

COUNTY COUNCIL – 8 December 2021

Members' Questions

1. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Baker	Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne
As we approach the end of 2021, can the council leader please confirm that every single home and business in Gloucestershire now has superfast broadband?	96.5% of residential and business premises in Gloucestershire have access to superfast broadband. There are a range of issues linked to why the remaining 3.5% of premises are yet to have access. The main reason is linked to the distance between the premises and the nearest broadband cabinet and that the signal and bandwidth reduces over distance. The Fastershire team continues to actively work with suppliers to find viable solutions to the resolving these remaining digital connectivity issues.
2. Questioner's name: Cllr Colin Hay	Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne
What was the public interest in seeking a winding up order against CR4C? Does the Council Leader agree that it appears to be an attempt to scare individuals or organisations away from the legitimate scrutiny of the use of taxpayers' money?	No, I do not agree, it was the court's decision to require CR4C to meet the costs associated with the failed legal action they took against the Council. The purpose of the order was to protect the council's interests, and in so doing, to try to recoup some of its costs for the benefit of local taxpayers.
3. Questioner's name: Cllr Colin Hay	Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne
Where is the value for money in seeking a winding up order against CR4C - what were the legal costs of the order and what returns will the taxpayer see?	It was in the Council's interest to continue to recover the costs. A total of £6,014.10 that was paid in legal costs relating to the process of winding up R4C.
4. Questioner's name: Alex Hegenbarth	Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe
The call-in of the decision to reallocate funding from the Bishops Cleeve to Cheltenham cycle-track to highway improvements exposed how the Council leaves such funding	The information relating to the proposed Bishops Cleeve to Cheltenham cycle track has already been supplied at the call in. There will always be occasions when the council needs to revise

<p>decisions to the very last minute - to the point that this S106 money was reportedly at risk of being lost.</p> <p>It is clear, therefore, that a spotlight needs to be shone on this opaque system - as such, can the Cabinet Member please provide a full and comprehensive list of all outstanding developer contributions along with the deadlines to use this funding and a list of what these contributions can be spent against.</p>	<p>funding on the capital programme.</p> <p>GCC Infrastructure Funding Statement is available at https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2103790/gcc-draft-infrastructure-funding-statement-2019_20-final.pdf.</p>
<p>5. Questioner's name: Cllr Alex Hegenbarth</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>Can the Cabinet Member please confirm that no developer contributions have been returned in the last 17 years?</p>	<p>There can be various reasons why a contribution is returned such as in cases whereby the time a development has commenced some obligations written into the original agreements may no longer be relevant and not within GCC's control so inevitably some contributions may be required to be repaid. Therefore, I am unable to confirm that no developer contributions have been returned in the last 17 years.</p>
<p>6. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>Does the Cabinet Member for Highways agree with me that the cycling spine from Stroud to Cheltenham, once completed, will only be as strong as its weakest point? And, as such, does he agree with me that his department needs to take charge of transforming the poorly maintained and poorly lit subways passing under Elmbridge Court roundabout?</p>	<p>As we have previously confirmed these subways are owned by National Highways and the council are unable, legally, to alter the infrastructure or take on their responsibilities without a formal mechanism. Officers have previously made contact with National Highway to request a comment on the suitability of the lighting provision within their subways, but unfortunately, to date we have not had a response from them. We will make a further request for a response.</p>
<p>7. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Tim Harman</p>
<p>Following the Conservative amendments to the motion to tackle deprivation in Gloucestershire, can the Cabinet Member responsible for managing this please confirm when the</p>	<p>We held an initial planning meeting on 15th November with colleagues to begin the process of organising this event. An outline programme is being drawn up for review among the working group. The plan is to</p>

conference proposed by the Conservatives will be held, as there has been silence from the Council on this issue?	hold this in March and so there is still sufficient planning time to ensure that dates are arranged; venues and practicalities need more careful attention due to the ongoing Covid19 pandemic. We will share plans in due course; it will also need to be informed by the forthcoming White Paper on Levelling Up.
8. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham	Respondent's name: Cllr Tim Harman
Can the Cabinet Member similarly please confirm, how many hours of officer time have so far been spent planning and organising this conference proposed by the Conservatives?	In total there has been the equivalent of one working day; but as stated, this is in its initial stages of planning and activity will increase in the coming weeks.
9. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe
Can the Cabinet Member please confirm whether GCC has received a response to its bid for funding for the Bishops Cleeve cycle track and if so how much has been received?	The Council is still awaiting the outcome of the Active Travel Fund bid.
10. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
In the last two years, Gloucestershire has seen just 62 EV chargers installed - increasing the number of chargers from 136 to 198. The ULEV strategy was signed off six months ago, promising 1,000 charging points. When will the first of these be delivered?	In the summer Cabinet approved the Gloucestershire Ultra Low Emission Vehicle strategy and authorised officers to procure 1000 charge points. We have been out to tender and are currently evaluating bids with the aim to award a contract in January and start installing chargers in Spring 2022.
11. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
We have been told that charging points will not be considered in rural communities, with a focus on urban settings. With sixty per cent of residents living in rural areas, does the Cabinet Member acknowledge that they are being left behind again in public funding?	The focus on urban settings will not exclude rural communities. We recognise that a balance needs to be struck and it is important that chargers are installed where they are going to get the greatest use.

<p>12. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>The potential location of charging points is shrouded in secrecy, yet hints of their locations are available in certain documents, including the parking review consultation. Can the Cabinet Member confirm that there is a map of these locations available, and if so share it, and how will the Council be seeking feedback from the public on potential locations?</p>	<p>Last year we set up a dedicated email address for the public to give feedback and suggest charging locations: electricvehicles@gloucestershire.gov.uk. Many sites / locations have been suggested to the council by private individuals, parish and district councils and we have kept a record of these expressions of interest. Once the EV charge point contract has been awarded the successful contractor will work with GCC, the electricity distribution network operator, parishes and districts to review all the site suggestions to identify which ones are suitable. We will also write to all parishes and districts to explain how they can make use (with our permission) of the contract should they wish to fund chargers of their own on their land.</p>
<p>13. Questioner's name: Cllr Colin Hay</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Stephen Davies</p>
<p>Given the order from the Government that all Local Authorities will need to play their part in resettling unaccompanied children seeking asylum, can the Cabinet Member provide an update to the council on the anticipated numbers of children that Gloucestershire might expect to resettle, the Government support that will be available and the particular support that we will provide to these children given the unimaginably challenging years they have endured to get here?</p>	<p>GCC Children's Social Care Service has been accommodating Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) for a number of years. Supporting UASC is not therefore a new responsibility but the basis for resettling UASC has recently changed.</p> <p>UASC tend to arrive in Gloucestershire in two ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spontaneous arrivals – UASC arrive spontaneously in the county usually as a result of being trafficked or making their way independently from their country of origin, through various countries and into the UK. • Arrivals via the National Transfer Scheme – the NTS has been in operational for several years in line with the Home Office (2018) protocol. The NTS has been previously operated on a voluntary basis and is administered by the Home Office. <p>Since the Summer of 2021, GCC Children's Social Care has been working with other regional local authorities to jointly manage the</p>

placement of UASC across the South West as part of the NTS voluntary scheme. This has provided UASC with the critical care they needed, avoided the use of hotels and helped to relieve the unprecedented pressures on the asylum system, particularly local authorities that are ports of entry. This scheme has worked well in the South West region.

In terms of recent demand since the Summer 2021, GCC has accommodated 6 UASC as part of the South West regional voluntary NTS. In addition, there has been 3 other UASC who have arrived spontaneously in Gloucestershire. Most recently, as part of the South West regional NTS during the week beginning 15 November 2021, 4 UASC were placed together in semi-independent accommodation which was commissioned in Gloucester. During the following week on 26 November 2021, a UASC who arrived spontaneously reported being driven in the boot of a car and dropped off in Tewkesbury. This UASC has been accommodated with a GCC in-house foster carer.

GCC is a corporate parent for UASC in the same way it is for any other child in its care. As such, UASC will be assessed by an allocated social worker, be placed in a suitable placement provision, receive regular visits and be supported to achieve positive outcomes. Interpreting services are made available to support all UASC who don't speak English and tracing and messaging services are used to try and locate and contact family members in countries of origin.

Officers within the 11-25 Permanence Service and in-house foster carers have received specialist training and support to be able to meet the specific needs of UASC. There are also local voluntary sector organisations like Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (GARAS) that provide a range of targeted services.

UASC may well have suffered adverse childhood experiences in their country of origin, including death, loss and separation from their family and friends, war and torture and/or traumatic and abusive experiences at the hands of human traffickers and others as they have undertaken their journey to seek asylum in the UK. As a result,

trauma informed and specialist mental health and well-being services are made available. UASC are often very keen and committed students who actively seek to learn English and engage in education and training provision.

The Government's recent announcement on 23 November 2021 informed local authority children's services about the intention to temporarily mandate the NTS. Local authorities have been given legal notice to accept transfers of children into care.

The factors that the Home Office will consider when transferring UASC to a local authority are the:

- Existing child population
- Number of supported asylum seekers
- Pressures on Children's Services
- Best interests of the child

The government's scheme continues to set a UASC threshold for local authorities which is calculated as 0.07% of the local child population. In addition, the mandatory NTS is supported financially and local authorities will receive a higher rate of £143 per UASC per night. In June 2020, the government already increased the financial contribution for former UASC care leavers from £240 to £270 per week.

On 26 November 2021, GCC had 845 children in care and 462 care leavers. This includes 25 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) and 54 former UASC care leavers.

Calculating the 0.07% threshold on the basis of the local child population, GCC Children's Social Care Services could be mandated to accept up to a total of 99 UASC, which could represent an additional 74 UASC given the existing number of UASC.

As at 26 November, 48 people from 12 families have been welcomed into the county, located in Cheltenham, Gloucester and the Forest of Dean.

14. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham	Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman
<p>Does the Cabinet Member believe that residents moving into a property in a zone covered by a Residential Parking Zone should be able to purchase parking permits that are valid from the day they move in?</p>	<p>The permit Terms and Conditions have been recently updated to allow new residents a more flexible approach when applying for a permit. They are on the parking pages of our website. All officers and our contractor have been made aware of the change. These changes allow for permits to be purchased from move in day.</p>
15. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham	Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman
<p>Could the Cabinet Member please: explain why libraries can assist with the renewal of age-related bus passes, but cannot assist with the renewal of disability related bus passes, publish the Equality Impact Assessment for this decision, and detail how this policy is compliant with the Equality Act?</p>	<p>This is the result of a temporary IT software compatibility issue between the concessionary travel IT system and scanning equipment used by staff serving customers in libraries. We apologise to our customers for any inconvenience caused and are working with our supplier to resolve this. A system update scheduled for January 2022 should rectify the technical issue and allow the Library Service to assist with the renewal of disability passes once again.</p> <p>As this is the result of a technical issue rather than a policy decision no Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken.</p> <p>In the meantime, to ensure that no one is worse off, we are accepting new applications (paper based) and we are extending the validity of passes which are about to expire.</p>
16. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>What are the criteria for selecting which concessionary bus routes that can be used free of charge before 9:30am, and can the Cabinet Member please publish the Equality Impact Assessment of this policy?</p>	<p>Under the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme the council must offer free travel on local bus services to pass holders after 9.30am on weekdays and before 9.30am at weekends. There is no legal requirement or funding from government to offer free travel before 9.30am on weekdays.</p> <p>Some 10 years ago, under the Meeting the Challenge programme, we</p>

	<p>consulted communities on plans for an extensive review of all supported bus services in the county. The decision to fund free travel before 9.30am on some bus services was taken in response to concerns in some rural communities that timetable changes would have disproportionately impacted older people who would be unable to use their concessionary bus pass until either very late in the morning or possibly not at all. This could restrict their ability to access morning medical appointments.</p> <p>A detailed Equalities Impact Assessment for this decision was published at the time.</p> <p>Since then we have continued this policy and are aware that some other rural authorities have adopted similar policies.</p>
17. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham	Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith
<p>Could the Cabinet Member responsible please explain why road signs cannot be installed with anti-rotation features to make it harder for vandals to rotate them, sometimes with results that are potentially dangerous.</p>	<p>Anti-rotational brackets can be installed at locations where a problem with vandals is identified, as well as other solutions such as using square posts or putting signs on 2 posts. The Local Highway Manager will be happy to discuss any locations where a problem with vandalism has been identified.</p>
18. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe
<p>Can the Cabinet Member advise whether the council keeps track of the number of papers printed on behalf of councillors, and can the Cabinet Member please share the cost of providing printed papers for councillors?</p>	<p>Paper copies for formal meetings are sent by Democratic Services to two members who have difficulty reading documents on the iPads due to health conditions. The cost of providing those copies for the full Council meeting today (8 December 2021) is approximately £15.00 including postage. Printed copies are provided to members who chair meetings on a request basis.</p>
19. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe
<p>Can the Cabinet Member please confirm how much the council has invested in iPads and Modern Gov?</p>	<p>The annual cost of ModernGov in 2020/21 was £10,820. In the same year, we spent £29,000 on ipads. This included ipads for new councillors, some senior officers and priority services areas such as</p>

	children social workers and our legal team who are involved with online legal family court hearings.
20. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne
Can the Council Leader please confirm if he has been to Peppa Pig world, and whether it has ever informed council policy?	I can confirm that I have not visited Peppa Pig World nor has it informed Council Policy. However, I did attend Harry Potter World in the summer and I am happy to explore whether a Gloucestershire County Council members v officers Quidditch match could be established.
21. Questioner's name: Cllr Cate Cody	Respondent's name: Cllr Alan Preest
It was very pleasing that following my last question, plastic bottles were removed from full County Council meetings and water jugs used instead. It would also be great if single-use coffee cups were removed as well as these too are completely unnecessary. If we purport to be reducing residual waste then we really ought to be setting an example. If reusable water bottles are page one, keep cups are page two. Again, the Green group all have these and can therefore access hot drinks without using single-use plastic-coated cups. Please could The Council at least let members and staff know that this is an option and actively encourage them to bring keep cups?	The County Council does not provide single-use coffee cups for Council meetings.
22. Questioner's name: Cllr Cate Cody	Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe
Nottingham City Council have a parking levy. This has generated enormous income, which has been ploughed back into public transport and active travel. Where is the incentive for members to use public transport if GCC give their members free parking? It seems ludicrous. It is appreciated that not all members have public transport options, although it is suspected that more do than don't and if not, surely it would be a good opportunity for members to get involved and understand how our rural areas are very much in crisis where	Since members are entitled to reclaim any expenses they incur in relation to attendance at Council meetings, a parking levy would provide no additional incentive. Changes to the member scheme of allowance are a matter for the Independent Remuneration Committee and the County Council as a whole, and not a Cabinet decision.

<p>public transport is concerned. Council and committee meetings are held during the day, members using buses can claim their fares and the money supports public transport. Members who drive, can claim fuel, plus wear and tear towards their vehicles which costs the authority more money and supports members using their private vehicles. Taking public transport helps to sustain it and keeps car numbers and pollution down. In turn, this keeps people fit walking to and from bus stops and makes it safer for pedestrians and cyclists, all helping to address both the climate emergency and the over stretched Health Service. Please could a parking levy for members be considered?</p>	
<p>23. Questioner's name: Cllr Cate Cody</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Stephen Davies</p>
<p>At the last full council meeting, it was ascertained that there are children in care from other local authorities living in Gloucestershire. Apparently, they are not the responsibility of this authority, but of the one they are registered in. How many children registered in Gloucestershire's care have left the area, does the authority know where are they are, are they safe and how is this monitored?</p>	<p>Children in care who are the responsibility of another local authority and who are placed by that local authority in Gloucestershire will remain the statutory responsibility of the placing local authority, which will be the child's designated local authority and corporate parent.</p> <p>The same is true whenever GCC places a child in care in another local authority's area. GCC retains statutory responsibility regardless of where the child is placed outside of Gloucestershire and continues to be the child's corporate parent.</p>
<p>24. Questioner's name: Cllr Cate Cody</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>It is both surprising and dismaying to learn that there are no secure cycle storage lockers in or around Gloucester train and bus station. How are commuters who are trying to use public transport and bicycles as an alternative to the car meant to be able to leave their bikes securely as they can in plenty of other cities? If this is the responsibility of the City Council, can the County Council help by encouraging and supporting the implementation?</p>	<p>I agree entirely that secure cycle parking is essential, not just to make cycling attractive for local trips but also to enable people to cycle to stations where they can make longer distance journeys by bus and train. Unfortunately storage units are much more expensive than Sheffield stands, and this is the main reason why there are few of them.</p> <p>As part of our Bus Service Improvement Plan we recognise the importance of transport hubs having the right facilities and we have bid for funds from government to invest in transport hubs across the</p>

	<p>county. In addition we continue to work closely with GWR to provide more secure cycle parking at stations.</p> <p>I have asked officers to contact the City Council to see how we can improve cycle parking at the bus station.</p>
25. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith/
What is the current annual income that Gloucester City Council receives from the county council for the maintenance of highways trees?	The current Agency Agreement with Gloucester City Council includes the maintenance of highway trees, with the County Council carrying out the inspection process. A lump sum is provided to Gloucester City Council to cover all the functions under the Agency Agreement. The typical annual spend is £40-60k dependent on what is identified through the inspection process.
26. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
Has a traffic speed survey been carried on London Road Gloucester to compare traffic speeds before and after the cycle lanes were put in?	Yes, speed surveys were carried out in March 2019 and in October 2020 to allow us to compare traffic speeds before and after the scheme was built. The results were reviewed by officers and no concerns were raised.
27. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith
Could you confirm the latest situation on the adoption of the residential estate roads and footways at St. Oswald's Park, Gloucester?	The Highways Development Management Team have been advised by Persimmon Homes that they have a private commercial dispute that they are trying to resolve, which is preventing adoption of the foul sewer by the drainage authority. Until the sewer adoption is resolved, we are unable to advance adoption of roads and footways. However, Persimmon Homes have continued to carry out maintenance where the Highways Development Management team have identified a need.
28. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe
How many members of staff worked at Shire Hall before the	There are more than 2000 staff who have Shire Hall as their main

<p>Covid-19 pandemic and how many now work permanently from home?</p>	<p>base for work. This number has not changed significantly since 2019. However, most staff are now working a hybrid of home and office working and we are seeing increasing numbers in offices each day. All working patterns are driven by service need first and staff are expecting to attend work physically when required. We continue to balance returning to the office with appropriate COVID measures based on public health advice.</p> <p>There will be a very small number of staff working permanently at home, these are either in our hardest to fill roles or where this is appropriate to support a member of staff with disabilities.</p>
<p>29. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman</p>
<p>What advice has been given to the county's six MPs with regard to the county council's current policy that Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service should remain a county council service, with this council remaining the statutory fire authority?</p>	<p>Since commencing my role as the LCM in September 2018, I, with our current Interim CFO and his predecessor Wayne Bowcock have contacted the MP's constituency offices and met with the six Gloucestershire MP's to update them on issues related to GFRS. This included a briefing for Cllr. Drew when he was the MP for Stroud. Furthermore we have hosted a Councillor (District & County) and MP awareness day at Gloucestershire South/SkillZone. Through these events I and our current and most recent CFO's have at every opportunity taken the opportunity to raise through discussion the anticipated Government White Paper on Fire & Rescue Service Governance Reform. In conclusion I can inform Cllr Hilton that I am now working with the CFO of Surrey, the County Council Fire Authority Lead Chief Officer, in on-going discussions with both the Fire Minister and the new Inspector of HMICFRS, Roy Wilshire, where future Governance is a substantive agenda item.</p>
<p>30. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>At last week's Environment Committee, the Cabinet Member responsible for Climate Change said that an 80 per cent reduction in Gloucestershire by 2030 was not going to happen.</p> <p>Specifically, Cllr David Gray said, "If your question is, are we going to reduce the county's, county as in every citizen of the</p>	<p>The Council remains committed to acting to reduce its own net emissions to zero by 2030, and to the target of the County being net zero by 2045, 5 years ahead of the target set nationally. As part of the delivery of the 2045 target, a step target of an 80% reduction in</p>

<p>county, emissions by 80 per cent by 2030? No, we're not."</p> <p>Has the Council Leader similarly given up on achieving an 80 per cent reduction across the county by 2030?</p>	<p>emissions for the County by 2030 has been set. Achieving that step target for the County will be exceptionally difficult and depends on the actions of a wide range of stakeholders, or partners, including national government, County and district councils, businesses and, most importantly, residents. We estimate that the Council currently accounts for significantly less than 1% of emissions in the County, having reduced its gross emissions by 77% since 2007 through a wide range of initiatives, setting a great example to other stakeholders.</p>
<p>31. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>The Council Leader will be aware that his Corporate Strategy states that "We will reduce Gloucestershire's carbon emissions by 80% by 2030, and secure a carbon neutral county by 2045."</p> <p>The Council Leader might be surprised to learn that, at last week's Environment Scrutiny Committee, the Cabinet Member said that any commitment to an 80 per cent reduction in the county's emissions by 2030 in a Council document was "misleading".</p> <p>Does the Council Leader agree that this addition to the Corporate Strategy was misleading, and if so, why was it ever allowed to feature in the Corporate Strategy?</p>	<p>The statement is not misleading when taken in context. The full commitment in the Council Strategy is:</p> <p>"We will reduce Gloucestershire's carbon emissions by 80% by 2030, and secure a carbon neutral county by 2045. We will do this by working with our partners through Leadership Gloucestershire to....:</p> <p>Whilst the County Council is on track to reach its corporate carbon reduction targets, we need every stakeholder, business and resident in Gloucestershire to be working to reduce their own carbon footprint in order to achieve county wide targets.</p> <p>.</p>
<p>32. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>Does the Council Leader agree with me, that if Cabinet Members are simply allowed to disown commitments made in the Corporate Strategy, then the document becomes meaningless?</p>	<p>Cabinet remains committed to delivering the Council Strategy in its entirety, and will be bringing forward a further ambitious 4-year strategy to Council in February 2022.</p>
<p>33. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray/Colin Chick</p>
<p>Earlier this year, you presented the ULEV Strategy to Cabinet. The strategy, which was approved by all members of the Cabinet, stated on Page 4, "In May 2019, UK Parliament was the first national government to declare an environment and</p>	<p>See answer to question 30.</p>

<p>climate emergency; in July 2019, GCC followed, pledging, along with other regional authorities to become carbon neutral (Net Zero) by 2050 and a stepped target of 80% carbon reduction by 2030."</p> <p>Can you explain why a commitment, which you have recently stated was "misleading" appeared in a paper which you presented to Cabinet? Did you even read the strategy?</p>	
<p>34. Questioner's name: Cllr Rebecca Halifax</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>A year and a half ago, the Highways Team removed a tree on Victoria Road after it had been hit by a van. Despite various protestations from the community, the Highways Team refused to reinstate it, claiming, from the Council's "Tree Inspection Policy", that "officers will replace only those trees which are subject to a Tree Preservation Order."</p> <p>This refusal was made after the Council had signed the one million trees pledge - which was later superseded by the commitment to see 35 million trees planted in Gloucestershire by 2030.</p> <p>In that context, does the Cabinet Member agree with me that the Tree Inspection Policy is no longer fit for purpose, and will he work with officers to ensure a replacement tree is planted on Victoria Road?</p>	<p>We treat each location individually and make our decisions regarding planting based on the specific factors at that location. We undertake to plant the right tree in the right location for the right reason. At this location difficulties were experienced with a vehicular access adjacent to the tree, and as a result a decision was made to find an alternative location in the Victoria Road area to replant.</p> <p>The Tree Inspection Policy is fit for purpose and provides an important framework for meeting the Council's statutory responsibilities under the Highway Act to keep the network safe. It is not always possible to plant a replacement tree in the same location where one has been removed for safety reasons. However, the tree planting guidance within the policy will be reviewed to reflect our commitment to the climate response.</p>
<p>35. Questioner's name: Cllr Roger Whyborn</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>It is reported that large parts of the road network are rated as end of life, meaning they need immediate renewal or resurfacing and more, which in the case of the unclassified roads is 16% of the network. It is not clear whether that figure includes associated road furniture and footpaths. What is the cost of clearing the backlog of such repairs and renewals for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'A' & 'B' roads? • 'C' and unclassified roads? 	<p>Figures for carriageway condition do not include road furniture which is inspected and replaced as required. Carriageway standstill cost is calculated at £16.8m pa which is the level of investment required to maintain in the current condition. Investment above this threshold will deliver improvement. That is why we have delivered the £150m resurfacing scheme and recommitted in the recent local elections to an addition £100m. Over the last 4 years we have carried out 196 patching and surface dressing schemes, and 495 resurfacing</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pavements & footpaths? <p>Above to include associated road furniture and traffic lights where applicable.</p>	<p>schemes, delivering over 550 miles of new.</p> <p>Less detailed asset information is held about footways and it would require extensive survey to assess an accurate backlog figure.</p>
<p>36. Questioner's name: Cllr Roger Whyborn</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>It is noted that the cabinet responsibilities for the Highways and transportation issues on this Council are divided between three different cabinet members, for road building and maintenance, road safety, and buses, with a fourth looking after Rail, Local transport Planning & Electric vehicles. All of these members have other responsibilities for subjects not involving highways and transport.</p> <p>In the light of the climate emergency, how does the administration plan to promote and maintain a holistic approach to, and sufficient emphasis on, this vitally important subject, and to achieve meaningful transition away from over-reliance on the motor car to other transport modes? Might it be construed that the various components of an integrated transport approach are as it were being parcelled out to various members as spare time odd jobs?</p>	<p>The cabinet members with responsibilities for transport, planning, highways, road safety, climate and environment form part of the Strategic Economy Environment & Infrastructure Members Board where, together with officers from the EE&I Directorate, they plan and coordinate delivery of the Council's Strategy across these important, interdependent areas.</p> <p>This arrangement works well, judging by our track record of delivery and our ambitious plans for the future.</p>
<p>37. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Baker</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>At a recent Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee, we heard about the severe shortage of HGV drivers in Gloucestershire and of course across the country caused in no small part by Brexit. The impact upon supply chains is obvious for all to see as is the impact upon local bus services.</p> <p>There is no HGV driver testing centre in Gloucestershire, the nearest ones in Swindon and Bristol have a 3-month waiting</p>	<p>The existing HGV driver shortage is very much a national issue around skills shortages in HGV drivers. Identifying skills shortages and addressing those with businesses is currently the responsibility of the LEP, in the case of Gloucestershire this is GFirst. I am very much aware that the LEP are conscious of the current situation regarding HGV driver shortage.</p>

<p>list. We have lost local training companies as a result. The situation is not a happy one and does not inspire confidence that we are addressing the situation.</p> <p>What is the Cabinet Member doing to help address this situation? As a minimum we need to pressurise government to reopen a testing centre in our County and lobby our MP's.</p>	<p>The setting up of HGV test centres is the responsibility of the Department for Transport and given the skills and resources required to do this it is something which cannot be done quickly.</p> <p>Gloucester's HGV test centre was closed sometime ago as these facilities had been assessed as not being viable. The LEP did make an approach to DVLA to ask about reopening Gloucester's testing centres, and they were informed that there are no plans to change the current network of testing centres.</p>
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38. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Baker

Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray

Our new and long awaited 'High School Leckhampton' is scheduled to open in September 2022 and will ultimately cater for 900 students.

The catchment area for the school includes the greater part of my division of Charlton Park & College but prospective parents are very concerned about the lack of safe walking and cycling routes from the Naunton Park area and beyond. There are no safe crossing points anywhere along the old Bath Road for example and many dangerous junctions for cyclists and walkers especially on Leckhampton Road.

As a consequence parents will be forced to drive to the school which is not what they want to do and not what we should want them to do. Given the opening date is fast approaching can I be assured that the measures proposed for Kidnappers Lane and Lotts Field will be in place in time and that a thorough analysis and plan for safe walking and cycling routes from across my division will be investigated and implemented?

As far as the county council as Highways Authority is concerned, the planning application for the new school was determined on its merits based upon an application which included detailed transport and highway assessments. Since the application was approved by Cheltenham Borough Council (the Local Planning Authority) it is being implemented on the terms of the submissions made. These include timescales for completing essential works by the school opening date.

I understand officers have offered guidance on how to engage with highways and transport teams to address any concerns you have about safe routes to the new school from your division and regarding progress with highway improvements required as part of the planning consent.

<p>39. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Baker</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>Meanwhile, the proposed footpath and cycleway connecting up the new Leckhampton school does not adhere to more recent DfT LTN 1/20 standards for what constitutes safe active travel infrastructure. Local cycling groups have said of the plans that they “are so compromised that they are irremediable in their current form”.</p> <p>Does the Cabinet Member agree with me that installing unsatisfactory active travel links is a great waste of public money that will do little to keep students safer as they travel to school or encourage pupils to use active travel methods?</p>	<p>Local Transport Note 1/20 “Cycle Infrastructure Design” had not been published when the highways and transport impacts of the proposed school were being considered.</p> <p>We are committed to good quality cycling and walking infrastructure in new schemes. Where practicable will endeavour to ensure that plans which pre-date LTN 1/20 are brought up to current standards however this is not always possible, e.g. where this may requires acquisition of land from third parties.</p> <p>Since the publication in July 2020, the Manual for Gloucestershire Streets has been updated to ensure that proposals for active travel corridors provide infrastructure as suggested in LTN 1/20. This includes segregated pedestrian and cycle facilities, and the provision of cycle priority over vehicles at side roads.</p>
<p>40. Questioner's name: Cllr David Brown</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>A Member briefing in September 2020 outlined a trial for e-scooters in Gloucestershire. This was in response to a request from the Department for Transport asking local authorities to facilitate the trial, find a provider, manage it locally and provide feedback after 12 months. What was the nature and content of the feedback given to the DfT?</p>	<p>The DfT requested feedback from GCC relating to the nature of the information shared between the e-scooter provider (Zwings) and the council. The data provided to the DfT covered many aspects of the scheme such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total distance covered (459,738.28 km) • Total number of rides (157,078) • Average distance per ride (2.93 km) • Incidents involving injury (5) • Average ride time (17m 43s) • Number of e-scooters in use (299)

<p>41. Questioner's name: Cllr David Brown</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>The trial has been extended by approximately 6 months to March 2022. What were the reasons for the extension and how will a decision be made on whether to extend beyond March 2022?</p>	<p>The DfT decided to extend the national trials in order to gather more data before making a permanent legislative decision. One of the main reasons for the extension is that the London trial did not begin until summer 2021 therefore more data was required from their scheme to inform the final decision.</p> <p>It is proposed that the Gloucestershire trial is extended to align with the DfT national timeline and support the objectives of the national trials At the January Environment Scrutiny Committee there will be an agenda item to provide the Committee with an update on the Gloucestershire scheme and opportunity for members to ask questions.</p>
<p>42. Questioner's name: Cllr David Brown</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>The monthly report on the trial provided by the operator includes various helpful and encouraging statistics on usage. It would also be helpful to know more about the expansion of the 'network' in terms of the increase in the number of parking bays. From the briefing I understand the Council has been instructed to "support parking arrangements for any docking/parking points as required".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how many parking bays are there across Gloucester currently? • are there plans to increase the number of parking bays? • will the Council support the removal of parking bays where the proximity to residential housing results in unacceptable noise, particularly late at night or early in the morning? • does the Council give neighbours advance knowledge of new parking bays? 	<p>One of our objectives from the trials is to understand what factors support greater use of e-scooters and reduce the high proportion of short trips that are made by car. The ability to access an e-scooter within a 5 minute walk appears to be a major factor, with longer walks being a significant barrier to take up. Therefore we are working with our e-scooter operator to identify areas of the City where take up could be increased by making access to e-scooters more convenient.</p> <p>Whenever new locations are being considered care is taken to ensure that road safety is not compromised and residents are engaged before and after implementation. This is led by our e-scooter operator, whose staff are keen to ensure that local members and officers are kept in the loop. The operator is also responsible for dealing with issues such as antisocial behaviour and has been working effectively with the police on this during the trial. In the end we seek to strike a balance between the needs of nearby residents and the wider social and environmental benefits of the e-scooter trial.</p>

	We will ask our e-scooter operator to confirm the number of bays in Gloucester.
43. Questioner's name: Cllr David Brown	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
<p>Gloucester City Council monitor the air quality at a number of locations around the City and produce a detailed Annual Status Report showing the data collected. The report is published on their website.</p> <p>How does the County Council use the data?</p>	<p>This summer we appointed a Climate Change and Air Quality Officer. She has played a key role in working with officers in the city council to review the Annual Status Report and identify ways we can make greater progress in improving air quality in the city. This included submitting a bid to DEFRA to fund air quality monitoring in the AQMA areas, an officer to work in schools, signage to raise awareness and work on a single air quality web site for the whole county. We will find out in March 2022 if this bid has been successful.</p>
44. Questioner's name: Cllr David Brown	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
<p>As the data user what recommendations do GCC make about improving the data collection, e.g. type and positioning of monitoring equipment?</p>	<p>We are mindful that there are very specific regulatory processes for monitoring air quality. Ideally we would like to increase the coverage of air quality monitoring to identify trends such as increased pollution from changes in land use however our priority is to raise awareness of the risks of air quality and to make the information that is currently collected more accessible, i.e. a single web site for all districts, as agreed in the Gloucestershire Air Quality and Health Strategy.</p>
45. Questioner's name: Cllr Roger Whyborn	Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith
<p>I note today's petition, from people mainly in the south of Cheltenham, for an electronic pedestrian crossing over Warden Hill Road to enable safe crossing for Bournside, Belmont and Bettridge School pupils, and the recent serious accident on 19/11/21 to a female student at Cheltenham Bournside School, which is the largest school in the County.</p>	<p>We are well aware of this site and its challenges and are actively investigating a range of options. I have visited the site with Cllr Emma Nelson in the last week and am working with officers on a solution. I met with the Headteacher at Bournside to listen to their thoughts which will inform the decision taken.</p>

<p>What is the Council's latest thinking on this subject, where crossing this road clearly carries a high risk?</p>	
<p>46. Questioner's name: Cllr Roger Whyborn</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>Concern has been raised by members of the public about the often poor access to footpaths for disabled persons e.g. on mobility scooters, due to barriers. Also, in these days one would want to make footpaths more accessible to cyclists, albeit dismounted.</p> <p>Whilst recognising there may be legitimate reasons for retaining barriers in a few cases (e.g. to prevent children running into a carriageway), is it not time for the Council to conduct a review of where barriers could and should be removed to improve access?</p>	<p>With funding agreed by Council we carried out a Barriers to Mobility study. Officers are now in the process of commissioning further work to tackle the very issues you raise in your question.</p>
<p>47. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>I note that approval has been given by Cabinet for officers to conduct competitive tender processes for the purchase and sale of energy for the GCC Estate and Schools. Please can we have confirmation that this energy will be sourced from high quality green tariffs i.e. renewably sourced, with ownership of the REGO certificates directly linked to the energy supplied, and preferably from a supplier that complies with the principle of additionality (i.e. one that is responsible for financially supporting new, expanding, or developing renewable generation sources)?</p>	<p>In its Climate Change Strategy, the Council has committed to purchase 100% renewable electricity for its buildings, street lighting and council schools to help meet its climate targets. Renewable electricity can currently be purchased in a number of forms, which the Council intends to explore with bidders during the procurement; as each organisation will offer its own unique products. The Council will assess the make up of the renewable energy offered alongside price and risk allocation to determine a value for money contract for the Council that also allows it to meet its Climate Change Strategy commitment.</p>
<p>48. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>

<p>I note that the annual update of progress with the Gloucestershire Climate Change Strategy is underway, along with the action plan for 2022-2027.</p> <p>Will/has feedback from the Youth Climate Panel be/been incorporated into these plans?</p>	<p>Following difficulties earlier this summer linked to Covid our facilitator is convening Youth Climate Panel meetings this week. We will consider their feedback and where we can we will reflect this in our action plan programme during the year.</p>
<p>49. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>Has initial feedback received from Climate Emergency UK (the non-profit body which is assessing the Climate Action Plans of all local councils with a view to publishing a Council Climate League table in January 2022) been incorporated into these reviews?</p>	<p>Officers have been in contact with Climate Emergency UK in late November and shared our latest plans with them. I am not aware of any initial feedback having been received to date but we will consider this carefully when we do receive it.</p>
<p>50. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>In relation to the newly-published Gloucestershire Bus Service Improvement Plan:</p> <p>In answer to the question 'please tell us one main improvement which you would like to see to your bus service?' (864 responses), bus frequency is cited as the most popular response, and the Plan makes much of the aspiration for one bus every hour for the majority of rural routes, yet bus frequency is not one of the four targets against which performance under the BSIP will be assessed. Why is this?</p>	<p>Increasing bus service frequencies is a central ambition of the BSIP, with a key outcome identified as "<i>deliver an increase in bus service frequencies</i>". This should provide an hourly bus service minimum on most routes (at peak times), and significantly greater frequency on the core urban network where we are aiming for there to be a perception of a "<i>turn up and wait</i>" bus service. This clearly sets out what we are aiming to achieve, we can compare individual bus corridors against this ambition and GCC will work with Bus operators and Government to work towards delivering this outcome. The BSIP targets measuring bus journey time and reliability will contribute to the bus operator's ability to increase bus service frequencies.</p>
<p>51. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>

In section 8.9 of the BSIP, the nine deliverables are set out, along with progress to date, but there is no detail, and there are no dates, funding requirements and no targets given against these deliverables. When will we see the detail needed to understand whether this Plan will in fact improve bus services across the county?

Gloucestershire's BSIP aims to dramatically improve bus services in Gloucestershire. It follows the National Bus Strategy which commits £3 billion of new funding to support bus services and infrastructure in England. Access to a share of the new £3 billion funding will require the Local Transport Authority (LTA) to issue a notice of intent, produce a BSIP and have an Enhanced Partnership in place by April 2022. Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) will set up a governance structure, for the Enhanced Partnership, to work with bus operators on delivering the ambitions set out in the BSIP. The scale and time in which this can be delivered will depend on the level of funding GCC as the LTA and bus operators can attract from Government as well as other funding sources.

52. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner

Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson

Why is school bus provision not covered in the Plan? How is GCC working with bus operators to resolve the many current issues with regard to school bus provision, for example the cutting of the Applegates service from Chalford to Marling School? Should the council not take a more proactive role in ensuring that school transport is reliable, consistent and safe across the county?

The council is required to provide school transport to those who are entitled to it, this requirement is met in full and is completely separate from the public transport network. This network is monitored constantly to ensure it is reliable, consistent and safe.

The service referred to in the question caters for children who do not meet the requirement for GCC school transport. Children who do not meet this requirement can pay to use the public transport network where available to access a different school of choice. The Bus Service Improvement Plan aims to significantly increase investment in public transport therefore giving children more options for school travel outside the statutory GCC school transport network.

53. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner

Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson

Why has Gloucestershire not yet implemented any innovative incentives such as those already being widely used in other councils to increase bus take-up, such as free weekend

The aim of the Bus Service Improvement Plan is to improve the availability of public transport and to encourage use. This will require continued discussion and co-operation with all bus operators in the

<p>transport in Herefordshire, free Christmas bus services in Swansea and Newport, the Stop/Swap/Go campaign in Essex and the Move for Change/Zwitch reward programmes for bus usage in Brighton and Milton Keynes, and so on?</p>	<p>county, a key feature of these discussions will be how to incentivise bus travel and any feasible scheme will be given serious consideration.</p>
<p>54. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>It was great to hear the draft Gloucestershire Food & Farming Strategy set out at a recent Joint Economic Growth Committee meeting - it has much to offer this important sector of the county's economy and it was particularly encouraging to see the focus on sustainable farming initiatives. What support is the council providing for the further development and implementation of the Strategy?</p>	<p>The recent awareness session at the Joint Economic Growth Committee meeting was intended to make members aware of the changes taking place in the agricultural and farming sector.</p> <p>The LEP is leading on the land base sector and has undertaken a lot of this work along with the Gloucestershire Food Partnership. Through the work of the agri-food and rural economy sector, the group has appointed a new chair (Claire Whitworth, vice principal for further education at Hartpury University and College) to take forward key projects. This includes the identification of two research links to understand the needs of the sector. These include a survey being conducted by the National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise into the impacts of COVID-19 and the skills needs of the sector going forward. There is also an emerging Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board's draft skills strategy which begins to set out how the sector needs to transform its approach to skills.</p>
<p>55. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Stephen Davies</p>
<p>At the recent Children and Families scrutiny committee, the Director of Children's Services explained that two children in care have cost £5m in the last year. Can the Cabinet Member please provide a breakdown of these costs?</p>	<p>The high costs for these young people are due to their complex behaviours and relate to staffing. Both young people have high levels (as high as 4:1) of dedicated trained staff 24/7, this is to ensure we can safely manage their care, even at times when they are experiencing great distress and become physically challenging their accommodation costs are met separately within GCC and partners property portfolio's.</p>

56. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham	Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman
<p>Could the responsible Cabinet Member please confirm what the post-implementation review timetables are for Cheltenham Parking Zones 11, 12, 13 and 14, and when residents living in and around these areas will have an opportunity to get any problems with the current operation and boundaries of the zones remediated?</p>	<p>A parking review programme has been agreed. The programme prioritises areas that have not been reviewed for many years to ensure the restrictions are fit for purpose. Any areas that have been recently reviewed and require minor amendments are considered less of a priority.</p> <p>As part of that programme the Tivoli and St James and Philips area of Cheltenham have been included due to zones 12, 13 & 14 causing a certain element of displacement. At present the Tivoli & St James/ St Philips areas have had ANPR camera car surveys completed to understand demand, occupancy and length of stay. This data will be analysed and shared with relevant stakeholder and members before considering necessary next steps.</p> <p>As part of the Tivoli area review, GCC will consider surveying zones 12, 13 & 14 since the zone was implemented in August 2018.</p>
57. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham	Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman
<p>Could the responsible Cabinet Member please advise approximately how much in terms of both financial cost and officer time, the post-implementation reviews of Cheltenham Parkings Zones 11, 12, 13 and 14, would take; the steps involved, and approximately how long each of these steps would be expected to take?</p>	<p>The cost and officer time will depend on the nature of the post implementation review.</p>
58. Questioner's name: Cllr Beki Hoyland	Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith
<p>In the Conservation of Road Verges document the removal of cut vegetation is stated as a bonus for future plant diversity. how many verges under Highways control are currently cut and collected and is there a plan to increase this as machinery is replaced and upgraded?</p>	<p>Currently cut and collect has been undertaken on a small trial area of highway verge in Gloucestershire. Useful trials have also been carried out on this topic in other counties which we are monitoring. Generally it is not practical to use the available cut and clear equipment on all county highway verges so</p>

	only a limited number of flat clear sites would be suitable. This may change when other appropriate equipment is designed and comes on to the market and we will keep this under close review.
59. Questioner's name: Cllr Beki Hoyland	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
I am interested in the on-demand bus service pilot that is due to start in Spring 2022 in the Forest of Dean (south) and Cotswold. Has the contract been awarded and will this service be advertised in advance of it being available?	The contract for the service is currently being procured and we expect to announce the winning supplier in January 2022. A full Communications Plan, including an advertising strategy, is being developed for implementation prior to the launch of the service.
60. Questioner's name: Cllr Wendy Thomas	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
Since the introduction of new bus timetables at the end of 29 August, Stagecoach West has struggled to deliver a reliable bus service for Gloucestershire. There have been numerous cancellations every day for the last three months, including many days where over 60 bus services were cancelled in Stroud District alone. As a councillor I receive several emails a week giving examples of students left stranded at bus stops, either being late or missing school entirely; elderly and vulnerable residents left in the cold and dark due to services that do not run; workers having to pay for expensive taxis to get to their employment. Could the Cabinet member please explain what measures are being taken, in particular, why this poor performance has not been raised with the Traffic Commissioner?	<p>Stagecoach have experienced a severe driver shortage since the end of the summer, this is very much related to the severe and on-going national issue of the same nature affecting bus companies across the country. While some significant issues do remain on the network the situation in Gloucestershire has improved considerably since September. This is due to the recruitment of over 80 additional drivers with more currently in training.</p> <p>In Gloucestershire Stagecoach are currently delivering approximately 95% of all registered journeys and expect the situation to further settle over the next few weeks. Stagecoach also contacted the Traffic Commissioner directly to inform them of the situation and what actions are being taken to remedy it.</p> <p>Due to these actions and the fact this is part of a national issue we believe working with the operator is a more constructive approach and will achieve a better result than a report to the Traffic Commissioner. Such a report will be a lengthy process without immediate results and in the long term would have a detrimental impact on public transport in the county.</p>

61. Questioner's name: Cllr John Bloxsom	Respondent's name: Cllr Kathy Williams
Will the Council publish, at the earliest opportunity, the independent review that it commissioned related to the finding of maladministration and injustice by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman as reported to Cabinet on 10 November 2021	The report was circulated to all Members by Sarah Scott on 12 November 2021.
62. Questioner's name: Cllr John Bloxsom	Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith
When did a "cross-party Cabinet Panel" consider alternative options in respect of structural maintenance contracts 2022 - 26 and why was reliance placed on this in awarding future contracts given that no such meeting has taken place in the life of this Council [i.e. since May 2021]. When will this be rectified?	The cross-party Cabinet Panel (2017-2019) was formed in response to the retendering of highway services, that being the Term Maintenance Contract, Professional Services and Structural Maintenance. The agreed strategy was to procure separate contracts to obtain best expertise and value across the industry as opposed to a single provider. The Panel has since ceased in being as its objectives were completed. The renewal of the surfacing contract is in accordance with the agreed strategy. Neither the Term Maintenance or Professional Services contracts are due for renewal for several years.
63. Questioner's name: Cllr John Bloxsom	Respondent's name: Cllr Carole Allaway-Martin
Will the review of Adult Social Care Commissioning and Estate Strategies include a review of the contractual arrangements by which GCC owned homes are being run and managed by external organisations?	There are no planned changes to the contractual arrangements at this time.
64. Questioner's name: Cllr John Bloxsom	Respondent's name: Cllr Stephen Davies
The 2017 Ofsted inspection showed that our services were not keeping children safe. As a full reinspection of children's services continues to be awaited what assurance can Council be given that children in Gloucestershire are safe?	The Ofsted 2017 inspection judged GCC's Children's Services to be 'Inadequate'. This is clearly not the judgement that the children, young people and families of Gloucestershire deserve and GCC remains committed to improving practice and performance. The Ofsted re-inspection is much anticipated and very overdue and by

February 2022 GCC will have been waiting 5 years to be re-inspected.

In the intervening period since the 2017 inspection, and in accordance with DfE statutory notice, a number of activities have been undertaken to improve practice and performance. Internal and external scrutiny has been continuous and has included the following:

- DfE reviews (most recent review letter published August 2021)
- Ofsted monitoring visits x 7 (letters published in February 2018, June 2018, October 2018, February 2019, May 2019 and March 2020)
- Ofsted focus visit (letter published November 2020)
- Ofsted annual conversation (most recent letter published October 2021)
- Independently chaired multi-agency Improvement Board (next Board due 21 December 2021)
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee (most recent convened in November 2021)
- Refreshed and updated Accelerated Improvement Plan
- Monthly Performance and Quality Assurance reports
- Current written Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)

Following the publication of the Ofsted focus visit letter in November 2020, which was the last time Ofsted reviewed practice and performance in GCC, the DfE wrote to GCC's Chief Executive in December 2020 and stated:

“Overall Ofsted's letter was encouraging and indicates that good progress has been made by senior leaders and social work teams since the monitoring visit in February 2020. I was really pleased to read that there had been a change in pace, given this has been a recurrent and longstanding issue.

Despite the challenges the country has faced during the pandemic, Ofsted noted that Gloucestershire County Council's response to COVID-19 for its most vulnerable children and young people has

been positive, proactive and well managed. It has also been delivered whilst maintaining focus on accelerating the improvement of children's social care service, which is no small feat.

There is still work to do in continuing to drive sustained improvements for children and families and I encourage you and your staff to continue to drive forward improvements with a forensic focus.”

The most recent DfE review letter dated August 2021, stated that:

“The feedback highlighted the significant progress Gloucestershire has made on its improvement journey since the last review, despite the impact of Covid-19. Relationships with partners are experienced as much more mature and collaborative and the quality of practice continues to improve overall. There is a consensus, both internally and externally, that the culture and reputation of Gloucestershire County Council is much improved, and the staff we spoke with are committed and feel well supported.”

The independent chair of the Improvement Board most recently reported to the Council's Scrutiny Committee in November 2021 and stated that:

“The Committee can be reassured that the momentum and attention to practice improvement remains evident within the reports received by the Board. This is in spite of all of the issues arising from the management of the pandemic.

The Senior Leadership Team acknowledges the current pressures within the public sector and local system as somewhat of a perfect storm. The service is however weathering the storm and continues to focus on maintaining and improving services and arrangements for/with vulnerable children and young people in need of support, protection and care, even though the current conditions are less than ideal. Targeted action is being taken to manage and address staff wellbeing, service demand and workforce pressures.

<p>65. Questioner's name: Cllr John Bloxsom</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Kathy Williams</p>
<p>Given the lack of detail, and concerns of the Society of County Treasures, how can Council be confident that the details announced so far on future of social care will reduce the financial pressure on core services?</p>	<p>The Government has stated its intention is to reform adult social care, with a once in a generation transformation which will: offer choice, control and independence to care users; provide an outstanding quality of care; and, be fair and accessible to all who need it, when they need it. With the White Paper having now been published and as work progresses on the delivery of that intention, the dual aim must be to do so in ways that both achieve this ambition and ensures that existing core services continue to be available to meet the needs and aspirations of those who rely on them.</p>
<p>66. Questioner's name: Cllr Alex Hegenbarth</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Vernon Smith</p>
<p>While Bishop's Cleeve and the surrounding areas continue to grow and welcome new families to our communities, the divisions' road infrastructure has increasingly begun to buckle under the increased demand from new residents.</p> <p>Recent road works on the A435 to increase and improve gas lines to a new estate have only highlighted the fragility of our area's road network, while out-dated Traffic Regulation Orders (such as on Gotherington Lane, where the switch from the 30-mph zone to the National Speed Limit now sits in the middle of a housing estate) put children's lives at risk.</p> <p>Due to this there is now an urgent need to make sure current local Traffic Regulation Orders are fit for purpose and that they are 'future-proofed' ahead of planning and community infrastructure projects already in the pipeline.</p> <p>To this, can the Cabinet member commit to the Council completing a TRO Audit and Reorganisation Plan within the next six months, with the implementation of that plan carried out as soon as humanly possible in order to keep residents safe?</p>	<p>Building new homes is a key area of Gloucestershire's economic growth strategy. Most large developments require changes to be made to existing highway infrastructure to safely accommodate the additional traffic and enable sustainable travel. Improvements are secured through the planning process and are normally delivered by developers with the council leading on traffic regulation orders where required.</p> <p>Officers in the Highways Development Management (HDM) and Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) teams are currently enabling TROs to be made for two large developments in Bishop's Cleeve.</p> <p>At Homelands, Gotherington Lane, we have completed the road hump notice procedure and consulted on safety restrictions (yellow lines). The development includes works to extend the street lighting northwards - which will determine the limit of the 30mph speed limit – however a contractual issue between developers has delayed this so we have asked Bovis Homes to provide interim signing.</p> <p>For the development off Malleson Road we have completed</p>

consultation on a 20mph speed limit with traffic calming and will be making the Order and signing off the road hump notice once the developer confirms the build date.

We are not aware of any further requests for TROs and do not consider that a wider review of TRO's is needed.