

CDC: We reviewed the administration's budget proposals at Overview and Scrutiny (O&S), and it was refreshing to note that the spending was realistic, although reserves are forecast to further reduce in the coming 1-3 years. There was good news from the government that an additional £118k will be received by CDC, but it is still difficult to budget properly without a multi-year settlement.

Elsewhere at O&S and full council, the updated Local Plan was reviewed – this is now available for public consultation via the CDC portal. We also reviewed the Corporate Plan, which is effectively the manifesto and priorities for the administration.

The **Public Conveniences Review Group's** recommendations were largely accepted by the Cabinet, but any changes to entry fees will be delayed until more data is available from the newly installed card readers at some sites. There will be a tendering process for the ongoing cleaning and maintenance contract, and a budget for initial refurbishments will be allocated later in the year. Where sites have been identified to be closed, consultation will take place with Town councils, and any contractual considerations will be followed up by officers.

Visit to Javelin Park Incinerator – Following my visit to the recycling plant last year I was invited by Avening WI to join them on a visit to the Javelin Park Incinerator near Gloucester. The household residual waste, that is waste left over after kerbside recycling, is managed by a Spanish company called Urbaser on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council. The 'Energy from Waste Facility', significantly reduces the county's dependence on landfill, whilst recovering value from waste in the form of electricity, recyclable metals, and aggregates. The site has a long history, being a key facility for the development of the Javelin jet aircraft during the second world war, and this is reflected throughout the plant. If you have noticed an unusually straight section of the M5 going south from junction 12, this is actually built over the original runway! The building is a bit 'Marmite' with many people hating it, but it was designed to minimise the visual impact in such a prominent position – you can be your own judge. Inside, it is a cathedral of steel, with waste delivered into a giant concrete hopper at one end. The mostly automated process (there are only around 40 workers) consumes up to 190,000 tons of rubbish per year which would otherwise have gone to landfill. A grab, like a giant version of the one to win a teddy at fairgrounds, feeds the two furnace conveyor belts. The fire heats water (later super-heated) into steam which drives a massive turbine, producing enough surplus energy to power 25,000 homes. The facility manages the gaseous products of combustion through a sophisticated cleansing and filtration system to ensure that flue gas emissions are well within regulatory limits – the only visible evidence (depending on the weather) is a small plume of warm gas rising from the chimney. From this process, there are two solid waste products: Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA), which is processed to recover metals that have passed through the system and is then graded for recycling, and lime-based residues from the flue gas treatment system, which are taken off site for treatment and disposal.

Visit to Zero Avia – Here is another high-tech firm on our doorstep based at Cotswold Airport. It is a world leader in developing aeroplanes powered by Hydrogen – not burned in the engine, but powering electric fuel cells. The 200+ employees at ZeroAvia have developed high performance, high efficiency systems from scratch in pursuit of zero-emission flight. The technology has already been proven, with their Dornier 228 aircraft making history last year with a milestone first flight. The next challenge is a test flight from Kemble to an airport in Hampshire, on their mission to get CAA certification by the close of this year, and to power zero-emission commercial aircraft by 2025.

Roads – After travelling elsewhere in the country, it is obvious when you are back in Gloucestershire – exit any junction from any motorway in the county and you are immediately bouncing along pothole riven roads. Following my petition to our two local MPs, they have both written to the Transport Minister to ask for a review of the Highways Act 1980, which gives councils a ‘get out of jail’ card to refuse claims for damaged wheels if they meet certain criteria – mainly an annual inspection of the road. They have also written to the Chief Executive at GCC to ask what they are doing about the state of our roads. Meanwhile, I am about to start legal proceedings against GCC in support of my own claim.



Javelin Park Incinerator



Zero Avia test aircraft

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Other updates and information for Parish Councils:

HOW TO REPORT POTHOLES

I recommend using this link, especially if you have a smartphone and can take a photograph of the pothole and identify the exact position. It is more efficient than emailing the council as officers get a daily schedule of these alerts.

Gloucestershire County Council, report a pothole:

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/roads/your-highways-report-it/>

FIX MY STREET

Report, view, or discuss local problems like graffiti, fly tipping, broken paving slabs, or street lighting. This reports back to the appropriate Council: [LINK](#)

CHANGES TO THE PLANNING PROTOCOL SCHEME OF DELEGATION and THE PLANNING REVIEW PANEL

On 24 January, the Full Council voted to approve an update to the Scheme of Delegation following recommendations by the PAS (Planning Advisory Service). The most significant item is the 28-day call-in deadline from the date of validation. This means that District and Parish Councillors need to identify concerns very early on in the application stage, without the benefit of a case officer's report. Currently members call in applications towards the end of the process. Going forward, if an application is of concern, District Councillors will need to liaise with Planning Officers and Parish Councillors with some urgency. Pro-forma will be created which will also give the member the ability to make a conditional request for scrutiny at the Planning Committee.

At present the Planning Review Panel is held monthly, which can result in delays for some applications. It is proposed to amend this to a bi-weekly meeting which would mean that no application waits longer than 14 days from the point of call in.

FIBRE OPTIC TELEGRAPH POLES

You may have received correspondence from David Dunbar of Willersey Parish Council. I thought I would clarify the policy for you: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/596/schedule/2/made> (you'll need to scroll down quite a long way). Fibre optic telegraph poles are allowed under permitted development. Schedule 2 Part 16 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 sets out the permitted development rights relating to telecommunications apparatus. The following is relevant to fixed line broadband: Prior approval does not apply in relation to Class A development on any article 2(3) land which consists of the construction, installation, alteration or replacement of a telegraph pole, cabinet or line, in connection with the provision of fixed-line broadband.

Telecommunication operators do not therefore typically need planning permission or prior approval for the erection of telegraph poles, even in AONBs or conservation areas.