

Cherwell Parish Liaison 12 June 2019_Leader's Overview & Q&A

<p>Barry Wood Leader of the Council</p>	<p>Having been a Parish Councillor for a long number of years myself I know what a great service it gives to our communities and I am really grateful to all of you for volunteering for these roles. It is very often a thankless task and I think that sometimes it is overlooked in modern society that people do not say thank you enough. I would like to begin by rectifying that from our part here at the District Council. We are grateful for the work that district councils, councillors and parish clerks do and so I say thank you for that. I am conscious that we can always improve things and not least the way we handle the relationship with Parish Councils, we're going to touch on that in a number of ways this evening. We think we do a reasonably good job but there is always room for improvement and it is right to concentrate on what those improvements are.</p> <p>There are four topics I would like to cover briefly, one is climate change, the second is joint working between councils, the third one is the concept of the Oxford to Cambridge Arc and a subset of that, the Oxford to Cambridge expressway, and linked to that, finally I just want to touch on the Oxfordshire Growth Deal and give an overview of that piece of work.</p> <p>Climate change is very much in the news today and it is going to be extremely interesting to see the details of the work from the Government's position to move to net zero-carbon over what I think is quite an ambitious timeframe. What will be important is in the detail about how that affects the work that local councils do and how we have to react to the national agenda and play our part in that. I think that it's fair to say that we have not been idle in respect of climate change issues and we continue to build on what we've started to do here at the District Council but it is one of those things that is very much for me part of our growth agenda. We need to play a positive and strong role in moving towards a lower carbon economy. Over time we've undertaken many initiatives to fulfil our obligations as an environmental steward and these have included (not an exclusive list) as a property owner we review the sustainability of our own buildings and you will note that the photo-voltaic panels on many of our buildings, including this one. We have recently bought electric vehicles for our depots and we start to decarbonise our waste and street cleaning fleet so we are shifting from diesel to electric. Our household recycling rates are reaching nearly 60 per cent now. This has been a long term project for the District Council and we are extremely grateful for the way in which the citizens as a whole very largely play their part in that. There are still some educational roles that we need in order to make sure that people don't mix up or pollute the recyclables.</p> <p>As the planning authority we ensure that new houses are meeting the required standards in energy efficiency. Really what needs to happen is that the required standards in energy efficiency need to go up and then we will, as a planning authority, be in a position to condition that for new houses. There is going to be a key relationship between central and local government to deliver on new standards in energy efficiency in houses that people are living</p>
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in. The Housing team enable residents to access funding for insulation and boiler improvements as well as ensuring private rented properties meet the required energy efficiency standards. So there is already a workstream that enables residents to move towards doing the right thing. It is right that we do that but I think there is a role about how well that's advertised. I saw on the television today that it is now alleged that everyone is going to have a hydrogen boiler under their stairs. We do have a number of exemplar zero carbon developments across this district including the new zero carbon business centre in Bicester which is now a ready for occupation so there is some exemplar work that we have sought to lead on in the Cherwell District on a low carbon development. That is not an accident, we've chosen to do that and it's the lessons that we will learn and the way that we've been setting those examples that we seek to export to other parts of the country and to improve and expand our work.

On joint working between councils you will know that we are slowly extricating ourselves from joint working with South Northamptonshire Council because of a complete reorganisation of local government in that county. Instead we are now beginning to set up a joint working arrangement with Oxfordshire County Council which is proving to be very interesting and successful. At the time there was a bit of doubt about how well that might go but it has started to do well and started to deliver such that we are becoming more and more confident that our overarching financial position will be able to stabilise in the next 12 to 24 months. The shock of losing the savings of joint working with SNC needed to be replaced by a new way to bring us back so that we can balance our budgets relatively easily. So far we have joint working between Trading Standards and Environmental Health, we have joint working in terms of business continuity and emergency planning, joint working in terms of closing the gap between housing and adult social care which is a key concern for a local governments across this country and joint working in terms of housing and support to vulnerable families.

There are some real success stories that have come from joint working between district and county. The other important thing to say is joint working between the district and county is a new thing and you'll be hard pressed to find other examples. We're pleased to be in the vanguard of that work, it protects the sovereignty of both councils but enables us to deliver economies of scale and better product for the people we seek to represent. We are proud of that workstream and we believe that it will go well.

I want to touch quickly on the Oxford to Cambridge Arc previously known as the Oxford/Milton Keynes/Cambridge corridor. This is very important and will become more and more important for us in this District as time goes by. There is a collective known as the Arc Leaders' Group, on which I sit, which has the leaders of all 27 local authorities that are on the map of the arc. Essentially it's Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. I think it's 27 local planning authorities and local housing authorities that are represented there with a myriad of

central government departments and what are known in the trade as Enterprise Partnerships LEPs which include the Environment Agency and a university sector. Those partners seek to plan how we can have good development in that corridor between now and 2050 because we know that if it's going to be done anywhere you should find a way to do it well, there has been a dearth of sub regional planning in this country and this is a return or an attempt to have some good sub regional planning for a change. I pick two objectives from the Arc Leaders' Group because I think that you should be able to identify with these and see why councils acting together is a good thing. The two objectives are that there should be a biodiversity net gain approach to development across the arc. We should increase wildlife rich habitats and supporting environmental services for recreation, flood amelioration, water and air quality improvements. There is a real emphasis on environmental aspects of planning and growth in such a way that those things are to the fore, and in my view need to be, and there's going to be a good gain from that that piece of work. It has only just started though and there's a long way to go to 2050, but we should start planning now for our future. There will be a need for infrastructure as well and I think that the way that central government has seen the Arc or the corridor as a priority for them will mean that they are going to have to put their money where their mouth is and that's going to be an important part of that equation.

I touch briefly now on the expressway which I suppose is arguably a subset of the Arc proposal and that is very much one of those things that impacts on or could impact on some of the parishes in this district. We don't know yet where the route will be exactly, but there will then be a full-scale statutory process that the road will have to go through. That's if there is one, because meanwhile there are judicial challenges to the road which may impact. We know that there has to be a new occupant of Number 10 Downing Street and I think it is a reasonable bet that it will be followed by a new occupant of Number 11 Downing Street. I think it is a reasonable bet that there will be a complete reappraisal of government priorities and a complete piece of work to support the comprehensive spending review and I think that it will be a defacto new government. I think therefore that the priorities may change and a lot of things may alter. I was shocked last Friday by an announcement that there has to be a full and complete comprehensive review of High Speed 2. I never expected to see that but there is to be one and so I think that may be a precursor for a lot of change.

I finish with the Oxfordshire Growth Deal and that is just to say that that matter is progressing down the road. The Growth Deal is a contract between all the councils in Oxfordshire and the central government and essentially the contract was the councils shall deliver the Local Plans on time and begin work on a Joint Strategic Spatial Plan. This has been started but there is a bit of a chicken and egg argument with a Joint Strategic Plan, a bit like in the old days what we used to call the County Structure Plan. It's difficult to do that piece of work because how can you have a strategic plan if you do not know if there's going to be an expressway and if there is,

	<p>where it's going to go? The important point is that the Councils still seek to work together to live up to their end of this contract, the incentive is central government money.</p> <p>Cherwell District has infrastructure schemes in the Growth Board Plan, which are; the North of Oxford Transport Study; the Tramway Road in Banbury Accessibility Improvements; Upper Heyford Mitigation Package Number 1; the North-West Bicester Road Realignment of the A409; school schemes at south west Bicester and at the Warriner School; Howes Lane realignment in Bicester; RAF Upper Heyford package to (junction 10); A41 Ploughley Road signalisation; and Hennef Way congestion relief.</p> <p>These aspects are a result of the Growth Deal, the Growth Deal is not without its benefits. That is the position, meanwhile what I don't know is whether new political control at South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse Council will mean a fundamental shift in the Growth Deal, and the funds that flow with it. I am unable to predict that with any certainty, I suspect that there may be some moving of the chess pieces on the board but not a cancellation, at least that's my hope. The whole of the business of the Growth Deal is very interesting but there is a requirement for a feedback loop. There is, in my opinion, a lack of pushing out the information of the type that I have just given you in a proper, good and easily digestible way. Our endeavour here, at this district council, will be to encapsulate the work that the Growth Deal is doing and proposes to do, and distribute that to parish councils.</p>
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Questions from the Floor

<p>Jane Olds, Parish Clerk to Caversfield, Wendlebury and Launton</p>	<p>Following the programme on Monday evening on BBC1, 'The War on Plastics', how can you guarantee that what we are putting in our bins is being recycled ethically?</p>
<p>Cllr Barry Wood</p>	<p><i>We have a contractor who takes all the blue bin stuff, sorts it out and packages it off to different places to be dealt with. As the programme inferred, and as we've known for some time, the market for people to get their hands on plastic and do something with it has gone down the pan. The bulk of our plastic, after it's been sorted into different colours and types, goes to contractors in this country and in Europe, but what I really want to know is exactly what happens next and does it end up being a chucked in an incinerator or do they turn it into new wheelie bins. I want to know the full story on what happens to our plastic and when I know the proper answer to the question we will circulate it to parish councils. We will also put out a press release and put it on the website. We need to make sure that (and I'm speculating here) if it goes to a factory somewhere and they then put it in another lorry and tip in the nearest sea, then we need new contractors or new conditions on the contract. (post meeting note: see statement below on CDC's recycling)</i></p>

Information about what happens to recycling from Cherwell District Council

All of the recycling collected in the blue bins is taken to the Casepak recycling facility in Leicester. Here it is separated into different types of material (e.g. paper, card, aluminium) using various mechanical and hand sorting methods.

The recycling facility sends the Council a monthly report of where the materials have been sent. Most of these locations are in the UK, some of them are in mainland Europe, and a few are in other parts of the world.

The Council works very closely with Casepak to ensure that the recycling is dealt with safely and legally. Our officers meet with Casepak on a regular basis to discuss the sorting, the end destinations and the quality of our materials. The materials are sorted to a high standard so that it goes to reputable reprocessors that are able to recycle it.

The UK has limited recycling capacity in some materials due to the fact that most mass-market produced goods are manufactured in other parts of the world, such as China.

Recycling is a global market and affected by issues of supply and demand and while it may be preferable if materials were recycled in the UK this is not possible with current infrastructure.

Recently there has been much interest in plastics and the recycling of plastics. Most of the sorting of plastics is automatic with a laser recognizing which sort of polymer is on the conveyor belt and the items are blown off the conveyor belt into the correct bin. Since the start of 2019 plastics sorted at Casepak have been sold as follows:

- *Milk plastic bottles: HDPE natural has strong markets in the UK and most of it is recycled in the UK. A proportion is exported for recycling in Portugal*
- *Drinks bottles and trays: PET, is sold to a number of companies in the UK, France, Netherlands and Turkey*
- *Mixed Plastics is sold to a wider range of companies. During 2019 the countries which have bought mixed plastics are based in Belgium, Spain, Netherlands, UK, France, Bulgaria, Turkey and Germany.*

The materials sold by Casepak are commodities. These commodities are often sold from one processor to another as the materials move through the supply chain. It is the responsibility of the seller of these materials to ensure they are selling it to a reputable firm that is going to handle and process the waste in accordance with the laws in that county. In the UK, it is the Environment Agency who are responsible for ensuring that waste

	<p><i>and recycling processors are acting in accordance with the legislation governing the processing and selling of waste and recyclable materials.</i></p> <p><i>Cherwell District Council ensures that it undertakes all of its legal duties in collecting and processing the waste and recycling collected from households in the district. Casepak were appointed following a rigorous procurement exercise which ensured only registered processors of waste and recycling could be appointed as the Council's contractors. Throughout the contract, the performance of the contractor is closely monitored by the Council to ensure they adhere to their legal duties.</i></p> <p><i>As with all recycling schemes it is very important that people put the right things in the right bin to ensure that waste and recycling is dealt with properly. This is particularly important for the blue bin and we do find that a minority of people sometimes put the wrong things in their blue bin such as nappies, old clothes and food waste which cause real problems at the recycling facility. Please check our website for a list of what to put in each bin.</i></p> <p><i>Thanks to our residents Cherwell District Council has excellent recycling rates which are much higher than the national average of 45%. Cherwell currently recycles 55.6% of the district's household waste, which puts it towards the top of the recycling table in England.</i></p>
<p>Polly Foster, Fritwell Parish Council</p>	<p>Are you going to be making a requirement for electric car points in all new developments to go along with some of your energy saving? It's all very well to have good insulation but we need to be changing people's habits and that's only going to happen if they make it easy for us. I think it would be a good selling point as well for new developments.</p>
<p>Cllr Barry Wood</p>	<p>I agree with you and we will consider that. We already look to promote the putting in of electric points for cars at what used to be called the eco-town in north-west Bicester. If the district council has planning conditions (e.g. a charge point for each new house), we need to know that we will be able to enforce the condition, so the development industry won't appeal and have it taken away. So I agree with the principle that you espouse and we will look into how we condition electric charge points. Separate to that there is the matter of our own estate and how we can, for example, shift to having more and more electric charge points in public carparks.</p>
<p>Tim Hibbert, Wendlebury Parish Council</p>	<p>As far as climate change is concerned do you envisage following the lead of Oxford City Council and establishing a citizens' assembly to look at all the issues relating to climate change and health matters?</p>
<p>Cllr Barry Wood</p>	<p>No but we do envisage having to arrange something akin to this. We do need to engage with parish councils, as the representatives of the citizen, and that will be our channel to engage on how to pursue this agenda inside the Cherwell District. So we won't have</p>

	a citizens' assembly but will instead use the Parish Councils as our point of contact.
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Rural Housing for People in Housing Need – Q&A

Tim Brown, Fencott & Murcott Parish Council	What was the timescale from the identification of the 12 sites to the first occupants, which have not occupied yet?
Nicki Lewis	<p>It was 2011 that we started the work on identifying sites so it has taken a long time to get where we are today.</p> <p>In the processes we identify the sites that seem to have potential. Some of those sites will be eliminated for one reason or another – it may not meet planning requirements, it may not meet the road junction requirements, it may be that it's a protected piece of land and so on. That exercise is gone through and therefore it's like a site assessment, and eventually it narrows the number of sites down to a handful.</p>
Frances Evans, Strategy & Development Team Leader	That's one of the processes but there are lots of processes; like the parish needs survey and engagement with the local community about what's needed. Nicki's explained it really well and we do have to narrow it down to the sites that are actually deliverable.
David Rogers, Deddington Parish Council	What's the life expectancy from a planning viewpoint of a housing needs survey, and how effective have you been in maintaining local criteria and sources of funding? Have you been able to get local people into these houses?
Frances Evans, Strategy & Development Team Leader	<p>The Parish Housing Needs survey lasts about three years in terms of its effectiveness. At the time we will also look again at housing register, so the time the planning application goes in, we bolster that information with more recent information from the housing register. Then, once the site starts to be developed it's really important that we're engaging with communities at that point because the properties will be coming soon, two 2 beds and two 3 beds and so on.</p> <p>It is about making sure communities are aware of the development programme, when they're going to be completed. That way we can make sure that all those who are interested or need the housing are registering well in advance, so they can bid for those properties and they can be shortlisted and selected.</p> <p>We can only help people if we know about them and that help might just be advice or information, or other options. So I would encourage anybody in housing need of any description to register on the Housing Register and come and talk to our housing officers to get that advice.</p> <p>What we will prioritise then is people with a local connection, so as Nicki explained, that can be residents within the actual parish itself;</p>

	in employment within the parish; a family connection within the parish; and potentially those who have moved away from the parish but need to return.
Adrian Thwaites, Fringford Parish Council	My concern is that many villages don't have any public transport and there seem to be very few car parking spaces. How do you plan on addressing the fact that if there's no rural transport? Where do people park their cars? We see it in many villages now where there's a lot of cars and they end up being on pavements and verges, adding to general congestion. That's something that really needs to be taken into consideration.
Nicki Lewis, Ardley with Fewcott PC	That was one of our concerns and as part of the development we were insistent that each house had sufficient parking so in our development each house has a drive with two slots per household, and there is also additional parking space at the end of the cul de sac for visitors
Frances Evans, Strategy & Development Team Leader	This is all part of that engagement process and, as Nicki's explained, this was something that the Parish Council wanted, so we would try and bear that in mind. Equally, our planning colleagues want to make sure that the development is right and if there is a lack of rural transport, that is a consideration that would be part of the planning application.
Kidlington Parish Council	What view do you take of the role of towns/Parish Councils in urban affordable housing needs?
Bob Duxbury Major Projects Manager	<p>In terms of urban development you will find that most of your affordable housing needs are met by Section 106 sites, so the major urban developments are going to deliver 30% of affordable housing on each of those sites so I think I'm right in saying neither Banbury, Bicester nor Kidlington have promoted what we normally consider as a rural exception site.</p> <p>No reason why we shouldn't consider it but nobody has done to date and, although this is being re-promoted as a new scheme, Cherwell has been involved for about 20 years in various schemes and delivering them.</p>
Kidlington Parish Council	How up-to date then are figures about estimates of affordable housing needs in the urban areas?
Bob Duxbury Major Projects Manager	I don't think any needs statements have been done for the urban areas
Frances Evans, Strategy & Development Team Leader	<p>We have the strategic housing market assessment for the area and we have planning policy that secures a proportion of affordable housing as part of development so we can look at what the Strategic Housing Market Assessment is telling us in terms of housing need and how many units we have to deliver across the district.</p> <p>We can also look at what the Housing Register is telling us for current numbers on the housing register of people who are living in those areas or who need to live in those areas for whatever reason.</p>

	<p>We have some data that is covering the whole district in terms of general and affordable housing need but we can also bolster that with local evidence from the Housing Register as well.</p> <p>I haven't got figures in front of me but that's how we would look at it, as a sort of triangulation of information that we have; to say what is the need in that area, what does that look like in terms of mix.</p>
<p>Rodney Hobbs, Barford St John's & St Michael Parish Council</p>	<p>As well as the smaller affordable houses I think there is also a need for more smaller properties being built. On the normal market a lot of the developments around our village – Bloxham and Deddington – seem to have an awful lot of three and four bedroom houses but very few two bedroom bungalows.</p> <p>We had a specific case in Barford St Michael a couple of years ago where an infill plot became available. It was suitable for one or possibly two small properties but at the suggestion of the Planning Department we ended up with a very large four-bedroom property. There is a need in our village for small bungalows but instead we got a four bedroom one so I hope the planning department can begin to look at these things a little differently and enable smaller properties to be built, not necessarily affordable ones, but the smaller ones that would be suitable for young families or older people.</p>
<p>Robert Jolley AD Planning & Economy</p>	<p>We'll look at that and take that point. I don't know the details of it and no doubt I will be told tomorrow but yes it's a very good point, thank you</p>

Planning – A New Relationship with Parishes

<p>Q: Sam Shippen Bicester Town Council</p>	<p>Given our history of the fastest growing town in the district and wider, I shall look forward to Robert coming to talk to us about Section 106 agreements because I've been CEO at Bicester Town Council for four and a half years now and we've had one single, very short email about Rectory Green and that's it.</p> <p>Today I met with Karen Curtin from the Graven Hill Development Company to talk about their Section 106, they're talking to Paul Almond but there's been no conversation whatsoever with Bicester Town Council so I look forward to that being first on the list.</p>
<p>A: Robert Jolley AD Planning & Economy</p>	<p>I'll be delighted to come and talk to you about Section 106.</p>
<p>Q: Jenny Jones Clayton with Clattercote Parish Council</p>	<p>How normal is it for paperwork to be withheld from planning application packs when they're sent to the Parish Councils and how do we ensure we get everything?</p> <p>We have had an instance with a business plan which we have finally acquired at second time of asking. It covers a house being built in the countryside. We had a previous application where the</p>

	plan had more holes in it than a colander and we felt we were entitled to have a look at it.
A: Nathanael Stock – Householder Plus Team Leader	I think I'm aware of the application this relates to. One of the exceptions is where sensitive information of a financial nature is included, which is personal to the applicant. I think in this case there is a great deal of work we are able to disclose, and the Officer will be in touch to make sure that we can disclose all that we can but there may be some elements that involve financial information which is sensitive
Q: Jenny Jones Clayton with Clattercote Parish Council	Is this the only case? Because we have another major application on the outskirts of the village and we want to ensure that we have everything that's involved with that.
A: Alex Keen Major Projects Manager	I think are you referring to the marina application, yes. As has been explained, we publish all the information on our website that we are allowed to publish. The nature of planning is that we sometimes receive documentation which is commercially sensitive and for that reason we cannot publish everything, in some circumstances, if there is commercially sensitive information within it. But as far as we can we will publish everything we've got.
Q: Jenny Jones Clayton with Clattercote Parish Council	Sorry to keep on. I understand that it can't go on the website but certainly with redactions it can go to the Parish Council? So are you withholding anything for that marina?
A: Alex Keen Major Projects Manager	<p>Not that I am aware. I will have to check for you, we can do that and I'll speak to the case officer about the application and check that we are publishing everything on the application.</p> <p>I think that the wider point about how we deal with commercially sensitive information – and you mentioned we can redact documents – I think that's something that I'll have to take up with my colleague Jeremy, and as part of the new system that we are bringing in that Sara's referred to. That may give us more options around how we can publish and share information, which might hopefully deal with that that issue.</p> <p>Coming back to the marina, I will come back to you tomorrow on that.</p>
Q: Jane Olds Caversfield, Launton & Wendlebury Parish Councils	It's a positive thing about the Facebook list that you produce every week. Can you keep it going please because it's really useful and I can go through it and just check that what's on the list I also have and also keep a lookout for the applications coming through the paperwork so thank you.
A: Cllr David Hughes	Yes, we can do that thank you very much
Q: David Rogers Deddington Parish Council	First of all Alex; thank you very much for coming out to our annual parish meeting a year or so ago, that was much appreciated.

	<p>Our experience with Section 106 has actually been very positive and we've taken a more proactive view and have tried to build relationships with all of the planning officers when we've had major applications in the community and we have put a Section 106 wish list into our Neighbourhood Plan. We've always engaged with planning officers and made it very clear what we're hoping to see and our experience has been positive.</p>
<p>A: Robert Jolley AD Planning & Economy</p>	<p>Thank you very much, we always take the plaudits with everything.</p>
<p>Q: Ken Howard Piddington Parish Council</p>	<p>A question which mainly refers to the rural areas; we had an instance, only one at the moment but I know other rural parishes have had a problem, where the planning office is approached by a prospective customer and you liaise with them and even have site visits and you then tell them that though you do not see a problem in them applying for planning permission some months later the paperwork turns up within that parish.</p> <p>Would it not be possible, if you've gone to all that trouble to tell somebody that they can and possibly will build, or whatever they wish to do, on that site, to let us know at the same time so we could be pre-warned.</p>
<p>A: Sarah Stevens Senior Manager Development Control</p>	<p>For Pre-application we encourage, as good practice, that people come and talk to us in advance. I think it is fair to say that we give advice in terms of policy matters and perhaps things that we would expect to see. The fact that an officer has indicated that an application might be acceptable is obviously caveated because we will not have undertaken any of the consultations. I apologise if I have missed the point but we don't go out at that stage to consult with people.</p> <p>Our views are very much that when you come to us we will be consulting and if perhaps local residents, parish councils and anyone else comes in with material objections then clearly that is going to be a point that we will make. Those discussions that take place at a pre-app stage are very much to give some guidance and sometimes it's 'you haven't got any chance whatsoever because it's contrary to policy' and other times it's to tell someone 'well, if you want to put an application in you need to be thinking about x, y and z and yes the principle may look fine but actually in terms of detail it may not'.</p>
<p>Q: Ken Howard Piddington Parish Council</p>	<p>If somebody has made the effort to approach you they've obviously got something in mind on a particular site which they wish to do, and you either give them advice that there is a possibility or you say to them there is no possibility whatever the scenario.</p> <p>We, I think, would be entitled to know at that stage that somebody has enquired. Why cannot we know? It hits like a bombshell when eventually the application goes in and everybody seems to know about it beforehand except us.</p>

<p>A: Alex Keen Major Projects Manager</p>	<p>First of all the pre-application service, or seeking pre-application advice, is encouraged by the government because it is a way for potential developers engaging with the Council at an early stage to explore an option's possibilities for development. So by its nature it has to be a confidential service.</p> <p>But absolutely what Sarah has just said is correct: that the advice we give as Officers does not guarantee the outcome that we have advised because there has to be a democratic process, the application has to be made, it has to go through consultation, and we have to have regard to that consultation and any responses that come to us as a result of that.</p> <p>The other thing I would say is that we do, when we are in pre-application discussions particularly on sites that we know are likely to be controversial in the local community and likely to have an impact, we will encourage the developers to engage with the local communities. Now that that is not something we can make them do but it is something we can encourage them to do, and in some instances they will do that and they will they will take that advice.</p> <p>I'm afraid the bottom line is that the pre-application service does have to be a confidential service but it does not guarantee. So for example, if we've given favourable advice it does not guarantee planning permission at the end; that has to be that public consultation exercise and of course the right for Councillors to call an application in to Planning Committee</p>
<p>Q: Diane Bohm Weston-on-the- Green</p>	<p>Thank you Alex. We looked into this pre-application information under freedom of information and there are clear statements just on Google that we have a right to freedom of information unless it really contravenes the Act and I think that's maybe some of the wiggle room that we're looking for. We're not necessarily looking for disclosure of totally confidential information but we would like to know who is sniffing around our areas and what they possibly intend to do because, as a volunteer organisation, parish councils need to be able to pull together the resources to manage whatever is coming in the future. We don't have a long time over the course of the application cycle to get our act together, we're not the professionals here and we need time to get professional advice. That's just really what we're asking for; more wiggle room I think as opposed to utter and complete disclosure of everything. We understand the need to do your jobs so I'm just putting that one in there.</p>
<p>A: Robert Jolley AD Planning & Economy</p>	<p>In the spirit of engagement we will go away and take that away and find if there is a way that we can assist you with this particular issue and pain that you have. We will see what we can do but I can't make any promises but I can promise we will look at it and will get back to you and let you know what can be done.</p>
<p>Q: Councillor Middleton</p>	<p>Rural housing: are these properties sold or are they rented and, if so, who decides if they're sold who would set the price and if they're rented who sets the rent and who administers that including things like maintenance, and who ultimately owns them?</p>

<p>Frances Evans Housing Strategy and Development Team Leader</p>	<p>In terms of what is decided on the site, it comes back to housing need so this is why it is important to have the Parish Housing Needs Survey; important to have the Housing Register information; important to look at what we have globally in terms of housing need in that area; evidence of housing need.</p> <p>If then the housing need identifies that the properties need to be for rent or for part-rent and part-buy on a shared ownership type accommodation then what we normally do is engage with a registered provider, a housing association. They will look at either the cost of renting a property or part-rent-part-buy, whichever, but they would be the owners of the property; they would buy the site from the landowner and then they would let and manage those properties so if they were to be sold as shared ownership they would sell a share and they would retain the other share and charge a rent on that.</p> <p>So they would sell a share, say they sell 40% of the property value and the person who lives there then owns a 40% share of that property and they'll pay rent on the other 60% to the housing association. How those costs are calculated are very much linked to the cost of build and the whole site viability but also they look at the cost of what Local Housing Allowance levels are as well.</p> <p>We would actively encourage housing associations to work within our Local Housing Allowance levels to make sure that they are affordable for people who are on lower level incomes. For the shared ownership property the value of the properties are linked with the market value but of course the rent charged on the unsold equity – the bit that the housing associations still owns – is usually a formula calculation to make sure that it's a viable delivery of the scheme.</p> <p>Occasionally there are some rural exception sites or rural developments that will include some properties for sale. It is an unusual situation and it's usually where there is a very strong argument that the scheme would not be deliverable without some form of cross subsidy from sale, it also has to link back to housing need as well and any sort of plans to develop that would have to be planning compliant in order for it to be approved</p>
<p>Q: Philip Clarke Chesterton Parish Council</p>	<p>Can I just thank Robert for his presentation this evening because clearly many points which concern us he is going to pick up and I thank him for that.</p> <p>I would have to say this: that one of the problems we are facing, and have faced with Section 106 agreements, do not lie with our District Council but with Oxfordshire County Council Highways who have actually failed on at least two occasions to deliver their part of the 106 agreements and I know that's an ongoing problem.</p>
<p>Robert Jolley AD Planning & Economy</p>	<p>One of my colleagues from Oxfordshire County Council, Eric Owens, was invited to be here but he had a family commitment</p>

	<p>tonight which is a shame as he would have loved to have been here.</p> <p>Section 106 agreements are something that I've asked Sarah and the rest of the team to really get a grip on and do it in conjunction with our friends and colleagues and partners at Oxfordshire County Council. There's a work stream going on about ways we can cooperate together to make it a better customer experience in all of the areas, planning and Section 106 are absolutely at the top of the pile so watch this space.</p> <p>I believe we've got an appointment to meet soon.</p>
<p>Philip Clarke Chesterton Parish Council</p>	<p>Yes, I will not only be meeting with you Robert but we're also meeting with Ben Smith from Oxfordshire County Highways, because of the non-delivery of certain aspects of a Section 106 agreement but also we want a broader approach from Cherwell District Council and OCC. In fact there are a number of developments taking place in the village but actually there are often seen as one development seen at a time rather than actually as a whole and that impacts upon us enormously.</p>

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