

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

CABINET MEETING – 13 November 2019

<p><b>1. Dr Christopher Chiswell</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent: Cllr Nigel Moor</b></p>
<p><b>Agenda Item 10: Procurement of Highway Construction Services relating to the West of Cheltenham Transport Improvement Scheme and UK Cyber Business Park (Phases 1 and 2)</b></p> <p>The case presents only a plan to deliver the road elements of this scheme, before any definitive commitment to the pedestrian and cycle enhancements is made.</p> <p>UK and international evidence shows that increasing road capacity induces additional vehicle demand. This scheme also increases numbers of harmful pollution emitting vehicles queuing much closer to vulnerable receptors of air pollution (eg children) in residential areas, rather than any traffic queues being held further away by the motorway.</p> <p>Together, the net effect of this scheme appears harmful, as a new equilibrium of congestion will be reached that has significantly more traffic, with higher local exposure levels. At public engagement events, these concerns were raised, but no response has been made available.</p> <p><b>Given the level of public concern, and the council's stated commitment to prioritising the climate emergency, of which car use is a major contributor;</b></p> <p>1a) What evidence has the council reviewed to assure itself that air quality and health for local residents will not be adversely affected, and that the scheme's choice of building road capacity before any additional active transport capacity is the most appropriate way to mitigate dependency on single occupancy vehicles, and</p> <p>1b) What level of commitment can the council offer that phases 3 and 4, the only pollution reducing elements of the scheme, will actually be delivered, and within what timescale?'</p>	<p>This scheme has been designed specifically to reduce congestion levels and to support future development in the area. All the scheme's phases include improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. In phase one and two that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new pedestrian/cyclist crossing facility across Fiddlers Green Lane to support a well established desire line for pedestrians and cyclists</li> <li>• An upgrade to the existing subway with improved lighting</li> <li>• Additional shared use footway/cycleway facilities on Hatherley Lane to cater for cyclists accessing the park and ride and linking with the subway to the North.</li> </ul> <p>Future phases include more provision, with GFirst LEP allocating a further £1.6m to be used solely on cycling and walking infrastructure between Arle Court Roundabout and Gloucester Road/Lansdown Road Junction. This will be delivered alongside phases 3 and 4 of the scheme and will include a new shared use footway/cycleway amongst a number of other cycling and walking improvements. All phases of the project are currently on programme to be completed before the end of 2021.</p> <p>A full local air quality assessment, which shows no significant issues.</p>