



COUNCIL

MEETING : Thursday, 30th June 2016

PRESENT : Cllrs. Hampson (Mayor), Hansdot (Sheriff & Deputy Mayor), James, Dallimore, Noakes, D. Norman, Organ, Porter, Haigh, Hilton, Tracey, Stephens, Lugg, Hanman, Lewis, Morgan, Wilson, Williams, D. Brown, Dee, Taylor, Patel, Pullen, H. Norman, Pearsall, Brazil, J. Brown, Cook, Coole, Fearn, Finnegan, Hyman, Melvin and Smith

Others in Attendance

Jon McGinty, Managing Director
Anne Brinkhoff, Corporate Director
Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director
Sara Freckleton, Solicitor, One Legal
Anthony Wilson, Head of Planning
Philip Bylo, Interim Planning Policy Manager
Adam Gooch, Principal Planning Policy Officer
Louise Follett, Principal Planning Policy Officer
Tanya Davies, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager
Tony Wisdom, Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Gravells, Bhaimia, Toleman, Hawthorne and Ryall

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

11.1 There were no declarations of interest.

12. OUTCOME OF THE REFERENDUM ON THE UNITED KINGDOM'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

12.1 The Mayor invited the Leader of the Council to move a motion to suspend Council procedure rules to enable Group Leaders to comment on the outcome of the referendum on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union. The motion was seconded by several Members.

12.2 **RESOLVED to suspend Council procedure rules to enable Group Leaders to comment on the outcome of the referendum.**

12.3 Councillor James, Leader of the Council, advised that a majority of voters in the City had voted to leave with 58 per cent in favour of leaving and 42 per cent in

COUNCIL
30.06.16

favour of remaining in the European Union. He stated that the United Kingdom was a democratic nation and the decision should be respected as the people had spoken. He believed that it was too early to predict the effects of the decision, which had caused turbulence in both Westminster and Brussels and the only certainty was uncertainty. He stated that the result of the referendum would not result in any intrinsic change to the ability of Gloucester to be a great city. He stated that Gloucester had always been a warm and welcoming place and he deplored the incidents of race hatred that had recently been reported elsewhere.

- 12.4 Councillor Haigh, Leader of the Labour Group, welcomed the comments made by Councillor James. She believed that the Council must show leadership and provide stability for the community. She understood that Officers were taking advice on finances and devolution was under review. She believed that Council needed to consider that we were in a changing situation nationally and could possibly face further financial challenges although she believed that local government had taken the brunt of the Government's cuts. She advised that Members of the Labour Group were wearing safety pins as a symbol of solidarity with immigrants as Gloucester had a history of welcoming people from overseas. She stated that Members should work together to ensure that Gloucester had the best possible future.
- 12.5 Councillor Hilton, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, stated that he had voted to remain and found it difficult to accept the result of the referendum, which had caused turmoil in the Conservative and Labour parties and in the financial markets. He believed that the nation was waiting for leadership that could tell us the impacts of leaving the European Union. The Council would have to do its best, devolution would be on hold and he noted with concern that some of the Council's regeneration partners had Brexit clauses within their contracts. He expressed concerns about the impact of the decision upon small businesses in the City, many of which exported to Europe. He stated that many citizens of the European Union had made their homes in the City and found it distasteful to learn that British citizens were telling foreigners to go home. He suggested that the Council should check how many of its staff were European citizens and he had made the same suggestion at the County Council. He concluded that the reality of the situation was that the UK Government did not have a plan.

13. JOINT CORE STRATEGY: INSPECTOR'S INTERIM REPORT

- 13.1 The Mayor invited the Leader of the Council to move a motion to suspend Council procedure rules in order to permit Officers to respond to technical questions. The motion was seconded by Councillor Dallimore.
- 13.2 **RESOLVED to suspend Council procedure rules in order to permit Officers to respond to technical questions.**
- 13.3 The Mayor then invited Councillor Organ, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning, to present his report which sought approval of the proposed response to the Inspector's Interim Report on the Joint Core Strategy.

COUNCIL
30.06.16

- 13.4 Councillor Organ moved the recommendation in the report, which was seconded by Councillor James. He stated that the preparation of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) started in October 2008, this has involved a commitment to joint working on a strategic plan with Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Borough Councils. The Examination process had been progressing for over a year with the appointed Inspector and there have so far been three hearing stages, a Preliminary Report and now an Interim Report from the Inspector. The Inspector has supported the general strategy within the JCS and made clear in her Interim Report that the plan is progressing towards a position of Soundness and Legal Compliance, but that some Modifications are required to move it forward to eventual adoption. He recommended that Council must allow the JCS officers to continue with their dialogue at the JCS Hearings in July and respond to the Inspector's Interim Report with their approach to the JCS Modifications. This would allow the JCS officers to move towards a public consultation on the JCS Modifications to be held in October/November this year. The JCS would provide Gloucester and its partners with a robust planning strategy that will guide the growth of our area over the next 15 years. It was important to approve this report tonight in order to avoid negative consequences for the JCS (including possible financial and reputational costs) and significant difficulties in delivering strategic planning policy required for Gloucester and the JCS area.
- 13.5 The Mayor invited Ms Sarah Sharpe of Tuffley Matters to address Council.
- 13.6 Ms Sharpe stated that Tuffley Matters was a local, non-political, residents' group based in Tuffley, originally formed due to the local response of Tuffley, Whaddon and Brookethorpe residents, in relation to a planning application for 250 houses on the Tuffley Farm fields off Grange Road. Tuffley Matters had a Facebook page with almost 800 followers, who comment on, share and support the cause. Ms Sharpe wished to draw Council's to the online petition with nearly 1,000 signatures against outline planning application for Tuffley Farm site (16/00165/OUT) on the grounds of infrastructure, traffic and congestion, lack of school places and doctors surgeries and other local facilities, impact on the landscape, flood risk and lack of public transport. She expressed concern that the Inspector's report was moving beyond the original remit of the JCS. She asked why was the land south of Gloucester now being included in the interim report, when it mostly lay within Stroud's remit and Stroud are not part of the Joint Core Strategy.
- 13.7 Councillor Organ responded that the land south of Gloucester was not in the JCS area but noted the Inspector's comments in her report. He believed that the site was one of the prettiest entrances to the City and he noted that the Inspector had passed comment on the need for a green buffer between Gloucester and Cheltenham. He considered there was even more need for such a buffer between Stroud and Gloucester. His recommendation would be to remove this site from the JCS allocations and give it protected status.

COUNCIL
30.06.16

- 13.8 Councillor Haigh requested clarification on the designation of Green Belt.
- 13.9 Councillor Organ stated that it would be guided by the Inspector.
- 13.10 Councillor James stated that he had met with the Leader and Chief Executive of Stroud District Council. He noted that Stroud had a Local Plan in place and that there would be a process to be followed for any review of that plan.
- 13.11 The Head of Planning clarified that any designation of the Land South of Gloucester would be a matter for Stroud District Council.
- 13.12 Councillor Morgan referred to the agenda for the JCS hearings on 6 and 7 July and noted that land to the South of Grange Road, which was the subject of an application for 250 dwellings, was listed for discussion.
- 13.13 The Head of Planning advised that the application was below the threshold of 500 dwellings for a strategic allocation and advised that the application could be considered by the Planning Committee at its August meeting.
- 13.14 Councillor Pullen noted the reduction in the requirements for Gypsies and Travellers sites from 82 to 28 pitches and asked if this was the result of a reduced demand or the redefinition of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople by the Government.
- 13.15 He was advised that it was the result of the redefinition and he believed that if the numbers remained the same we would be unable to meet their needs.
- 13.16 Councillor Morgan requested further clarification on land south of Grange Road and was advised by the Head of Planning that the Inspector referred to the site in her interim report as part of the larger potential reserve site at Brookthorpe with Whaddon. The site had been discussed during 2013 sites consultation for the City Plan.
- 13.17 Councillor Coole asked if the inclusion of Winnycroft as a strategic allocation would allow the provision of twenty per cent affordable housing. The Head of Planning advised that the larger application at Winnycroft (420 dwellings) had not yet been determined and the provision of affordable housing at Winnycroft would take into consideration the twenty per cent affordable housing draft policy subject to viability.
- 13.18 Councillor Dee expressed concerns that some of the proposed modifications were not in existence at the time of the Members Steering Group meeting. He was advised that the detail of the proposed modifications would be developed during the summer.

COUNCIL
30.06.16

- 13.19 Councillor Dee asked if there would be any further Member involvement and the Managing Director advised that all three JCS Councils were meeting to consider the Interim Report and Members comments would be conveyed to the Inspector.
- 13.20 Councillor Porter noted that Parton Farm was owned by the Council and he suggested moving the housing from that site to South Churchdown and allocating Parton Farm to commercial or industrial use. He requested that this point be put to the Inspector for consideration.
- 13.21 Councillor Hilton noted that the airport had been allowed to develop Green Belt land and may need to move businesses to make room for additional hangars.
- 13.22 There were no further questions of Officers or any amendments so the Mayor opened the matter for debate.
- 13.23 Councillor Morgan fully endorsed the approach to the Interim Report although he had reservations on some particular aspects. He asked if the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning would work with Officers to scrutinise all aspects of the JCS.
- 13.24 Councillor Porter was disappointed by the Inspector's comments. He believed that the JCS should focus on jobs rather than housing. The Inspector was proposing to increase the number of houses but there was no reference to an increase in the number of jobs.
- 13.25 Councillor Pullen asked that more sites should be provided for Gypsies and Travellers and consideration be given to their human rights.
- 13.26 Councillor Hilton stated that the JCS planned to create 21,000 additional jobs and additional houses were needed to support those jobs and to cater for demographic changes such as smaller family units. He believed that the JCS was about creating a dynamic growing economy and there was a need to identify further sites for development to protect other areas. He supported the removal of North Churchdown as new housing was not appropriate near airport runways. He suggested that Highnam would be an ideal location for development as it was close to the City and not in the flood plain.
- 13.27 Councillor Haigh stated that the JCS was planning for the future of the community which the Council represented. The City's housing need could not be met from within its own boundaries, neither could Cheltenham Borough but Tewkesbury Borough could meet its needs within its own boundaries. She noted the need to provide homes for the old and the young with space to thrive and she welcomed the Inspector's judgement that affordable housing need could not be assessed from the workings of the benefits system. She believed that the present government was destroying the social housing system. She noted that Bristol City was leading the development of housing development companies and she welcomed the inclusion

COUNCIL
30.06.16

of Winnycroft in the JCS. She did not believe that the infrastructure would be sufficient to support development at Brookthorpe with Whaddon and she would support the recommendations in the report.

13.28 Councillor Stephens referred to the Madleaze Industrial Estate and the challenges of the A.38 corridor. He believed that the City Plan would present an opportunity for the future. Referring to the employment strategy, he called for work to increase the manufacturing capacity within the County and referred to the need for community buildings and facilities and a review of retail investment policy. He further referred to the Inspector's proposed five per cent uplift in housing requirements in order to provide additional affordable housing and stated that if this proposal was not supported, alternative mechanisms to deliver affordable housing must be considered.

13.29 Councillor James stated that he maintained his opposition to development south of Gloucester and Stroud District Council were in agreement and had signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the City. He noted that the delivery of affordable housing was dependent on viability and he referred to recent achievements including the former Kwik Save site. He noted the Inspector's comments regarding a review of retail policy which would require further consideration by Councillors. He believed that the Council could be proud of the manufacturers in the City and the Council and the JCS was not planning for a decline in manufacturing. He thanked Councillors Haigh and Hilton for their support of the report as a whole.

13.30 Councillor Organ, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning, thanked Members for their comments.

13.31 **RESOLVED to**

- (1) Note the Interim Report of the Inspector;
- (2) Agree that the JCS officers attend the July hearings to discuss the Interim Report and the recommended way forward with the Inspector, identifying specific consequences and key points arising from the findings to the Inspector as detailed (within Appendix A) and expressed through the June 2016 Council meetings on this report;
- (3) Agree that a summary of comments made by Members at the Council meetings held by the JCS Authorities be passed to the JCS Inspector for consideration.

Time of commencement: 6.00 pm

Time of conclusion: 7.35 pm

Chair