if it is to retain its vitality. Many villages in rural areas lose their schools because of lack of children, we need to ensure that this does not happen to our Parish.

So as a community do we still have a voice when it comes to planning applications ?

I don't want to go into specific circumstances or individual applications but I am sure you will all have your own examples of where CDC Planning Dept has NOT listened to the voices and concerns of our community and even those of other bodies such as conservation groups. There are many instances where CDC are justified legally and in the interests of National policy in permitting development but some decisions seem to be very strange to say the least!

There is definitely a change in direction from the CDC. Some may even allege that CDC now has covert desire to stifle local input into planning decisions and even remove the ability for local Parish Councils and other individuals to have a public voice at a democratic hearing such as the Planning Committee. This is a concern shared by most other PC's in the Cotswolds (such as Quennington) and I also know that our local CDC Ward Councillor Julia Judd has concerns herself so I urge you all to support her in her endeavours to change the current undemocratic process which seems to remove much of the local accountability on planning decisions.

Moving on I hope parishioners have noted in their recent Council Tax bills that your PC was the only authority to have not increased its precept. As councillors we voted to keep our precept unchanged due to any hardships the Pandemic may have brought.

I Would like to reference the great work and support given to the PC by Councillor David Metcalf who has now moved on and I and the Parish Council would like to wish him and his family good luck in the future.

And finally.....

Looking back over the year I need to state that the work of the PC is not just about these PC meetings and the items on the agenda that are proposed and discussed.

What I see on a daily basis is the work that is done to support individual parishioners by Elaine, our PC clerk. I know I am in a rather unique position to see this myself but I do need to highlight the day to day work that she does. Whether it be dealing with reports of fly tipping, abandoned cars, anti-social behaviour, breaches of planning regs, organising litter picks and countless calls or messages from residents with questions and in the period of this pandemic putting volunteers in touch with those who were shielding and unable to leave their homes. So from me and on behalf of all of the councillors I would like to say a big thank you to Elaine for her work over the last year as I can assure you that without our clerk we would not have a functioning PC.

Lets now Look forward:

The ongoing pandemic means it's difficult to make detailed plans for the next year but it does look like it will not be long before these virtual meetings will be a thing of the past.

I am really hoping that 2021/22 will see the DCO for the A417 Missing Link approved and we can now start looking at longer terms plans for this Parish.

However that aside I am which sure the A417 scheme will remain a key feature of our work and I am hoping that once completed it can leave a real legacy that will not only enrich the lives of our residents, but also the many visitors we know this project will bring to the Parish. My view is that the current A417 divides the Parish between Cowley and Birdlip and puts Birdlip village in the centre of a busy traffic island. Once the scheme is completed it should reduce the issues we have with rat-running and congestion and above all the horrendous accidents that we have seen over the years.

A key feature going forward needs to be how this PC and our residents can ensure it has an effective voice on planning decisions and I am looking for Julia and CDC to help us with our aspirations in this area. Maybe we need to look at taking greater control by way of a Neighbourhood Plan, which we have talked about as a PC many times but I think as a small Parish it's something that is just too difficult to achieve on our own. So again maybe some of the ideas that Julia has presented before such as looking at a multi-parish or Ward based approach to a Neighbourhood Plan is something that we could be involved in.

So in conclusion under the current conditions its difficult to set more detailed plans and objectives for the coming year but I think the ongoing discussions with HE and the planning issues are more than enough as key focus areas for the coming year.

DRAFT

ERMIN WARD COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCILLOR ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2020 TO APRIL 2021 The year has of course been dominated by the Covid Pandemic, and whilst I don't plan to spend much time talking of this, I would like to say how impressed and encouraged I've been by the way our villages have pulled together to ensure that everyone was looked after and the needy helped. You might wonder sometimes about the state of our society, but when the chips are down there is always a tremendously heart-warming response – 'Community' is alive and kicking in Ermin Ward. March 2020 saw a change in the refuse and recycling operations with the roll-out of new bins, a weekly food waste collection and a reduction of garden waste collection to every other week. The permit is increasing by 33% (£30 to £40). Replacement bins/bags will also be chargeable at £5 per container from now on. Following on from the previous year's increase in parking charges (+30%), this year brought the news that the option to pay cash at Cotswolds car parks was to be removed (in stages through this coming year) and payment could only be made through an 'App' on a smartphone or by card. Given that some 9,000 adults in the Cotswolds don't have a smartphone and 72% of all payments in 2019 were cash, this doesn't seem rational. I have (and will continue to) challenge this decision; so far the only change has been to drop the 'cost' argument and replace it with a 'green' reason for the change. There have been major changes in the senior management at the Council, with Nigel Adams (Head of Paid Service with 28 year's service) and Bhavna Patel (Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services) both leaving - at a cost to the Council of £330,000. They have been replaced with a new Chief Executive – Robert Weaver and an interim Monitoring Officer. An additional eight people have been recruited to deliver manifesto promises. A number of Strategies and Reports have been proposed at Council, covering:- Ecological Emergency declared (July 2020) · The Climate Emergency (Sept 2020) · Corporate Strategy and Plan (Sept 2020) 1In addition there have been a number of other changes:- A number of changes have been made to the Council's Constitution. - The Community Grant scheme has been replaced by 'Spacehive', a crowdfunding platform (costing £30,000 p.a.). - Removal of the Ward Member's ability to automatically refer planning applications to the Planning Committee where considered appropriate. (This particular decision is causing a considerable amount of annoyance to affected Parishes and is the subject of ongoing discussion.) - A new additional crest for the Council, designed for use on social media and new road signage including the crest and the parish's name. These being part of a £200,000 'Civic Pride' scheme. - A new fly-tipping reporting tool has made this a much easier process and there has been a substantive increase in the numbers being reported. I presented a motion to Council to increase the spending on this bane and I believe this has been given through the 'Civic Pride' scheme (to be confirmed). In February, the revised budget for 2021/2 was presented to and approved by Council. I was not able to support this vote owing to lack of detail on the £65 million borrowing proposed and warnings that other Councils around the country have been seriously financially damaged by the strategy. It has been necessary to support the CDC Leisure Centres during the pandemic (more details below), some of which we might get back, if the contractor sees profit before the CDC contract is up. The Planning Department is currently suffering from large workloads and a lack of Officers – recruitment is currently taking place and I would ask for your patience whilst these matters are being resolved. Cllr Julia Judd 2COUNCIL SPENDING Cotswold District Council has a net Budget Requirement of £12,557,015 for 2021/22, with a District Council Tax of £138.93 at Band D (an increase of 3.73 % on the 2020/21 figure). ● Councillor allowance increase ● £54 million of capital investment to reflect the desire to invest to deliver against the Council Priorities and Corporate Plan, approved in September 2020, and to generate additional income. No details on how this will be spent. ● £350,000 to be spent over the next three years to deliver the £54 million commercialisation strategy. ● £938,000 support for the Council's leisure contractor SLM as revenues down owing to Covid. The 'payback', in the event of SLM getting back into profit, may not materialise because a profit may not be shown before the CDC contract will have ended. ● £75,000 to explore a two council unitary authority devolution instead of just one under Gloucestershire. ● £30,000 pa (reduced to £24,000 first year) for a new Crowdfunding Spacehive platform to deliver the Community Project Grant Scheme, taken from the budget of £80,000. ● £200,000 for an initial two-year Civic Pride Programme (updated street signs). ● £10,000 grant, a separate £20,000 loan and a further £20,000 contract awarded to The Barn Theatre for ongoing media support to generate publicity, communications, and engagement with residents on behalf of the council. ● £100,000 was spent in 2020 with £250,000 projected for 2021 to provide housing for the homeless. Two people are in accommodation, they are working towards a further four. The approved Housing First Scheme can deal with complex cases (taking a holistic approach), they work with a maximum of six people with a full time support worker and partner with Housing Associations to find accommodation. In November 2019 there were seven people classified homeless in Cirencester, in 2020 there are four. ● The reception areas at the Council's Trinity Road offices have been refurbished and updated over the past few months. £20,000 to install LED lighting in Council buildings and to improve their external lighting and an investment in Council information technology £2.1 million. 3INCREASED COSTS TO RESIDENTS ● Council Tax increase of 3.73%. ● Garden Waste - green bin licence to increase from £30 to £40 each ● Waste container replacement - £5 per item ● Bulky waste collection to increase from £14 to £25 for up to three items. The charge for additional items will remain at £5 each with an upper limit of six items. ● 25% - car park charge increases throughout the Cotswolds and payment methods revised to include a move to cashless payments by using an App. CDC Management restructuring and staff recruitment The senior management restructuring at the Council (the replacement of the head of paid service and the monitoring officer) cost £333,000. ● Chief Executive Officer Rob Weaver (replacing the existing Head of Paid Service, Nigel Adams) ● Monitoring Officer (Bhavna Patel - now MO at Forest of Dean DC) replaced by a shared MO with Stroud District Council. He is leaving. ● Dr Christine Gore, Executive Officer (Deputy CEO) acted as interim CEO throughout most of 2020 after Nigel Adams left. She has now left CDC. ● Senior Infrastructure Delivery Officer ● Infrastructure Delivery Technician ● Head of Climate Action ● Economic Development Officer ● Lead Landscape Officer ● Sustainable Transport Officer ● Affordable Housing Programme Delivery Manager ● Cabinet Support Officer MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND BUDGET 2021/22 The budget documents can be found here: MTF5 2021/22. The Government has committed to underwrite 75% of all lost revenue owing to Covid, meaning the council should be able to access a total of approximately £2,595,180 in government aid. 4UBICO WASTE CONTRACT EXTENSION Waste collection is the most expensive core service that the Council has to deliver. Costs have increased owing to Covid and there are currently no alternatives to Ubico. Ubico is a not-for-profit Teckal company owned by several shareholders (other Councils) which benefit from contracts for works, services or supply from its controlling Contracting Authority without having to go through a competitive tender process. ● Current contract to be extended by 5 years from 1st April 2022 until 31st March 2027 with a break clause at 2 years. ● 2020-21 waste collection in the Cotswolds cost the taxpayer £6,552,103, an increase of £507,563 from the previous year. ● The Ubico budget for 2021-22 is £6,983,315 (a further increase of £431,212). COTSWOLDS FLOODING Flooding spoiled Christmas 2020 for many residents in Cirencester and other parts of the Cotswolds. Tackling flooding is not straightforward, it is best achieved by all agencies working together. CDC held a Flood Forum and the important Cotswolds Annual Flood Forum hosted by Geoffrey Clifton-Brown was held at Barn Theatre on Friday 5 March with representatives from Thames Water Environment Agency Gloucestershire FWAG Cotswold District Council and Gloucestershire County Council. SLM (LEISURE FACILITY MANAGEMENT) FINANCIAL SUPPORT SLM Everyone Active (SLM) is contracted to provide the management of the Council's three leisure centres and the Corinium Museum in Cirencester which are owned by the Authority. · SLM has requested a further £280,403 (April-July 2021). · November 2020-March 2021 they received a support package of £291,146 (plus £8,773 monthly fees payable from SLM to the Council - waived). · 29 July 2020 - Council approved support package of £221,140 (plus £8,773 monthly

fees payable from SLM to the Council - waived) to cover August to October 2020. · 1 April-30 July 2020 - Council paid £74,000 (£18,500 per month) Total: £936,873

5CLIMATE EMERGENCY STRATEGY

In July 2019 CDC declared a climate emergency - unanimously passed with cross party support. As part of declaring that emergency, CDC agreed to spend £72,000 on a new Climate Change officer to write a Climate Emergency Strategy for 2020-2030. This strategy was published on 23 September 2020. · Cotswold District as a whole emitted 605,000 tonnes of greenhouse gasses (CO2E) in 2018, (equivalent to the emissions from burning about one and a half Cirencester leisure pools of diesel each day). A bit less than half is from road travel (diesel and petrol), a third is from gas and other fuels for heating homes and workplaces, and 15% is from electricity for homes and workplaces. Some carbon is stored in grasslands and woodlands. · The council's own corporate emissions for 2019-20 were 2,746 tonnes (CO2E) or 0.4% of the district as a whole. Half is from diesel used by the waste fleet, a quarter is from gas for heating council buildings and leisure centres, and a quarter from electricity. · The report concluded that the council has to work within the constraints of its levers of influence. · The report concluded that the council should play a leadership role, using our own commitments and actions to help others realise the impact they can have. · The report concluded that the council should support a number of government led initiatives such as promoting and supporting electric vehicle use, supporting whole house energy retrofit, supporting renewable energy switching, facilitating community-owned renewable energy, solar neighbourhoods and multi-stakeholder energy projects. · The report concluded that while it's financially viable for Trinity Road (the council offices) to have solar panels on its roof, the project should not go ahead because of uncertainty over the future use of the building.

6PLANNING COMMITTEE PROTOCOL & SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Featured several times before, this has become of great concern to some parishes. The most important point to be aware of is that point three below, referrals to the planning committee must be made on material planning considerations and could be rejected by the Chair/Vice Chair. Revisions proposed and approved at council include: ● Time management - public speaking limit of three minutes ● All members (councillors) must have basic training ● Referrals must be made on material planning considerations and could be rejected by the Chair/ Vice- Chair* ● Ward members should not represent the views of their town/ parish council during public speaking * There are grave concerns over the starred items above. Planning is nuanced, material planning considerations considered by one person may not be by another. Officers' recommendations are sometimes overturned at the Planning Committee; under this revised mechanism, they may not get a hearing.

COTSWOLD LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

The Cotswold Local Plan is undergoing a partial update to review certain policies to aid conformity with national policy and guidance, to reflect changes to local and national strategic priorities (e.g. housing supply and the amendments to the Climate Change Act 2008); and to reflect recent updates to evidence. This will be published in 2023.

7MY OPINION BUDGET

- CDC has large financial reserves to fall back on (approx £33 million in May 2019) and is receiving a significant amount of government support so the council is in a strong financial position; frontline services should not be affected in any way. However costs are rising, and revenue is falling so the medium to long term economic situation is less certain. Our group put forward a motion to curb all but essential spending (on frontline services) until the long-term effects of the second wave of COVID-19 is more certain, but this was rejected at Council. The administration argued that such a move would send the wrong message to the councils partners and residents, and the fact the council had a strong reserve position and had a large amount of financial reserves meant this move was not necessary.

COMMERCIALISATION STRATEGY

- The administration believes the council is too reliant on revenues from government grants, parking, council tax and new homes bonuses. They are concerned that the council is vulnerable to changes in government policy and they also feel the council needs more revenue income so they can fulfill some of its objectives. For that reason, they intend to commence an investment strategy to increase revenues coming into the council.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY STRATEGY

- Obviously I am very keen to support our fight against climate change - I voted for the climate emergency and I voted to support this report. This was a very expensive report which seemed to have a national overview rather than specific Cotswold policies. A more "bottom up" approach, encouraging and supporting individuals and communities to take a large number of small actions, rather than competing with the Government and GCC on the "top down" approach.

CAR PARKS

- We campaigned to delay price increases until after COVID-19 pandemic. The new car parking payment app means you can pay for car parking on your phone and the ability to pay by cash is being phased out. While I welcome the app, I believe the ability to pay by cash or card is really important. The Office for National Statistics reports that just 40% of those aged 65+ have internet access via a smartphone and 25.2% of people in the Cotswolds are aged 65 and over, so this decision means at least 9,058 residents will be unable to pay for parking once cash payments have been phased out.

PLANNING PROTOCOL

- Our concerns have been raised at Council but were dismissed. They are being pursued.