

**CABINET –27 March 2024  
PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

<p><b>1. Questioner’s name: David Redgewell</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent’s name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b></p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 6: Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Funding Application</b></p> <p>With the welcome news the Mark Harper MP, Secretary of State for Transport and Forest of Dean has awarded for Zebra bus bid ,in Gloucestershire, of £1,500,000 To stagecoach west , Go ahead group Oxford bus company, Pulham coaches, Lydney community Transport,</p> <p>What discussions are taking place with Cheltenham Borough Council to improve the passenger experience in Royal Well bus and coach station and for service x94 94 99 to serve the bus and coach station,</p> <p>Gloucester Transport hub facilities include intergrated Transport information and passenger information real-time and reopening the café.</p> <p>And improvement to public waiting shelter and real-time information systems passenger safe along theses Transport corridors</p> <p>Tewkesbury Town centre, Tewkesbury and Ashchurch station, including more bus lanes and priority measures on Gloucester to Cheltenham bus corridor.</p>	<p>GCC is undertaking a study into bus routing and stopping arrangements in Cheltenham. In addition, GCC has ringfenced budget for investment in bus priority measures and interchange hubs.</p> <p>Investment in bus service infrastructure across the county will include waiting facilities, lighting, service information and other features that will make using the bus more attractive to passengers.</p> <p>We will also be looking to the private sector to invest in our public transport infrastructure. In 2024/25 we will be going to the market to procure a long term bus shelter contract looking for a company to provide and maintain bus shelters in return for rights to advertise on shelters.</p>
<p><b>2. Questioner’s name: David Redgewell</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent’s name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b></p>
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<p><b>Agenda Item 6: Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Funding Application</b></p> <p>With Gloucester City services on stagecoach west service 1 Gloucester to Matson and Service 12 Gloucester city centre to Quedgeley,  What is the level of clean air improvement to be provided in Gloucester in terms:  8 tonnes Nox  15 845 tons of carbon?</p>	<p>Electric buses significantly reduce harmful pollutants such as nitrogen oxides (NOx). Routes 1 and 2 have specifically been included in the ZEBRA bid as they go through an Air Quality Management Area in Barton &amp; Tredworth.</p> <p>The total amount of NOx savings was calculated by operator, not by bus route, so whilst there will be improvements in air quality in Gloucester we do not have figures for individual routes at the current time.</p>
<p><b>3. Questioner's name: David Redgewell</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b></p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 6: Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Funding Application</b></p> <p>What legal agreement are in place to protect the Residents of Gloucestershire that stagecoach Group and the go ahead group plc Oxford bus company will keep the buses in Gloucestershire?</p> <p>And if the Bus Depot at Cheltenham spa 13 charging points or Stagecoach west or Go head Oxford bus company Burton on the water 16 charging points are relocated so that bus infrastructure is protected?</p> <p>Will the buses be branded in Gloucestershire County Council branding and Department for Transport logo as per money spent on Bus services improvement plans?</p>	<p>Bus operators are obliged by the ZEBRA fund conditions to continue to operate the ZEBs purchased under the ZEBRA scheme within Gloucestershire for a minimum of five years. GCC officers will ensure that the funding agreement to be signed with the bus operators reflects this obligation.</p> <p>The charging infrastructure will be installed at specific bus depots with the aim to serve the vehicles purchased through the ZEBRA fund. Therefore, should bus operators lose access to the charging infrastructure, they would have to find a different way to operate the ZEBs in Gloucestershire for the agreed time period.</p> <p>The DfT is still to provide GCC with guidance on branding.</p>

<p><b>4. Questioner's name: David Redgewell</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b></p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 6: Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Funding Application</b></p> <p>With Western Gateway Transport Board and Peninsula Transport Board study for charging points for coaches . And Bourton on water being a major visit attraction and coaching centre in South west England and the cotswolds, is the issue of enough coach charging points and coach parking facilities being addressed by Gloucestershire county council public transport unit, and the go ahead group?</p>	<p>Go Ahead are proposing to install 16 chargers at their Bourton depot providing capacity for up to 29 (maximum) ZEBs, that's up to 14 in addition to the 15 ZEB it is planning to purchase as part of the ZEBRA funding.</p> <p>In terms of visiting coaches, it is still unclear which direction the coach industry will adopt for the move zero emission with hydrogen power still considered the favourite option, adding opportunity charging for coaches at this time could be a false investment but we do need to be ready if required so the Arle Court Transport Hub has been built to be able to add such facilities in the future.</p>
<p><b>5. Questioner's name: David Redgewell</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b></p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 6: Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Funding Application</b></p> <p>Arles court interchange coach station and park and ride</p> <p>We welcome the provision of a cafe and passenger facilities. Will the cafe opening hours allow for opening on Mon to Friday Evening weekend and Sundays?</p> <p>As the Gloucester Transport hub to Cheltenham spa x94 94 is 24 7 service and if National Express coaches limited main line coaches, Megabus Scottish City link coaches and Flixbus coaches network call the issue of the Cafe opening hours need to be addressed.</p>	<p>The Café is intended to be let on a commercial basis with a hope that it will eventually provide an income source to help fund the operational costs of the hub. A successful provider will be encouraged to ensure that their operating hours meet the needs of any demand.</p> <p>The operating hours of the hub will initially be the same as current, 0700 – 1900 Monday to Saturday, however it is an aspiration to expand hours and days of operation as demand grows. GCC have engaged with national coach operators to utilise the hub with very favourable feedback.</p>

<p>And level of local bus services that the council and Transport Authority reroute via the Transport hub , Bristol bus and coach station, Birmingham coach station, London victoria and Gloucester Transport hub bus station catering facilities open early and close in the Evening.</p> <p>What is the operating hours proposed at Arles court coach station park and ride and interchange? Have discussions taken place with Public transport operators?</p>	
<p><b>6. Questioner's name: David Redgewell</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b></p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 6: Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Funding Application</b></p> <p>Junction 10 m5 bus priority is welcomed For Cheltenham spa to Tewkesbury bus services. What other bus service improvement are planned? Including bus lanes on this import public transport corridor to Tewkesbury and Ashchurch for Tewkesbury railway station. Hope in the future a bus service from Tewkesbury to Worcester crown point bus and coach station via Upton seven again.</p>	<p>GCC has allocated a budget of £2.6 million for bus priority improvements across Gloucestershire. Exact locations are still to be identified.</p> <p>It is also expected that the provision along the A4019 associated with M5 Junction 10 will be further extended as part of transport mitigations to be provided by developments arising from the North-West Cheltenham strategic allocation.</p>
<p><b>7. Questioner's name: David Redgewell</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b></p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 6: Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Funding Application</b></p> <p>What plans does Gloucestershire County Council have to call a bus service users Forum to discuss BIS improvement plan and 12th June 2024</p>	<p>GCC is keen to introduce a bus service user forum before the end of 2024.</p>

Submission to the Department for transport?	
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## MEMBER QUESTIONS

### CABINET MEETING –March 2024

<b>Question 1: Cllr Paul Baker</b>	<b>Respondent: Cllr David Gray</b>
<b>Agenda Item 8: M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme - Funding Update</b>  Given that costed requests for CIL funding have already been submitted by Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Gloucester City Council, for both individual and shared schemes totalling £44m, can the Cabinet Member confirm how realistic it will be to raise the £80m junction 10 funding gap from CIL contributions and what likely impact that may have on the schemes submitted by the districts?	<p>The grant funding for the M5 Junction 10 improvements scheme has been conditional on pursuing a recovery strategy (being an approach to recover funding from the developments which it seeks to support) since negotiating and agreeing the grant agreement during the period March 2020 to October 2020.</p> <p>Conversations and negotiations have been ongoing with developers (and relevant highway and planning authorities) in the North-West and West Cheltenham area since September 2023 to secure the additional funding required through S106 agreements.</p>
<b>Question 2: Cllr Paul Baker</b>	<b>Respondent: Cllr David Gray</b>
<b>Agenda Item 8: M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme - Funding Update</b>  For a nationally important scheme such as this is there not an opportunity to seeking additional funding from alternative funding sources such as National Highways, Homes England or the various pots that spring up from time to time from central government?	<p>Homes England have confirmed that there is no further grant funding available for the scheme at this time, it is a condition of the current grant agreement that GCC seek to recover funding from dependent developments – a number of which are anticipated to progress to planning committee (requiring agreement on s106) during Summer/Autumn this year.</p> <p>The project team will continue to explore additional funding opportunities to support the delivery of the scheme.</p>

<p><b>Question 3: Cllr Roger Whyborn</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent: Cllr Philip Robinson</b></p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 6: Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Funding Application</b></p> <p>I note agreeably that GCC will work with bus operators to seek to introduce bus priority measures on ZEB routes – but only apparently if the bid is successful.</p> <p>Given that GCC is the Highways authority, with bus priority measures in its gift, and that these junction measures are urgently needed on many junctions on the affected routes anyway, shouldn't this be something GCC should be proactively moving forward <b>now</b> with the aim to re-launch slicker - i.e. accelerated timetable - services with electric buses in short order?"</p>	<p>Bus priority is an ambition we have regardless of the Zebra bid, with existing capital funding being used to target key junctions across the network to speed up bus services. Zebra funded electric buses simply strengthen the already strong case for bus priority measures.</p>
<p><b>Question 4: Cllr Colin Hay</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent: Cllr Stephen Davies</b></p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 5: Performance and Risk Monitoring Report 2023/24</b></p> <p>Can we add High needs placements in Childrens social services at unregistered settings be a corporate risk?</p>	<p>Children's Services will review their entries in the corporate risk register and provide an update to Cllr Hay once completed.</p>
<p><b>Question 5: Cllr Colin Hay</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent: Cllr Lynden Stowe</b></p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 10: Schedule of Proposed Disposals</b></p> <p>How many County residential properties declared surplus are left empty pending the sale or disposal of the land, and how long are they left empty.</p>	<p>This varies depending on the circumstances. A property declared surplus and pending sale is subject to the same requirements and time constraints as any other residential sale; for example, time to advertise and secure a buyer.</p>



	Residential properties that form part of larger infrastructure projects such as road building may take longer due to the complexities of purchasing the property via either a negotiated settlement or as part of a Compulsory Purchase Order, for example.
<b>Question 6: Cllr Roger Whyborn</b>	<b>Respondent: Cllr Philip Robinson</b>
<p><b>Agenda Item 9: Arle Court Transport Hub Bus Service and Cafe Concessionary Contracts</b></p> <p>The intention to increase the Transport hub frequency to 15 minutes from November 2024 – with a future aim of 10-12 minutes - is much to be welcomed as a means of ‘kick-starting’ the bus service to the new hub. Is it reasonable to expect that over time this 15 minute service would run reasonably well-loaded, even at off-peak times and therefore become (near to?) a commercial service?</p>	<p>It's fair to assume that, given current and historical use of the Arle Court Park and Ride service, it will be very well used at the traditional working day rush hour times. We also believe a large market for leisure and tourism exists and this can be built upon to increase the revenue taken on the service and justify further improvements to the frequency.</p> <p>The more we invest in and promote this particular service, the greater the chance of commercial viability.</p>
<b>Question 7: Cllr Roger Whyborn</b>	<b>Respondent: Cllr Philip Robinson</b>
<p><b>Agenda Item 9: Arle Court Transport Hub Bus Service and Cafe Concessionary Contracts</b></p> <p>Readers need to understand the overall financial risks and consequences, and the effect of the ‘Revenue Guarantee basis’ in the scenarios of: If the fare revenues achieved are better than forecast, who benefits from this? Conversely if revenues do not improve within the initial two-year period quoted, what then happens then, given that the full £650K p.a. is not built into base budget, and could leave considerable unfunded revenue commitments for a future administration?</p>	<p>‘Revenue Guarantee’ means that GCC keeps the fare revenue, which means we hold the risk/reward. If the service is successful the financial benefit is ours and any surplus income will help cover the costs of operating the Transport Hub.</p> <p>The Park and Ride budget has been built using existing fare revenue information, we are not projecting an increase to justify the service frequency increase. The reality is that additional services will almost certainly lead to at least some level of revenue increase. This risk has been mitigated and the service is securely funded.</p>

<b>Question 8: Cllr Roger Whyborn</b>	<b>Respondent: Cllr Philip Robinson</b>
<p><b>Agenda Item 9: Arle Court Transport Hub Bus Service and Cafe Concessionary Contracts</b></p> <p>The principle of a café on site is a welcome one, and as with the nearly Costa/Aldi site, could attract some ‘destination’ business if it is properly conceived. Apart from a set-up cost of £100K, which sounds rather high, to be offset by unknown revenue returns, (the structure of which is not given in the report), what other commitments fall to this council in setting up or maintaining a café on the site? In particular what steps have been taken to de-risk this project?</p>	<p>The council are seeking a concessionaire to fit out, manage and operate the café at Arle Court Transport Hub.</p> <p>The estimated c£100k set up costs are to be funded by the concessionaire, not the council.</p> <p>By requesting a concessionaire to operate the café the council is reducing its exposure to financial risk from the venture.</p> <p>Over the course of the long term concession contract the council anticipates receiving income from the concessionaire.</p>
<b>Question 9: Cllr John Bloxsom</b>	<b>Respondent: Cllr Lynden Stowe</b>
<p><b>Agenda Item 10: Schedule of Proposed Disposals</b></p> <p>Why is the identity of the land and buildings included in the exempt schedules not disclosed in the publicly available reports?</p>	<p>There are a number of reasons why the list of disposals remains confidential at the stage when they are added to the schedule including, but not limited to; commercial sensitivities around land and property values, future planning issues, sensitivities associated with current occupiers/staff and adjoining owners. Promotion of land for various schemes or developments can take months or years to develop prior to them being put into the public domain.</p>
<b>Question 10: Cllr John Bloxsom</b>	<b>Respondent: Cllr Lynden Stowe</b>
<p><b>Agenda Item 10: Schedule of Proposed Disposals</b></p> <p>What opportunity is there for members of the public to comment upon proposals to dispose of land and buildings before Cabinet approves such proposals?</p>	<p>There is no opportunity at this stage given the commercial, planning and occupation points raised under the Question 9.</p>

<p><b>Question 11: Cllr John Bloxsom</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent: Cllr Lynden Stowe</b></p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 10: Schedule of Proposed Disposals</b></p> <p>As Cabinet is considering the recommendations of the Rural Estates Tak Group and has confirmed that "the rural estate does deliver a multitude of diverse aims and does form part of the councils plans to meet its sustainability goals", why is there a proposal to dispose of such land?</p>	<p>The current Strategic Rural Estate Plan identifies that the estate will be progressively rationalised during the term of the plan. It also recognises that the Rural Estate delivers a multitude of diverse aims and forms part of the council's plans to meet its sustainability goals.</p>
<p><b>Question 12: Cllr John Bloxsom</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent: Cllr Lynden Stowe</b></p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 10: Schedule of Proposed Disposals</b></p> <p>In considering sales to special categories of purchasers referred to the GCC Policy for Disposal of Property: parish and town councils, voluntary/community groups, registered charities , housing associations; what weighting is given to social, economic and environmental benefits of bids rather than simply price to be paid?</p>	<p>Each case is considered on its own merits having made 'One Public Estate' partners aware of the intention to dispose. Assets listed as 'Assets of Community Value' are treated differently, see below (Q 13) for the process applied in these cases.</p>
<p><b>Question 13: Cllr John Bloxsom</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent: Cllr Lynden Stowe</b></p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 10: Schedule of Proposed Disposals</b></p> <p>Where a property to be disposed of is listed as an Asset of Community Value under the Localism Act, how are members of the public consulted by the County Council upon the future use of those assets as opposed to GCC simply engaging parties interested in their acquisition?</p>	<p>A statutory process is followed when disposing of these assets. The disposal is advertised in accordance with this process and a moratorium of six months applied prior to any sale. When the property is advertised and bids requested, a process that considers social and community benefit is provided to all bidders. Bids are assessed in accordance with this process. Any organisation or individual has the opportunity to submit a bid.</p>

