

URGENT QUESTIONS

CABINET MEETING – 20 December 2019

Urgent question 1: Cllr Steve Jordan (Cheltenham Borough Council)	Respondent: Cllr Nigel Moor
<p>Agenda Item 5: Cheltenham Transport Plan Phase 4</p> <p>Will you confirm that in taking any decision in relation to the Cheltenham Transport Plan phase 4 you will give proper weight to empirical evidence over anecdotal evidence?</p> <p>The specific points presented at the meeting were:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Significant modal shift with Stagecoach claiming an additional 270,000 additional bus passengers p.a and better punctuality as a result of the trial; potentially the most significant modal shift success ever achieved within the County➤ Cycling through Boots Corner itself up by 185% since the trial began➤ Falling traffic flows in the town centre (20% reduction compared to 2008)➤ No adverse air quality impact, in fact, a slow decline in NO₂ over several years➤ Positive town centre performance from a footfall and investment perspective as cited by commercial contributors at the TR committee➤ 7% increase in town visitors and 6% increase in overnight stays in the last 12 months i.e. within the trial period➤ 2019 CBC residents survey independently undertaken that identified 'Promoting walking, cycling and public transport' within residents top three priorities.	<p>Cabinet will consider all the representations that have been made to it on this subject in reaching a decision.</p>

<p>Urgent question 2: Cllr Steve Jordan (Cheltenham Borough Council)</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Nigel Moor</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5: Cheltenham Transport Plan Phase 4</p> <p>When GCC received £4.95m from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund it was premised on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing the severance of the High Street at Boots Corner • Increasing walking, cycling and public transport use • Stimulating town centre retail activity and supporting regeneration <p>Please confirm how you will achieve these if the outcome of Cheltenham Transport Plan phase 4 is to abandon the trial.</p>	<p>The Cheltenham Transport Plan has been implemented in phases, so whilst phase 4 has been a trial phases 1 – 3 are permanent changes. Albion Street, Oriel Road, Clarence Street and Clarence Parade will stay as two-way streets, providing more direct routes for bus passengers, cyclists and shoppers accessing town centre car parks.</p>
<p>Urgent question 3: Cllr Steve Jordan (Cheltenham Borough Council)</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Nigel Moor</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5: Cheltenham Transport Plan Phase 4</p> <p>Do you agree that since the trial began there has been a 270 000 per annum (4.3%) increase in bus passengers in Cheltenham; a 185% increase in cycling at Boots Corner and a 20% reduction in vehicle movement representing a very significant modal shift?</p> <p>As these significant gains would be lost if the trial is not made permanent, in light of the Climate Change emergency recently declared, could the Cabinet please advise how it proposes to address these significant modal shift losses and the steps it will take to make similar or</p>	<p>We have noted the growth in bus and cycle use and reductions in overall traffic. However, displaced traffic has also caused congestion on residential streets and roads used by buses. Our budget for 2020/21 includes proposals to invest in upgrading traffic signals to reduce congestion on the A4019 ring road at several locations and help keep the town moving.</p> <p>I would note, whilst Cheltenham Borough Council has contended the scheme provided carbon benefits, other</p>

<p>increased improvements in Cheltenham?</p>	<p>representations made to the council and at the committee argue the closure had a significant carbon cost. I recall that, when Cheltenham Borough Council originally advanced the scheme, the primary intent was presented as boosting town centre business rather than modal shift.</p>
<p>Urgent question 4: Cllr Steve Jordan (Cheltenham Borough Council)</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Nigel Moor</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5: Cheltenham Transport Plan Phase 4</p> <p>Both the Climate Change Strategy and emerging Local Transport Plan support increased walking, cycling and use of public transport.</p> <p>In the absence of any other deliverable proposals, would you agree that since Cheltenham Transport Plan phase 4 has succeeded in achieving these, abandoning the trial would be perverse?</p>	<p>I certainly don't agree there are no other deliverable proposals to promote modal shift in Cheltenham, and, whatever the decision on this aspect of the Cheltenham Transport Plan, I look forward to working with Cheltenham Borough Council in pursuit of our shared goals in this area.</p>
<p>Urgent question 5: Cllr Steve Jordan (Cheltenham Borough Council)</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Nigel Moor</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5: Cheltenham Transport Plan Phase 4</p> <p>If the Cabinet supports the recommendation of the TR Committee, to ensure that at least some of the modal shift and pedestrian priority benefits are preserved, will you confirm that cycle racks and traffic calming measures will be retained on the highway.</p>	<p>The County Council will be very happy to work with Cheltenham Borough Council to look at the implementation of any changes.</p>

<p>Urgent question 6: Jessica West</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Nigel Moor</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5: Cheltenham Transport Plan Phase 4</p> <p>Pedestrianisation and alternative transport measures across town are obviously imperative - not only because of very limited spaces to park cars either on streets or off-road, but because of air pollution concerns from poor wind over surrounding hills, and because of our aging population who have different mobility needs.</p> <p>What is the next planned direction for accommodating these needs going ahead?</p>	<p>The County Council is committed to working to decarbonise our transport systems and giving people the choice of how to travel. This will continue to be the case, irrespective of any decision on Boots Corner.</p>
<p>Urgent question 7: Tabitha Joy</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Nigel Moor</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5: Cheltenham Transport Plan Phase 4</p> <p>What alternative measures might now be taken to reduce Cheltenham's carbon emissions and air pollution levels now that Boots Corner has been reopened? What steps will Gloucestershire County Council take to ensure that targets are being met, people's health is being protected, and the declared Climate Emergency is being taken seriously - and what would be the timescale for implementation?</p>	<p>Whilst supporters of the scheme have contended closing Boots Corner offered a benefit in terms of carbon emissions and air pollution, opponents of the closure have contended it has in fact increased carbon emissions, and moved air pollution issues to other, more residential, parts of Cheltenham.</p> <p>Whoever is correct, this is a minor issue when set against the need to decarbonise all of our transport system, something the County Council is committed to doing as part of our response</p>

	<p>to the climate emergency.</p> <p>We will be consulting soon on the draft Local Transport Plan and developing detailed action plans to deliver on air quality and climate change commitments, and I hope the questioner will take part in that consultation.</p>
<p>Urgent question 8: Cllr Iain Dobie</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Nigel Moor</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5: Cheltenham Transport Plan Phase 4</p> <p>Today the Cabinet will be considering the Due Regard Statement covering transport policy in Gloucestershire. Transport decisions made by GCC should avoid disproportionate harm to the poor, the old and the disabled. These people use buses more than the general population.</p> <p>At the TR Committee meeting on Monday we heard from Stagecoach that, as a result of the closure of Boots Corner to 10,000 cars a day, its buses can now stick to their schedule – in consequence more people are using buses – therefore Stagecoach is (or was) planning to lay on more bus services. It follows that bus services will deteriorate should Boots Corner be reopened. Poorer bus services will disproportionately harm the poor, the old and the disabled.</p> <p>Therefore will Cabinet take into account when making its decision that reopening Boots Corner will run counter to GCC’s own policy?</p>	<p>Cllr Dobie had every opportunity to raise points on this issue at Traffic Regulation Committee. I can assure him Cabinet will give due consideration to relevant matters, as it always does.</p>

Urgent question 9: Cllr Iain Dobie	Respondent: Cllr Nigel Moor
<p data-bbox="69 328 824 360">Agenda Item 5: Cheltenham Transport Plan Phase 4</p> <p data-bbox="69 411 1093 528">The supplementary item presented on behalf of the Traffic Regulation Committee claims that the committee’s recommendation to GCC cabinet was to:</p> <p data-bbox="69 584 1093 655">“Abandon the current Phase 4 ETROs and revert back to the permanent TROs which were in place immediately prior to the Phase 4 trial.”</p> <p data-bbox="69 711 1061 823">However, the report makes no reference to the fact that the committee was not unanimous in its recommendation, or who on the committee voted for this recommendation.</p> <p data-bbox="69 879 1070 1031">Does the relevant Cabinet Member therefore agree with me that this is not an accurate record of the day’s hearing, and do they agree with me that the accurate context is essential for Cabinet to make an informed decision on item 5?</p>	<p data-bbox="1124 411 1603 443">No, I do not agree with Cllr Dobie.</p>