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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE - 04 OCTOBER 2022

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the next meeting of the Environment Committee, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No Item

12. **Member Questions (Pages 3 - 4)**

See Agenda Item 4 for deadlines for submission.

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Members Questions to Environment Committee.

Question 1 from Councillor Christopher Evans

1. In October 2019 the Environment Committee approved the Stroud draft Local Plan. The Plan was then approved at Full Council on the 29th April last year and has since gone to the planning inspectors.

The plan includes allocations PS24 and PS25 in Cam. PS24 currently has planning applications in progress whilst PS25 remains at allocation stage. There is significant concern and opposition amongst the residents of Cam to the planned development of these sites. The planned developments go against local opinion and the wishes of Cam Parish Council.

Please can the Council provide an update on the progress of the Plan's examination by the inspectors and when the initial hearings will begin?

Reply

The Inspectors have requested that in order to assist in considering the additional technical evidence the Council published this summer, they would like representors, where it is relevant to their existing representations, to be given the opportunity to comment on this evidence, if they so wish.

The Council is currently preparing for this consultation to start shortly. The future timetable for the hearing sessions has not yet been confirmed. Any further updates from the Inspectors will be published by the Programme Officer on the dedicated examination webpage as soon as they are available.

Question 2 from Councillor Tricia Watson

2. I read with increasing dismay the escalating Government priority for economic growth at the expense of environmental protection. From quietly removing many of the EU regulations that were claimed pre-Brexit to be 'holding us back from doing better' to recent ideas such as Investment Zones where local planning and community wishes will be brutally overruled in favour of economic development, it feels that our precious natural world is under massive threat, at a critical time when all levels of Government internationally should be doing their absolute utmost to preserve and restore our degrading ecosystems.

This particular Government policy direction is totally at odds with our District Council plan, our draft Local Plan, and needs to be formally challenged. I was relieved to see that so many national environmental organisations have responded so vehemently and rapidly and would welcome officer advice on what we can do at district level to counter these threats? I hope we can make our case to County Council and our local MPs in no uncertain terms that Stroud or the Cotswolds as a whole is no place to consider for an Investment Zone.

Reply

It is understood from the Government's Investment Zones documentation that upper tier authorities may only submit proposals "after local in principle approval is confirmed. This

includes approval in principle from Local Planning Authorities, Constituent Authorities and District Councils". As a result, District Councils in Gloucestershire are currently in discussions with the County Council to understand what proposals the County Council is considering putting forward and these will be reported to members for a decision as to whether to support any such Zone within the District.