

**COUNTY COUNCIL – March 2023
PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

1. Questioner's name: Alan Bailey	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
<p>The A417 Missing Link National Road scheme represents a significant change in the local road system from previously and had not been agreed at the time GCC Highways offered its opinion on several developments in South Cheltenham. These include a 900 place new secondary school and the Miller proposal to build 350 houses on land just south of Shurdington Road. On a road with severe traffic problems.</p> <p>Will the GCC Transport Authority Planning team meet with the local transport groups in Brockworth, Shurdington and Leckhampton to discuss initiatives to address congestion that will align with the 'Missing Link' national road scheme?</p>	<p>This potential problem was outlined in the NH traffic modelling, submitted at the time of the planning application for the scheme, which was approved by the Secretary of State for Transport in November 2022.</p> <p>The A417 Missing Link scheme was included in the future year modelling scenarios in the traffic model developed and used by the consultant for the Miller Homes planning application, so the Missing Link scheme and its impacts have already been taken into account.</p> <p>Officers at GCC are dealing with several development applications and transport schemes in the area, including the A417 Missing Link scheme, and are coordinating how mitigation will be provided.</p> <p>In addition, GCC is working with NH to identify cycling and walking improvements in the Leckhampton/Shurdington area, including the A46. If successful, funding would be made available by NH for the schemes to be constructed/delivered.</p> <p>NH and Kier (the contractor building the A417 Missing Link scheme) have contacted GCC about arranging a community event, at which the local Parish Councils, transport groups and residents can all attend and provide their views / ask questions. The event will be held at a local venue and GCC officers will be attending.</p>

2. Questioner's name: Alan Bailey	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
<p>Given the impact of the new road scheme will fall upon several different Planning Authorities, what plans are in place (or proposed) to deliver satisfactory traffic systems to the South Cheltenham area in line with the delivery of the National Transport Plan and how will the various local authorities planning authorities be involved?</p>	<p>Further to the answer to question 1 above, all of the relevant District Councils (e.g., Tewkesbury BC, Cheltenham BC and Cotswold DC) will be engaged, as well as having the statutory responsibility of being the respective local planning authorities.</p>
3. Questioner's name: Julie Wrench	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
<p>Houses numbers 1 to 5 Aubrey Mews , Stow on the Wold were built on Lower Swell Road in 2020.</p> <p>The properties were all subsequently sold to individuals.</p> <p>It later transpired that the builder had erected steps and ramps to the frontage of those properties on Highways land without permission.</p> <p>Following correspondence with County Councillor Mark Mackenzie Charrington and Rhodri Grey (a Highways employee) it was agreed in May 2022 that the County Council would pursue a 'Stopping Up Order' to transfer the ownership of the land at the front of the properties to the individual house owners provided we made a contribution to the costs.</p> <p>This was an acceptable solution to all the householders.</p> <p>Since agreeing to the terms set out by the Councillor we have not had any formal contact demonstrating progress towards the Stopping Up order.</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear that you've not had a recent update on the progress of this. As you rightly say this is a complex issue and has been complicated by the actions taken by the builder, confusion around required easements and disputes over sourcing the necessary funding, however it is confirmed that work on a 'stopping up' order is being undertaken for the area of verge in question. The order is being funded by GCC and will be implemented in due course. Unfortunately, this type of legal action does need to be granted by a Magistrates Court and can take 9 to 12 months to conclude.</p> <p>However, I do recognise that it is important to provide you with an update and I'll ask that officers get in touch with you directly after this meeting.</p>

<p>I have personally chased Councillor Mackenzie Charrington on many occasions but all I am told is that it is a complex matter and the Council legal team are pursuing it.</p> <p>We have seen no evidence of this.</p> <p>9 months on myself and my fellow Aubrey Mews owners would like a full written update from the Council Legal officer telling us what has been done to date and providing a timetable for resolution of the matter. "</p> <p>I have resorted to asking the question as I cannot get a satisfactory response from either the elected member or the council employees.</p>	
<p>4. Questioner's name: John Irving</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Our home, an old property circa 1560 is about 10 feet from the kerb on Vicarage Lane Brockworth. Traffic, usually heavy lorries linked to the building trade, is passing through the lane causing vibration through our bedroom between 10 and 20 times a day. This is/has leading/led to damage to our property, recently roof tiles slipping and problems with sewage, and will over years we believe, seriously damage the structure of the cottage.</p> <p>Would the council agree that this is unreasonable, unsustainable, damaging and that we have a right to the peaceful enjoyment of our property without the anxiety and distress this brings?</p>	<p>I believe Highways officers have been in contact with yourself and explained that the current developers have been informed that the HGV's associated with the development should not be using Vicarage Lane. The access arrangements for construction vehicles are part of the details agreed as part of the planning approval, so we have been in contact with the Borough Council to see how they can support the community on this issue. However, the possibility of a weight restriction has also been considered by us as this is an aspect within our control, but clearly this is a longer term option. Inspections of the carriageway do not indicate that the structural make up of the road has been impacted by the HGV's.</p>

5. Questioner's name: Nigel Adcock	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>E service bus - Woodmancote</p> <p>My petition designed to gauge the public feeling regarding the loss of the E bus reached over 800 signatures and has now been accepted by GCC. Eight hundred people in support of the service is significant. I accept that not all were users, many in fact signed in support of family members who were service users. I have been contacted by people who are feeling socially isolated. By people in Cheltenham who used the E service to get to Woodmancote, including one young lady who is a support worker in Woodmancote and used the service to get to work and by a gentleman with impaired vision. He used the service with his dog in order to access necessary services in Cheltenham. Given that if the D service were extended to cover Woodmancote at sometime each day only circa 2km would be added to the journey. The D service appears to be running regularly now with few effects of driver shortage.</p> <p>Could the cabinet member please contact Stagecoach on behalf of the residents of Woodmancote to check the possibility and feasibility of the extension of the D service and get back to me?</p> <p>If the answers from Stagecoach are negative would the cabinet member for transport please point out to Stagecoach that the value of a D service extension to Woodmancote would be very significant?</p>	<p>We are happy to raise this with Stagecoach.</p> <p>Officers from the Integrated Transport Unit have sent an email detailing this to the Management Team of Stagecoach, and as requested if the response is negative the statement around the value of transport from Woodmancote will be delivered.</p>
6. Questioner's name: Paul Aldridge	Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe
<p>Can you confirm how many properties (Business or Residential) that Gloucestershire County Council own, that have been empty/vacant for over one year?</p>	<p>25 in total.</p>

<p>Within this total above, can you confirm how many properties are empty care homes and how many are residential properties formerly used for supporting vulnerable adults or children.</p>	<p>There are 3 empty care homes which have been empty for more than a year and no residential properties formerly used for supporting vulnerable adults or children.</p>
<p>7. Questioner's name: Paul Morrish</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman</p>
<p>The promotion of active travel is a key council and national strategy. There were 124 serious injuries and 5 deaths in pedestrians and people using bicycles on the 30mph roads in Gloucestershire in the 2 years between May 1st 2019 and May 1st 21. The increased weight, size and acceleration of electric vehicles means that death and serious injury to pedestrians and cyclists, as well as damage to roads and buildings, on these 30 mph speed limit roads will become more common unless further measures are put in place. The recently introduced County Road Safety Policy says "Gloucestershire County Council considers that 20mph should be the accepted speed for drivers in places where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix" yet makes it no easier for communities in Gloucestershire to replace their 30mph limits with the necessary 20mph limits. Why doesn't this council follow the example set by Oxfordshire, Cornwall, Wales and many others in helping all communities in Gloucestershire that would like 20mph residential roads to gain them quickly and easily?</p>	<p>Last November Cabinet agreed a new Road Safety Policy for Gloucestershire. Our strategy to make our roads safer is multi-pronged and backed by a three-fold increase in road safety investment in 2023/24. This includes resourcing the road safety team to deliver this larger programme.</p> <p>Over the past year, working closely with the police, we have invested £600,000 in a range of measures to help communities to tackle speeding under the £600,000 Community Speed Watch Fund. The first of many new Community Speedwatch cameras and vehicle activated signs (VAS) have started to be installed around the county and early indications are that they are already having a very positive effect reducing the number of people driving over the speed limit and reducing risk to all road users.</p> <p>This year we are developing a much larger capital programme of schemes to tackle hot spot locations with the most severe collisions and greatest scope for reducing casualties. Our approach is data led, to focus our resources – staff and funds – to achieve the greatest effect.</p> <p>Whilst there are several roads where a 20mph limit would support our policy objectives and reduce road casualties many of the requests we receive are for areas where the safety benefits would be marginal. Officers have spent considerable time explaining this to a few such communities.</p>

I understand that the authorities you mentioned are investing considerable resources in 20mph schemes, yet published figures for those Killed and Seriously Injured indicate that they still have road safety challenges across their network. Typically, this type of investment will still leave issues on rural roads where higher speed collisions lead to more severe injuries and account for the majority of fatalities.

Given the scale of our road safety challenge we will be prioritising officers' time and the council's road safety funds on the higher risk areas in order to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in the county. We still encourage bids for 20mph schemes provided they meet our policy objectives and can be funded. A good example of this is the developer funded Hatherley Road / Hatherley Lane scheme that will be out for public consultation shortly.