

Council

Tuesday, 18th October, 2016
6.00 - 9.50 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Klara Sudbury (Chair), Matt Babbage, Paul Baker, Garth Barnes, Ian Bickerton, Nigel Britter, Flo Clucas, Mike Collins, Bernard Fisher, Wendy Flynn, Tim Harman, Steve Harvey, Colin Hay, Rowena Hay, Karl Hobley, Peter Jeffries, Steve Jordan, Adam Lillywhite, Chris Mason, Helena McCloskey, Paul McCloskey, Andrew McKinlay, Dan Murch, Chris Nelson, Tony Oliver, Dennis Parsons, John Payne, Louis Savage, Diggory Seacome, Malcolm Stennett, Pat Thornton, Simon Wheeler, Roger Whyborn, Max Wilkinson and David Willingham

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Coleman, Holliday, Ryder, Williams and Walklett and Councillor Murch and Councillor Colin Hay had advised they would be arriving late.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Fisher, Harman, Colin Hay (when he arrived at the meeting), Sudbury and Wheeler all declared interests as members of Gloucestershire County Council and indicated that they had been granted dispensations from the Standards Committee to participate and vote in the meeting.

Councillor Baker declared an interest as the chairman of the Cheltenham Football Club who used a training ground in the buffer zone at Swindon Village and announced his intention to leave the meeting at this point.

Councillor Dan Murch declared an interest as a member of Hatherley and the Reddings Cricket Club which is within the JCS boundaries and part of the designated greenbelt area.

3. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor welcomed all the members of the public in the gallery.

4. COMMUNICATIONS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

There were no communications from the Leader.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1.	Question from Adrian Kingsbury to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
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	<p>Within the NPPF Section 83, there are clear criteria for the function of Greenbelt and it clearly states that Greenbelt may only be revised under 'exceptional circumstances'.</p> <p>Upon review of the HM Planning Inspectors Preliminary Report, it is stated within Sections 5 & 6 that such 'exceptional circumstances' have been demonstrated, yet the report does not define what such circumstances are. The Inspector's Interim Report made no further justification other than refer back to the previous report.</p> <p>However the Preliminary Report does state in Section 69, that "The AMEC GB Assessment of September 2011⁶⁵ considers all the Cheltenham and Gloucester GB land at a high level against the five purposes of including land in the GB⁶⁶. It does not consider sustainability or landscape issues, but is purely an assessment against the purposes and function of GBs. I am satisfied that the methodology used is appropriate and that the report is robust."</p> <p>It continues in Section 110 that "According to the AMEC report, this cluster is critical to preventing the sprawl of Cheltenham and, towards the south, the merger of Cheltenham and Gloucester¹¹⁷. The segments to the south are NE1 and NE2. NE4 is further north. Nonetheless, the report specifically says that this segment makes a significant contribution to the land separating Cheltenham and Innsworth¹¹⁸, thereby playing an important role in the separation of Cheltenham and Gloucester.</p> <p>With such clear expert guidance can you therefore please detail the criteria and the assessment of how the Inspector determines that there are now exceptional circumstances for release of the Greenbelt identified as West Cheltenham despite the contrary comment within the preliminary report?</p>
	<p>Response from the Leader</p>
	<p>During the examination detailed evidence was heard over a number of sessions on both the Green Belt sensitivity of the site and the potential for development which would meet both economic and housing needs at West Cheltenham. The agendas for these sessions, and the documents produced in relation to them are available on the JCS examination webpage, particularly JCS Green Belt papers EXAM 142 and EXAM 196.</p> <p>In determining whether exceptional circumstances exist, the value of the Green Belt must be balanced against the need to positively seek opportunities to meet development needs in our area. These opportunities should accord with the JCS spatial strategy and national policy. In assessing these needs it has been established that our need exceeds the urban capacity of Cheltenham to accommodate this growth without causing substantial harm to the character of the town. Further information on this can be found in the JCS Matter 7 statement on Green Belt on the JCS website.</p> <p>The JCS authorities have considered strategic allocation options at West</p>

Cheltenham through the plan making process since the Broad Locations report in 2011, and allocation options were considered in 2013. Whilst the Pre Submission Plan identified the land for safeguarding for future development, the Hayden Sewage Treatment plant which forms part of the site and emits odour curtailed further development of the allocation at that time. Severn Trent is now working with the Council on measures to improve odour emissions, which when undertaken will release parts of the site for development. The latest statement of common ground outlining these measures and the emerging masterplan for the area is at EXAM 198 and a priority for this proposed allocation is ensuring effective master planning of phase 1 and a future phase 2.

The JCS inspector heard this evidence over the course of the examination. In December 2015 the inspector published EXAM 146 which contained the 'Inspector's Preliminary Findings on Green Belt Release, Spatial Strategy and Strategic Allocations ' paragraph 113.

"Taking account of housing and employment needs overall, including GCHQ's requirements, and my reservations on certain other potential strategic allocations, it seems to me that the Cheltenham part of this proposed safeguarded area might be suitable for allocation. Views are sought from the JCS and other participants on the potential for allocating land in this area."

After hearing further evidence on the emerging allocation at paragraph 126 of EXAM232 the Inspector's interim findings she writes:

"An additional employment led site at West Cheltenham has been agreed for allocation by the JCS team, who suggest it is also suitable for about 500 dwellings, albeit the developers have put forward a figure of 750. This is in a sustainable location on the edge of Cheltenham and, for the reasons given in my Preliminary Findings, I recommend this site for allocation in the JCS. Allocating this site for 500 dwellings would reduce the remaining unmet requirement to 1,039 (1,539 – 500)."

After further hearings, in her most recent communication, the Inspector's "Note of Recommendations made at the hearing session on 21 July 2016" she writes:

"West Cheltenham Safeguarded Land Part of this area has already been recommended as a strategic allocation and I do not propose re-visiting those discussions. It is the remainder of the area proposed for safeguarding that I have re-considered. This proposed safeguarded land makes a significant contribution to the Green Belt according to the AMEC report. Consequently, there is a very high bar to overcome in demonstrating exceptional circumstances.

However, in my judgement this bar has been reached for reasons which include the following: there would be a major benefit in Severn Trent Water removing the Hayden Sewage Works from the area, resulting in significantly improved living and working conditions; it would result in a co-ordinated development in two phases, preventing further piecemeal development in the area; it would provide a strong Green Belt boundary; there would be significant contributions to infrastructure, including

	<p>schools.</p> <p>Consequently, I find that exceptional circumstances exist for the release of this land from the Green Belt and, therefore, its safeguarding is sound. Furthermore, the JCS team might wish to consider exploring the possibilities of phase one being expanded and additional housing being provided in this area during the Plan period.”</p> <p>The JCS team have considered this in light of the statement of common ground, and work on the capacity of the site for employment and housing purposes, and maximising the sustainable utilisation of the area. Through this work, the main modifications plan has been prepared, identifying at least 45ha of employment land and 1,100 new homes for the area between the plan’s adoption and 2031.</p> <p>If the Main Modifications are approved by the three councils they will be subject to public consultation and then to Examination in Public.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Mr Kingsbury said he was disappointed that there had been no definition given in the Leader’s response for exceptional circumstances and asked him to detail what they were in this case?</p> <p>The Leader said he could not add anything to his response. Guidance was provided but the final decision on what was exceptional was down to the Inspector.</p>
2.	Question from Carol Kingsbury to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	<p>Can the Council confirm if any studies have been carried out during the creation of the JCS:-</p> <p>a. Pertaining to the wildlife in the area of Greenbelt identified as West Cheltenham, and if so where is the report lodged for public review?</p> <p>b. Pertaining to the toxicology of the soil due to the earlier practice by Severn Trent (and/or its predecessor) of the disposal of treated human waste within the area of Greenbelt identified as West Cheltenham?</p>
	Response from the Leader
	<p>Exam 198, the Statement of Common Ground for land at Hayden, identifies the current evidence base which has been developed for the site so far. Biodiversity effects have been assessed through the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal in 2014 and updated in the Sustainability Appraisal Addendum Report which is part of the associated documents with this report available on the JCS website.</p> <p>Detailed contaminated land work will need to be undertaken as part of any proposal regarding the strategic allocation, in accordance with JCS policy SD15.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Mrs Kingsbury referred to the AMEC report of September 2011 and its references to the land at West Cheltenham and its significant contribution to safeguarding the countryside and checking urban sprawl. She asked why and how can the JCS Councils and the Inspector justify and recommend that this area can be removed</p>

	<p>from the Green Belt at this late stage.</p> <p>In response the Leader advised that the Green Belt review had determined that all sites in the Green Belt served some useful purpose however the evidence shows that more land is needed for employment land and to meet housing requirements. Therefore it has to be questioned whether there are exceptional circumstances which would allow development in these areas. After assessing all the evidence the Inspector has concluded that those circumstances do apply in this case.</p>
3.	<p>Question from Peter and Margaret Holt (a resident of Springbank) to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan</p> <p>High Rise Buildings - The constraints around this side of Cheltenham are daunting, particularly the traffic issues, housing and employment building distribution. What is proposed now will create more jobs and the consequent housing and roads trapped between the hills and the motorway. The planners are clearly very professional and pragmatic officers – one example and a very important one is that they advise tall commercial units to be on lower ground and closer to the main road arteries. They also advise open spaces. What has been proposed in the vision statement is the very opposite, namely: ‘Proposing building high rise industrial units on the top of prominent greenbelt land, blocking out the western light, views and pastures for miles around. If we can see the Malverns and the Forest of Dean, they can see us. The industrial units on the high ground will stand out like solar panels in Dubai.’</p> <p>Why not build high rise next to the motorway – it can also act as a noise barrier and closer access?</p> <p>What makes you ignore your planner’s advice regarding building prominence?</p>
	<p>Response from the Leader</p> <p>The vision statement contained within the statement of common ground identifies broad principles of placemaking, but is not equivalent to a detailed masterplan. Detailed master planning for the West Cheltenham area as a whole is an explicit requirement of JCS Policy SA1, and development of the site will not be approved without it.</p> <p>The placemaking principles in the statement of common ground include ensuring that development relates well to the topography of the land “The buildings on the higher ground to the north-east will be restricted to typical residential heights whilst taller commercial buildings would be located to the southeast on lower ground” but does not set out specifics of building heights and density, which will all need to be agreed as part of the master planning process of the site.</p> <p>The JCS detailed design policy (Policy SD5) identifies principles for architectural design in regard to layout and scale, and these will need to be integrated into any future proposal.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Mr Holt said that the main contention for</p>

	<p>residents in this area was high rise steel clad buildings in close proximity to housing and the suggestion that they would be located on the lower ground did not address their concerns. He added that the public questioners had only received the responses to the questions just before the meeting and therefore had had inadequate time to assimilate the responses and formulate their supplementary questions.</p> <p>In response the Leader advised that it was very early days for the West Cheltenham site and there was a lot more work to do before any approvals are given.</p> <p>On the issue of the timing of public questions he indicated that the deadline for submitting public and the questions had been put back some time ago to allow an additional day after the agenda had been published for Members and the Public to draft their questions. Lead Members had been given the shortest practical time to turn around their responses to the questions and it was a question of balance.</p> <p>The Mayor confirmed that the responses to public and member questions for this meeting had been published on the website at midday earlier that day and all public questioners had received a personal e-mail with all the responses attached immediately after this publication.</p>
4.	<p>Question from Peter and Margaret Holt to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan</p> <p>Despite the hysteria concerning the development of Springbank, I have on my deeds that a 'road of convenience' may well traverse from south to north, west of my house. A natural, logical, forward planning requirement. So we have been expecting this since this house was built in 1968. I also cannot be such a hypocrite to object to houses being built in front of us as my house was built in front of somebody else. However over the passage of time, the authorities, politics, planners and circumstances have proved that they have missed the boat and boxed themselves into a corner. We are now (in my opinion) in the situation of where the JCS is forced to play pass the parcel with the additional pressures of governmental changed attitudes on the 'greenbelt' issue and the financing of housing and employment.</p> <p>To add to these pressures, are the changed attitudes to the environment and the need for increased security requirements. This is where I, as a 73 year old ex professional engineer, take a strong issue with the proposals. There are alternatives. The cyber security / science park does NOT have to be built on a Cheltenham greenbelt or even in the Cheltenham boundary. By building next to and from the M5 motorway towards Cheltenham, more people can share the remaining (I hope) greenbelt from either side, i.e. a greenbelt corridor! Tewkesbury seems to have all the greenbelts. What are you leaving as Cheltenham's legacy – traffic jams, terrible traffic infrastructure, frustration, unrest and then just an ordinary industrial town.</p> <p>What happens when Cheltenham runs out of greenbelt space, when you finally develop the ONLY greenbelt around the west side of Cheltenham (or even the whole of Cheltenham)?</p>

	Response from the Leader
	<p>Please see also answer to question 1. The development proposed in the Main Modifications is sufficient to meet Cheltenham's needs for the plan period, with areas safeguarded for development well beyond 2031 at West Cheltenham and North West Cheltenham. These locations have been chosen to reduce the potential for the coalescence of Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury, whilst preserving the openness and integrity of the remaining designation.</p> <p>Any release of additional Green Belt land will require exceptional circumstances, and can only be done through the review of the Plan. By identifying safeguarded areas in the plan, the JCS ensures that future growth well beyond the plan period can be sustainably accommodated to allow the town to grow whilst preserving its character and surroundings.</p> <p>If the Main Modifications are approved by the three councils they will be subject to public consultation and then to Examination in Public.</p> <p>Mr Holt indicated that he did not accept the answer and he had had insufficient time to assimilate the response provided by the Leader. He suggested the JCS was being railroaded through.</p> <p>The Leader did not accept that the JCS was being rushed. It was a long process and there was still a long way to go before the endpoint particularly in terms of public consultation.</p>
5.	This question has been withdrawn
6.	Question from Mary Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan (plans to attend)
	<p>The following statement is made in the 'Emerging JCS Transport Strategy' which was only published on the JCS 'New Evidence' website 24 hours before the deadline for public questions.</p> <p><i>"When the 2013 Central Severn Vale SATURN model is available later in the year it will be used to refine the list of schemes outlined in the emerging strategy. Only once this work has been completed will the strategic and local highway authorities be able to fully consider the transport impacts of the JCS and its supporting Transport Strategy and to determine if their respective policy requirements are likely to be satisfied."</i></p> <p>It is now clear that Councillors' will be making their decision on the final JCS Strategic Allocations without adequate and credible up-to-date traffic modelling evidence. Likewise the public have been denied the opportunity to submit informed and relevant public questions regarding the key issue of transport infrastructure to this decision meeting.</p> <p>The 2013 CSV Saturn modelling was stated to the JCS Inspector to be available in April 2016 for the Transport hearing sessions. It failed to</p>

	<p>materialise in April, and was then stated to be available in October 2016. It is still missing.</p> <p>When is the 2013 traffic modelling going to be available and will you confirm that it will be published in time for the <u>start</u> of the public consultation on the Main Modifications?</p>
	<p>Response from the Leader</p> <p>The updated 2013 CSV model is expected to be available later this year. However, additional work using this model will not be available prior to the Main Modifications consultation.</p> <p>The latest round of modelling has tested all sites presented in the Main Modifications plan with a package of mitigation (the 'DS5' model run) on the existing 2008 model. Although the final package of mitigation needs to be refined using the 2013 model, the DS5 scenario provides us with enough information to confirm that the strategic allocations are deliverable and that there are transport measures that can be implemented to mitigate their impacts. This transport evidence is publicly available and will support the JCS consultation.</p> <p>In her Interim Report, the JCS inspector states: (para 195 – 197)</p> <p>"With respect to transport, there have been wide spread concerns that the transport modelling, based on the Central Severn Vale SATURN strategic highways 2008 base year model is outdated and not fit for purpose. Whilst I understand that the model has been refined to make it as robust and up to date as possible, Gloucestershire County Council and Highways England have commented that further refinement work needs to be done.</p> <p>Nonetheless, I note Atkin's evidence that the model was peer reviewed in 2012 and found to be generally fit for purpose. Whilst the 2008 model contains weaknesses, it is currently the best information available. There were no objections to its use at the March hearing session from Highways England or Gloucestershire County Council.</p> <p>Although Highways England and Gloucestershire County Council are working on a 2013 based update, it is not expected until later on in the year and, even then, model runs will have to be undertaken to make refinements to the mitigation packages and transport strategy. Waiting for this updated evidence would cause undue delay to the JCS, which in the public interest needs to progress. Therefore, I do not recommend delaying progress to await the 2013 based model."</p> <p>Mrs Nelson asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>The JCS Inspector has recommended that the Fiddington site be included in the JCS Main Modifications and allocated for 900 houses, but in Paragraph 2.1 of the Report for this meeting the JCS officers explain that Fiddington has not been included as a JCS strategic allocation. The reason stated is as follows:</p>

	<p><i>“The evidence to support this decision is rooted in the on-going transport modelling work. Mitigation options relating to the transport issues on the A46 and M5 Jct 9 have been tested and these raise deliverability concerns with this allocation”.</i></p> <p><i>“Due to this uncertainty, it is not considered appropriate to allocate the site through the JCS at this time and to reconsider options for development through future plan review when more is known about the infrastructure needs of the A46.”</i></p> <p>Why has the Fiddington site been omitted for reasons rooted in the on-going transport modelling and mitigation options, when there clearly remains great uncertainty and much public concern regarding transport infrastructure and mitigation for the North West Cheltenham site, which is to provide 4,250 houses, almost 5 times the number of houses at Fiddington, and additionally a large amount of employment land?</p> <p>The Leader advised that the situation with the Fiddington site was different and the reason it had been removed was that the proposed traffic changes to the A46 would have the A46 running straight through the middle of the site.</p>
7.	Question from Mary Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	<p>In the same ‘Emerging JCS Transport Strategy’ document it states the following in Appendix A:</p> <p><i>“Lower High Street (Cheltenham) – bus only routes inbound, reallocation of existing highway space for inbound bus lane.”</i></p> <p>This means that all traffic, except buses, approaching the Lower High Street from the Tewkesbury Road (A4019) will either have to turn right into Gloucester Road, or left up Townsend Street or, (if able to proceed under the railway bridge) will be forced left onto the already congested Northern Relief Road.</p> <p>With a total of more than 5,300 new houses planned on land on either side of the Tewkesbury Road, plus major Employment sites included, can you explain why this planned entry closure into Cheltenham for all traffic except buses will not end up in gridlock around Cheltenham town centre, and be a major deterrent to people shopping and visiting the town, resulting in a severe adverse impact on Cheltenham’s economy?</p>
	<p>Response from the Leader</p> <p>A number of measures have been tested throughout the extensive transport modelling work that has been undertaken over the last few years. It is an iterative process with different scenarios, containing different mitigation measures, being tested along the way. The DS5 scenario is the last culmination of this work. However, it is not the final package of mitigation measures and further refinement is required once the updated 2013 CSV model is available. Therefore, individual</p>

	<p>measures such as those described above will be re-assessed to confirm their impact to the wider transport network.</p> <p>Mrs Nelson asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>Phase 2 of the Cheltenham Transport Plan is to commence in early January, and the CTP is aiming to close Cheltenham's Inner Ring road through the centre of town via Boots Corner. This will displace much traffic out into the Gloucester Road - Tewkesbury Road (A4109) junction, and also onto the already congested Princess Elizabeth Way.</p> <p>As the inner ring is a major and important north to south route through the town, and also a designated freight route, has the Cheltenham Transport Plan been included in the DS5 Saturn 2008 traffic modelling, upon which the officers are basing their assertion that all of the Cheltenham JCS development can be mitigated against, and can the Leader confirm that an implemented CTP will be included in the revised 2013 Saturn modelling which is due to start in December?</p> <p>In response the Leader advised that the traffic modelling for the CTP had been done separately. His understanding was that it would be included but he would need to check the technical detail with officers and would then confirm his response in writing to Mrs Nelson.</p>
8.	Question from Ken Pollock to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan (plans to attend)
	<p>The summary diagram on page 5 of the 'Emerging JCS Transport Strategy - October 2016' document shows that Cheltenham is now to get both a Western Bypass AND a NorthWest Bypass (linking from the A4019 to the A435 at Bishops Cleeve), major routes which were obviously essential from the very first JCS stage, but which dysfunctional GCC Highways has hitherto declined to specify or acknowledge. Accordingly, the developer of the Cheltenham-NorthWest urban extension has never planned for any such link route through that whole area (of 4,000+ houses).</p> <p>Will Cheltenham Councillors urge that this road infrastructure (essential for the most massive JCS urban extension) be unambiguously required by/in the Main Mods text (Policy A5) prior to the forthcoming public consultation?</p>
	Response from the Leader
	<p>The latest round of modelling has tested all sites presented in the Main Modifications plan with a package of mitigation (the 'DS5' model run) on the existing 2008 model. This has included some significant infrastructure improvements around the west Cheltenham area. However, while this latest modelling provides us with the information that the strategic allocations are deliverable, once the updated 2013 model is available then further testing is required to refine the mitigation package. Therefore, at this stage it is difficult to provide a policy requirement when we don't know the exact level of improvements that may be needed. Nevertheless, the JCS transport policy and the individual site policies put a requirement on sites that their traffic impact must be mitigated.</p>

	<p>This is high level modelling work, which demonstrates that there are no 'showstoppers' to delivery of the strategic allocations, but identifying the right scheme and the most efficient and cost effective layouts will be a more detailed process which will come as part of the master planning and applications work for these sites as they come forward.</p> <p>Mr Pollock raised the following supplementary question:</p> <p>Contrary to the above answer, there are no "significant" road "infrastructure improvements" specified for Cheltenham North West , for a development which is so huge that its strategic "masterplanning" needs to be more than just "high level" concepts, awaiting credible detail (called "refinement").</p> <p>Therefore, can Cheltenham Councillors request that the JCS team of officer "colleagues" provides much more detail of the major road infrastructure items (not traffic-lights tinkering) around NorthWest Cheltenham, and that they do so before the start of the Consultation?</p> <p>Otherwise the Inspectorate can be persuaded to revise its 'blind eye' to inadequate transport evidence, on grounds of natural justice and demonstrating genuine deliverability, which therefore warrants a brief delay for that evidence. A brief delay is no risk to Cheltenham.</p> <p>In response the Leader advised that he couldn't support any further delay to the process and the Inspector was satisfied with the process. The traffic issues would be reviewed as part of the process going forward once the updated 2013 model was available.</p>
9.	<p>Question from Ken Pollock to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan</p> <p>The DS5 Modelling is grounded upon both the M5 Junction 10 'all movements' upgrade and the A417 Missing Link having been carried out. However it is quite possible that neither of these will be completed within the next 10 years, and the Junction 10 upgrade may not happen at all, if Highways England decides that it will impede motorway flow (due to the Cheltenham Western bypass not being built early enough).</p> <p>In a Matter 5 Statement provided to the JCS Examination in June last year GFirst LEP stated (page 3 para 1.4):</p> <p><i>"At the present time the current evidence indicates that even if the A5 (North West Cheltenham) allocation were to progress from plan to implementation there would still be insufficient traffic demand to warrant an all ways junction at Junction 10."</i></p> <p>The proposed net increase at West Cheltenham (of 600 houses, i.e. 1100 minus 500) may not change that J10 'demand' calculation, given that West Cheltenham comes with its own integral distributor road linking to the A40, Golden Valley Bypass and Junction 11.</p> <p>Therefore will Saturn CSV 2013 modelling be published to show the traffic implications <u>without</u> these two upgrades for the years 2026 and 2031?</p>

	Response from the Leader
	<p>The specific scenarios that will be tested through the updated 2013 model have not yet been agreed.</p> <p>Mr Pollock asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>The JCS Inspector has appreciated and defended special Cheltenham's environmental constraint very creditably, and has effectively 'pushed' Tewkesbury (and Gloucester) housing away from Cheltenham's limited available periphery, reminding them that those Districts both have non-Green Belt sites available adjacent to their centres of population.</p> <p>Cheltenham, in these Main Mods, is delivering its target of nearly 11,000 houses, yet the other two Districts are proposing not to. In particular, Tewkesbury's proposed shortfall of 730 houses should not be tolerated, especially in the context of the current risk that Tewkesbury BC will now progress (as it did at Leckhampton) an application outside the JCS for 700 houses (plus other land uses) at Up Hatherley (Chargrove Lane), adjacent to the severely trafficked and unwidenable Shurdington Road (A46).</p> <p>Should Cheltenham follow the Inspector's lead, and cease to let Cheltenham be imposed upon (out-voted) in this JCS "trio" of Districts ?</p> <p>In response the Leader advised that it was not a question of Cheltenham being out voted as the JCS was being developed in partnership with the other two councils.</p>
10.	Question from Dr D J Coppard to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	<p>We live at the junction of Old Gloucester Rd and Hayden Lane, at the bottom of the hill proposed for development. Water levels are already high - near surface level all year round. In winter the defensive ditches are near full and the under road culverts are high.</p> <p>TODAY (OCTOBER) THE WATER LEVEL IN OUR WELL IS JUST 90CM BELOW GROUND LEVEL.</p> <p>How can you possibly build on this flood plain and who will be responsible when our properties flood and what will happen to the run off water from the roofs, hard surfaces, roads, and parking areas of the proposed business park and housing?</p>
	Response from the Leader
	<p>Flooding is clearly an important issue, JCS Policy INF3 "Flood Risk Management" requires new development to where possible contribute to a reduction in existing flood risk and incorporate suitable sustainable drainage systems to manage surface water drainage, ensuring the flood risk is not increased either on site or elsewhere. This is detailed and exacting policy written in collaboration with the Environment Agency. New development will need to meet these requirements as well as national standards and guidance to gain approval.</p>

	<p>Mr Coppard raised the following supplementary question:</p> <p>The Environment Agency flood hazard maps show that some areas to the west of the proposed W Cheltenham development area, within the proposed zone 2 in particular, prone to regular surface water flooding. I live in this area and fields flood each Winter.</p> <p>The Inspector's report suggests that only the general flood zone category for the region has been considered, not the impact of increased surface water runoff caused by new development onto areas already prone to surface water flooding.</p> <p>Could we please hear what real investigations have been done into flood risks and who is ultimately accountable for mitigating this risk?</p> <p>In response the Leader advised that when a particular site is put forward for development, the applicant would have to supply details of how flood risks and surface water drainage would be addressed and these would be fully assessed before any approvals were given.</p>
11.	<p>Question from Dr D J Coppard to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan</p> <p>This is a huge plan with great impact and I am concerned it is being bulldozed through? This plan for West of Cheltenham abutting Old Gloucester Rd is being rushed through without due diligence. The area has gone from Green Belt to plans for a business park and 2,000 + homes in just two years. In the rush not to miss out on the New Homes Bonus this development will be a fragmented free for all for greedy developers with no responsibility for the supporting infrastructure and long term environmental impacts.</p> <p>This is a large life-changing development for the surrounding area.</p> <p>Who will be accountable for the irreversible impact on place and people when the ambitious have moved on?</p>
	<p>Response from the Leader</p> <p>Given the length of time it has taken to develop the JCS it is difficult to believe it is being rushed. However it is true that modifications have been introduced in order to achieve a sound plan. If these Main Modifications are approved by the three councils they will be subject to public consultation and then to Examination in Public.</p> <p>Please also see answer to question 4. Part of the value of the development of strategic allocations is the ability to gain substantial high quality 'hard', social and green infrastructure planned into the development and released alongside the build out of the schemes. Policy INF 4, 5 and 7 create requirements for delivery of each of these types of infrastructure, and there is currently ongoing work to study and develop the social and community cohesion and structures needed within these new urban extensions as they are built.</p>

	<p>Mr Coppard asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>We are all agreed that the formulation of the JCS has indeed been a long process and has allowed for substantial consultation. But the speed with which this significant new amendment is being pushed through at this late stage is denying the right to any form of proper consultation and is undermining due democratic process. I'd like to illustrate this with two examples.</p> <p>Firstly, because there were no local objections raised in the original draft JCS - where no real plans were proposed for the area beyond future review in 2020 - residents and their representation have been locked out of subsequent discussion, even after the plans have dramatically changed - how many contributions from the Springbank community did you receive? I doubt any. A change in plan should reopen the process so that communities have the same opportunity to respond as other communities have had when the draft JCS was first published.</p> <p>Secondly, the information that is now being rushed out is at best, extremely difficult to follow, and at worst, contradictory in nature such that no one really seems to know what is being proposed. For example, details of Phase 1 and Phase 2 were presented in Examination document 198, published in February. However the new map presenting Indicative Site Layout 11 - i.e West Cheltenham - published this October in the amended JCS presents both different boundaries to phase 1, with an expansion into the north west area between Old Gloucester road and Hayden, and presents different land use, with this changing from green infrastructure to housing.</p> <p>So either communication is either very poor, or the process is moving ahead so quickly that there is a lack of internal clarity on what is being proposed. One is, I believe a function of the other and I do believe this is being rushed through far too quickly.</p> <p>So my question is simply this: How can these inconsistencies, lack of clarity, combined with a statement from the Inspector that she will not revisit discussions, support any fair consultation process?</p> <p>In response the Leader acknowledged that new potential sites have come in late in the day and the council had raised concerns with the Inspector about the process, but it was a national process which the JCS councils had to follow. He also accepted that the JCS was currently not a perfect document and a lot more work needs to be done. If all three Councils agree to the recommendations, the JCS in its current form will go out to public consultation and the Inspector has promised an examination in public of the main modifications.</p>
12.	<p>Question from Tess Beck to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan</p> <p>The North West Cheltenham development will create a significant amount of vehicular traffic, most of which is predicted to be seeking to access Cheltenham for work and recreation. The Tewkesbury Road (A4019) is heavily trafficked and congested with many drivers avoiding it by rat running through residential areas on Swindon Road and St Paul's Road.</p>

	<p>This already causes major problems for the communities living along these roads; noise; dirt; poor air quality; poor pedestrian environment. The junction of St Paul's Road and Swindon Road is already identified in the report as being congested at peak hours. However, in the evidence submitted, it seems no mitigation is planned for these roads.</p> <p>How will Cheltenham Borough Council ensure that the St Paul's and Elmfield communities are protected from the impact of the extra traffic generated by the NW Cheltenham development?</p>
	Response from the Leader
	<p>A number of measures have been tested throughout the extensive transport modelling work that has been undertaken over the last few years. It is an iterative process with different scenarios, containing different mitigation measures, being tested along the way. The DS5 scenario is the last culmination of this work and contains a number of measures that have been identified in response to the North West Cheltenham allocations. However, it is not the final package of mitigation measures and further refinement is required once the updated 2013 CSV model is available. Therefore, if evidence suggests that further mitigation is required then this can be assessed.</p>
13.	Question from Tess Beck to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	<p>Swindon Road through Elmfield and St Paul's Road are not suitable for heavy vehicles due to the various weight limits and height limits on the bridges. But with a significant reduction in traffic, this could be a cycle route to the town centre and the Honeybourne Line.</p> <p>Will Gloucestershire Highways and Cheltenham Borough Council be considering modal filtering and other traffic reduction measures along this route to improve cycle access from Swindon Village/ NW Cheltenham to Cheltenham town centre?</p>
	Response from the Leader
	<p>These measures can be assessed to determine what the most sustainable and efficient solution will be. This will be done as part of the detailed assessment of transport needs which will come as part of the master planning of strategic allocations and with further work on the local transport network alongside the County Council through the local transport plan. We are currently at the high level modelling stage, while specific solutions such as this would need to be looked at in a more detailed context at the applications level, when considering the needs of the area as a whole in response to specific development proposals.</p>

6. MEMBER QUESTIONS

1.	Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	<p>The JCS Transport Strategy Evidence Base was only released on 10 Oct, just 2 days before the deadline for questions to Council. This is simply not good enough and makes it very difficult to have a proper debate on JCS transport matters next week. This late release of key transport strategy information has been a regular feature of the JCS throughout the last couple of years.</p> <p>We will also have the situation that when the JCS next goes out for public consultation in November, we will still be waiting for the release of the 2013 Central Severn Vale</p>

	<p>base year Saturn model and new 2031 forecast models (also due in "November" but it will not be until Jan/Feb 2017 that we will have a model based on the 2031 developments and the associated traffic mitigation). Without that critical transport information we will be unable to fully consider the transport impacts of the JCS and its supporting Transport Strategy and to determine if their respective policy requirements are likely to be satisfied.</p> <p>Why is it that the JCS Authorities seem incapable of managing the release of key transport planning information in sufficient time to inform the democratic process of review?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p> <p>Please see also answer to public questions 6 -9 on transport modelling.</p> <p>It was agreed at the hearings that we would utilise the 2008 model to determine the mitigations necessary and consequently a transport strategy for the JCS to review the new sites as proposed in the main modifications. This has been completed and is what will be consulted upon.</p> <p>With reference to timing of the transport evidence clearly this is not ideal although is not entirely within the control of the JCS Authorities. The work being done via the County Council is not a straight forward technical analysis as both they and Highways England need to review the outputs for accuracy before anything is issued.</p> <p>Councillor Nelson asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p>I and a number of the public questioners are only asking for a 3 month delay to the public consultation, to ensure the transport solution and its £750M ++ of mitigation measures can be fully assessed by the public. It is all about the need for due diligence. Although I have full confidence in Inspector Ord generally, on this one area I am very uncomfortable with her almost implicit confidence in GCC Highways and Highways England. Why is it not in the public interest for a short delay to the next public consultation, which is effectively the public's last opportunity to scrutinise the transport solution (apart from the final public hearings, where people may not be able to attend)?</p> <p>In response the Leader disagreed that that the next public consultation would be the last opportunity as the JCS was an iterative process. When any applications were put forward for West Cheltenham then all transport issues would be considered before any approvals were given. The Local Plan would also provide a further opportunity to review transport issues. Now was not a good time to delay the JCS process and the Inspector had confirmed she was happy with the process being followed and the timescales.</p>
2.	<p>Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan</p> <p>The JCS Transport Strategy Evidence Base when considering the North West Cheltenham development, stated that a long term solution would be to introduce a south bound access to J10 on the M5 to reduce the traffic impact on Prince Elizabeth Way. Up to now, I had always understood that increases to traffic from JCS development was thought to be insufficient to justify a south bound access to J10. Do the JCS Authorities now believe that situation has changed and that we may be able to generate a realistic business case to modify J10?</p>

	Response from Cabinet Member
	Yes – the increased volume of traffic which has come about from the new proposed sites to meet both the recommended housing numbers as well as the employment sites does strengthen the case for the south bound access to the M5 J10. However it must be noted that this emerging strategy will be refined as and when the 2013 SATURN model is eventually available.
3.	Question from Councillor to Cabinet Member, Councillor Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	The JCS Transport Strategy Evidence Base appears to indicate that the North West Cheltenham development of some 4,300 houses will need significant public transport investment on Tewkesbury Road, more than on any other JCS site. What is the latest view of transport operators on this demanding financial requirement of £19M?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>This is really a question for transport operators. It is important to note that the purpose of the DS5 scenario is to provide us with enough information to confirm that the strategic allocations are deliverable and that there are transport measures that can be implemented to mitigate their impacts. Whilst the work has achieved this, the exact schemes to be chosen will be a matter for master planning further down the line. This means that the current financial requirements are subject to change once specific layouts and schemes are decided, beyond this high level work.</p> <p>Councillor Nelson asked the following supplementary question.</p> <p>You say that my question is really a question for transport operators. Well, we had a senior one yesterday, with Rupert Cox, MD Stagecoach West, who knew nothing about this £19M requirement. He had also expressed the view that some of the JCS developments gave him grave cause for concern in terms of the traffic implications and any mitigation measures. So why are you not delaying the public consultation to allow subject matters experts to get involved with the transport solution?</p> <p>The Leader replied that the £19M was only a generic estimate of costs at this stage based on high-level strategic plans. Full estimates of mitigation costs would be worked up when any applications for West Cheltenham come forward.</p>
4.	Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	The JCS Transport Strategy Evidence Base suggests that Do Something 5 may be the best mitigation solution to meet JCS traffic problems. However, it does not include any dwellings in Leckhampton. Yet the TBC planning permission for 377 houses on SD2 is still extant (although subject to a Judicial Review) and Inspector Ord has agreed "of the order of 200 houses" could be built on CBC land to the east of Farm Lane. So in the 'worst case' situation of 577 houses being built in Leckhampton, should not future modelling of the DS5 transport mitigation measures factor-in that worst case traffic pressure?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	To be consistent the JCS transport modelling work has mirrored that as proposed in the Main Modifications in terms of strategic sites. Of note however, is that the 'smaller sites growth' within the JCS (for the local plans to further define) is also included but as a background traffic demand. Therefore in this case for Cheltenham this would include the development as proposed at Leckhampton, albeit not as a specific site.

	The Cheltenham local plan work however would then be the plan and the time to better review any specific local need.
5.	Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	The JCS Transport Strategy Evidence Base at Fig 71 on page 88 lists the potential funding sources of the £750M + required for the preferred DS5 solution. How realistic is this provisional breakdown? Please explain what level of confidence you have in each of the potential funding sources.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>This provisional breakdown is a 'first level' calculation and therefore is merely guidance only. The actual number can only be better refined when:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The 2013 SATURN model is available and 2. Detailed schemes are put forward for the final list of mitigations. <p>To answer the question of potential funding sources, there is growing confidence in these, and other, sources of funding to support the growth. Naturally substantial further work needs to be completed before funding could be confirmed, but at this stage, there is sufficient confidence to at least pursue these sources further.</p> <p>In a supplementary question Councillor Nelson said he full appreciated that the £750M figure was a 'first level' calculation but did the Leader have any idea what the plus or minus change could be.....could it be as much as 50% or double?</p> <p>The Leader advised that he could not give any more idea of potential variation at this stage.</p>
6.	Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	Para 2.6 on page 11 of the Main Modifications Report to Council, notes that the Farm Lane site of 377 dwellings can be accorded to Cheltenham's supply figures "should TBC and CBC agree." I thought they had agreed and that we were simply waiting for the legal paperwork to be signed? Also, why is this paperwork taking so long to conclude, given that Inspector Ord made her recommendations on apportionment of urban extensions/Duty to Cooperate in May/June, some 5 months ago? Do the 10,996 housing supply figures for Cheltenham on pg 43 of the Report include the 377 figure?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The statement of agreement between Tewkesbury and Cheltenham according the 377 dwellings to Cheltenham's supply is still being drawn up, but there is no known disagreement between the parties. Because these are technical and precise legal documents they can take some time to draw up. Yes the housing supply figure for Cheltenham includes this permission.
7.	Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	I wish to be assured that CBC officers are not planning to include in the Cheltenham Plan significantly more than 200 dwellings on the Leckhampton site east of Farm Lane, nor intending to include more than 200 dwellings, in line with Inspector Ord's JCS recommendations for an indicative figure of 200?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The Inspector's Interim Report states that: (para 123 and 124)</p> <p>"Overall, in my judgement, a limited amount of development could be supported</p>

	<p>towards the north of the site where public transport is more accessible, subject to the avoidance of land of high landscape and visual sensitivity. Therefore, for reasons of landscape/visual amenity and highway impacts, I recommend that the Cheltenham part of the site be allocated for a modest level of built development in the order of 200 dwellings.</p> <p>This remaining modest level of housing would not classify as an urban extension and, therefore, it would be more appropriate to allocate the site in the emerging Cheltenham Local Plan rather than in the JCS. It is, therefore, my recommendation that the Leckhampton urban extension be removed in its entirety from the JCS.”</p> <p>In light of the interim report the Leckhampton strategic allocation has been removed from the JCS and is now being considered within the Cheltenham Plan, local allocation in that document (which is less than 450 dwellings). Because the work on capacity for the landscape areas identified as having potential for development has not yet been undertaken (and will be through the Cheltenham Plan) it would be wrong to pre-judge the specific number of dwellings that could be sustainability accommodated, other than to say it would not be a site of strategic scale in JCS terms. Further work on the capacity of the remaining parts of the Leckhampton site, as well as local green space will be undertaken through the Cheltenham Plan.</p> <p>Councillor Nelson asked the following supplementary question.</p> <p>Your answer sadly does not provide the reassurance I seek. Correct me if I am wrong but you seem to be saying that Leckhampton's Northern Fields can accommodate anything from 200 to 450 houses?? Surely, what Inspector Ord means is 200 plus or minus 'something'? I am sure she did not mean that you can stuff as many houses as you can into the areas indicated for development! Particularly if the 377 on SD2 happens, then the 200 target on the Northern Fields should reduce to 72, to keep under the 450 strategic site limit. Pending a resolution on SD2, I suggest that a reasonable plus or minus figure for the 200 houses might be 10%.....do you agree? If not, could we set up a meeting with the planners to discuss this important matter please?</p> <p>In response the Leader advised that he would be happy for Councillor Nelson to set up a meeting with planners. The JCS would set out housing needs at a strategic level and other proposed developments would be determined as part of the Cheltenham plan.</p>
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7. GLOUCESTER, CHELTENHAM AND TEWKESBURY JOINT CORE STRATEGY- MAIN MODIFICATIONS REPORT

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and reminded Members that the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) was the strategic planning document being prepared jointly by Gloucester City, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Borough Councils to provide a framework for meeting the development needs of the area over the plan period from 2011 to 2031. He explained that in June this year the Councils met to note the Interim Report of the Inspector, and the key points for change she identified through it. An overview of her findings was presented to that meeting and the initial response of the Councils to that report agreed. Following this meeting public hearings were held in July and the Inspector's Note of Recommendations made at the hearing session on 21 July.

The focus of this meeting, and Council meetings at Gloucester City and Tewkesbury Borough Councils, was to consider the proposed main modifications to the June 2014 Pre-Submission JCS which represented the changes the JCS Councils consider make the plan sound and capable of adoption. These modifications would then be made available for public consultation and form part of the emerging plan policies for the purposes of development management. Public consultation would be undertaken for an eight week period expected to begin in November. The Inspector would receive the full responses to this consultation and consider them in January 2017. The Leader explained that the Inspector had already confirmed that further hearings on the main modifications would take place after the public consultation which was expected in February 2017. The three Councils would then meet to formally adopt the Joint Core Strategy in the summer 2017.

The Leader then highlighted the following changes which were proposed through the main modifications:

- Transport data - the evidence available indicated that the modifications were achievable. The data, produced by Gloucestershire County Council via its contractor Amey, dated from 2008, however would be updated when new data was released in the New Year. The Leader highlighted that for the first time reference had been made to Junction 10 of the M5 as a mitigating factor which was something that all parties agreed was needed for the local area.
- Link road to the West of Cheltenham - proper connections were required and further work would be undertaken to focus on the detail of this.
- Overall housing requirement of 35 175 dwellings between 2011 and 2031 including a 5% uplift to boost affordable housing delivery and flexibility in housing supply. Whilst officers presented evidence to question the justification of the 5% uplift to help deliver the required number of affordable homes, the Inspector strongly believed that this was based on evidence and national planning policy and guidance. This was therefore considered a matter of soundness and should be included in the proposed modifications.
- The North West Cheltenham Strategic Allocation was reduced in capacity to 4,285 dwellings as part of the main modifications to allow for local green space in Swindon Village now shown on the indicative maps.
- The Leckhampton Strategic Allocation was removed from the JCS as a strategic site and will now be dealt with in the Cheltenham Plan.
- Leckhampton Farm Lane Planning Permission has been accorded to Cheltenham Borough Council's housing numbers (377 dwellings). The Inspector was minded that the allocation of the Farm Lane site was not sound in the JCS but had noted that there was an extant planning permission and that this could be accorded to Cheltenham supply figures, should Tewkesbury Borough Council and Cheltenham Borough Council agree. The planning permission was currently subject to legal challenge.
- A 1,100 dwelling and 45 ha employment land strategic allocation at West Cheltenham (Phase 1) was introduced into the Plan through the Main Modifications. The key was to see the inclusion of local green space and transport properly considered and this would be subject to consultation and examination in public.

- West Cheltenham Safeguarded Land (phase 2) remained within the Plan. The Inspector in her note of recommendations identified that the bar had been reached in demonstrating exceptional circumstances for the removal of this land from the Green Belt, to be safeguarded for future development of the West Cheltenham area in a future Plan review.
- Other changes included the inclusion of the Twigworth strategic allocation and the removal of North Churchdown. The Fiddington strategic allocation was potentially a reserve site. Existing transport infrastructure issues and requirements would be assessed before future release of the latter site should the position be progressed by the Inspector through the next stage of the examination.

The Mayor invited Members to ask questions on the report.

- Local green space in Swindon Village - a Member was concerned that whilst this had been accepted in the JCS examination and agreed by all Members at July Council a live planning application showed disregard for this. The Director of Planning explained that there were two issues. Firstly there had been agreement of green space through the JCS examination and with the local community and the Inspector. The Cheltenham Plan would provide the detail on how the local green space would be defined, particularly in terms of a defined boundary. Secondly, there was currently a live planning application for public consultation in the area and officers had been alerted to the disconnect between that application and the JCS. Officers would therefore be emphasising with the applicant that there would need to be an extremely good reason to divert from what had been agreed through the JCS. She highlighted that once the JCS proposed main modifications were agreed, the JCS gains greater weight as a planning document, this is relevant to the negotiation of the live planning application. She believed it was vital to concentrate on the detail of the JCS and ensure that the JCS and planning application were reading each other correctly. The Member concerned wished to record the community's disagreement with the green space identified in the current planning application. The Director of Planning reiterated that the broad area of local green space had been agreed in the context of the strategic allocation in Swindon Village and the Cheltenham Plan would determine its defined boundary. If the developer could not accept this then it would ultimately be Planning Committee to consider the application in the context of the development plan.
- Green Belt - concern was expressed that the Green Belt was under threat. Officers were referred to the Table SP2a : sources of housing supply in the JCS area and asked how many commitments had been developed and whether it did not pose a threat to the Green Belt if it was a significant number. He also asked whether the windfall allowance was genuine or estimated. In response the Leader explained that Cheltenham was now permitted to include Farm Lane in its figure,. With reference to the table the Director of Planning confirmed that the 377 figure had been included within the Cheltenham commitments figure. She reported that all commitments had been reviewed together with potential lapse rates. The windfall allowance was based on assumptions made on a ward by ward basis, the details of which are set out in the

housing background papers previously published. With regard to the Cheltenham Plan the Senior Planning Policy Officer stated that taken into account were the indicative figures of 200 at Leckhampton, 200 in West/north West area i.e. around Arle Nurseries.. Urban extensions at Cheltenham - all are accorded to the housing supply figure for Cheltenham.

- 5 % Affordable housing - a Member questioned how this would be delivered and made reference to the Housing and Planning Act whereby in his view all affordable housing had been redesigned as starter homes. He asked whether there had been a better understanding of this in subsequent discussions. The Leader replied by saying the JCS Councils had challenged the Inspector as to how it could be achieved. The Director of Planning informed that at the JCS examination four sessions had been held on this issue and the legal opinion was that it was a question of soundness. It remained uncertain however as to how in reality this translated into affordable housing on the ground. Officers have strongly challenged the Inspector on this issue.
- A Member took exception to the late inclusion of West Cheltenham and questioned what the exceptional circumstances were for the removal of this land from the Green Belt. He referred to the map which had no resemblance to what residents thought the green space would look like. He strongly believed that residents should have the same input as other residents and asked what the next steps were. The Leader said that exceptional circumstances were where the requirement for housing was such that this justified the removal of the green belt. He stated that this was a proposal and would be subject to a consultation process so it was important that a proactive approach be taken. There was a reasonable guarantee that local green space would be followed and Cheltenham Borough Council had undertaken green space reviews and this information had previously been relied upon by the Inspector and with a positive outcome. It was important that all communities were treated equally. The Director of Planning added that in terms of exceptional circumstances there was a depth of information on the JCS website including the AMEC report. All Green Belt in the Gloucester/Cheltenham area continue to meet the objectives of green belt designataion, but this needs to be overlaid with other constratints/evidence, in particular the Objective Assessment of Need. Inspector Ord's view was that exceptional circumstances did exist and the bar had been reached in the West Cheltenham area. Severn Trent was working with the council on measures which when undertaken would release parts of the site for development. A priority for this proposed allocation was ensuring effective master planning of phase 1 and phase 2 and represented a future growth direction for the town. In terms of the rest of the process she said that should the three Councils agree to the main modifications a public consultation would take place in November/December, the results of which the Inspector had a duty to have due regard to. Individual representations from the West of Cheltenham would have a right to be heard and there would be a hearing which would give those concerned the opportunity to express their views. Following this a final JCS report would be produced which the JCS Councils would need to consider. Should the recommendations not be accepted there would be no plan. She informed that JCS officers had recently met with regard to the consultation process and it was clear

that there were communities, such as in Springbank, which had not had the opportunity to input into the process. There would therefore be focussed consultations in the West of Cheltenham and officers would work with ward councillors on this. She emphasised that this was a statutory process and accepted the frustrations with the plan; the council could not intervene but could support communities. The Senior Planning Policy officer added that the examination would give those in the West of Cheltenham the opportunity to look at Local Green Space. Since the 30 June Council meeting Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) had been commissioned to undertake work in the West of Cheltenham. There had also been discussions with the West of Cheltenham Partnership and ward Members. During the Local Green Space study communities had been asked to identify local green space and three areas had been identified as preferred options but were too small for the scope of this plan.

- Neighbourhood planning - confirmation was sought as to whether neighbourhood planning would dovetail in with the Cheltenham Plan and whether there was funding available for new groups to cover work on major concerns regarding local green space. The Leader said neighbourhood planning was definitely a good thing and the council had received funding which gave it the capacity to assist neighbourhood groups. The issue was whether to concentrate efforts on the JCS examination or progress neighbourhood planning. The Senior Planning Policy officer informed Members that work was ongoing on the Engaging Communities project in cooperation with the GRCC regarding the aspirations of creating neighbourhood areas around the Plan.
- Local Green Space - The Director of Planning clarified that the JCS was a joint team approach between the three councils. Local Green Space was defined in the JCS and planning applications would have to have due regard to this in the JCS where defined.
- Policy INF4 River Severn potential as Regional Park - in response to a question the Senior Planning Policy Officer explained that there were further opportunities to develop a regional park to enhance wildlife and the countryside in this area and further discussions were required before this could be taken forward.
- Tewkesbury sites close to Cheltenham boundary and allocations - the Senior Planning Policy Officer explained that there would be another sites consultation early in the new year. The sources of supply were coming from the sites allocation in the JCS and the Memorandum of Understanding between the JCS partners. He gave the example of the 377 Farm Lane site which had been allocated to Cheltenham via the Memorandum.

At the start of the debate the following amendment was proposed by Councillor Nelson and seconded by Councillor Seacome.

To add a fourth recommendation

“The traffic implications of building 35,175 houses in the JCS area by 2031 remain to be fully assessed and tested by an up to date transport model. The last public consultation for the next stage of the JCS, due to be started in November, should be delayed until the new 2031 developments and the

associated traffic mitigation measures have been tested and validated by the 2013 Central Severn Vale Saturn model (not expected before Feb 2017)."

In proposing the motion, Councillor Nelson suggested that if the JCS plan remains as it is then all the traffic consultation would have been completed before the revised traffic modelling was available. Many transport measures in the JCS had not been fully thought through and assessed. In Leckhampton one of the reasons the application had been rejected on appeal was because of the severe traffic problems it would cause. The Inspector had also referred to them as severe however GCC had originally advised there were no significant issues for the site regarding transport. He no longer had full confidence in the GCC approach and a delay of three months was needed for a thorough review. He was aware that other areas affected by the JCS proposals would welcome a delay for other reasons. He felt sure that the other two councils could be persuaded to agree to the delay and this short delay would be better than later regret for the decisions made on the JCS today.

Other Members spoke in support of the amendment and thought Council should not be expected to make a decision on the JCS which could affect the borough's long-term future without a fully integrated plan. The Inspector had torn the Cheltenham JCS plan to pieces and what she had now put back was significantly different and therefore needed time for Members to assimilate all the information before making any further decisions. There was also an issue of fairness to members of the public affected by the latest changes who needed longer to formulate their opinions and prepare their case before the start of the consultation. There was a risk that the situation in Leckhampton could be replicated in other areas and therefore the latest traffic modelling information was essential. Projects tended to go wrong when assessments were made based on out of date data.

Speaking against the amendment a Member supported Councillor Nelson's lack of confidence in the GCC approach. They emphasised that agreeing the recommendations today was not the final stage as Council was being asked to agree a proposal for further public consultation. Although the transport modelling had been based on 2008 data and needed some updating, it still provided a good indication of the current situation. The revised traffic modelling was expected in February 2017 and this could inform the JCS in time for the next stage of consultation. The risk of delaying the process for three months was not justified and it would be better for the public to have the opportunity to express their concerns now. A delay until February would simply reduce the overall time available for public consultation.

Other Members agreed that the pressure should be kept on GCC to deliver the revised transport modelling and a delay in the JCS could provide an opportunity for a delay in the delivery of this.

Another advantage of supporting the recommendations today would be to add considerable weight to the JCS as an emerging plan which would could provide valuable defence against planning applications which did not conform with the JCS. The emerging JCS also provided a measure of protection to the Green Spaces in the borough, particularly at Swindon Village and in Prestbury. Without this there could be a spate of unsuitable planning applications and this was too high a risk. Members must have confidence that the Inspector would

not make decision on the soundness of the plan before she had all the information she needed.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Seacome thought that a short delay until all the information was available was likely to provide a better result in the long run.

In his summing up, Councillor Nelson appreciated that all Members wanted the best results for Cheltenham. It would be too late at the next vote at Council to make any substantive changes to the JCS and many members of the public had not had the opportunity to comment on transport issues to the Inspector. He felt that one of the weaknesses of the inspection process was that Inspector Ord had not gone into detail on the transport modelling to date. He felt there was a lot to learn from the updated traffic model once it was available.

He acknowledged that the emerging JCS would have some weight but it was not absolute and although he acknowledged there was a slight risk in delaying the JCS process there was a much greater risk of making wrong decisions with insufficient data and without this delay the process would be undemocratic and would not be following due diligence.

Councillor Jordan, as proposer of the main motion, responded to the amendment. A delay until the traffic modelling data was planned to be available in February 2017 would in fact be a four-month delay and there would be no guarantee that it would be delivered on time. The revised traffic modelling had been based on 2013 rather than 2008 data but he did not feel there had been significant changes during that period. The JCS was a strategic plan and mitigating factors could be added as it moved forward. More importantly there was a significant risk that the whole JCS process could collapse if Cheltenham were not to agree the recommendations today.

Upon a vote the amendment was LOST.
Voting (For:8, Against:25)

Councillor Jeffries proposed the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Clucas.

Add a fourth recommendation:

“Conduct an urgent review of the Local Green Space Strategy in relation to the West Cheltenham emerging Strategic Allocation.”

Councillor Jordan indicated that he was happy to accept the amendment but also highlighted that such a review was already in progress.

In the debate that followed on the substantive motion Members made the following points:

- Assurance would be needed from both Government and Gloucestershire County Highways that money would be spent upfront on the necessary transport infrastructure to support the JCS. Funding interventions from developers would also be needed to address mitigation measures and make the infrastructure viable.

- It was important to get the Local Green Space right before developers get to build anything. There have been some poor planning decisions by previous generations and this was the one opportunity to get it right for the future.
- The Ward Councillor for Springbank felt the revised JCS was a catastrophe for his ward and his residents felt locked out of the process. The proposals had come out of the blue and he felt that there were other more suitable locations for employment land and 1100 houses. Whilst acknowledging that there were additional hearings planned he suspected they would offer little time for local residents to make their views known to the Inspector. There was a mountain of additional information on the JCS website and the changes had happened so fast that people have not had the time to assimilate them and his residents needed more support in understanding the information. He felt Swindon Village and Leckhampton had ground down the Inspector and without telling residents the proposed development site had now been moved to a beautiful area of Springbank. For that reason he could not support the recommendations.
- The JCS was a strategic document which sets out how requirements for the area would be met. Each site identified in the master plan would go through a proper planning process before any development went ahead. Whilst accepting that the plans did disadvantage some areas, it was inevitable that some of the Green Belt had to be taken away in order to meet housing needs.
- Refusal of the JCS tonight could result in piecemeal applications resulting in inappropriate developments. If developers don't comply with the emerging JCS then there would be grounds for turning down applications.
- It was important to approve the JCS and go out to consultation and then bring forward objections and arguments to the Inspector who had demonstrated that she was prepared to listen and change her views.
- A Member made the point that they felt they had to agree to the recommendations in order to be able to defend inappropriate applications even though they felt there were real problems with the JCS. They proposed that they should seek to get the best deal for West Cheltenham with proper affordable housing, green spaces and car parking and feed their views through to the Inspector.
- A Member raised questions about the assessments of housing need as they still felt the numbers were too high and questioned how they had been calculated. The Inspector was also constrained by the process by which the DCLG projections were made. They also questioned the basis on which the Inspector was recommending a 5% uplift in housing and thought this may not be necessary.
- The NPPF also refers to sustainable communities and the local Green space strategy would help residents realise their life aspirations. The developers view of sustainability could often be based on what is good for them rather than the community. They must present their views on sustainability to the Inspector and they were confident she would listen. Inspector Ord had carried out a very thorough process to date and each area would be able to put their case to her.
- There was a real need to consider employment in the area and attract high skilled jobs as well as improved social housing and green space.

- A member stressed that new houses were needed to meet population needs and new jobs, particularly for young people and therefore they supported the JCS and proposed developments and they should not let parochial disputes get in the way.
- The existing housing stock was inadequate to meet current needs and so new social housing was needed now and not in 10 years time.
- A Member was concerned about the impact that the JCS proposals would have on residential streets in St Paul's and local residents must be engaged meaningfully in the process and he would encourage officers to work with residents and help them to engage.
- Members all wanted Cheltenham to be commercially prosperous, sustainable, environmentally safe and a pleasant place to live and it was important to do what was best for the whole town rather than be too parochial.

In his summing up, Councillor Jordan thanked Members for their comments. He emphasised that the aim was for a sustainable plan which balanced the need for more housing against the environmental impact and its implementation supported by effective mitigation measures. Putting the appropriate infrastructure in place was critical and although he couldn't commit to Government funding there would be opportunities to bid for it. It was absolutely right that residents in Springbank could have their say and the council would support them through the process. He was confident that the Inspector would listen to their views. He acknowledged there was a lot of information and he would ask officers to make it as clear as possible to aid understanding. He recognised the need for affordable housing and the council was ensuring that this was considered upfront in every application. In conclusion he accepted that the JCS was not perfect but considerable hard work had been put in to get to this stage and in to getting the document as good as it could be. The public and Members could all have their say in the next stage of the process.

Upon a vote the recommendations were CARRIED

RESOLVED THAT COUNCIL

1) approve for public consultation the proposed main modifications to the June 2014 Pre-Submission Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 to this report (including proposed modifications to the Proposals Map and Key Diagram) as those it endorses and considers necessary to make the JCS sound.

(2) delegate authority to the Chief Executive of Tewkesbury Borough Council, the Corporate Director of Services and Neighbourhoods of Gloucester City Council and the Director of Planning of Cheltenham Borough Council in consultation with the relevant Leaders of each those Councils to make minor changes to the proposed main modifications and proposed modifications to the Proposals Map and Key Diagram) in terms of formatting, presentation and accuracy, including any minor changes arising from the consideration of the proposed modifications by each of the Joint Core Strategy councils, prior to publication for consultation purposes.

(3) Agree that the “additional layout for appendix a1,”the City of Gloucester Proposed Primary Shopping Area, Primary Frontage and Secondary Frontage” and the “Superseded Development Plan Policies on Adoption of the JCS” and the “Addendum for Council-Primary frontages” documents be incorporated into the proposed main modifications to the June 2014 Pre-Submission Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 to this report (including proposed modifications to the Proposals Map and Key Diagram) as those it endorses and considers necessary to make the JCS sound.

(4) Conduct an urgent review of the Local Green Space Strategy in relation to the West Cheltenham emerging Strategic Allocation.

Voting: For: 32, Against 1, Abstentions 1

8. ANY OTHER ITEM THE MAYOR DETERMINES AS URGENT AND WHICH REQUIRES A DECISION

There were no urgent items.

**Klara Sudbury
Chairman**