

COUNTY COUNCIL – May 2023

Members' Questions

<p>1. Questioner's name: Cllr David Drew</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>What is the County Council's position on the re-opening of Stonehouse Bristol Rd Railway Station and in particular how does it intend to respond to the recent Department of Transport 'Restoring Your Railways Ideas Fund' Report?</p>	<p>The Local Transport Plan sets out a plan for rail to play an enhanced role in the future of Gloucestershire and it fully supports a new railway station south of Gloucester.</p> <p>In January 2020, the Government announced the Restoring Your Railway Fund. Out of a total of four applications in Gloucestershire, only the Stonehouse Bristol Road bid was invited to proceed, and a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) was submitted in September 2022. The SOBC has demonstrated that there is demand for a new station south of Gloucester.</p> <p>However, as only a location north of the line split could serve trains on both rail lines (i.e., to Bristol and to London), we feel that this location is preferable from a long-term strategic perspective, while still able to also serve the local community in Stonehouse and the Stroud Valleys.</p>
<p>2. Questioner's name: Cllr David Drew</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>How many drivers have been fined, for the latest year figures are available, for taking an overweight vehicle along a route that has a weight restriction in place?</p>	<p>The council does not hold this data. I suggest you contact the enforcement authority, Gloucestershire Constabulary.</p>
<p>3. Questioner's name: Cllr David Drew</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>What was the cost of repairing the wall on the Slad Rd which required the road to be closed for 7 weeks, and who bore the cost of the repair?</p>	<p>The retaining wall scheme cost was £63,410.36 and was funded by GCC.</p>
<p>4. Questioner's name: Cllr David Drew</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Stephen Davies</p>
<p>To the Leader:</p> <p>What plans he has to ensure that as a Corporate Parent all Gloucestershire County Councillors have a DBS at enhanced level?</p>	<p>There are no plans to ensure all county councillors have an enhanced DBS check. This position is informed by Legal and HR colleagues and is in line with DBS Guidelines and Gloucestershire's policies.</p>

<p>5. Questioner's name: Cllr Graham Morgan</p> <p>Bus Service cut backs Ruspidge & Soudley Forest of Dean</p> <p>Has any progress been made to find an alternative provider to replace the cut back No 24 Service by Stagecoach that has effectively left these two Villages without a regular service to their nearest Town of Cinderford, this has had a major impact on vulnerable people and is also damaging to businesses in the Town of Cinderford where footfall has fallen dramatically. Welcome as the Robin service is, it is effectively only a dial a ride that has limitations and cannot replace a regular service for these rural villages.</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p> <p>GCC were notified by Stagecoach of the changes to their network in September 2022. In response, two full procurement attempts were made to replace services, including service 24. Unfortunately, no bids were received either formally through the procurement process or the direct conversations we had with multiple operators. A replacement was found for the Chepstow to Lydney link but no operator was able to provide a link between Lydney and Cinderford.</p> <p>The Robin is a very flexible demand response transport service, it operates from 7am-7pm, Monday to Saturday. Holders of a concessionary travel pass can use this on their service for free travel within the usual eligible hours (after 0930 on weekdays, no restriction on weekends).</p>
<p>6. Questioner's name: Cllr Chris McFarling</p> <p>With the recent government decision to cut the active travel funding by £200m, will the cabinet member concerned please write to the Minister for Transport, asking that this decision be reversed?</p> <p>The following reasons come to mind....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - investment in active travel contributed £36.5 billion to the UK economy in 2021. - promised Government targets of 50% of all journeys in English towns and cities being walked or cycled by 2030, and for the UK to be Net Zero by 2050, are made impossible by these cuts. - people walking, wheeling and cycling take 14.6 million cars off the road, and are saving 2.5 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions every year. - more than ever, people want and need support to walk, wheel and cycle, for commuting and for their well being - these cuts will impact those that would have benefited most, limiting their choice to travel healthily, cheaply and emissions-free. - withdrawing these funds clearly indicates that the government is not serious about tackling climate change and sends the wrong message to local authorities like Gloucestershire County Council 	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p> <p>I understand your sentiment and I can assure you that the County Council is fully committed to investing in walking and cycling infrastructure. This is why we are investing more than £40 million in the Gloucestershire cycle spine and are also developing Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans for several towns / settlements throughout Gloucestershire.</p> <p>I am also pleased to make you aware that Gloucestershire was recently able to secure over £8 million of additional funding for active travel in the last round of Active Travel Funding. This amounts to the largest funding allocation secured by any County Council in the country.</p>

<p>who are trying to include active travel infrastructure in their decarbonisation strategies.</p>	
<p>7. Questioner's name: Cllr Chris McFarling</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>The strategic commissioning statements for the Economic, Environment and Infrastructure directorate in this years budget, state that :</p> <p><i>“Through our Adult Education Service and Employment & Skills Hub we will also identify ‘green’/sustainable job opportunities and career pathways and, where it fits with our capacity, we will deliver, or signpost skills and qualifications needed to progress into these job roles.”</i></p> <p>Could the cabinet member please clarify how many sustainable job opportunities have been identified so far and how many will be identified in the next year?</p> <p>How does this compare with the provision and promotion of non sustainable green jobs?</p> <p>How will unemployed Gloucestershire residents be encouraged to apply for these job opportunities?</p> <p>Since green economic growth is likely to have multiple benefits, could the cabinet member please identify constraints that might compromise this strategic commissioning statement and ambition?</p>	<p>For the period Jan-Dec 2022 there were a total of 2,890 jobs in Gloucestershire posted that required at least one green skill, this accounted for 3.2% of all jobs posted and is higher than those in 2021 (2.5%)</p> <p>January - March 2023 has seen a total of 1,314 jobs posted that required at least one green skill, accounting for 3.1% of all jobs posted in Gloucestershire.</p> <p>It isn't possible to predict how many sustainable job opportunities will be identified in the next year as this very much depends on what employers want and then include in their job postings.</p> <p>GCC's Employment and Skills Hub works with each of its customers to develop a vocational profile that includes job/career goals, interests, qualifications, skills, personal circumstances and travel options.</p> <p>The job brokers use local Labour Market Information (LMI) including the sustainable job postings and other job postings, to help unemployed customers find their 'best fit' jobs to apply for and support them with applying for these job opportunities. The Employment & Skills Hub team also works closely with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and within the job centres to share job opportunities they become aware of.</p> <p>Constraints mainly relate to funding for the job broker roles within the Employment & Skills Hub. Funding for the Employment & Skills Hub currently comes from over 10 funding streams. Most of these are short-term and none are specific to sustainable/green jobs. Budgets for 2024-25 are currently being reviewed.</p>

8. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner**Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris**

Our local roads are plagued by apparently endless roadworks - even if they finish on time, signs are regularly left out long after the permit date (effectively large-scale roadside litter in the AONB), and rectification of the road surface is often required when it is left in an unacceptable state. I have been asked whether the county council is using to the full its powers to fine utility companies where they have not complied with their permit? Specifically, what is the total for fines issued in the past financial (or calendar if easier) year across each district by GCC, for what reasons, and to which utility companies?

We fine all works promoters (utility companies) if works over run or if signs and barriers are left on site after the permit has been stopped. Members of the public and councillors are very good at letting us know when this happens. Our staff also identify overruns when travelling between sites on inspections, and checking as many jobs as possible after the permit has been closed. We have a number of mechanisms to fine utility companies for permit breaches or defective works, once a site is defected, the remedial work is completed at no cost to GCC and we charge a defect fee. Please see below our latest overrun income. An over run could be due to missing lines or signs and barriers left on site, or the fact the work is still ongoing without a valid permit or agreement to extend the permit. This is shown by utility company for the last calendar year and for the whole county. We still have some charges to agree so this figure will rise. We have other fines that we levy for different types of failure to comply with regulations.

Bristol Water	£ 100.00
BT	£11,500.00
City Fibre	£97,250.00
Gigaclear	£85,750.00
National Grid	£61,600.00
Severn Trent	£82,150.00
Thames Water	£24,375.00
Virgin Media	£ 1,000.00
Virgin Media Networks	£ 250.00
Wales & West Utilities	£65,650.00
	£429,625.00
	(Total)

Please report any issues to streetworks@gloucestershire.gov.uk and the streetworks team will respond. This may result in a fine and it helps us to encourage compliance by utility companies and builds a picture of when things gone wrong on site.

<p>9. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>The volume of highways complaints, almost all regarding potholes, I am now receiving - via my inbox, in person, at parish council meetings and on social media - has now reached the point where it is impacting my ability to do other ward work. This is no criticism of the local Area Highways Manager and his team, who are doing everything they can to help, but I am embarrassed by the state of the roads in the Minchinhampton division. We make very good use of the reporting mechanisms, but many local roads are well beyond 'splat and pat' repair, and the Highways Local pot will address only a few of the most severe but relatively small issues. When and how will financing for the likes of the A419 Chalford-Thrupp, Windmill Road Minchinhampton, and the worst-affected of the back lanes like Dark Lane/Skiveralls, Chalford, come forward?</p>	<p>The A417 between Chalford and Thrupp has experienced a significant deterioration following last winter. Having secured additional funding we have been able to add it to this year's resurfacing programme and planned delivery is Sep/Oct 2023.</p> <p>The core surfacing programme is data led, ensuring the roads used by most people combined with highest need are attended to first. Local Highway Managers also target their area-based funding at surfacing and patching on minor roads. However, it is not possible to resurface every road in need immediately and in the interim we apply a safety inspection and pothole repair regime to keep the network safe.</p>
<p>10. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>The policy of not addressing nearby potholes unless they meet the same deficiency standard is particularly infuriating to residents - it must surely be inefficient from a fuel and carbon perspective to make the repeated visits necessitated by this policy. Is it under active review?</p>	<p>Yes, as part of the work in the Transformation Programme we are looking at ways to reduce return visits to locations by repairing more defects on the initial visit, whilst balancing the need to ensure that high priority safety defects are completed immediately.</p>
<p>11. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Many residents have observed that the material currently being used to fill potholes and for resurfacing does not seem to adhere well and sometimes begins to break down almost immediately. Are the materials currently used for resurfacing under review?</p>	<p>The most appropriate material used for each site within our surfacing programme is fully considered. Pothole repairs are a short term repair only – we have been trialling a number of materials which are designed for different conditions, e.g. wet weather, etc. and will be reviewing the feedback over the coming weeks.</p>
<p>12. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>The proposed Stroud centre parking scheme and associated consultation has been poorly received in the wider Stroud area, both in terms of the proposal itself and in relation to the confusing</p>	<p>Over the past two years the county council has worked with key stakeholders in the local community and has engaged with residents and businesses to develop proposals to improve the current on-</p>

<p>consultation documentation and lack of in-person engagement. The Town Council does not appear to have been separately consulted in advance, which seems like a major omission. What is being done to rectify these concerns, and will the learnings be taken into future consultation processes?</p>	<p>street parking situation in residential areas surrounding Stroud town centre. This included meeting at the town council's offices and with town councillors.</p> <p>The main purpose of the proposed changes is to give priority to residents whose streets have become dominated by commuter parking, impacting on their quality of life and ability to access their homes. This is especially the case for more vulnerable groups such as young families, people with disabilities and older residents who are less mobile.</p> <p>Following several years of developing the scheme with input from local stakeholders a formal public consultation was held in April giving everyone in the community another opportunity to give their views.</p> <p>We are now considering all the feedback we received during the consultation before a decision is taken on next steps.</p>
<p>13. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>A growing group of employers are offering additional paid leave to accommodate employees taking slower, low-carbon transport e.g., vacations by train. Has the council considered offering this to its staff?</p>	<p>Our paid annual leave scheme is already more generous than many employers and significantly more than the statutory minimum for all employees. Our terms and conditions link to national arrangements and our green book employees did receive an additional day of annual leave this year. This covers most of our employees but not our more senior roles. We also offer an additional leave scheme where employees can purchase extra time off to use as they choose.</p>
<p>14. Questioner's name: Cllr Wendy Thomas</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>At the February county council meeting, you kindly provided updated usage stats for the Robin Demand Responsive Transport service. The stats showed significantly lower use of the North Cotswolds service, which had only 112 trips from 17 October - 31 December (vs 1,038 trips in the Forest of Dean, from 24 October - 31 December).</p>	<p>Since this data was provided we have seen further increases in bookings in the North Cotswolds, which increased from 102 in January to 142 in February.</p>

<p>Would the cabinet member kindly provide an update on what measures are being taken to increase ridership in the North Cotswolds and could updated usage stats for both routes please be provided?</p>	<p>In recent weeks and months, a concerted effort has been made to raise awareness of The Robin, with a particular focus on the North Cotswolds.</p> <p>A social media advertising campaign is on-going, we have seen significant engagement via the various social media platforms.</p> <p>Many new leaflets have been printed. These have been distributed to various local hubs and have proven vital in advertising the service to those who may not use social media.</p> <p>Local events have been held to raise awareness and provide promotional material and press releases.</p> <p>This is only part of a lengthy communication strategy to promote The Robin and get as many passengers on the buses as possible.</p>
<p>15. Questioner's name: Cllr Wendy Thomas</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>In the April 23 issue of the Dursley Gazette, Cllr Andrew Miller was quoted raising his frustration at GCC Highways' practice of filling potholes, specifically only filling potholes that are on their daily work list, often ignoring significant potholes that are immediately adjacent. This is something I frequently hear from constituents and it is clear this is a cross party issue. The article went on to quote deputy council leader Lynden Stowe, who said "I wouldn't disagree. We need to somehow look at that practice to see if there is a better way of doing it." May I ask what the cabinet member for highways is doing to find a better way of efficiently repairing potholes adjacent to those specifically reported?</p>	<p>As part of the work in the Transformation Programme we are looking at ways to reduce return visits to locations by repairing more defects on the initial visit, whilst balancing the need to ensure that high priority defects are completed immediately.</p>
<p>16. Questioner's name: Cllr Cate Cody</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>A dental practice in Tewkesbury with a large number of patients is closing down. Using the suggested NHS search feature shows that no dentists in Gloucestershire are taking new (adult) patients. The nearest is in Malvern which is very difficult for those without access to private cars. What is being done about this situation</p>	<p>We acknowledge the challenges that people are facing in accessing dental care in the County.</p> <p>From 1 April 2023, all <u>Integrated Care Boards (ICBs)</u> are taking on delegated responsibility for commissioning dental services from NHS England.</p>

<p>which will further impact those who are less well off and potentially have dire consequences for their future health?</p>	<p>Prior to these changes, NHS England was responsible for commissioning dental care services to meet local needs and priorities, managed through its local area teams. Access to dentistry was the subject of a County Council motion, resolved on 9 November 2022. In responding to the motion, reports were received by Health Overview and Scrutiny on 6 December 2022 and it was agreed the committee would receive a further update post the transfer of commissioning responsibility from NHS England to the Integrated Care Board. This question will therefore need to be addressed to the relevant commissioning body, either directly or via the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p>
<p>17. Questioner's name: Cllr Cate Cody</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>The issue that residents are most contacting me (and many fellow councillors) about is the state of the roads. The pot holes are terrible, including those not long fixed. Tyres are being damaged and accidents are more likely with drivers swerving to avoid pot holes or hitting them and having less control over their vehicles, potentially endangering others road users. Cyclists are particularly vulnerable both to cars swerving and the potholes themselves. Residents have seen their council tax bills increase and their roads worsen. It is a county-wide issue and neighbouring Worcestershire doesn't appear to be anywhere near as affected. What are members meant to be relaying?</p>	<p>We understand the frustration about potholes. The post winter period is a national problem and not just affecting Gloucestershire. We are working hard to identify and repair the safety defects. Our resurfacing programme will improve significant sections of road but we appreciate that other roads will deteriorate. We are targeting additional funds at high safety defect locations to patch and resurface locations to stop return visits.</p>
<p>18. Questioner's name: Cllr John Bloxsom</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>At the Annual Meeting 2021 Council made appointments to a range of outside bodies. Since that time the membership of both Council and its political groupings has changed. Can the Leader of the Council set out the process by which vacancies are filled, and substitutes used, and how these are approved by Council in accordance with the Constitution?</p>	<p>Appointments are made on a 4-year basis. Where a vacancy arises, there are two routes by which it may be filled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By a decision at full council - By the chief executive (in consultation with the Chair and Leader of the Council) under the powers afforded to him by the Scheme of Delegation.

	The arrangements for substitutions will depend on the rules set out in the constitution of the organisation being appointed to and will differ from case to case.
19. Questioner's name: Cllr John Bloxsom	Respondent's name: Cllr Stephan Fifield
In a statement on 27 March 2023 the former Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Delivery said, in respect of Community Meals (Meals on Wheels) provision, that "over 400 people say they no longer need the service". How many of these people were offered the service of delivery of a plated hot meal as was supplied by the Community Meals (Meals on Wheels) provider?	343 individuals were offered the option of delivered hot plated meals. The remainder of individuals that where we were not able to offer a hot plated were offered a frozen meals option. Where individuals were not able to reheat frozen meals a care call at lunch time to support heating and serving meals was also offered.
20. Questioner's name: Cllr Rebecca Halifax	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
There is concern among senior teachers and school leaders in Cirencester that building a new Primary School as part of new Streadings Housing development when there is still capacity within existing schools could lead to falling numbers and resulting financial challenges in other Schools – have we properly thought through that scenario when undertaking our planning of school places?	Education officers in the school place planning team are working with the Headteachers and governors of schools in the area, and the Multi Academy Trust responsible for the new school to ensure that the number of school places offered at the new school grows in line with the increased demand from new houses, as and when they are occupied.
21. Questioner's name: Cllr Rebecca Halifax	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
What is our policy as a Council on competition between local authority schools serving the same area – are we encouraging schools to compete or are we focusing on ensuring every local school is of the standard parents and children deserve?	<p>The Council is committed to all children receiving a high-quality education whatever part of the county they live in and whatever education setting they attend, be that a maintained or academy school.</p> <p>The Council encourages all schools to work collaboratively and positively with one another to ensure they work together effectively for the communities they serve, meeting the needs of children, young people and their families.</p>

	<p>The Council supports all maintained schools in line with its statutory duties and focuses on ensuring every local school provides a high-quality offer to parents and carers.</p> <p>As a local authority, we also support the right of every parent to express a preference for the school of their choice for their child. To enable parents to be informed about what each school has to offer, the Council provides information to parents in the form of a booklet from the school admissions team. Many schools also offer tours of the school and provide additional information – each school will decide what they will provide in addition.</p> <p>Members will be aware that schools are funded on a per pupil basis which means schools will be keen to attract children to their school in order to maximise resources for the children and communities they serve.</p> <p>As a key stakeholder in the local education system, the local authority, encourages all schools to work cooperatively through organisations such as the primary, secondary and special school heads association and the Gloucestershire Education Forum. As a result, we are able to maintain standards which are at and above national averages across our county schools.</p>
<p>22. Questioner's name: Cllr Rebecca Halifax</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>How were the locations for EV Charging points in Cirencester selected? What consultation took place with residents and with Cotswold District Council and Cirencester Town Council and what impact did that consultation have on the selection of sites? Additionally, could a map be sent to all Members detailing all the current live locations for EV Charging points?</p>	<p>In summer 2021 Cabinet agreed the Gloucestershire Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) strategy setting out our approach to reducing transport carbon emissions by switching to electric vehicles.</p> <p>The strategy reflects the government's priority to provide EV charging for those residents with no access to off-street parking and charging so that they can have the confidence they need to switch over to driving electric vehicles.</p>

Since procuring a chargepoint operator we have worked with them using analytic tools, demographic profiling and local highways knowledge to identify locations with no or limited off-street parking, higher density housing and affordable access to the electricity grid for power connections. The sites identified are the first phase of locations and we will be installing further EV chargepoint locations in later phases.

County and District Councillors for areas where we proposed EV chargepoints were invited to take part in an on-line survey for their views on the locations. This was sent out in November 2022. A letter drop to all houses close to the proposed locations was completed in February 2023 and district officers were also informed of the proposed locations in their district.

Following discussion with the Cotswold district one location was dropped because it was close to proposed public chargepoints next to the district council offices.

Following the survey and email feedback we received, in areas, such as Gloucester Street in Cirencester, officers have agreed with the cabinet member to adopt a phased approach to mitigate the concerns of some residents who contacted us. This will address the shortage of EV charging now, yet still allow for expansion in future as EV use increases.

Initially the council will mark out and sign two bays, leaving two bays unmarked. The marked bays will be enforced to ensure that they are prioritised for use only by EV drivers. The others will be courtesy bays where non-EV drivers can park, but we would ask that they keep these clear if other bays are available. We will monitor demand for EV charging and mark out the 3rd and 4th bays later as demand picks up.

Once the EV chargepoints have been installed and are live their locations will be published on public platforms such as Zapmap to allow existing and prospective EV drivers to find them.

<p>23. Questioner's name: Cllr Rebecca Halifax</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Stephan Fifield</p>
<p>Could the Cabinet Member provide an update on the number of residential places we currently have available for victims of domestic abuse? What is the current analysis of the likely need for these places as against the available provision and what steps are we taking to increase this provision?</p>	<p>As part of the Council's statutory duties under the Domestic Abuse Act, we are required to regularly assess the need for safe accommodation for victims of domestic abuse in the county. The 2021 needs assessment is available on the GCC website and is reviewed annually. I would refer Councillor Halifax to the needs assessment which provides detailed information on the current provision of safe accommodation and numbers accessing that accommodation.</p> <p>The needs assessment does identify an ongoing need to increase the amount and type of safe accommodation available for all victims; and this is a key objective in the Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse strategy. The Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board (LPB) is working with the district councils (as the local housing authorities) to increase provision supported by grant funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). This includes actioning plans to increase the provision of Places of Safety in the county from the current 12 units to up to 36 units; alongside annual funding to the refuge in Stroud to help meet the support needs of victims. Research shows that many victims of domestic abuse would prefer to remain in their home where it is safe for them to do so. This is the approach that we prioritise in the County; and the OPCC and the district councils are continuing to invest in the provision of target hardening and sanctuary schemes to enable this, with specialist support commissioned by the Council.</p> <p>In line with its statutory duties, the County Council will continue to work with the LPB to monitor whether the steps being taken to improve support in community and residential based accommodation are meeting victim needs.</p>
<p>24. Questioner's name: Cllr Linda Cohen</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>There is real concern from parents about a stretch of Wotton Road in Kingswood which is considered dangerous and where</p>	<p>Officers in the Traffic Team will carry out a brief review of this location to see what measures (by the council and with the schools)</p>

<p>children attending Kingswood Primary, Blue Coat and Katharine Lady Berkeley's Schools have to cross the road without a pedestrian crossing.</p> <p>A number of buses have been getting stuck along this route and there are calls for the buses to be re-routed.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Members advise on what action they can take on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The installation of the level crossing b) The re-routing of buses away from the centre of Wotton Village 	<p>could assist parents and children walking to school. This includes liaising with officers who manage school crossing patrols and engagement with schools on road safety education and school travel plans. Given the team's workload this may take up to two months. They will report back to Cllr Cohen as soon as this is done.</p> <p>The issue with buses in Kingswood has been raised with GCC before. The service in question is commercial, GCC does not hold a contract nor can it instruct an operator to alter their route.</p> <p>Our understanding is the operator has been contacted about this issue before and has decided to continue along the current route.</p>
<p>25. Questioner's name: Cllr Linda Cohen</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>There have been several reports and articles recently detailing an increase in the number of school absences related to poor mental health in Children.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member confirm whether our own statistics show whether this is also a problem in Gloucestershire Schools, and explain what steps we are taking to work with Schools on supporting child mental health.</p>	<p>The national systems in place for recording absence do not allow us to specifically identify those who are not attending due to poor mental health, however we are aware anecdotally of an increase in absence linked to mental well-being since COVID and this is reflected in the national picture.</p> <p>The Department for Education have recognised this and produced guidance for schools entitled '<i>Mental Health Issues Affecting a Pupil's Attendance: Guidance for Schools.</i>'</p> <p>The Education service shared this guidance with schools in the week it was released at our Attendance Network Meetings, which are held three times a year for all schools. The Education Inclusion Service (EIS) provides advice to schools, parents and agencies with regard to the best practice, in accordance with the guidance, to support children who are unable to attend school due to poor mental health.</p> <p>EIS are working with Young Gloucestershire to offer mentoring support to children who have very low attendance due to poor mental health and this is having a positive impact on those taking part, enabling them to increase their attendance at school.</p> <p>Education and Early Help (targeted support) are working closely with NHS mental health services to ensure there is a joined-up approach between our services and to ensure there is a full range of support</p>

	<p>for children and young people with poor mental health, from both initial concerns through to more acute and complex needs.</p> <p>There are a wide number of projects that have either been rolled out, are being rolled out, or are planned, that provide support to children, young people and their families through schools, NHS services and voluntary and community groups.</p>
<p>26. Questioner's name: Cllr Linda Cohen</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>The Council pursued the owner of the great barn in Wotton for an expensive and lengthy legal case over a small debt. Eventually the owner was paid for damage caused to their fence, but found the experience of the process and how they were treated really unsettling.</p> <p>The action taken seemed to disproportionate to the case and also more expensive than settling the case earlier.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member clarify whether we seek to avoid taking legal action where we can and what more efforts can be made in the future to achieve early and informal resolution to disputes in the future?</p>	<p>Whilst we cannot comment on the specifics of any particular claims, the following provides details about how we seek to avoid legal action.</p> <p>The Council always makes several attempts to establish the facts of each case when it receives a claim and considers whether it is appropriate to reach a settlement in relation to any claim for damages without the need for any legal action.</p> <p>It will be for the claimant to decide whether they wish to pursue court action if they are unhappy with the Council's response to a claim. In such a situation, the Council will look to explore whether it is still possible to reach a settlement without the need to defend the claim through the courts.</p>
<p>27. Questioner's name: Cllr Linda Cohen</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>How many Schools in Gloucestershire currently have air purifiers in place within their estate?</p> <p>Does the Cabinet Member agree that air purifiers are an important way to safeguard the health of the County's Children and what can the Council do to support more Schools in purchasing and installing air purifiers.</p>	<p>GCC has not installed air purifiers in schools but some may have installed them themselves, especially where GCC does not manage their buildings.</p> <p>Building Bulletin 101 provides guidelines on ventilation, thermal comfort, and indoor air quality in schools. All new schools are designed and built to this standard and any changes to existing buildings, renewing windows for example, will consider these guidelines as part of their design and implementation.</p>

28. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
What progress has been made with the road and footway adoptions at the St Oswald's Park housing development in my county division?	As part of the road adoption process we have requested that the developer introduce parking restrictions to help deal with the footway obstruction issues. This draft parking restriction plan has been submitted by the developer and will be consulted upon once the developer has paid the necessary fees for the legal process to support those proposed draft restrictions. Once the parking issues have been resolved, it is expected that the roads will progress to adoption.
29. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
At council budget setting an additional £150,000 was allocated to speed up the progressing traffic regulation orders. How has this additional budget been allocated?	Work is underway to increase the capacity of the internal team and make greater use of external consultants to deliver TROs this year. This includes additional technical and managerial expertise which has recently been brought in to support the team manager.
30. Questioner's name: David Willingham	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
Following the withdrawal of the F bus from St Mark's and Rowanfield, the Cabinet Member has suggested Community Connexions as an alternative for the elderly, disabled and less mobile people. Could the Cabinet Member please advise me what the cost to the individual was of using the F bus with a concessionary bus pass, and what the cost to the individual would be for the same individual with a concessionary bus pass seeking to access services via Community Connexions (including a full breakdown of all fees)?	<p>A pass holder travelling on the F would not have paid a fare if they were travelling within the hours of eligibility. However, as the pass is not accepted on Community Transport, a fare would be required, the amount would be determined by the destination of the trip.</p> <p>However, it is important to note that this is a comparison between a commercial bus service operated by Stagecoach, one that has since been withdrawn due to low passenger use and therefore low revenue, and a subsidised demand responsive Community Transport service.</p> <p>Stagecoach withdrew the F as it was not commercially viable to continue its operation. GCC has always maintained its subsidy for the valuable service delivered by Community Connexions.</p> <p>GCC did not set the fares for either service, they were set by the respective operators.</p>

<p>31. Questioner's name: Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom</p>
<p>In the local elections this month the number one topic on the doorstep by far was the appalling state of many of Gloucestershire's roads. Despite repeated reporting of roads in my division by residents, parish councils and I, there remain numerous lanes and roads which are really unsafe. What is your plan to urgently address this issue and make our highways safe and fit for purpose?</p>	<p>Please continue to report areas that you are concerned about and safety defects will be identified and repaired. Having secured additional funding we have also been able to add new surfacing and patching schemes to this year's resurfacing programme.</p> <p>As part of the work in the Transformation Programme we are looking at ways to reduce return visits to locations by repairing more defects on the initial visit, whilst balancing the need to ensure that high priority defects are completed immediately.</p>
<p>32. Questioner's name: Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>In my division it is not just lanes such as Leckhampton Hill which are full of potholes, some A roads are also unsafe - such as the A429 between Northleach and Bourton. Drivers are swerving to avoid the very bad surfaces and this is dangerous for all concerned. In one case, the road between Compton Abdale and Northleach is so bad that part of the road has collapsed. Yet still we wait for a firm timetable for repairs to be carried out. Isn't it time you raised this as an emergency which the Council focuses on as a priority?</p>	<p>The Area Highway Manager provided a response to the query about the minor road between Compton Abdale and Northleach earlier this week. We have undertaken safety defect repairs and further patching works are planned in June. With regards to the A roads in the vicinity, a surfacing scheme for the A429 north and south of Northleach traffic lights is programmed for August, and north of the A40 towards Bourton on the A429 we have been able to bring forward a surfacing scheme from the recently awarded additional pothole funding.</p>
<p>33. Questioner's name: Suzanne Williams</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>When returning home after a meeting on Wednesday May 10th, I spotted a severely damaged utility manhole cover on Tewkesbury Road in Cheltenham.</p> <p>As soon as I got indoors, I tried to phone Highways. I knew it was out of hours and fully expected to have to spell out words and explain in full detail the exact location, but no, the phone rang out for over 10 minutes without being answered before I gave up and switched to 101 and a further 6-minute wait.</p> <p>This was an emergency, and it scares me that I had to wait so long to pass on my concerns.</p>	<p>Thank you for raising this. On the afternoon and evening of 10th May the lines were extremely busy with the events of heavy rain and localised flood incidents on the network. At this time the operators were on multiple calls with the Police and outgoing crews. We apologise for the delay in responding on this occasion.</p>

<p>Given this particular incident and the current condition of our highways, is the service provided for repairs and for reporting issues, fit for purpose?</p>	
<p>34. Questioner's name: Paul Baker</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Can the Cabinet Member confirm what impact the spiralling rates of inflation have had on the Government's capital grant for road infrastructure? Given that industry sources suggest that some costs have increased by as much as 35% has support from the government to invest in and repair our deteriorating roads effectively been cut and by how much?</p>	<p>There has been no increase in the Department for Transport grant funding for structural maintenance or integrated transport which has remained at a very similar level since 2021/22. The additional £3.9m received recently was a welcome boost to the capital programme which will enable more locations to be addressed. Construction inflation varies across different materials but the average impact on contract prices in 23/24 is an increase of 22.4%. Some additional revenue funding to offset inflation was able to be provided as part of the 23/24 budget setting process but there the impact of inflation will mean that the funding is unable to stretch as far as in previous years.</p>
<p>35. Questioner's name: Roger Whyborn</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>What is the extent of s106 obligation to link the new Leckhampton Farm Lane estate to the Rail Station and town centre by Bus, and when does it have to be satisfied?</p>	<p>The s106 agreement states:</p> <p>Cheltenham Bus Service Diversion Contribution (together with any indexation payment in accordance with Clause 5 hereof and any Late Payment Interest payable in accordance with Clause 6 hereof) shall be used towards:</p> <p>The diversion of the existing bus service or services serving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leckhampton and Warden Hill areas of Cheltenham • Cheltenham Spa railway station, and • The centre of Cheltenham <p>In order to provide links to the employment destinations and other transport hubs.</p> <p>Funds must be used within 15 years of the Commencement Date.</p>

36. Questioner's name: Roger Whyborn	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
<p>Caernarvon Road in Up Hatherley now is so badly potholed and disintegrating as to render it almost too dangerous to use, and vehicle damage has already been sustained, with further allegations by residents of personal injuries to cyclists. When, if at all, does the County Council plan to resurface this road, which is a major artery through the community?</p>	<p>Caernarvon Road has experienced a significant deterioration following last winter and has been flagged by the Local Highways Manager. Having secured additional funding we have been able to add it to this year's resurfacing and patching programme.</p>
37. Questioner's name: Roger Whyborn	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
<p>"Low traffic neighbourhoods" have been introduced in some parts of the UK in an attempt to stop rat-running of vehicles through those neighbourhoods, and they have proved controversial in some places. Does GCC intend to explore the introduction of Low traffic neighbourhoods within any areas of the County, and if so what will be the criteria for their introduction? Is external, e.g. Government, funding available to enable or assist with the introduction of "Low traffic neighbourhoods", and if so has GCC applied for any?</p>	<p>Since the 1960's councils have been introducing measures to make residential streets safer, often as part of regeneration, environmental enhancement or road safety schemes. Many existing roads in Cheltenham and Gloucester have cycle only gaps and one-way streets etc.</p> <p>Last year the council secured government active travel funding for a Mini Holland study to see how we can make walking and cycling more attractive for communities along route of the Honeybourne line in Cheltenham. We are exploring opportunities for funding this and similar schemes in future.</p>
38. Questioner's name: Cllr Alex Hegenbarth	Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman
<p>After speaking to residents in the new estates across the Bishop's Cleeve division there are a number of safety issues on estate roads that have arisen due to bad design, poorly planned traffic management, the introduction of additional housing, or a mixture of all three. While many of these of inconveniences, there are those that are cause for concern as more estates are completed. Previously this has just led to near misses, unfortunately there was recently an accident involving a car and delivery vehicle on Sapphire Road. Thankfully no one was hurt, but it underlines the need in getting these issues resolved. What can be done to improve road safety on roads that have yet to be adopted by the County Council?</p>	<p>If anyone has any road safety concerns on roads that are not yet adopted by the Council then please report it on the Council's website at https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/roads/your-highways-report-it/ or email the team dealing with highway adoptions at highwaylegalagreements@gloucestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>On residential estates that have an adoption (section 38) agreement in place, the council has the ability to compel the developer to deal with road safety issues arising from a range of construction related activity such as mud on the road, contractor vehicle parking, HGV traffic routing, raised ironworks etc. Under those agreements the developers must have the road constructed to base-course, with street lighting where appropriate, prior to occupation of any housing.</p>

	<p>However, quite often some permanent traffic calming features or parking restrictions that are essential to the safety of the permanent design have not been installed, usually due to the fact that they would be damaged by construction traffic. On those private roads where adoption agreements are not yet in place, we still work closely with the developers to ensure road safety is maintained, but often rely on the local planning authority planning conditions for enforcement or reminding developers of their legal obligations under the Construction Design Management regulations to ensure safety issues are addressed.</p> <p>In addition, we carry out independent road safety audits of the roads which are to be adopted. In the case of Sapphire Road, that audit has highlighted the issue concerning on-street parking at the Medical Centre blocking driver visibility to the pedestrian crossings. This on-street parking problem will be addressed directly with the developer.</p> <p>Whilst the County Council carry out regular inspections, where members of the public witness regular “near-miss” safety issues, it would be very beneficial if they reported these to the Highways Development Management team using the email address above.</p>
<p>39. Questioner’s name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton</p>	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr Carole Allaway-Martin</p>
<p>Can the Cabinet Member please provide an update on the local commissioning of community meals? Who will be delivering the service in each District, when will they be ready to operate from and how many of the residents previously receiving the service will still be receiving it following the change of provider?</p>	<p>All providers were ready to take new referrals from 20th March 2023 and the exiting Apetito clients from 1st April 2023.</p> <p>17 - Age UK Wiltshire – GL7 /GL8 6 - GL11 CIC – GL9 /GL11 /GL13 21 - Dean Forest Kitchen - GL14-19 & NP16 9 - Long Table - GL5/GL6/GL10 12 - Harry’s Country Kitchen - GL1-4/GL20/GL50 -56/WR12</p>
<p>40. Questioner’s name: Cllr Roger Whyborn</p>	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>On average, what is the cost to the taxpayer of each pothole that we repair? What will Gloucestershire’s share of the recently announced ‘pothole’ fund enable us to deliver and on what basis was the decision to allocate this funding taken?</p>	<p>This is not a figure calculated by Gloucestershire as it will vary considerably depending on a number of factors including the volume of high priority defects to those able to be planned.</p>

	<p>The additional £3.9m pothole funding recently awarded by Department for Transport is capital funding and is therefore targeted at larger scale patching and surfacing works to provide permanent repairs. These funds are being targeted at high safety defect locations to patch and resurface locations to stop return visits based on local area-based feedback.</p>
<p>41. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>The public Health Grant from Government has been reduced in real terms in recent settlement. Is the Cabinet Member disappointed by this and what will this mean for public health provision in Gloucestershire?</p>	<p>The Government have confirmed that Gloucestershire will receive a public health grant of £26,075,974 in 23/24; a 3.2% uplift on our 22/23 allocation. Whilst there is a small increase to contract values in some commissioned services, there will be no changes to provision in 23/24 as the public health ring-fence means reserves can be utilised to meet these costs in the short-term. It also allows us to develop a longer term plan for provision in future years and we continue to work with local, regional and national colleagues to highlight the importance of investment for public health services.</p> <p>The ringfenced grant is not the only source of funding. Public Health receive recurrent contributions from corporate funds (via the MTFS process); as well as supplementary national grant funding for substance misuse services, domestic abuse support, and work to address health inequalities (funded via the Contain Outbreak Management Fund). Beyond the work of the public health team, a range of council programmes from early years to adult social care contribute to improving health and wellbeing. Our partners in the ICS are also investing in preventative services, and as a Council and we will continue to leverage opportunities for collaboration with system partners to further the public health agenda in the county.</p>
<p>42. Questioner's name: Cllr Colin Hay</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Can the Cabinet Member provide an update as to what conversations the Council is having with Central Government and with other Councils regarding the unsustainable levels of funding for special needs education and the risk posed to Councils by the financial deficits that exist in this area?</p>	<p>We recognise the significant challenges and risks that the national SEND funding pressures are creating for local authorities.</p> <p>Alongside the effective delivery of local services, our priority has been to influence the DfE and policy makers, which we are doing through two avenues:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gloucestershire is playing an active role in the DfE 'Delivering Better Value in SEND' programme, which is working with 55 local authorities to explore the challenges and pressures around SEND funding. The DBV programme will be reporting its findings in the summer, which will help inform policy in relation to both practice and funding. • GCC also play an active role in the funding group, The F40, which represents the views from 42 local authorities regarding key education funding challenges. A senior officer from GCC is part of the executive group and currently holds the post of Deputy Chair. The group is focussed on both the equity of funding across the school system and the SEND pressures. <p>The F40 holds relationships and co-ordinates activity with other stakeholders including the DfE funding policy team, Unions and the Local Government Association. Activity has included communication with the Secretary of State, direct engagement and feedback to the DfE Funding Policy Team and an MP briefing at the Houses of Parliament last summer.</p>
<p>43. Questioner's name: Cllr Lisa Spivey</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>I have recently been contacted by a Gloucestershire resident, that frequently cycles through my division on his commute to work. He raised a pothole enquiry with the County Council (Enquiry no. 11408511) at the junction on Fosscross lane, near Winson, and was delighted to hear that, within a few days, the pothole had been repaired.</p> <p>Unfortunately, when he next cycled past the site he was met by this scene (picture attached): Can you explain which pothole, precisely, was repaired at this site?</p>	<p>A number of defects were identified for repair, the defect repaired was done so within 24 hours. It would have been preferable to have repaired the other 28-day repairs at the same time but the gang were required to attend other urgent safety defects on that date. The site was able to be revisited on 17th, 18th and 19th May to address the outstanding defects.</p>
<p>44. Questioner's name: Cllr Lisa Spivey</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Assuming any repair was carried out, can you explain why none of the innumerable potholes pictured were repaired when highways officers visited the site?</p>	<p>A number of defects were identified for repair, the defect repaired was done so within 24 hours. It would have been preferable to have repaired the other 28 day repairs at the same time but the gang</p>

	were required to attend other urgent safety defects on that date. The site was able to be revisited on 17 th , 18 th and 19 th May to address outstanding defects.
45. Questioner's name: Cllr Lisa Spivey	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
Does the Cabinet Member agree that this site, for cyclists in particular, but also for drivers, represents an unacceptable risk of injury or worse?	The safety inspectors visited the site and identified a defect requiring a 24-hour response, and others requiring a 28 day response. These have now been addressed.
46. Questioner's name: Cllr Lisa Spivey	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
On the County Council's "report it" site, there are 15 public reports of defects at this site, and a further 28 within just a few hundred metres either side of that site. The resident has confirmed that this stretch of road is in a dangerous state of disrepair. Does the Cabinet Member believe this is acceptable, and will he commit to resurfacing Fosscross Lane – not mismatched patching that will only fail within a few weeks or months?	Having addressed the outstanding defects, we will continue to monitor this site as this location has not yet been able to be included within our programme for structural maintenance.
47. Questioner's name: Cllr Lisa Spivey	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
Can the cabinet member give us a list of claims made against the Council for vehicle damage in the last year and the amount paid out?	In the financial year 2022/23 there were 549 vehicle damage claims, of which 6 were paid/upheld at a total value of £1190.86.
48. Questioner's name: Cllr Lisa Spivey	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
Several residents in my division have contacted me over the last few weeks regarding damage to their vehicles from the appalling state of our local roads. In almost every case they have received a generic response from the Council negating any liability. Given the truly shocking state of most roads in my division, I think that these residents have rightful claims and are simply being "fobbed off" with some technical jargon. Would the Cabinet Member agree with me that the roads are full of potholes and defects which are missed in the regular inspection routine and that the system for compensating residents for damage caused to their vehicles needs to be urgently reviewed?	We are sorry to hear of residents damaging their vehicles and if details can be provided we can review their claims. However, the Highways Act recognises that it is unreasonable for every highway authority to inspect their entire network every day. Therefore Councils which have a safety inspection regime in place, and who can demonstrate that where defects are identified they are repaired within timescales, are able to defend claims.

<p>49. Questioner's name: Cllr Gill Moseley</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman</p>
<p>Will the cabinet member please state what proportion of the Road Safety budget has been allocated in response to the first and second tranches of applications to the Community Speedwatch Fund? What proportion of the applications have been approved, rejected or are in process?</p>	<p>In phase 1 and phase 2 of the Community Speedwatch Fund the council has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - issued 6550 wheelie bin stickers; - carried out 51 speed surveys; - approved 76 bids for Speedwatch cameras; and - approved 58 bids for Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS). <p>A number of the camera and sign bids are now on the highway network and the remainder are with the police for final sign off over the course of the next month, to be followed by installation work. These actions impact on the forecast expenditure.</p> <p>Overall a very high proportion of bids have been approved and all parishes that had their bids approved were fully funded from the programme, no parish or town bid was declined due budget considerations.</p>
<p>50. Questioner's name: Cllr Gill Moseley</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>I am led to believe that there is a responsibility on Highways to assess the road condition around new developments both before and after the build period. In the case of apparent damage to the carriageway or other Highways-owned areas, it is correct that the developer will be asked for a contribution towards repair? If so, how many of these surveys have been carried out over the last five years? And how many contributions have been requested?</p>	<p>The obligation for a developer to provide a pre-start condition survey is usually secured through the planning conditions for the development site, however sometimes they are provided directly as part of the legal agreement for the developer to build their access. These will involve a joint survey between the highway authority and the developer and/or their contractor. Section 59 of the Highways Act permits the Highway Authority to charge developers for damage where there are very high levels of movements of vehicles to and from a site. However, GCC generally require developers to rectify defects directly as part of the highways legal agreement that authorises them to build their access and therefore no contributions have been requested. Where impacts are more remote from the development site itself, it is very difficult to establish a direct relationship between the development traffic and the damage itself and it is therefore very difficult to secure payments for those more remote impacts under the terms of Section 59 of the Highways Act.</p>

51. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
<p>I have recently been contacted by a Gloucestershire resident, that frequently cycles through my division on his commute to work. He has raised, with me, the unbelievable state of the northern half of the White Way – which is in such a dangerous state of disrepair that you cannot safely cycle down one side of it.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member confirm that it is still the intention to resurface part of this road during this financial year, with the rest following the year after?</p>	<p>The Whiteway has resurfacing works scheduled for this financial year – these works cover the sections having been identified as needing immediate attention, rather than resurfacing the whole road which has been estimated at £1m, given the relatively low traffic volumes and the needs across the entire network.</p>
52. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
<p>The resident remarked that the White Way improves dramatically halfway down the road, on the section that was to be used by the Tour of Britain last year (before it was cancelled). He wanted to know, if he organised a bike race along the northern section of road, would this be resurfaced as well – or was the Southern section only repaired because it was going to be on the TV?</p>	<p>Some schemes were able to be brought forward in the programme in order to support the hosting of an international event in Gloucestershire.</p>
53. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne
<p>What plans does the Council have in place to mark Pride Month in June?</p>	<p>We are aiming to paint a rainbow on Shire Hall steps as well as refresh the rainbow crossing on Commercial Road during Pride Month. Our employee network PRISM is working with the Archive service to develop display of relevant material that we can use internally and in a public space such as Shire Hall reception during the month. We are asking our leaders to consider their opportunities for communication during the month and include a focus on Pride month whenever they can.</p>
54. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Respondent's name: Cllr Stephen Davies
<p>What work are we currently doing with the Children's Coalition in Gloucestershire to hear the voice of young people in our decisions?</p>	<p>The Coalition from its inception has recognised the central importance of child, family and youth voice in its development. The themes and approach of the Coalition were shaped by its early engagement with these key groups.</p> <p>All the themes taken forward as part of the Coalition's current focus programme were identified from rich and diverse community</p>

	<p>discussions with youth clubs, schools, colleges, travellers' groups and by visiting places where young people gather. The principles of the Coalition are derived from these early discussions.</p> <p>As part of our aspiration to place the voice of young people at the heart of the Coalition's work we have been working on a pilot of a youth voice model reaching into schools, starting with the Gloucester City primary and secondary schools, building on the role of pupil voice that is well established within education settings. Working with the 15 Gloucester secondary schools (G15) and the Gloucester primary schools' partnership (GSP), the Coalition are developing a model that initially works through the local school system that hosts the children and young people of the county. It is our aim to increase its reach to groups outside of education once that model is established.</p>
<p>55. Questioner's name: Cllr Roger Whyborn</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Can the Cabinet Member detail the number of pothole repairs carried out each year by District area?</p>	<p>This data is not recorded by district area and hence will require further work. We will provide the information as soon as it is available.</p>
<p>56. Questioner's name: Cllr Rebecca Halifax</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Stephan Fifield</p>
<p>With reports circulating in the news that 'unseen' homelessness is at a 20 year-high. A big reason for this is the lack of secure, affordable housing. What are we doing as a County Council to support our District Council partners in the provision of affordable housing?</p> <p>Do we know where we stand as a Council in comparisons with other areas on unseen homelessness and what estimates do we hold for the number of people sofa surfing and living in overcrowded accommodation respectively in the County?</p>	<p>The District councils remain the Housing Authorities in Gloucestershire and are therefore responsible for housing duties related to homelessness as well as the supply of affordable housing.</p> <p>As a member of the multi-agency Gloucestershire Strategic Housing Partnership (which brings together the district Housing Authorities), the County Council is actively involved in discussions around homelessness and its various impacts on the system. This includes influencing discussions around the provision of support services and pathways out of homelessness for residents.</p> <p>The County Council directly commissions accommodation-based support services to support homeless young people, young parents and more complex adults towards independence. We also</p>

	<p>commission larger housing related community-based support services that work with approximately 3000 residents per year in order to prevent homelessness, maximise income, reduce isolation and support access to health services.</p> <p>We do not hold exact live data on the number of households/individuals that are sofa surfing or living in overcrowded accommodation as this is collated and held by the District Councils. However, public data (filtered by Housing Authority) is available on the gov.uk website https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness.</p>
<p>57. Questioner's name: Cllr Linda Cohen</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>Whilst the introduction of the infrastructure for high-speed broadband is welcome, we are regularly experiencing problems with Gigaclear/City Fibre – in relation to a lack of sensitivity in how the works are carried out. This includes a lack of prior notification about works being carried out, roads or trees being damaged during works and street lighting being disrupted during works. What can we do as a Council to work with Gigaclear and City Fibre to improve the experience for residents during these works?</p>	<p>The streetworks team works closely with all broadband (and all utility companies) providers. One area of concern has been about the lack of notification that works are due to commence, this is a condition of their permit to work. We have both City Fibre and Gigaclear on informal improvements plans, this includes letter drops prior to works starting. If anyone sees work that does not look right please inform streetworks@gloucestershire.gov.uk this may result in GCC being able to fine them for failure to comply with the permit conditions.</p>
<p>58. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Baker</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Stephen Davies</p>
<p>The Cheltenham Festival of Performing Arts is one of Cheltenham's oldest established festivals and presents a wonderful and unique opportunity for local children, and those from further afield, to show off their talents in music, drama and dance.</p> <p>The festival runs for 10days in May and is attended by hundreds of children from the ages of 7 to 18. It is entirely run by volunteers but sadly the amount of work involved with the licensing process demanded by GCC for LA maintained schools is putting unreasonable demands upon festival volunteers, schools and parents to the detriment of the festival which has seen a reduction of entrants from LA maintained schools. Independent schools do not need to go through the licence process.</p>	<p>The Cheltenham Festival is a wonderful event and a great opportunity for the children and young people of Gloucestershire and beyond.</p> <p>The Education Service works closely with the planning committee for the festival to ensure that the appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that children and young people can participate.</p> <p>As the Festival takes place during term time and school hours, it does mean that the licensing requirements are more stringent than many of the other performance events that take place across the county.</p>

<p>In a letter from the Rt Hon Justine Greening to the Rt Hon Liam Fox in 2017 she wrote ' We would encourage local authorities to take a proportionate view, taking into account the nature and length of a child's performance whilst ensuring that there are adequate safeguards in place.'</p> <p>My question following on from this background is :- 'A Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) is issued each year to the Cheltenham Festival of Performing Arts (CFPA) in recognition of CFPA's robust and well-embedded child safeguarding practices. However, continuing to insist that, for a 2 or 3 minute performance, a licence is necessary only for children who require to be absent from LA maintained schools, is disproportionate and discriminatory.</p> <p>The current legislation and associated guidance gives LA's the right to set the terms of a BOPA. So, why can't the BOPA cover performances that take place during the school time as well as those that take place during evenings and at weekends? This would make licensing completely redundant and the BOPA would be concentrated solely on safeguarding.</p>	<p>GCC supported the festival organisers to put a BOPA in place, which ensures that children and young people who attend academies or independent schools do not need to submit individual licences. However, the national legislation remains clear:</p> <p><i>“For local authority maintained schools and special schools not maintained by the local authority, a child may not be absent from school in order to perform or to take part in paid sport or modelling unless a licence has been obtained from the child’s local authority.”</i></p> <p>The DfE are aware of the fact this places additional burdens on the licensing arrangements and makes the process more complex and lengthy for LA maintained and special schools. We understand there is an intention to address this in changes to legislation, but until such time as it is, we are obliged to undertake individual licensing for children that attend these schools and therefore unable to exercise the discretion you suggest. This year we issued 119 individual licences.</p>
<p>59. Questioner’s name: Cllr David Willingham</p>	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>Could the Cabinet Member please advise what work has so far been done in respect for preparing for the introduction of Martyn's Law for locations in Cheltenham such as the central shopping streets and areas around major sporting events?</p>	<p>The central shopping streets in Cheltenham are managed by GCC Highways and Cheltenham BC, the link below highlights phase 1 of an ongoing project to improve the high street. In particular reference to improved security for the space the project has implemented measures such as planters to enable the space to be used for events and make it difficult for vehicles to misuse the area. Improvements to the High Street High Street refresh Cheltenham Borough Council</p> <p>Emergency planning are not part of these projects so we do not have the specific details, but GCC Highways / Cheltenham BC would be in a position to advise further.</p> <p>In terms of areas around major sporting events, again county council emergency planning are not part of any improvement discussions, the safety of sports grounds (I believe for the safety of the stands / tiered seating only) is part of the GCC SHE unit remit. District councils are</p>

	<p>responsible for holding Safety Advisory Group (SAGs) with event managers and key stakeholders for each large scale event that happens in their district.</p> <p>In terms of the county council buildings, meetings were arranged by emergency planning between counter terrorism security advisors for the South West (NaCTSO – National Counter Terrorism Security Office) and AMPS to discuss protective security measures. These discussions continued between the security advisors and AMPS.</p>
<p>60. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>Based upon the New Burdens Doctrine, how much money will the Council be asking for from the Government to meet commitments under Martyn's Law?</p>	<p>It is considered that public premises which are permanently open to the public are better able to take forward security measures and any associated costs with requirements, than events of a temporary nature. The Bill seeks to strike the right balance between proportionality for different premises and events against ensuring appropriate security has been considered and taken forward. Government will consider further whether they have got that balance right through the scrutiny period.</p> <p><i>Please note:</i> On Tuesday 2 May 2023, the Government published the draft Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, also known as Martyn's Law, for pre-legislative scrutiny by the Home Affairs Select Committee. This will allow parliament and stakeholders to comment on the proposals prior to introduction to the House, and Government to consider and make changes in light of these. The Government will introduce the draft Bill to the House, following the completion of the scrutiny process, and as soon as parliamentary time allows.</p> <p>Dedicated guidance and support will be provided for Martyn's Law, to ensure that those in scope have the required information on what to do and how best to do it. As part of this approach, the government will expand the support available to those responsible for delivering security in public venues.</p> <p>The Government's explanatory notes on the draft Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill sets out the costs associated with</p>

	<p>implementing the duties of Martyn’s Law will be borne by both local authorities and central government in bringing the sites they own and operate into compliance with the Bill. There will be economic costs of lost productive time for sites in the standard tier with a central estimate of £2000 per site (10-year cost) for the cost of bringing sites into compliance. It is currently unknown the exact cost to Government from publicly owned sites that fall under the Bill, but it is estimated there are 9,100 sites which are owned by Local Authorities and Central Government and a large proportion of these sites such as schools will be subject to the requirements of the Bill. The cost of bringing these sites into compliance will be borne by Local Authorities. For sites in the enhanced tier, local authorities could face a cost of £80,000 per site (10-year cost) to bring them into compliance with the Bill.</p>
<p>61. Questioner’s name: Cllr David Willingham</p>	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>The council's IT offer for many councillors currently prevents them from copying a web-link from Safari into Outlook, which would normally be the quickest and most efficient way of sharing important information to constituents about accessing council services on-line. Given many web-links, including the one for reporting safeguarding concerns about vulnerable children, are over 100 characters in length, so are not easy to copy manually, could the Cabinet Member explain why the Council's IT offer is so badly misconfigured that cyber security measures currently prevent members from <i>efficiently</i> advising people how to report child safeguarding issues, and could the Cabinet Member advise when this issue will be fixed so that councillors will be able to efficiently share web-linked with constituents?</p>	<p>Councillors can copy from Microsoft Edge into Outlook as both apps are within the Council managed software on their personal or corporate devices.</p>