

COUNTY COUNCIL – 9 September 2020
Members' Questions

<p>1. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Tim Harman</p>
<p>Staff in elderly persons care homes are now being tested for COVID-19 anti-bodies. Can you please provided data to include how many tests have been done so far and how many tests proved positive or negative?</p>	<p>As of 2nd September 2020 1,801 staff working in care homes in Gloucestershire have had anti-body testing (of approximately 5,800 staff; 31%). Of these 323 were positive (17.9%).</p> <p>It is important to note that there is still insufficient evidence to show that a positive antibody test means immunity to further COVID-19 infections. In addition, the numbers of people testing positive should be treated with caution as we do not have comprehensive data to compare the data to at the current time, and we do not know where people who test positive caught the virus from.</p>
<p>2. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Kathy Williams</p>
<p>On the 7th of April a press release was issued by the county council in which you were quoted. The press release reported that the county council was helping the NHS Hospital Trust transfer patients from hospital into elderly persons care homes within three hours.</p> <p>Considering that it was known at the time that some elderly people were not being tested for Covid-19 infection and that some subsequently died, why didn't you say no to such untested transfers?</p>	<p>The county council followed all applicable guidance from Public Health England in working to support Gloucestershire's NHS.</p>
<p>3. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Kathy Williams</p>
<p>How many residents in the county elderly persons care homes have died from Covid-19 since the beginning of the pandemic?</p>	<p>ONS data shows that sadly between 1st March and 21st August there</p>

	<p>were 274 deaths in care homes (of all types – both older people and younger) in Gloucestershire where COVID19 was mentioned on the death certificate. We do not know how many of these people will have died from Covid, as opposed to other causes.</p> <p>There are 113 care homes delivering care to those in the frail elderly category, as defined by CQC.</p>
4. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr Richard Boyles
<p>Can you please state what the agreed budget for services vulnerable children was for the following years and what the financial outcome (final spend) was when the accounts were closed?</p> <p>2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20</p>	<p>15/16 Budget £60.1m; Outturn £62.2m; Variance £2.1m</p> <p>16/17 Budget £61.1m; Outturn £65.8m; Variance £4.7m</p> <p>17/18 Budget £64.3m; Outturn £71.4m; Variance £7.1m</p> <p>18/19 Budget £80.7m; Outturn £90.1m; Variance £9.4m</p> <p>19/20 Budget £88.7m; Outturn £101.9m; Variance £13.2m</p>
5. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr Richard Boyles
How many young people are in the council's care?	777 as of the last performance report in July.
6. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr Richard Boyles
How many of those young people in your answer to the previous question are placed out of county and what is the cost to this council?	The July 2020 performance report shows that 599 children were placed in county and 177 (23%) were placed out of county. Whilst the volume of children being looked after by the council has continued to increase year on year, we are accommodating more children in county than in previous years.

	The costs as shown on the external placements tracker for children placed OOC during July 2020 was £1,798,656.
7. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr Richard Boyles
Under your leadership will you ever turn around the failing children's services? You only have until May 2021 to do so.	Children's Services continues to make progress in improving services to children and young people. This progress of course cannot be formally recognised until GCC Children's Services are next inspected. The timing of re-inspection is still uncertain due to Ofsted inspections having been suspended due to Covid-19. What I can tell you is that a number of LAs nationally (40) who were rated inadequate at their last inspection or who have not been inspected for a while will receive a "Focussed Visit" during the autumn. Given that we are an inadequate rated LA and we have not been inspected since February 2017, we are likely to be one of those 40 LAs nationally who will receive a visit. The focussed visits will beginning the week commencing 28 th September so we could get a visit as early as the first week in October. However, even a focussed visit will not lead to a change in rating as this will only be possible following a full ILACS re-inspection. The latest information coming out of Ofsted is that the full re-inspection of children's services will not recommence until the new year and possible not until April 2021. Significant improvements have been made to our services for children and young people which we are informed about during reports to the Improvement Board, CFOSC and other forum but however significant those improvements they will not be formally recognised until a full re-inspection. I would also like to reassure members that although progress is being made we recognise that there is still some way to go to become a "good" service and we are certainly not complacent in our approach to Improvement.
8. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith
How many gullies in the city of Gloucester were cleaned during the Covid-19 lockdown period?	Since 1 st April 8836 gullies have been cleaned in the Gloucester.

<p>9. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Nigel Moor</p>
<p>What plans other than on London Road, do you have to improve the cycling infrastructure in the city of Gloucester</p>	<p>The priority for improving cycling infrastructure in Gloucestershire is the delivery of the B4063 Gloucester to Cheltenham cycle route. Strategically this is the heart of the county's cycling network; a clear and definite 'spine' from which other routes can be connected. We have applied for funding for this scheme under the Tranche 2 bids of the Emergency Active Travel Fund from DfT, as well as from the LEP and Highways England.</p> <p>Further to this, we have also applied to the same funding pot for two areas, which are part of the Central Severn Vale LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan) in Gloucester. The focus here is on linking the canal towpath to the city centre and London Road, with widened cycle lanes and footpaths on Southgate Street and other measures to remove barriers to cycling on Llanthony Road. The LCWIP itself has further cycling improvements through Gloucester.</p> <p>Local Transport Plan (Review) identifies a number of cycle scheme priorities for Gloucester, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gloucester – Cheltenham: cycle access improvements for A40 Corridor between Cheltenham and Gloucester • A38 Outer Ring Road, Gloucester: cycle access improvements <p>Gloucester – Tewkesbury: cycle access improvements to the Gloucester – Tewkesbury corridor.</p>
<p>10. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>As a city resident, would you support the abolition of Gloucester City Council in favour of a single unitary council serving the whole of Gloucestershire, ending the current two tier system?</p>	<p>As a city resident, and as leader of the county council, I would favour whichever system is fit for the future. Certainly I will look closely at the points made by his colleague Cllr Harris, along with the leaders of Cheltenham and Stroud councils.</p>

11. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe
<p>What is the expected additional cost, in this financial year, to this council for its response to the Covid-19 pandemic?</p>	<p>The financial impact of COVID 19 on the council (which includes, additional costs, reduced income and unachievable savings) is £47.2m.</p>
12. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe
<p>Could you please list all additional Covid-19 grant funding this council has received from the government or has been promised?</p>	<p>Covid Emergency Grant £31.425m Test and Trace Grant £2.222m Infection Control Grant £7.752 Emergency Assistance Grant £0.558m Covid Bus subsidy Grant £0.461m Home to School Transport Grant £0.550m Reimbursement of Lost Income £4.1m (estimate)</p> <p>So £47.1m in total.</p>
13. Questioner's name: Cllr Joe Harris	Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne
<p>Two weeks ago the GCC Comms team released an internal email to all County Council staff and councillors criticising three District Council Leaders for exploring options for unitary government in Gloucestershire. This notice was signed by the Conservative Group Leader, Mark Hawthorne, and the County Council Chief Executive.</p> <p>Does the Conservative Group Leader agree that this was clearly a political statement and therefore inappropriate for the Comms team to be instructed to write this release and that it was extremely inappropriate for the Chief Executive to be dragged into a political situation?"</p>	<p>It is very telling Cllr Harris sees the issue of local government reorganisation in Gloucestershire as a party political matter. I make no apology for working with the Chief Executive to keep staff updated on the latest proposals, and will continue to do so.</p>

<p>14. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson</p> <p>In a recent High Court ruling, HH Judge Russen QC stated that there is now “sufficiently clear and apparent factual indication of a breach of public procurement rules” in relation to GCC’s Javelin Park contract.</p> <p>Does Councillor Nigel Moor agree with HHJ Russen’s assessment that procurement rules appear to have been broken and what are the potential implications for the recovery of taxpayer’s money from UBB?</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Nigel Moor</p> <p>The full sentence, of which this is a strangely selected fragment, makes it clear Judge Russen has stated nothing of the sort. The purpose of the preliminary hearing was to establish if CR4C could bring its case against the Council and the Judge ruled that it could not. The Court did not consider whether there had been a breach of the Procurement Regulations by the Council.</p>
<p>15. Questioner's name: Cllr Iain Dobie</p> <p>Department for transport figures recently released show that the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured on British roads has increased by 11% over the past decade to more than 4,000. The number of fatalities last year was just under 100.</p> <p>For each of the past 10 years (to 2019), please supply the equivalent statistics</p> <p>a) for Gloucestershire b) for Cheltenham c) for Gloucester.</p> <p>If available, please also provide annual figures on the % of journeys made by bicycle for a) b) and c) - or at least an indication over time of the relevant trend.</p> <p>Has local cycling become more or less dangerous in the county - in particular in its two main urban areas?</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p> <p>The following table shows the statistics of cycling injuries provided to GCC from Police records.</p> <p>Comparison of individual years shows considerable annual variation. Whilst this could suggest a small increase in cycling KSI casualties in recent years, these figures have also been influenced by changes made by the DfT at the end of 2015 to its method of reporting road accidents, since when increases of about 20% in the number of serious casualties have been reported.</p> <p>Cheltenham: 2010 – 7 2011 – 9 2012 – 11 2013 – 2 2014 – 4 2015 – 9 2016 – 8 2017 – 9 2018 – 11 2019 – 10</p> <p>Gloucester: 2010 – 4</p>

2011 – 10
2012 – 11
2013 – 2
2014 – 13
2015 – 10
2016 – 7
2017 – 11
2018 – 10
2019 – 16

County:

2010 – 25
2011 – 35
2012 – 44
2013 – 15
2014 – 25
2015 – 35
2016 – 31
2017 – 42
2018 – 40
2019 – 46

Gloucestershire County Council has a network of 15 cycle counter sites that monitor local use. The total average daily count from ten* of these sites is shown below.

2009 – 1524
2010 – 1413
2011 – 1483
2012 – 1484
2013 – 1541
2014 – 1686
2015 – 1667
2016 – 1694
2017 – 1744
2018 – 1690
2019 - 1795

* counters at some sites have recently been upgraded and are more sensitive. To

	<p>make a valid year on year comparison only data from 10 sites has been used.</p> <p>These sites do not cover the whole county and tend to be located where there is greater potential for cycling. In these locations there has been an 18% growth in cycle use between 2009 and 2019.</p> <p>Further data analysis and time is therefore required to reliably ascertain whether cycling has become more or less safe in the urban areas.</p>
<p>16. Questioner's name: Cllr Eva Ward</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Kathy Williams</p>
<p>Could the Cabinet Member please provide a brief update on any progress with the disposal of the former care homes, Southfields and Wyatt House in Stroud.</p>	<p>Both properties are being reviewed at the current time for the re purposing / consideration for re use by other GCC services priory to any disposal.</p>
<p>17. Questioner's name: Cllr Eva Ward</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>Whilst I am aware that GCC has good policies concerning staff support for and recruitment of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff, will these policies now be reviewed in the light of the recent Black Lives Matter protests?</p>	<p>We are in the process of reviewing our policies regarding the recruitment and support of all those with a protected characteristics including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff. We are in conversation with the Black Workers Network as well as other employee networks so that they are involved with these reviews and can help us proactively encourage the recruitment of Black, Asian and Minority staff where they are underrepresented in our teams.</p> <p>For context – our workforce data shows that we do represent the County's BAME population across the majority of grades except senior officers where BAME staff are underrepresented. Therefore we are looking at targeted activity to support development into these roles including mentoring, leadership programmes and targeted recruitment. Any selection would remain fair and transparent but we aim to encourage applications from underrepresented group and the development programmes give BAME colleagues proactive support to reach their potential.</p>

<p>18. Questioner's name: Cllr Iain Dobie</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Patrick Molyneux</p>
<p>Urgent Question</p> <p>What is the advice which GCC has received from its own or the government's lawyers about a single individual's letter requesting a Judicial Review to stop construction of the new Leckhampton High School - will this vexatious spanner-in-the-works be quickly thrown out in order that worried parents can apply with confidence for their children to attend their local community secondary school?</p>	<p>As I've said publicly, the council is strongly opposed to this judicial review, and will robustly defend its position. The new school in Leckhampton is a £30m investment into the future of Cheltenham children, as well as being the lowest carbon school we have ever built. I stand with local parents and will fight this tooth and claw.</p> <p>Publishing the council's legal advice before this issue is resolved risks undermining the councils legal position. Whilst I appreciate that is not Cllr Dobie's intention – I hope he understands why I cannot do as he asks.</p>