

### **Member questions submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13**

**The following questions have been received from Councillor Helen Munro to the Lead Member for Built Environment. The answers are given by the Lead Member for Built Environment, Councillor Mel Gore, but are taken as read without discussion.**

#### **Question 1:**

The County Council was asked at its full Council meeting on February 12th why it had not shared with this Council the change in the formula to calculate school places arising from new housing and why it had not worked with the Borough Council to identify potentially suitable sites.

The County Council advised that the need for a new school site had been shared with this Council and through its responses to the local plan, and that it had been working with Borough Council officers to identify a suitable location.

This is not the understanding that Councillor Stanley and I have. The Council is asked to clarify the approaches it has had from the County Council with regard to school provision in Cleeve and to detail the work it has done with the County Council to identify a suitable location.

#### **Answer 1:**

In regard to the issue of a need for the provision of a new school at Bishops Cleeve, Officers from the County Council education team first confirmed this in a meeting held with Officers in October 2019. At the time of this first meeting the County Council was exploring potential provision on land at the Cleeve School on Kayte Lane. However, discussions took place about the potential for the former Nortonham allotments site (owned by Gloucester Diocese) to be an alternative location as it had recently become available and was being promoted to the Borough Plan for residential development. The County Council resolved to discuss this matter with the Diocese and it is understood that this is still ongoing. Officers from the Borough Council have had ongoing discussions with both the Dioceses and the County Council to try and facilitate this.

Subsequent to discussion in October 2019, the County Council formally submitted representations to the Tewkesbury Borough Plan in November 2019. These representations stated that the Nortonham allotments site (proposed for residential development under site BIS3) should be instead allocated for a mixed use development of a new primary school and housing.

It should be noted that, through the same consultation, the Diocese, via their preferred developer, submitted representations promoting the site for just residential development.

Borough Council Officers are continuing discussions regarding the Nortonham allotments/BIS3 site in leading up to the examination of the Borough Plan to try and find a mutually acceptable position in the regard to the provision of a school on this site.

**Question 2:**

At the last full Council meeting of this Council, we agreed a motion to require this Council to work with the County Council and any other interested party to find a solution that works for everyone. The Council is asked what has happened since this meeting in relation to the proposed new school in Cleeve?

**Answer 2:**

As Q1 above, Officers are continuing discussions around the Nortonham allotment sites with both the County Council and the Diocese.

**Question 3:**

The County Council has said it has objected to the inclusion of the former allotment site in Cleeve as housing land in the draft local plan and recommended that it is reallocated for a mix of education and residential development. Please can an explanation for the process for this to happen be provided.

**Answer 3:**

As Q1 above, it is confirmed that the County Council has put forward that the proposed BIS3 site should be allocated for a mixed use development comprising a primary school and housing.

The next step for the Borough Plan is to submit it for independent examination which will be undertaken by a government appointed Inspector. The Inspector will consider all responses made to the Pre-Submission version of the plan in determining whether it is sound and Officers will, along with any other significant issues, raise this matter with them for consideration. The Inspector will recommend making modifications to the plan, where necessary, before it is adopted.

However, Officers are working to resolve this in advance of the examination and to reach an agreed position with the County Council and the Diocese to present to an Inspector. For this to happen it would need to be agreed that the site is the preferred option for a school from the County Council and that the Diocese are willing to make the land available for this use. The County Council and the Diocese would also need to reach agreement over the transfer of land to deliver this. These discussions are ongoing.