STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
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COUNCIL

Thursday, 25 January 2024

7.00 - 9.40 pm

Council Chamber

Minutes

Membership

Councillor Doina Cornell (Chair)	**Vacancy (Vice-Chair)**
Councillor Beki Aldam	Councillor Christopher Jockel
*Councillor Paula Baker	Councillor John Jones
Councillor Martin Baxendale	Councillor Haydn Jones
Councillor Natalie Bennett	Councillor Robin Layfield
Councillor Catherine Braun	Councillor Gary Luff
*Councillor Chris Brine	Councillor Jenny Miles
Councillor Martin Brown	Councillor Dave Mossman
Councillor Gordon Craig	Councillor Gill Oxley
*Councillor Kate Crews	Councillor Loraine Patrick
*Councillor Laurie Davies	* Councillor Martin Pearcy
Councillor Stephen Davies	Councillor Keith Pearson
*Councillor Katrina Davis	Councillor Nigel Prenter
Councillor Jonathan Edmunds	Councillor Steve Robinson
Councillor Christopher Evans	Councillor Mattie Ross
Councillor Helen Fenton	Councillor Mark Ryder
Councillor Colin Fryer	* Councillor Lucas Schoemaker
Councillor Victoria Gray	Councillor Ashley Smith
Councillor Lindsey Green	Councillor Nigel Studdert-Kennedy
Councillor Trevor Hall	Councillor Haydn Sutton
Councillor Jessie Hoskin	Councillor Brian Tipper
Councillor Nicholas Housden	Councillor Ken Tucker
Councillor Nick Hurst	Councillor Chloe Turner
Councillor Steve Hynd	Councillor Tricia Watson
Councillor George James	Councillor Rich Wilsher
Councillor Julie Job	

*Absent

Officers in Attendance

Chief Executive	Strategic Director of Place
Corporate Director (Monitoring Officer)	Interim Planning Strategy Manager
Democratic Services & Elections Manager	Strategic Director of Resources

CL.053 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Baker, Brine, Crews, Laurie Davies, Katrina Davis, Pearcy and Schoemaker.

CL.054 Declaration of Interests

There were none.

CL.055 Briefing on the current status of the draft Stroud District Local Plan

The Chair of Environment Committee, Councillor Turner, introduced the update on the Local Plan and advised Members that the Local Plan was currently going through the planning inspectorate process and therefore there were no decisions being asked of Council at that time.

She provided an extensive history on the creation of the local plan and highlighted the following key points:

- In September 2017, the Environment Committee approved a timetable for the local plan review and approved an issues and options paper for public consultation.
- In October 2018, the Environment Committee approved an emerging strategy for further public consultation.
- In 2019 the Environment Committee approved a draft local plan for further public consultation.
- In October 2020 a final additional housing options document was approved by the Environment Committee for public consultation.
- Consultation had been carried out in stages from the start of the plan making process. The first three consultation stages had involved public exhibitions meetings with town and parish councils, key stakeholders and hard to reach groups. The informal consultation for the additional housing options document took place during the Covid-19 pandemic and as such was an online process. All of the documents relating to the consultations were available in the examination library.
- In April 2021, the Environment Committee resolved to recommend to council the formal submission of the draft local plan. On 29 April 2021, the Council resolved to approve the draft local plan for publication. This was followed by an 8-week formal consultation process in accordance with Regulation 19.
- In October 21, the draft plan was submitted to the Inspectors however it had taken a couple of years before the inspectors were appointed and the hearings began in March 2023.
- During the summer break in August 2023 the Inspectors wrote to the Council setting out concerns with specific areas of soundness around 3 key issues:
    1. The strategic road network, specifically motorway junctions 12 and 14.
    2. Provision of the pedestrian and cycle bridge over the motorway at site PS37 (Wisloe) on the grounds of viability and deliverability.
    3. Public transport aspects in relation to site PS36 (Sharpness).
- Since the initial letter, the Council had worked with key stakeholders, including the County Council, South Gloucestershire Council and National Highways to address the soundness concerns and in particular the concern in relation to the strategic road network. The Council had requested a six month pause in order to work with partners to address the concerns.
- The Inspectors were currently considering the request, the council worked with partners to produce a joint action plan which had been submitted to the Inspectors on the 29 November 2023.
- The Inspectors responded in a letter dated 18 December 2023 advising that they were still considering the request for a six month pause and requested further clarification regarding some of the actions. The Council responded to this letter by the deadline of the 19 January 2024 and was currently waiting permission from the Inspectors to publish the response.

Councillor Turner drew Members attention to the Frequently Asked Questions which had been published on the website and highlighted sections 2.6, 2.7, 2.8 and 2.10 of the report. She confirmed that they were waiting for the Inspectors to consider the request for a six month pause following the councils production of the joint action plan and response to further questions. She believed that this would be the most pragmatic way forward to address concerns raised by the Inspector whilst ensuring the delivery of the local plan.

Councillor Pearson expressed his frustration that the response submitted to the Inspectors on the 19 January 2024 had not been shared with Councillors and believed that elected representatives should have had access to the information. The Chair of Environment Committee, Councillor Turner, confirmed that the published briefing paper advised that the council had aimed to respond by the 19 January. Therefore there should have been an expectation that the council would meet the deadline and update all Members at the Council meeting. She reminded Members that the Council was not permitted to publish the response in any form until they had received permission from the inspectors via the Programme Officer but would do so as soon as they were able.

Councillor Pearson asked for clarification as to whether elected representatives and Councillors of Stroud District Council were no longer trusted with information under embargo. The Leader, Councillor Braun, advised that all Group Leaders including the Opposition Group Leaders had received a monthly briefing from Council Officers on the progress of the local plan examination and therefore although they were unable to publish information they had ensured that the process was transparent and all Members could be updated through their group leaders on progress.

Councillor Pearson suggested that providing information to elected representatives did not count as publishing the information. The Chief Executive advised that it was extremely difficult whilst the plan was going through examination as all information was the property of the inspectors at that point and therefore the Council didn't have permission to do anything but to work to the inspectors requests but they had tried to keep Members up to date with regular updates to the Group Leaders.

Councillor H Jones asked a procedural question about whether the Council had permission to publish the FAQ responses on the examination library. Councillor Jones also raised concerns with the information provided and stated that Councillors and members of the public relied on receiving accurate, informative, unbiased, factual information which he didn't believe had been included in the report or the FAQs. He also stated that it was important to get context regarding the 3 councils that it was advised had been warned by government not to withdraw their plans, he stated that 2 of the 3 councils hadn't reached examination in public and 1 council had requested to withdraw their plan because they had a change of political control. He queried why a comparison had been drawn with those councils when the inspector had clearly suggested to the council to withdraw its plan. The Chair of Environment Committee advised that she didn't see the distinction however advised that she believed it was worse because the Council was further down the line. The Chief Executive advised that the report had attempted to provide context on government thinking on local plans including the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the series of Councils who had tried to withdraw their local plans and the government responses. The Chief Executive advised that Erewash had just started their examination and West Berkshires plan had been submitted for examination but hearings had not yet commenced. Spelthorne were midway through their examination which the inspector had suspended because they were waiting for publication of the NPPF however the government intervened before the Council were able to withdraw it. She advised that it was important that councillors understood the risks and the fact that the government could

intervene if they tried to withdraw their local plan. The Interim Planning Strategy Manager advised that the FAQ document had not been published on the examination library but were published on a different webpage.

Councillor H Jones referenced question E on page 14 of the FAQ document which referred to the number of homes proposed in the draft local plan and stated that the answer provided was incorrect as there was a 29% buffer compared to 9% in the previous plan. The Chair of Environment Committee advised that in matter 3 housing need and requirement had already been examined by the Inspectors and no modifications had been suggested. The Interim Planning Strategy Manager advised that he couldn't provide information regarding the previous plan and that he couldn't provide any further clarification than was already set out in the report.

Councillor H Jones asked a final question regarding Junction 14 of the M5 which South Gloucestershire Council had made clear that due to unsustainable transport patterns and the fact that there was no money set aside in advanced government funding that they thought it would be undeliverable and therefore would make their plan unsound. He queried why they had come to this conclusion whilst Stroud District Councils local plan still included a reliance on Junction 14. The Chair of Environment Committee referred Councillor H Jones to questions H and J in the FAQ document and advised that the infrastructure that supported the District wasn't necessarily inside the District boundaries and therefore they had decided to step forward as a sponsor so they could focus on what the communities of the Stroud District needed. The Chief Executive advised that Junction 14 of the M5 was in the previous South Gloucestershire Local Plan which was current at the time that SDCs plan was submitted. She confirmed that if developments were forthcoming at Oldbury and Berkeley on the former nuclear power sites then Junction 14 would have to be upgraded. She advised that Junction 14 was important for some of the sites contained within the SDC Local Plan and therefore they would need to look at how to progress the work if needed. She provided reassurance that if SDC were to begin the preparatory work for improvements to the junction then as the budgetary requirements were not set out in existing plans it would need to be the subject of a report to Full Council where Members would have the opportunity to vote on the matter. She further confirmed that SDC were still in conversation with both South Gloucestershire Council and National Highways.

Councillor Tipper asked whether the Conservative Group had been deprived of relevant information on the progress of the Local Plan. The Chair of Environment Committee advised that every single piece of information had been published in the examination library, she confirmed that by its nature the local plan process was public. She referred Members to the briefing they had received, the Strategic Planning Advisory Board which Members were apart of and the updates provided to Group Leaders. She advised that they were currently at the mercy of the inspectors and that they were awaiting their decision.

Councillor Tipper queried what consultation SDC had undertaken other than in February 2023 with regards to infrastructure. The Chair of Environment Committee made reference to her earlier introduction of the item regarding the four informal processes for consultation and the formal process which had been undertaken and confirmed that the infrastructure delivery plan was one of the key evidence-based documents used in the plan making process.

Councillor Tipper asked how many applications the District Council had fought in the last 10 years against planning applications by developers. The Chief Executive advised that anybody who had planning permission refused could make an appeal to the Planning

Inspectorate and there would have been a considerable number over the last 10 years. She advised that if Councillor Tipper wanted the exact number of appeals that the Council had been involved in during the last 10 years they would be able to provide a written response.

Councillor Patrick asked for confirmation that the Council was speaking to Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board regarding the primary care for the 4000 new homes proposed in sites PS24, PS25 and PS37 in addition to those in Box Road. The Interim Planning Strategy Managed advised that they would provide an answer outside of the meeting.

Councillor Hurst asked whether the Administration accepted that making the plan sound would require the cooperation and resource input of agencies that were outside SDCs control in terms of money, delivery and time scale. He raised concerns with the timescale for the delivery of motorway junction improvements which he believed damaged the plausibility of the local plan. The Chair of Environment Committee confirmed that they accepted the fact that the delivery of the strategic road network was outside of their control but that this should not stop authorities being able to produce their local plans. She advised that the Inspectors had asked SDC to work with stakeholders to produce the joint action plan and the inspectors responses had become increasingly encouraging.

Councillor S Davies asked whether they believed it was credible that National Highways would spend half a billion pounds on 2 motorway junctions that were 12 miles apart. The Chair of Environment Committee referred Councillor S Davies to page 17 of the FAQ document. She advised that the M5 junctions 12 and 14 were an issue which would continue to impact the residents of Stroud.

Councillor S Davies asked whether the budget which would be considered by Strategy and Resources later that month would commit to defend every single appeal that was made when speculative planning applications were refused because SDC didn’t have an adopted local plan. The Chair of Environment Committee advised that they were working constructively with the Inspectors who had indicated that they were pleased with the progress and the joint working with partners. She stated that they needed to continue to do what was asked of the Council under the NPPF and government guidelines to progress the Local Plan. She advised that she didn’t believe it would be correct to include budget for something where they didn’t have any knowledge of what would happen next.

Councillor Davies queried the consultation undertaken given that in a written response had confirmed that there were only 2 changes made as a result of the consultation which was not value for money. The Chair of Environment Committee advised that the Local Plan making process was an evidence based process which had to operate under the guidelines provided by the NPPF. She confirmed that much of the consultation undertaken was to confirm that the plan was sound and legally compliant. She stated that due to the constraints for planning in the District and the housing and employment land targets the consultation enabled the Council to hear views but they would not always be able to satisfy everyone’s requirements. She referred Members to the examination library where you could see every consultation response and the reasons why it was or was not acted upon.

Councillor Craig asked whether the Council, following discussions with South Gloucestershire and Gloucestershire County Council, had added the £175k and £200k to the budget to cover the commitment in bringing forward a development plan for the 2 motorway junctions. The Chair of Environment Committee referred to the Chief Executives earlier response that if a sum of money was required to sponsor Junction 14 then it would need to be brought as a separate report to Council. She further referred Members to the

response to the FAQ questions H and J. The S151 Officer confirmed that there was nothing specific in the budget at the current time but as any work progressed any funding needed to support the joint partnership working would come forward to Council in budget proposals.

Councillor Craig asked what residents would think of the Council spending £175k of SDCs tax payers money in South Gloucestershire. The Chair of Environment Committee advised that it was a very key piece of infrastructure for this district, and although it was just outside the District they couldn't ignore difficult problems. She stated that if they were the first council to need the junction improvements to ensure their Local Plan could be delivered then they may need to help fund the initial feasibility work.

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy asked when the FAQ document had been first produced. The Interim Planning Strategy Manager advised that they had been compiling the question response over a large time period as and when they had though of them, he also confirmed that they had received some questions from the MP which had fed into the FAQ document at the end of the previous week. Councillor Studdert-Kennedy advised that it would have been more helpful for Members if the FAQ document had been available a few days earlier as the information within the document would have been extremely useful to those not familiar with the history. Councillor Studdert-Kennedy also queried the date of the meeting which he believed had been set without any flexibility or consideration of when information would be available. The Chief Executive reminded Members that the Inspectors had set a deadline to respond by the 19 January 2024 and therefore the Planning Strategy Team needed to prioritise the response, furthermore due to changes to the NPPF the team needed to review all of the responses to the FAQ document to ensure that the answers were correct. She also advised that when a request for an extraordinary meeting was made they did their best to accommodate the meeting as soon as practicable to do so but would also be guided by the Chairs availability.

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy suggested that a conversation between Officers and the Councillors who requested the meeting could have resulted in the meeting being postponed to a better time. He asked whether any of the councils instructed by government not to withdraw their local plan had been elected upon their proposals to withdraw the local plan. The Chief Executive advised that she wasn't sure she was the right person to comment on issues of local democracy but agreed that it raised some interesting questions and that she was not entirely comfortable with the governments intervention in local democracy.

Councillor Hurst asked how much more public money could be expected to put into the local plan process given that to date the figure was upwards of £600k and possibly as much as £800k and the inspector could declare the draft plan unsound. The Chair of Environment Committee advised that the amount spent to date was completely comparable with other councils in the same process apart from any additional cost associated with being appointed two inspectors rather than one. The Chief Executive advised that the evidence base for the preparation of the local plan was a considerable cost and that they had asked questions of the Planning Inspectorate regarding the cost of two inspectors. She confirmed that the costs were not unusual compared to other Councils.

Councillor Evans stated that National Highways had not accepted SDCs position that development in Cam would not have a significant impact on Junction 14 of the M5 and asked whether the proposed housing allocation numbers for site PS24 could be reduced to 700 as was originally proposed in November 2019. The Chair of Environment Committee

advised that any modifications to emerge from the process would be requested by the inspectors, modifications that they had already indicated could be found in the examination library. The Interim Planning Strategy Manager advised that National Highways had not asked SDC to reduce that site in terms of numbers on highways grounds and confirmed they were working with them to assess the capacity of the junctions before improvements were required at Junction 12.

Councillor Evans referred to a report from the Engine Hub which had been produced for Cam Parish Council on employment in Cam, Dursley and Uley. The report identified that 56% of businesses in Cam employed only one person and the great majority of businesses in Cam, Uley and Dursley employed 5 people or fewer. He asked why SDC therefore considered Cam to be a major employment centre suitable for large scale development. The Interim Planning Strategy Manager confirmed that the evidence base for the local plan clearly set out the evidence that had been used. He further advised that there were a number of employment sites that would be coming forward in cam along the Box Road development.

In response to Councillor Evans, the Interim Planning Strategy Manager confirmed that the employment sites in Cam Box Road had recently been marketed.

Councillor Patrick asked how SDC could justify funding projects outside of the District when Members struggled to find funding for the many issues that faced residents and tenants. The Chair of Environment Committee advised that they would not normally seek to fund something outside of the District however they should not ignore the difficult issues. She advised that with strategic road networks the junctions would not always be in line with district boundaries and therefore they would potentially need to consider funding things they normally wouldn't to ensure they are able to progress towards a sound plan.

Councillor Housden advised that the Council could decide at the meeting to withdraw the Local Plan and advised that the responses they had received were not true. He asked whether SDC should withdraw the Local Plan given that it would require the council to spend £175k somewhere else, that it would require half a billion pounds of highways funding and that the inspectors had recommended withdrawal. The Chair of Environment Committee highlighted the response to question 20 contained in the FAQ document and read it aloud.

Councillor Housden asked whether the Chair would acknowledge that the Inspector asked SDC to consider withdrawing the local plan. The Chair of Environment Committee confirmed that the possibility was raised in their first correspondence but that it wasn't a requirement to withdraw the plan. Councillor Housden pressed the Chair for a yes or no response to his question. The Chair of Environment Committee confirmed that she had already answered his question and advised that the letter from the Inspectors was published on the examination library.

In response to Councillor Ryder, the Chief Executive reminded Members that the site was the subject of a live planning application and therefore would not be appropriate to discuss in the Chamber at that time.

Councillor Ryder asked whether the Council had a mandate to take the plan through to submission at any cost and how the Council could account for the undocumented costs that would be coming down the line which had not been included as part of any budget. Councillor Turner advised that nothing had happened to withdraw the original mandate from the Councils April 2021 decision to submit the draft plan for examination. She advised

that if they were to withdraw the plan they would likely see a duplication of the costs incurred to date and they would still need to resolve the problems of the strategic road network. She advised that any new costs arising from the consideration of paying for the feasibility studies around Junction 14 would be considered by Council and therefore the mandate would be renewed if Council agreed to proceed.

Councillor Ryder asked whether Gloucester City Council had called on SDC to help with their housing targets. The Interim Planning Strategy Manager confirmed that they hadn't at this stage and this was raised by the Inspector at the hearing session, he advised that it was currently safeguarded land and not an allocated site.

In response to Councillor Green, the Chair of Environment Committee confirmed that she cared very deeply about communities which was the reason she had become a Councillor. She advised that this was not a popularity process and that it was about gathering evidence and complying with regulations. She stated that Councillors, as representatives of their communities, had been consulted with throughout the process.

Councillor Green advised that she believed that the report contained language that was being used to influence emotion and that she had raised the issue with the Monitoring Officer and was waiting to receive a response. Councillor Turner advised that it was a briefing report written by Officers and was not intended to be emotive in anyway but a simple statement of the facts of the inspection process thus far. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that the role of officers was to provide the facts and evidence in a report and that she believed the report written was factual. She confirmed that she had acknowledged, in her response to Councillor Green, that there was a paragraph included that referenced the letter which could have been slightly more balanced but on the whole she believed the report to be fair and balanced.

Councillor Gray advised that she was asking the following questions as a representative of Cam East. She asked whether SDC would commit to publishing all of the email correspondence regarding the local plan since August 2023 between SDC, South Gloucestershire Council and National Highways. The Chair of Environment Committee asked for clarification as to the point of the exercise which she believed would be monumental. Councillor Gray advised that the report and FAQs did not highlight any evidence as to the discussions had and how they reached decisions that were laid out in the report. She advised that residents have said they were confused and that it would be helpful for email correspondence to be sent even to SDC Members so that people can understand what discussions were being had with the consultees and where the decisions and budgetary requirements were coming from. The Chief Executive asked whether a Freedom of Information Request was being made. Councillor Gray advised that was due to be her next question but they wanted to ensure transparency of the Council but they did want to submit an Freedom of Interest (FOI). The Chief Executive advised that they could submit an FOI in writing at anytime and confirmed that they had tried to capture the discussions held with partners but thought that releasing every bit of correspondence would take a lot of time for people to try and make sense of due to its technical nature. She advised that if they were able to further understand the issues they wanted clarification on they could try and help.

Councillor Sutton referred Members to section 3.11 and queried how housing could enhance the local environment. The Chair of Environment Committee informed Members that housing was only one aspect that the plan dealt with and there were a range of separate environmental policies that had been included, housing itself would not enhance

the local environment but other objectives such as high environmental standards, green space, recreational facilities would help to deliver sustainable communities.

Councillor Green asked what the next steps would be if the plan failed. The Chair of Environment Committee advised that if the plan failed they would need to start again which would probably require them to refresh the evidence base, they would need to consider the new NPPF guidelines and that they may have to wait a period of time before the plan could go through examination.

The Chair asked members if they wished to continue the meeting given that the time was approaching 9pm and in accordance with the Councils' Constitution, members would need to vote in order to continue the meeting.

After being put to a vote, the Motion was carried.

RESOLVED To continue the meeting beyond 9pm.

Proposed by Councillor Turner and Seconded by Councillor Braun

Councillor Braun stated that she believed that the Local Plan was one of the most important issues for Councillors as it was about creating communities. She advised that they wanted to be in control of where development happened and didn't want to be subject to speculative development. She expressed frustration that the housing targets were set nationally and no flexibility was provided. She highlighted the issues other local authorities had faced including Tewkesbury Borough Council losing planning appeals.

Councillor Pearson queried how many District or Borough Councils had contributed taxpayers funds to the development of the national motorways network and raised concerns about the Council considering this. He also raised concerns regarding the allocation of housing included in the Local Plan which was 29% above what was needed and believed that this had caused further issues.

Councillor Davies stated that they had been misled on a number of issues including:

- that they did not have an option to withdraw the plan a
- that the Opposition Group Leader had been provided with information as they had not seen the letter sent on the 19 January
- that consultation had taken place with partners as Gloucestershire County Council had asked in front of the Inspectors why SDC hadn't produced the plan around existing infrastructure.

He suggested that SDC could already be 5 months into rewriting the plan which was necessary and important to ensure we were protected from bad development. He also advised that the updated NPPF included higher standards of environmental control therefore a new Local Plan would have a higher control over climate change than they would have with the current plan.

Councillor Studdert-Kennedy drew Members attention to the letter dated 18 December including paragraph 5 and 6 on page 2 and paragraph 15 on page 3. He suggested that the Council needed to think ahead rather than wait for an axe to fall, as in his view there was only a slim chance of the Local Plan being accepted.

Councillor H Jones advised that South Gloucestershire also had similar issues with their local plan regarding excessive numbers and that when the Liberal Democrat group took control, they kept most of the work which had been undertaken but removed the massive

margin over what was required to be delivered. He read out a quote from the South Gloucestershire Cabinet Member for Planning. He advised that SDC should have favoured dispersal when developing the Local Plan.

Councillor Green advised that she had been part of a discussion about a lack of affordable homes in rural areas and for seasonal work e.g. farming. She stated that the Local Plan did nothing to help with the problems rural businesses in the Stroud District had and that a policy of dispersal would have helped.

Councillor Tipper raised concerns with the issues they had in Cam regarding housing and planning appeals, he stated that Cam was no longer recognisable and wasn't being protected.

Councillor Bennett advised that she wasn't a Councillor at the time decisions were made about the Local Plan but had watched the meeting and had looked at the evidence. She advised that she believed they had favoured a hybrid policy over dispersal. She didn't believe that the plan should be withdrawn as she felt the outcomes would be the same if they were to start again due to the planning constraints the District had.

Councillor Aldam advised that the motorway junctions would be a consideration regardless of where houses were built in the District. She highlighted the issue with the loss of approximately 1,500 bus routes in England since 2021 which would contribute to problems with motorways. She stated that the Local Plan was more than a plan for where SDC wanted to put houses but enabled communities to hold developers to account and helped to ensure high quality developments for all local communities including intergenerational outdoor play spaces.

Councillor Hurst expressed his sympathies to the current administration who were not in power when Local Plan decisions were made and therefore didn't have the chance to have a fundamental input into the processes which delivered this current strategy. He stated that the costs to rewrite the plan should be factored into forward thinking with the ongoing budget situation.

Councillor Evans stated that the fact that the discussion was largely centred around motorway junctions, told them that people were still dependent on dependent on their cars. It was therefore essential that infrastructure was put in place to match where houses would be built. He stated that people needed jobs and that it was a shame houses were not being built where there was already employment to stop the growth of commuter villages like Cam getting bigger.

Councillor Hall stated that they had to go forward with the draft Local Plan and they had to meet the government targets for housing. He also raised concerns with what would happen should SDC not have a local plan in place.

Councillor Ross advised that she believed that everybody had the right to a decent home and that the local plan should be supported so that speculative housing without decent play areas did not come to fruition.

Councillor Mossman didn't accept that there was nothing that could be done and advised that they had put forward many alternative sites to the one at Wisloe and suggested that they should reconsider the sites including sites designated for Gloucester and concentrate on housing impacting junction 12 rather than junction 12 and 14.

Councillor Patrick advised that the current Local Plan didn't seem to do much to stop developers and highlighted issues with Littlecombe and Box Road.

Councillor Robinson echoed points raised by Councillor Ross and stated that the District needed houses for its residents and that they needed a Local Plan in place to ensure they were able to stand up to speculative development and developers.

Councillor Housden advised that there were 2 options, either to do nothing and wait until the Inspectors come to a decision or withdraw the plan. He advised that if they waited it was likely that they would have to start a new plan anyway.

Councillor J Jones raised an observation about consultation with Parish and Town Councils and whether it was taken into consideration as he believed many of them would have favoured dispersal around the District.

Councillor Turner advised that they were focused on doing the best and delivering the best possible plan for the District and its communities. She thanked Officers for the work put in to produce the briefing report and the frequently asked questions and their ongoing work with partners.

On being put to the vote, the Motion was carried with 27 votes in favour, 8 against and 8 abstentions.

Councillor Pearson paid tribute to Councillor Turner for her perseverance and stamina throughout the meeting.

RESOLVED **To note this Report. As the draft Local Plan is currently at Examination in Public, this report is for briefing purposes only to update Members on its current status.**

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm

Chair

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