

**COUNTY COUNCIL –26 June 2019
PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

<p>1. Questioner's name: Jonny Brownsteen</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Nigel Moor</p>
<p>At the April meeting of Cheltenham Borough Council's planning committee, an application was deferred on the grounds that the contribution from Gloucestershire County Council's Highways team was not sufficiently detailed to enable members to make an informed decision. There were also concerns about serious danger posed to motorists and pedestrians should the application, which Highways supported, go ahead. Nobody from Highways was present to explain their position or to assist members with making their decision. The application was deferred so that Highways could address these concerns. Their response, given to the May meeting, again lacked any detail and made no mention of the safety concerns whatsoever. Again, nobody from Highways attended this meeting to account for their decision or to answer questions that committee members had. Does this not show contempt for the planning process and the residents that the county council serves.</p>	<p>GCC officers attend meetings where they believe there to be serious issues or serious public concerns. In this case, GCC's review ascertained no existing highway matters that would have caused severe detriment and therefore made our positive recommendation. A senior officer of the council spoke to the Head of Planning about this before the committee meeting and provided additional information as requested.</p>
<p>2. Questioner's name: Jonny Brownsteen</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Nigel Moor</p>
<p>In the representations regarding the same application, a member of the public states that they are a blue badge holder and have applied for a space. The county council's submission included a statement of due regard in which they said nobody with a protected characteristic would be adversely affected by this development. This</p>	<p>GCC's statement of due regard has been used appropriately and in the question raised the two matters are not directly linked. The controlled parking zone is already established and as such any blue badge holder will have right to all the concessions that a Blue Badge within Gloucestershire provides. These rights would not have been</p>

cannot be the case given the circumstances. Does this not prompt concerns that the statement of due regard is not being used properly?	affected by the decision to implement planning, had the scheme been approved, which it was not.
3. Questioner's name: Steve Gower	Respondent's name: Cllr Kathy Williams
When people have to announce that they are homeless and obviously upset, do you feel a phone in the lobby of the main entrance in the council offices are the right environment to talk about your traumatic circumstances?	This is a district council matter, and I would have to recommend that Mr Gower addresses his concerns to the relevant district council.
4. Questioner's name: Steve Gower	Respondent's name: Cllr Kathy Williams
Have the personnel on the other end of the phone of the homeless team in council had any communication training	Please see the answer to question 3.
5. Questioner's name: Steve Gower	Respondent's name: Kathy Williams
Since when has it been homeless policy that the housing officer in Gloucester council assesses the mental health and vulnerability of an individual, do you feel this is good practice?	Please see the answer to question 3.
6. Questioner's name: Vicki Hewer	Respondent's name: Cllr Nigel Moor
Is Gloucestershire County Council prepared to support the Pulhams 801 bus service, which goes to Cheltenham, for residents of Northleach as the proposed further cuts in this service will deny	This is a commercial service – and we are yet to receive a firm proposal as to any change. However the operator does say that he picks up very few passengers in Northleach. We will certainly work

<p>residents useful access to Cheltenham. We request GCC to assist Pulhams to restore the service to enable residents the ability to rely on a service to get them either to work or college/school in the mornings and home again in the evening.</p>	<p>with the operator and others to consider all the options to ensure passengers using this service continue to have access to public transport. We will also consider at the same time links to Cirencester for college students on the 855 bus.</p>
<p>7. Questioner's name: Norman Kay</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>I attended the annual meeting of the Council as an observer. With no prior warning I was told that it was not permissible to bring in two pieces of written material – the constitution of my authority Stroud District Council and an academic textbook.</p> <p>Has the Authority given any recognition to the needless annoyance and upset that such an arbitrary imposition creates to its good name? Why specifically should this Constitution be considered not permissible?</p>	<p>Unfortunately in the light of recent events, including protests, damage to Council property and a member of staff being injured, the Council has introduced bag searches for members of the public attending Council meetings. We have reviewed the procedures in place in light of concerns raised by members of the public.</p>
<p>8. Questioner's name: Norman Kay</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>What guidance was given to the staff concerned about written material that might be of concern? Should there have been a supervising officer who might adjudicate on supposedly questionable material, and if so why was s/he not involved?</p>	<p>Security staff are briefed ahead of each meeting by a manager in the Asset Management and Property Services. A manager from Asset Management and Property Services will be present at future meetings to adjudicate in the event of a dispute.</p>
<p>9. Questioner's name: Norman Kay</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>Why was there no secure place to keep such items? Does the Council consider it has no duty of care for such items? What steps</p>	<p>The Council has reviewed the arrangements that it has in place to store personal items and will look to make enhancements in future.</p>

will be taken to provide secure storage in the future?	
10. Questioner's name: Gerald Hartley	Respondent's name: Cllr Nigel Moor
<p>Hunts Grove School</p> <p>GCC's EfW contractor UBB, has acknowledged public concern regarding emissions from the plant, by funding various types of emissions measurement equipment at a number of sites proximate to JP.</p> <p>In September 2019, a new primary school will open on a site that will be 1.5km North East of Javelin Park and much closer to a length of the M5.</p> <p>Will the County Council work with the Robinswood Academy Trust and UBB to reassure parents of children attending the school, by ensuring that monitoring equipment, as used at Haresfield and Hardwicke Village Halls, is installed at the school and will continue to be used for at least as long as the other two stations.</p>	<p>It would be for the Community Liaison Group local to the facility, who manage the air quality monitoring that is currently undertaken to decide on any appropriate action if required and we would obviously work with them.</p> <p>It's worth repeating the well established advice of Public Health England, supported by a significant body of research from across Europe, that concludes that properly run incinerators do not pose a significant risk to public health.</p>
11. Questioner's name: Dr Richard House	Respondent's name: Cllr Patrick Molyneux
<p>To: Cllr Patrick Molyneux</p> <p>Following a meeting in Stroud on 16th June of nearly 200 members of the public highly concerned about 5G, we would like to submit this question to Gloucestershire County Council:</p> <p>If 5G technology proves to be as deleterious to human and</p>	<p>As I explained in my letter to Dr House on this subject, this is not something which the county council is coordinating, and he should refer his queries to the Department of Culture Media and Sport, who are responsible.</p>

<p>environmental health as many independent scientific authorities are predicting, elected politicians who have been complicit in its roll-out without the requisite health and safety studies will be morally, if not legally, liable for the negative impacts on health and the environment that ensue. To what extent have the officers and elected councillors on GCC formally examined the safety or otherwise of a rolled-out 5G technology across Gloucestershire, and what steps have been taken to inform the citizens of progress?</p>	
<p>12. Questioner's name: Max Wilkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>Did the leader of the council receive the letter about Schools Streets initiative co-written by Cllr Iain Dobie, Cllr Angie Boyes and me?</p>	<p>Yes thanks. Hopefully you have received a reply from the relevant cabinet member.</p>
<p>13. Questioner's name: Max Wilkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>Does he agree with us that the Schools Streets initiative is necessary to fight pollution at the school gate? Does he recognise that the scheme improves the health of children by improving air quality and fighting obesity by encouraging walking and cycling to school, instead of car trips?</p>	<p>As I believe the reply to you explained, the Safer Streets initiative is an interesting idea, which there is little evidence to support at present, and which will only operate, by its promoters admission, in schools on quieter roads. There is a risk it could see school safety funding diverted from schools on busy roads, which might actually need that support the most. Nonetheless, this is a great opportunity for local members to use their Highways Local funding to run a trial.</p> <p>Given Cllr Wilkinson's concerns about air pollution in connection with the school run, I was surprised to learn, despite the borough-wide Air Quality Management Zone, that Cheltenham Borough Council was refusing to make use of its statutory powers to control engine idling. Your own council could take action now, outside every school in the</p>

	borough, to address some of your concerns, and chooses not to do so. Perhaps you ought to speak to your colleagues there?
14. Questioner's name: Max Wilkinson	Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne
Will he commit to commissioning a study into which schools in the county could benefit from a School Streets initiative?	As I explained above, I am happy for local councillors, who after all know their areas better than most, to look at using their Highways Local Funding to run small-scale trials.
15. Questioner's name: Robert Wilkinson	Respondent's name: Cllr Nigel Moor
<p>I would be interested in knowing the council strategy for disposing of plastic waste.</p> <p>What proportion is recycled?</p> <p>Also, how does the council plan to reduce the production of CO2 and other compounds which damage the atmosphere?</p>	<p>The county council works with district councils through the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Committee to promote the reduction of plastic waste. We provide tips on reusable alternatives to single use plastics and also provide support to a small but growing number of "Plastic Free" communities starting up in Gloucestershire; the first of these being "Plastic Free Coleford".</p> <p>The county council has committed to reducing the use of single-use plastics in its own buildings, again by replacing single-use plastics with reusable alternatives.</p> <p>The council provides collection banks at its HRC sites for recycling plastic bottles. District council kerbside recycling collections also accept plastics for recycling. Over 6,000 tonnes of plastic was recycled in Gloucestershire last year. Our total household waste arisings (recyclable and non-recyclable) were 283,080 tonnes.</p> <p>Our approach to waste management is very much focussed on</p>

	<p>reducing, reusing, recycling and then recovering value from waste. By reducing the amount of waste that is disposed of we are helping to reduce Carbon Dioxide emissions (and also Methane emissions from landfill).</p> <p>The county council pays district councils to recycle more waste, and in particular to remove waste that rots, like food waste, from residual waste collections. Diverting food and garden waste from landfill offers a significant carbon benefit, by reducing methane emissions.</p>
<p>16. Questioner's name: Drew Davie</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Nigel Moor</p>
<p>As of May 2019, the council endorsed on behalf of Gloucestershire the declaration of a climate emergency by the UK parliament. How does the development of new roads as part of the A417 'Missing Link' project fit in with the values espoused by the councils commitments towards fighting the climate emergency?"</p>	<p>The A417 Missing Link scheme is intended to reduce the terrible toll of serious accidents on this road, help address the existing air quality management zone by cutting congestion, and support Gloucestershire jobs and businesses. Reducing carbon emissions from transport is important – and the best approach to this is through the transition to lower, low and no emission vehicles – not through artificial congestion and serious accidents. This transition is the only way that we will be able to meet our national climate change goals, is something that this council supports.</p> <p>I should add that the proposed scheme offers other benefit, including better ecological linkage with a “green bridge”, better and safer footpaths, and a reduction in “rat running” through neighbouring villages.</p>
<p>17. Questioner's name: David Willingham</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>Could the cabinet member please advise me, and my constituents,</p>	<p>I'd recommend that Cllr Willingham speaks to his colleague Cllr</p>

<p>what work has been done by officers and himself since 1st January 2019 to progress the requested closure of Alstone Croft?</p>	<p>Coleman in the first instance, who will be well placed to update him. A report has been produced and we are looking to set up a meeting with local councillors, residents and officers to try to agree a way forward.</p>
<p>18. Questioner's name: David Willingham</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>What is the scheduled date for the works to close Alstone Croft to be completed?</p>	<p>If a solution is agreed, we would hope to see it delivered this year.</p>
<p>19. Questioner's name: Siân Wyn-Jones</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>In a written answer to one of my previous questions you said that "in places where the lighting will never achieve this (meet the correct category under the British Standard) then we have provided the 'best fit', e.g. Minchinhampton". But in a verbal answer to one of my supplementary questions at the same meeting you replied that you don't operate on a best fit practice. Do you accept that you contradicted yourself in these two responses?</p>	<p>To clarify. Wherever reasonably practical we meet the design standards, where this is not reasonably practical we aim to achieve a best fit.</p>
<p>20. Questioner's name: Siân Wyn-Jones</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>The Council Minutes of the meeting on 23.07.14 when the rollout of LED street lighting was approved say that the LED lighting proposed will be at the same lighting levels as existing. Can you please provide me with your calculations and analysis of the pre-rollout lighting levels in the conservation areas of the Parish of Minchinhampton as evidence that</p>	<p>No. We did not specifically measure the existing lighting at actual site locations to facilitate the LED replacement. The lanterns are replaced on a similar as possible like for like, in terms of light output, as the existing units.</p>

<p>you had taken our existing lighting levels into account. Specifically, did you measure the brightness of our existing lights and assess any glare from them?</p>	
<p>21. Questioner's name: Siân Wyn-Jones</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>The Council applied for additional funding for a CMS system. Can you explain to me and to Council how this system works in practice and how, when it was installed on a pole below a new LED light close to a property in the conservation area of Minchinhampton, it interfered with the burglar alarm system, triggering it at random times in the day and night and causing great concern and worry to the elderly resident?</p>	<p>The CMS system operates on a frequency that is regulated by the Home Office. There have been occurrences where there is a close proximity to other equipment that use the same frequency, we have fine tuned our CMS to avoid the clash.</p>
<p>22. Questioner's name: Siân Wyn-Jones</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>Section 45 of the Public Health Act 1961 covers the situation where streetlights are attached to private properties. Under this statute you are entitled to repair, maintain or remove a pre-existing streetlight which the owner has previously consented to. Replacement of a streetlight is excluded from this statute. This of course makes perfect sense in that if someone consents to one type of light it does not imply consent for any type of streetlight.</p> <p>Can you explain why Skanska wrote a few months ago to homeowners in Minchinhampton who had lights attached to their</p>	<p>We do not hold the same interpretation of the act as yourself. We have contacted all of the households affected by this issue, and we are satisfied we have fulfilled our obligations.</p>

<p>homes telling them that the existing street lights on their homes would be replaced with new LED street lights and that there would be additional equipment for the CMS added and that they didn't even need to be home while this was being done? It didn't ask for their consent, nor did it inform them of their right to refuse to have such a light or equipment on their homes.</p>	
<p>23. Questioner's name: Siân Wyn-Jones</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>Professor Satchidananda Panda from the Salk Institute in California, who studies how light and darkness affects our brain and body, was interviewed recently as part of a Radio 4 programme, "Losing the Night". He studies the body's circadian rhythm (our in-built biological clock). Using data gathered over the last few years he noticed how lighting levels in terms of lux have increased and how this "slams down" melatonin. Our bodies are adapted to a predicted and ongoing cycle of light and darkness. He says that they now know that almost every human gene is under circadian control and information on day and night is written into its blueprint.</p> <p>Chronic circadian disruption leads to an elevated risk of a wide range of conditions and diseases. He says that everyone should have a basic human right to good health and everyone should have a right to darkness.</p> <p>You have reduced the brightness of the streetlights and we can't notice any difference. One resident where the light has been shielded outside her home has said it makes no difference – she has still lost the dark. These lights just do not work in conservation areas with the sort of built environment and inherent restrictions we</p>	<p>As you are aware from discussions with officers of the County we are proposing to use 3000 Kelvin Ampera LED lights within the conservation area of Minchinhampton.</p> <p>Where glare is an issue for residents, the County will provide appropriate shielding and tilting of the lanterns to reduce as much as possible.</p>

<p>have. Do you think it is responsible to continue to roll out of 4000 kelvin Ampera LED lights with inappropriate lumen levels and glare where they are being fitted within a few feet of homes?</p>	
<p>24. Questioner's name: Lorraine Du Feu</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Nigel Moor</p>
<p>Like most Cheltenham residents who use a bike to get around I find the current provision for cyclists in the town appalling. There are next to no dedicated cycle routes and of those that exist, none join up to make a network and hardly any are marked properly or segregated from traffic. Many people who would like to cycle do not do so because they feel (and probably are) unsafe. A recent report has suggested that painting white lines and little bike symbols on busy roads and calling them cycle lanes, as we have on the London Road in Cheltenham, is a pointless gesture which wastes millions of pounds.</p> <p>I hope the council will agree that:</p> <p>a) We are now in a climate emergency and that it is their responsibility to take urgent action.</p> <p>b) The reduction of petrol and diesel driven vehicles is an imperative part of this action, therefore spending 435 million pounds of the A417 missing link scheme, which will unarguably only increase levels of traffic, needs to be re-thought.</p> <p>c) Providing safer cycling and walking routes is the best way to encourage people to leave their cars at home, so a system of properly safe, connected and attractive dedicated cycle routes in all our towns is a priority and money must be found immediately to put this into practice.</p>	<p>I refer to my answer to question 16 on the A417 Missing Link.</p> <p>The council invests heavily through both its capital and revenue budgets to provide for and encourage cycling and walking trips. The council is currently undertaking an audit to produce a plan showing all the cycling facilities in the county to judge how best to move forward ensuring connectivity of cycle routes. The county also has a Thinktravel team that works to promote and enable more people to actively travel for more of their journeys and lifestyle choices.</p>

25. Questioner's name: Bren McInerney	Respondent's name: Cllr Tim Harman
<p>What joined up plan does Gloucestershire County Council have to address health inequalities within the Trust. What joined up plan does the Council have for addressing health inequalities with their partner organisations?</p>	<p>Our council strategy, 'Looking to the Future', recognises the challenge of reducing inequalities. It clearly sets out that we "will help people of all ages to stay healthy and well by working with partners to review our approach to make sure we are focussed on prevention and on reducing health inequalities."</p> <p>Our system wide approach to prevention and reducing health inequalities will be set out in the forthcoming Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The strategy is in the final stages of development and sets out our ambitions for seven key priorities. Each priority will have a plan in the form of a statement of strategic intent and these will clearly set a focus on reducing inequalities.</p> <p>Additionally, we are in the early stages of forming a prevention and health inequalities framework for the Integrated Care System. This will complement the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and specifically outline our local response to the prevention chapter of the NHS Long Term Plan.</p>