

STATEMENT BY COUNCILLOR LYNDEN STOWE

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Over recent months I have noted that my business interests have occasionally detracted away from the good work the Members and officers of the Council undertake.

There has been much speculation and accusation in the media and in the Council Chamber directed at me and my Cabinet colleagues Cllr. David Fowles and Cllr. Mrs Jepson which, in my view, is having a detrimental effect on the Council given the amount of hours spent by me, other Members and Officers in responding to both accusations and many formal questions.

It is for this reason that I have decided to re-state in public what my business interests are where there is some historic connection to the Cotswold Water Park Society (Trust), Cotswold District Council and high profile businesses in the Cotswold Water Park.

First, I reiterate that my fellow councillors and I have always declared our interests, both on our Register of Interest Forms and also when matters come up at Cabinet or other Council meetings on which we sit. If we have been in any doubt about a potential interest, then we have - on each occasion - always sought and followed the advice of the Monitoring Officer and/or the Deputy Monitoring Officer, and we will continue to do so.

In my private capacity I am involved in running (i) a printing business, Vale Press Limited, which is one of only two in the district of our size and production capacity - in total 23 people are employed – 14 of whom live in Cotswold District. I have been in this business in excess of twenty five years; and (ii) a publishing company, Cotswold Media Limited for four and a half years.

Business Dealings with the Cotswold Water Park Society Limited (now called the Cotswold Water Park Trust)

Cotswold Water Park Guide

Four years ago, in early 2008, Vale Press Limited were invited to and successfully tendered for the printing of a guide book which the Cotswold Water Park Society Limited (CWPS) wanted printing. This guide was known as Cotswold Water Park Guide 2008.

The guide was printed by Vale Press Limited at a cost of £15100. The invoice raised to CWPS was dated 21st February 2008.

The guide was part-distributed by Cotswold Media Limited at a cost of £5004. The final invoice raised to CWPS for the distribution of the guide was dated 26th August 2008.

The gross profit after direct costs was less than £3000, and if wage and overhead costs were deducted then it translated into a fairly substantial loss.

We understand the 2008 guide cost CWPS substantially more to produce than the advertising revenue generated and, accordingly, later in 2008, at the invitation of

CWPS, Cotswold Media Ltd was requested to take over the responsibility of producing subsequent issues of the guide, entirely at our own cost and risk, in order to mitigate the losses to CWPS. We were told that this decision enabled CWPS to make overhead & personnel savings of about £50,000 pa.

Cotswold Water Park Life

This magazine was conceived by Cotswold Media Ltd in late 2007 and published by us.

Owing to all the negative publicity, it ceased publication in early 2010 and taking all the issues together, ran at a substantial loss.

Other Business Dealings in the Cotswold Water Park

The following table sets out actual sales turnover figures **over the last two years** with the key Water Park based advertisers in the Cotswold Water Park Guides for 2010 and 2011/12 (N.B. figures are exclusive of VAT):-

Company	2010 Guide	Other Sales 2010
Coln Park LLP/Lakes by Yoo	nil	nil
The Co-operative	range £750 - £1000	nil
Cotswold Outdoor	nil	nil
Cullimore Group	nil	range £250 - £500
Cygnets	nil	nil
Four Pillars	range £1250 - £1500	range £250 - £500
Go By Cycle	nil	nil
Lower Mill	range £750 - £1000	nil
Watermark	range £1500 - £2000	range £0 - £250

Note: All figures in "Other Sales 2010" column relate to advertising in Cotswold Water Park Life magazine. No other services were provided.

Company	2011/12 Guide	Other Sales 2011
Coln Park LLP/Lakes by Yoo	nil	nil
The Co-operative	range £500 - £750	nil
Cotswold Outdoor	range £0 - £250	nil
Cullimore Group	range £0 - £250	nil
Cygnets	nil	nil

Four Pillars	range £750 - £1000	nil
Go By Cycle	range £0 - £250	nil
Lower Mill	range £250 - £500	nil
Watermark	range £1000 - £1250	nil

Note: For clarity none of the above nine businesses has had any sales turnover with Vale Press Limited in 2010 or 2011. (And as far as can be established, have never had).

Each of these accounts individually represents less than 2% of Cotswold Media Limited's turnover in 2010 and less than 1% of turnover in 2011. The amount is considered proportionately *de minimus*. We had been advised by the previous CDC Monitoring Officer – who gave a 5% of turnover guideline - that it is not necessary to declare prejudicial interests in such cases. That said I do not believe that I have ever been involved in any CDC decision-making process (eg planning applications) that would have involved any of the above Water Park connected businesses.

Business Dealings with Cotswold District Council

Cotswold Leisure and the Corinium Museum sometimes advertise in Visitor Guides published by Cotswold Media Ltd. Please note that all specific procurement decisions are made by officers and not by elected members. During 2011 the total sales turnover with Cotswold Media Ltd has been £275 with nil sales turnover with Vale Press Ltd.

The “Roles and Relationships” of Individuals

I feel that I must point out that whilst Mr Fowles is a Director of Cotswold Media Ltd, my Cabinet colleague Mrs Jepson is an employee and is not involved in the management of Cotswold Media Limited. Mrs Jepson's role is to seek to obtain advertisements in the publications produced by Cotswold Media Ltd. This role averages between four and six hours a week.

Statement

By way of this statement, I have now clearly set out the connections those Companies I am involved in have had with Cotswold Water Park Society (Trust); Cotswold District Council and various other high profile businesses in the Cotswold Water Park.

Having done so, I will not be answering any further questions on these matters at Council or Cabinet Meetings etc. as I believe that I have clearly outlined my dealings in the public domain.

Finally, I should like to point out I am under no obligation to publish this information in to the public domain. I do it on a voluntary basis and in good faith. However, I believe that the Council's reputation may have been damaged by spurious and vexatious allegations, accusations and baseless innuendo which have never been substantiated or backed by any evidence - this must stop. I will ask the Monitoring

Officer to append this statement to my declaration of Interests, which is available on the Council's website, so that anyone questioning these interests can be referred direct to this statement. I hope this is the end of this matter and we can get on with the real business of providing services to the public that they expect.

Lynden Stowe
April 2012