

COUNTY COUNCIL –6 December 2017
Members' Questions

<p>1. Questioner's name: Cllr Bernie Fisher</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>The A438, Charlton Hill, from the Lilleybrook Golf Course to Severn Springs Roundabout, has had large areas coned off for years because of subsidence (?). Surely by now there must be an action plan with finance in place to repair this busy A road, one of the main arteries into Cheltenham. In view of your recent answer to Paul Hodgkinson regarding the old A40 near Northleach, is GCC treating this as a major priority</p>	<p>I understand Cllr Fisher has been updated by officers on this, but to reiterate their advice. GCC have been monitoring the A435 Charlton Hill since 2014 when part of one lane collapsed. The findings suggest that there are four separate land slips along the section between Charlton Kings and the Seven Springs roundabout, all needing different approaches to remedy the problem. We have begun a feasibility study to understand the potential solutions and the estimated costs to fix the road. Once we have this information we can bid for the funding from central government.</p> <p>More information can be found on the Council's website where a dedicated page has been set up to communicate to the public the current status of works planning for the site.</p>
<p>2. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Richard Boyles</p>
<p>To: Cllr Richard Boyles</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member tell me the reasons why an investigation into allegations of sexual and physical abuse dating back to the 1960s and 1980s at Dowdeswell Court and Badgeworth Court has been reopened?</p>	<p>That is really a question which Cllr Hodgkinson must direct to Gloucestershire Police. We understand that there may have been more recent referrals after the previous investigation – but this is a police investigation and any further details would have to come from them.</p>
<p>3. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Richard Boyles</p>
<p>To: Cllr Richard Boyles</p> <p>I am aware that the former schools Dowdeswell Court and</p>	<p>I am happy for Cllr Hodgkinson to look at the entire file which the county council has on this issue.</p>

<p>Badgeworth Court were privately owned and that Gloucestershire County Council did not have any responsibility for regulating activities at any of the establishments, but I have seen some records showing that officers from this Council did visit these schools more than once. Can you therefore tell me what the records say about these visits?</p>	
<p>4. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Richard Boyles</p>
<p>To: Cllr Richard Boyles</p> <p>Please can the Cabinet Member tell me what this Council's responsibility is for those children in care placed in Gloucestershire from other Local Authorities and how long this responsibility has been in place?</p>	<p>Our responsibility is outlined in the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review statutory guidance and the associated regulations (Children Act 1989). Updated in 2013 this outlines duties on local authorities to notify other local authorities if they place a child in care within their area.</p> <p>The same notification duty applies when those children move back out of the other local authority area. Every local authority has a duty to keep a register of all children in care placed in their area by other local authorities.</p> <p>Where the child will require specialist health services such as CAMHS, the Clinical Commissioning Group that commissions secondary healthcare in the area authority [where it is proposed the child is placed] should be consulted, so the responsible authority can establish whether the placement is appropriate and able to meet the child's needs. The designated nurse for looked-after children in the area authority will also be a valuable source of advice and information.</p> <p>Similarly, the Virtual School Head for looked-after children in the area authority should be able to advise about access to school support. For children vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, children's services in the area authority will be an important source of intelligence and information about local arrangements for safeguarding children.</p>

<p>5. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Richard Boyles</p>
<p>To: Cllr Richard Boyles</p> <p>This Council became aware of allegations involving staff at Dowdeswell Court and Badgeworth Court in the early 1970s and stopped using the schools afterwards. The schools however continued to operate for a further 15 years, closing some time in 1985. Did the County Council not tell other councils the reasons why it was no longer placing children at the schools?</p>	<p>We have copies of a standard letter from 1978 from the then Director of Social Services, a Mr. H.D. Nichols. This standard letter was sent to a number of authorities when asked about the suitability of Badgeworth Court. This letter said it was difficult to provide information because we had not placed children at Badgeworth Court for some considerable time, nor did we currently supervise children placed by other authorities, and that we can only suggest a visit by a member of staff from the other authority prior to the prospective placement would be appropriate.</p>
<p>6. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Richard Boyles</p>
<p>To: Cllr Richard Boyles</p> <p>What oversight or role of an advisory nature did the Council or any members serving on the Council have with regard to Dowdeswell Court and Badgeworth Court?</p>	<p>The Council did not have any responsibility for regulating activities at any of the establishments, because they were privately run – oversight was required by the Department of Education and Science (DfES) and Her Majesty's Inspectors.</p>
<p>7. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Richard Boyles</p>
<p>To: Cllr Richard Boyles</p> <p>Can you provide me in chronological order with the names of this Council's Directors of Education serving from 1965 onwards?</p>	<p>GCC Chief Education Officers:</p> <p>C P Milroy 1963 - December 1970</p> <p>M G R Adams January - December 1971 (Acting Chief Education Officer)</p> <p>C P Milroy January 1972 – March 1976</p> <p>R D Clark April 1976 - March 1983</p> <p>Keith Anderson April 1983 – June 1997</p> <p>Roger Crouch July 1997 – November 2000</p>

	<p>(Director of Education)</p> <p>Stewart King December 2000 - January 2002 (Acting Head of Education)</p> <p>Margaret Davies 2002 (Interim Director of Education)</p> <p>Jo Davidson August 2002 – July 2010 (Executive Director of Education)</p> <p>Jo Grills April 2006 – November 2016 (Director of Learning)</p> <p>Tim Browne Oct 2016 onwards (Head of Education)</p>
8. Questioner's name: Cllr Joe Harris	Respondent's name: Cllr Richard Boyles
Please can the Cabinet Member provide me with an update on the police investigation into Colne House School?	We don't believe that there is an ongoing investigation – but details on police investigations are something you should approach Gloucestershire Police for.
9. Questioner's name: Cllr Simon Wheeler	Respondent's name: Cllr Kathy Williams
Is the Cabinet Member aware of the difficulties associated with returning mobility equipment back to social services?	GIS (Healthcare) have a service level agreement to collect community equipment that has been supplied through the Community Equipment Service by them within 5 working days of notification. Each piece of equipment has a label with a barcode and GIS (Healthcare) contact details. A Service User Leaflet also goes out with every delivery giving information on how request a collection. Once contact has been made with GIS (Healthcare) they will arrange a date and time for the collection to take place. GIS (Healthcare) do not collect single items under the value of £20 i.e. walking frame/sticks. However it is important that we collect and

	<p>recycle this equipment and we have alternative arrangements available for anyone who wishes to drop off a piece of equipment. These arrangements and comprehensive information about the Community Equipment Service can be found at:- www.glosequip.co.uk/index.php. However, I would be very interested to hear any specific problems that Cllr Wheeler or his constituents might have experienced.</p>
<p>10. Questioner's name: Cllr Colin Hay</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>Please can the Cabinet Member provide me with the figures of how much this Council has financially contributed to the Gfirst LEP over the last five financial years and also the anticipated contribution for 2018/19?</p>	<p>GCC has made a £250,000 contribution to GFirst LEP each year over the past 5 years, this contribution has been made towards its core operational costs as the locality matched funding that is required to enable the LEP to obtain a further £500,000 of core funding from DCLG each year.</p> <p>A recent decision by the GEGJC (Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee) has confirmed that from 2018/19 the £250,000 locality match requirement will be met by the 7 Councils through the Strategic Economic Development Fund of the Business Rate Pool.</p>
<p>11. Questioner's name: Cllr Suzanne Williams</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Roger Wilson</p>
<p>As noted in a motion submitted to this Council back in 2003, the Unison Ethical Care Charter seeks to establish a minimum baseline for the safety, quality and dignity of care by ensuring employment condition, and so ensuring the recruitment and retention of a more stable workforce through sustainable pay, conditions and training levels - Does the Cabinet Member agree that the adoption of this Charter would ensure that appropriate levels of care are provided to vulnerable people across Gloucestershire?</p>	<p>That motion was of course not supported by the Council and I remain of the view that adopting the charter would not provide such assurance. The enforceable elements of the charter are already in our contract or are within the remit of the Care Quality Commission. The remainder may suggest good intent but in reality providers would still be free to ignore them if they so chose. However I do see this as a priority area and we are already working positively with the sector in the County, Skills for Care and regional colleagues on Proud to Care with a view to creating a jointly owned and sustainable approach to recruitment and retention.</p>

<p>12. Questioner's name: Cllr Suzanne Williams</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Roger Wilson</p>
<p>This Charter has now been signed by over 30 Councils - Please can the Cabinet Member tell me the reasons why Gloucestershire's Health and Well-Being Board have not adopted this Charter?</p>	<p>This is an Executive issue for the Cabinet and thus would not be submitted to the Health and Well Being Board.</p>
<p>13. Questioner's name: Cllr Alan Preest</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Nigel Moor</p>
<p>To: Cllr Nigel Moor</p> <p>On the 28 September this year an invitation was issued to Abellio Rail Cymru, Keolis Amey, Arriva Rail Wales and MTR to submit their bids for the new Wales and Borders rail franchise due to commence in October 2018. Subsequently the existing provider Arriva Rail Wales has withdrawn from the process.</p> <p>Can I ask Cllr Moor if he agrees with to me as to the importance of this issue and will ensure that this Council write to the Welsh Government and state in the strongest possible terms, that it is imperative for cross-border Economic and Tourism stability and improvement that the new franchise holder shall seek to enhance the service frequency or, as a minimum maintains the existing service delivery that is currently provided by Arriva Rail Wales.</p>	<p>Thank you for highlighting this important issue. I have asked officers to write to the Welsh Government to emphasise the importance for cross border economic and tourism stability and improvement of the new franchise. It is expected that the new franchise will build on the services currently provided by Arriva Trains Wales.</p>
<p>14. Questioner's name: Cllr Rachel Smith</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>To: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p> <p>In view of the concerns being raised nationally about sexual harassment in the highest levels of government, what are the mechanisms in place at GCC to prevent harassment and support those victims who have been subjected to harassment to come forward and speak out?</p>	<p>We treat any complaints of this sort very seriously, although they are thankfully rare. As Cllr Smith will be aware, as part of our response to the recent Ofsted response we are significantly enhancing support for complaints and whistleblowing across the council, which I hope will further extend the protections against sexual harassment, and other inappropriate behaviour.</p>

<p>15. Questioner's name: Cllr Rachel Smith</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Ray Theodoulou</p>
<p>To: Cllr Ray Theodoulou</p> <p>I first asked this question as a supplementary question at September's meeting where I was promised a written response. Despite chasing, at the time of submitting this question, I have not had a response, so I am putting it to you again.....</p> <p>The 21st March (Ernst & Young Report) publication gives figures from prior to the revised project plan and only reports figures in Net Present Value which cannot be compared to the headline £100m figure the cabinet use. In terms comparable to the £100m claim, which I understand relies on NOT hitting the 70% recycling rate, please can the member provide the current, cash value estimated saving in the event we do hit the 70% recycling rate?</p>	<p>Can I repeat my apology for the delay in replying to Cllr Smith's original enquiry? Whilst I wouldn't wish to get into discussion of commercially exempt information, I am happy to confirm to Cllr Smith that we expect the Javelin Park plant to still deliver savings of over £100m if 70% recycling is achieved.</p>
<p>16. Questioner's name: Cllr Rachel Smith</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Ray Theodoulou</p>
<p>To: Cllr Ray Theodoulou</p> <p>A number of constituents have written to me in recent months voicing their concern over Gloucestershire County Council's pensions invested in fossil fuels. What proportion of Gloucestershire County Council's pensions investments are invested in fossil fuels? Please can you provide both percentages and the actual monetary figures?</p>	<p>There isn't a separate county council pension fund – we manage the Gloucestershire pension fund on behalf of 190 organisations, including county council staff. There isn't a separate investment category for fossil fuel investments, but £24m of the shares held directly by the Gloucestershire LGPS, or 3.5% of directly held shares, is currently invested in the oil and gas industry.</p>
<p>17. Questioner's name: Cllr Rachel Smith</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Ray Theodoulou</p>
<p>To: Cllr Ray Theodoulou</p> <p>The Governor of the Bank of England Mark Carney has warned that fossil fuel investments may become 'stranded assets' - what level of</p>	<p>The Gloucestershire Pension fund only makes investment decisions on the advice of professional fund managers – they are required to undertake on-going risk assessments of all of the investments that they make for all LGPS funds in order to deliver</p>

<p>risk assessment has been carried out to ensure that pension funds will make a good return for the people who will eventually be drawing on them?</p>	<p>the performance targets stipulated in each investment mandate.</p>
<p>18. Questioner's name: Cllr Rachel Smith</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Ray Theodoulou</p>
<p>It has been noted by many investors that one of the most promising area for investment is in clean, renewable energy. Do you agree that it would be appropriate for Gloucestershire County Council to not only invest for the best returns for its employees, but also to invest in the most ethical way with the least impact on the environment?</p>	<p>As I mentioned above, the pension fund doesn't belong to the county council, or even to the 190 member organisations, but to the thousands of staff, across all those organisations, who have paid into it. As Cllr Smith may be aware, the fund is moving to a new regional scheme Project Brunel in future, which will see our assets pooled with similar funds from across the South West. Project Brunel is alive to the concerns that Cllr Smith raises – it states:</p> <p><i>“Responsible investment (RI) and stewardship is part of our cultural vision and a key investment principle which will apply across all the assets within the pool. The RI policy will ensure the financial impact of such risks are managed and that responsible stewardship in terms of voting and engagement is embedded in our investment process.</i></p> <p><i>Within the pool, the Environment Agency Pension Fund has been recognised over many years for its commitment to and development of its responsible investment work and is acknowledged as an industry leader. We will look to adopt much of their best practice standards within this area. In addition, we are helping to develop best practice in this area as part of a collaboration on responsible investment across the eight LGPS pools.”</i></p>