

**COUNTY COUNCIL – May 2023
PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

<p>1. Questioner's name: Graham Beale</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Following the recent cold weather, we have been inundated with concerns around potholes. Although we appreciate there is a long backlog for highway repairs throughout Gloucestershire, residents have noticed that repairs are not lasting the test-of-time. Indeed, one particular pothole repair on a critical artery disintegrated within weeks. I'm sure you will share our view that poor quality repairs are both inefficient and expensive for taxpayers; so please can we ask GCC Highways what is the minimum length of time we can expect a pothole repair to last? Plus, will you commit to a review of pothole repair quality to address this issue?</p>	<p>The length of time a pothole repair lasts does vary depending on the condition of the surrounding carriageway, weather and materials. Audits are carried out on repairs and where they have failed they are identified and repaired at the contractors' cost. 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>2. Questioner's name: Martin Brown</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>I would like to know why the roads in Cheltenham especially Charlton Kings are so poor and in some cases are not suitable for any vehicle, and why its always a patch job repair time and time again. If it was repaired properly in the first place it would last longer and be cheaper overall.</p> <p>Below is an email I sent to the local councillors and highways, which explains how bad the area is and to be fair most of Cheltenham is fast becoming the same.</p> <p>"I came home from my parents yesterday and whilst driving down Horsefair Street in Cheltenham i was met with a section of road that would not have looked out of place on the moon, these potholes as im sure highways would refer too, are more like craters, and with parked cars either side you cant avoid hiting a few. One of the holes is so bad it makes you have to drive on the wrong side to avoid it, something I couldn't do yesterday.</p>	<p>Charlton Kings is inspected on a routine basis and different classes of road will be inspected either monthly, quarterly or annually depending on their usage. Any roads that are not in the forward programme for resurfacing or patching will be kept safe. Horsefair Street is in the structural maintenance programme for the first quarter of this financial year and is therefore due to be addressed imminently. We will continue to inspect the road until the patching works have been completed.</p>

<p>I now have a noise coming from my passenger side front and if it does need fixing I would like to know how the highways will reimburse me as my car has passed an MOT to be fit for the roads yet the roads are not fit for vehicles.</p> <p>I hate to think what would happen if someone was on a motorbike or a child cycling to school on a push bike, someone is going to get hurt, especially as when it rains the holes are effectively hidden and become an increased danger.</p> <p>I continued home to be met by over 20 potholes during a 4 mile trip, most I'm sure are in Charlton Kings.</p> <p>I have copied in the local councillors who I'm sure are aware and probably tried resolving but it does seem if you live in Gloucestershire the only option highways choose is to just turn up spray a white circle to claim they are aware (and avoid any insurance claims) and then months later when the hole is bigger and the white line has gone, fill the hole with hot tarmac, tamp it down and move on, for the complete cycle of events to happen again in the same places. Over the years it must cost more to patch that it would to do a proper job of resurfacing a section. In neighbouring county's, you see sections resurfaced and not a patchwork effect for the length of a road."</p>	
<p>3. Questioner's name: Paul Lilly</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Can you please explain the rationale behind the 14th April 2009 Gloucestershire County Council (lorry management areas within Gloucestershire) (7.5 Tonne MGW restriction) ORDER 2009. Can you please advise on the number of infringements in area 2 that have been reported by either by a Police Constable in uniform or a HATO for accessing the area without loading or unloading.</p>	<p>This order was made in 2009 to support a lorry management zone covering a large number of rural communities in the Cotswolds and Stroud. It aims to deter heavy vehicles from using smaller roads to protect the environmental quality for residents.</p>

	<p>Enforcement is a police matter so we suggest contacting the police about the number of infringements reported as the council does not hold this information.</p>
<p>4. Questioner's name: David Redgewell</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>What progress is being made by the county council on the bus service improvement plan and enhanced quality partnership with stagecoach west and the other bus operators in the county and set up of a passenger forum for bus and public transport users. With progress on talks with the Department for transport and mark HARPER mp secretary of state for transport and member for Forset of Dean. On covid 19 bus service recovery plan grant and the extension of the £ 2 ticket scheme in England.</p>	<p>GCC is keen to improve interchanges and the overall bus passenger experience and intends to enter into an Enhanced Partnership (EP) agreement with bus operators to deliver improvements to make bus services more attractive. These include infrastructure and passenger experience elements such as bus shelters, bus priority measures, ticketing, information, timetables, and fares.</p> <p>The EP will be governed through a Gloucestershire Bus Board and Bus Forum with a view to improving bus services across Gloucestershire. To ensure the EP and Bus Board is putting bus passengers at the heart of its actions, GCC will propose a joint Passenger Charter, to be applied to the entire bus network as one of the first actions of the Bus Board.</p> <p>Stagecoach and GCC held a very productive meeting in April to discuss the Enhanced Partnership. Following this meeting further refinements are being made to the draft document before a full consultation is undertaken in the Summer of 2023.</p> <p>GCC has repeatedly lobbied the Department for Transport for an extension to the Bus Recovery Grant, so we were delighted to hear last week that £300m has been allocated by the DfT to support local bus services until April 2025, alongside an extension to the £2 ticket scheme.</p>

<p>5. Questioner's name: David Redgewell</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>What discussion are happening with the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and mayor Dan Norris with South Gloucestershire council on service 84 , 85 Wotton under edge to charfield, wickwar chipping sodbury yate bus station Yate Railway station and yate Park and ride. For connections with First group plc west of England buses Y 1 to Bristol bus and coach station. and service Y6 to Bristol Parkway station cribs causeway bus station and Southmead hospital bus station. Also retaining service 62 Dursey may lane bus station Berkley sharpness and Thornbury link Service 60 Cam and Dursey may lane bus station to wootton under edge charfield and Thornbury. As no westlink Demand responsive bus services operate in this area.</p>	<p>Officers from GCC spoke with their counterparts from WECA recently regarding the 84/85. WECA made it very clear this service was not viable and would end in June 2023. We are not able to prevent this from taking place as it is a contract held between WECA and Stagecoach.</p> <p>GCC maintains its subsidy of services 60 and 62. Passengers can use service 60 to travel from Wotton-under-Edge to Charfield where they can use the new WECA WestLink demand responsive service.</p>
<p>6. Questioner's name: David Redgewell</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>With the anti social behaviour and graffiti in Cheltenham on the bus Network and in the High street bus stands and especially the stand for service c outside macdonalds which have resulted in assaults and police actions. With a bus driver assaulted and the manager of macdonalds. We very grateful to the county council intergrated Transport unit and staff For arranging cleaning of bus stops shelters and displays. At present Royal wells bus and coach station is again graffiti covered on all passenger information and timetables as is stop A at Trinity church towards the Town centre A D w and N . Plus Presbury road towards to the Town stop A Q w 606 . What action is the police and crime commissioner and Gloucestershire police British Transport police taking with the county council and Cheltenham Borough council.</p>	<p>The criminal aspects of this question should be directed to the Police as GCC has no powers over this issue.</p> <p>GCC will continue to monitor bus stops, with cleaning and repairs taking place when required.</p> <p>There are six community safety partnerships in Gloucestershire (one per district). These are made up of representatives from the police and police authority, the local council, and the fire, health and probation services to work together to develop and implement strategies to protect their local communities from crime and to help people feel safe.</p>

<p>Not public transport but many buildings in Cheltenham are tagged as well To put these tagger before the court's for criminal damage. Doe Gloucestershire county council have a public transport safety partnership like the Avon and Somerset police and British transport police have for south Gloucestershire council Banes North Somerset and the city and county of Bristol and west of England mayoral combined transport Authority.</p>	
<p>7. Questioner's name: David Redgewell</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>On cross border service it is great to see the new bus services from Ross on wye bus and coach station to Newent Dymock and ledbury. The Daffodils line with DML buses . With the community and the councils. What progress is being made with Worchestershire council to restore the Tewkesbury to Worcester bus and coach station service via Upton upon Severn Which was operated by first group plc Worchestershire buses under contract to Worcester council. May people are asking for the link to be restored This is very important regional link . Cheltenham Royal wells bus and coach station to Worcester bus and coach station. Cheltenham Royal wells bus and coach station to Evesham have been withdrawn as well .</p>	<p>The council has committed all its bus service subsidy resource to maintaining the current network. This is particularly difficult with the impact of inflation on the cost of bus services, and the lingering effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on passenger numbers.</p> <p>Expansion of the subsidised network is not feasible under these circumstances. We are not aware of any commercial desire from bus operators to reinstate these services.</p> <p>For travel from Cheltenham to Evesham, this can be done via Tewkesbury. 4 trips an hour from Cheltenham to Tewkesbury, then an hourly service (540 operated by Astons) from Tewkesbury to Evesham.</p>
<p>8. Questioner's name: David Redgewell</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Thank you for the progress on repairs to the bus and rail realtime information displays at Cheltenham spa railway station.</p>	<p>The County Council's Integrated Transport Unit have worked closely with the City Council and Stagecoach to deliver the real</p>

<p>What progress is being made with Network rail western route first group plc Great western railway and the Department for transport western gateway transport Board Gloucestershire county council public transport on lifts at Cheltenham spa station. Progress on Railway information display working at the Gloucester Transport hub. And progress with Gloucester city council on the cafe and kiosk. And bus information at Gloucester central station . In Stroud bus and coach station at merry walks on realtime information displays and better lighting CCTV and the lifts to the town centre working.</p> <p>As Cheltenham spa service D is now an intergrated transport link bus service and branded with stagecoach west and First group Great western railway What other bus links are planned For example cirencester town centre to kemble railway station and Tetbury.</p>	<p>time information screens, allocation of bays and passenger information at the Gloucester Transport Hub and is working with the Town and District Council in Stroud to consider real time information at Stroud Merry Walks.</p> <p>Gloucestershire’s Bus Service Improvement Plan also makes a clear commitment to seeking to improve bus-rail integration.</p> <p>The Cheltenham Spa Railway Station Access for All funded lift installation project is progressing well and Network Rail is expecting to be on site this Autumn, starting an 8 month programme scheduled to complete by summer 2024.</p>
<p>9. Questioner’s name: David Redgewell</p>	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>Can the county council update up on the proposed bus lanes and bus or mass transit system. Between Hardwick, Gloucester city centre via the Golden valley to Cheltenham spa Royal wells bus and coach station and Bishop cleve. As metro bus route .</p>	<p>Gloucestershire’s Local Transport Plan identifies a study area for a Mass Rapid Transport system linking Bishop’s Cleeve north of Cheltenham to Quedgeley in the south of Gloucester. While a route or funding for this project has not yet been identified, GCC is continuing its work on the business case for a Mass Rapid Transit system which we hope will enable us to bid into future funding opportunities. In the meantime, GCC has made £2.6 million available from its own resource to implement Bus Service Improvement Plan priorities over the coming 3 years.</p>
<p>10. Questioner’s name: David Redgewell</p>	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>With the metro west railway Network</p>	

<p>Service starting on the 22nd may 2023 . From Bristol Temple meads station Filton Abbey wood Bristol parkway yate cam and Dursey Gloucester central half hourly service. Hourly to cam and Dursey. Allowing for the opening of charfield station for wootton under edge. And hourly to Cheltenham spa Ashchurch for Tewkesbury and Worchester strubb hill and Forgate street Half hourly train service Cheltenham spa to Bristol Parkway station and Bristol Temple meads. By arriva German state railway inter city cross country trains.</p> <p>What plan do Gloucestershire county council public transport service have to market the new train service. With the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority mayor Dan Norris, western gateway transport Board. Severnside railway partnership Gloucestershire railway partnership. First group plc Great western railway and stagecoach west bus link</p>	<p>The County is delighted about the opportunities the new metro west services will bring for Gloucestershire. GCC has long lobbied for these improvements, utilising its close relationships with the West of England Combined Authority through the Western Gateway Subnational Transport Board. We are also working closely with the Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership as well as with Gloucestershire’s bus service operators. As privately owned businesses, Train Operating Companies (TOCs) are responsible for the operation of train services and are therefore primarily responsible for the marketing of any service changes. However, GCC provides links to train station websites and other useful rail industry links on its website through the Thinktravel portal.</p>
<p>11. Questioner’s name: Chris Chiswell</p>	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>Great Western Railway have announced that they are indefinitely pausing construction of the safe walking and cycling ramp link between Cheltenham Spa station and Shelburne Road/A40, citing cuts in their budget by the Department for Transport. Mark Harper, secretary of state for transport has also recently confirmed that the DfT active travel budget is being reduced by a further £200 million, making it unlikely that further national funding will be available within this parliament. Without the link, there is no all ability accessible link between the A40 cycle route and the Honeybourne Line, and the council's cycle spine is severed.</p> <p>1) Does GCC accept GWR’s decision, and if not, what engagement has GCC undertaken to date to challenge it or find alternative funding?</p>	<p>The scheme is already fully designed, with GWR and GCC contributions committing 60% of the costs and the DfT Cycle Rail Fund covering the rest. GCC have been working on this project for several years and have spoken to GWR’s senior management, Cheltenham Borough Council and Sustrans about options to make up a significant share of the subsequent shortfall in DfT funding.</p> <p>GCC officers are exploring alternative local funding opportunities including using Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds held by Cheltenham Borough Council, using funds in the County Council’s own highways capital programme, accessing other developer contributions and seeking contributions from other partner organisations. This includes applying for relatively small funding</p>

<p>2) Both the Gloucester Road and Queens Road bridge currently have significant road danger. Has the council developed any mitigations as local residents continue to wait for this link, and when will these be deployed?"</p>	<p>pots, such as the GWR Customer & Community Improvement Fund.</p> <p>Regrettably, at present, it is clear that the funding gap created is too large to be bridged by local financial contributions alone. Having got so close to starting on site we expect GWR to try to honour their previous commitments.</p> <p>In the meantime, a separate 'Quietways' project has been developed to improve access along Gloucester Road and Queen's Road, adjacent to the rail station.</p>
<p>12. Questioner's name: Gerald Ford</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Why are you resurfacing roads which do not require doing and you are ignoring potholes. It will not be long before a cyclist hits one and receives terrible injuries. If you wish I will take you on a pothole tour of Minchinhampton. An answer to my question would be very much appreciated.</p>	<p>No roads are resurfaced that do not require it – a carriageway can require resurfacing for many reasons – for example, the less obvious example is a loss of skid resistance. Our safety inspectors inspect all roads either monthly, quarterly or annually. If you are aware of potholes appearing, please report them via our website and an inspector will visit.</p>
<p>13. Questioner's name: John Cordwell</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>Gloucestershire Charter</p> <p>The current, sixth, version of the Gloucestershire Charter was first published in 2006. Much of it is out of date and the contact details don't work. I am pleased to see that, after I undertook much emailing to various people, a page on the Charter has reappeared on the GCC website. This says that both the Charter and the list of chartered councils are "under review".</p>	<p>GCC remains committed to working and engaging with town and parish councils on matters of mutual interest and importance.</p> <p>Unfortunately, a review of the charter was due to begin as the impacts and effects of covid became the council's main priority. Therefore, the review had been delayed for some time but has now been undertaken and a revised draft of the charter is expected by June 2023.</p> <p>The first point of contact for town and parish councils should be their local county councillor/s who can raise issues on their behalf.</p>

<p>1. To what extent are the County Council commitments to parish and town councils under the Charter currently being observed, for example on “Communications”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will identify a senior officer to operate as ‘Liaison Officer’ to act as the first point of contact for parish or town councils, providing help and information or addressing concerns they may raise from within their communities. • We will inform all staff of this council’s commitments under the Charter and ensure that they uphold them. • We will keep all local councils informed by providing regular news updates. • We will invite parish and town councils to meetings, seminars and other events specifically arranged for their benefit. 	<p>Officer liaison arrangements are being considered as part of the review.</p> <p>The page regarding the charter has not reappeared as it never disappeared.</p> <p>The review has taken account of the fact that not all areas of the county are represented by a town or parish council. Therefore, the revised charter will refer to other key community groups or organisations as well as town and parish councils.</p> <p>Meetings were taking place pre pandemic but have not re started due to the review. For some time now the attendance at these meetings was in single figures and therefore it is clear a different approach is required</p> <p>A dedicated newsletter is issued to town and parish councils providing GCC related updates.</p>
<p>14. Questioner’s name: John Cordwell</p>	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>When will the reviews be completed?</p>	<p>See response to Q13 above.</p>
<p>15. Questioner’s name: Robert Airton</p>	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Following my walk down Dark Lane, Chalford with Cllr Chloe Turner a few days ago, I would like to put the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why are you wasting so much money repairing only the very worst pot holes and ignoring close by ones. Sometimes you have repaired the deepest bit of a hole and ignoring the rest of the whole. This repair lasts about a month, wasting money. 	<p>Our first priority is to deal with the safety defects causing the highest risk across the network to all road users and when volumes are high there is less flexibility to stay longer at a site. However 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>

16. Questioner's name: Robert Airton	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
Some of this road look more like a farm track condition than a road and desperately requires patching. It is dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists due to the holes and also the grit released from the disintegration of this steep road. What is you policy on patching disintegrated roads?	We will arrange for this road to be inspected and appropriate actions taken.
17. Questioner's name: Robert Airton	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
Some holes in Dark lane were reported by my neighbour. The repairs were spread over 3 days, a few inefficient holes per day. The first day they put the sealant around the hole, the second day the team didn't bother and the 3 rd day they used the sealant. I reported this to the council and didn't get a reply. Can you confirm that all repairs should have a sealant around them. Also could you send me the specification please. Also, do you want people reporting substandard works? If so, why did I not get a reply?	We understand the frustration of defects not all being repaired at the same time and we are reviewing our process to see how we can improve scheduling, particularly when there are very high volumes of urgent defects to address. Usually it is because different defects have different repair timescales due to their size. The method of repair is dependent on the material they are using and we have been trialling a number of different materials and this may have been the case at this location. We will investigate further with the information provided.
18. Questioner's name: Robert Airton	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
When was the last time Dark Lane was surveyed? When inspections have been done, large holes that meet your criteria have been ignored, especially at the edges.	Dark Lane is on an annual inspection route which was last carried out on 16 th December 2022. However, as a result of public reports, it was also inspected on 16 th February 2023.
19. Questioner's name: Robert Airton	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
Due to the terrible condition of the whole of Dark Lane drivers are driving down with two wheels on the verge, wearing away the verge and putting mud on the road. This is obvious to see. Do you take this dangerous action into account?	We would look at the entire highway – boundary to boundary when we are inspecting the road.

20. Questioner's name: Robert Airton	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
<p>The mud and disintegrated road from Abnash, Skiveralls and Dark lane ends up at the bottom of Dark Lane. This is just where drivers need to break to stop going onto the A419 . The mud blocks the drains there and makes it difficult to stop. This is very dangerous as cars could skid into oncoming traffic at this difficult junction. The mud remains there for months. Do you have a policy to deal with this dangerous situation?</p>	<p>Please report mud on the road via our phone line (08000 514514) so we can take action.</p>
21. Questioner's name: Robert Airton	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
<p>Your contractors are marking roads as closed with signs weeks before the work starts. Residents usually ignore your signs. Visitors make take notice and make long unnecessary diversions. They then do not return after the to pick up the signs for months. This happens EVERY time. I have reported the litter of the signs over a month ago and yet they remain scattered around the village (Dark lane top and bottom, Silver St near the old shop, Commercial Road down from the old shop). Do you have a policy for when they should be placed and when they should be removed? If I go to the bother reporting them, should something happen?</p>	<p>Our contractors close roads when the width of the road is not wide enough to undertake the work safely with other traffic management (traffic signals or signs and cones). We would only close a road in advance of the works if the road is not safe to keep it open. I am sorry to hear you have reported the signs and no action has been undertaken. We have requested for these signs to be collected and removed from site.</p>
22. Questioner's name: Robert Airton	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
<p>I reported that the drains were blocked on Abnash 4 years ago and they have never been cleared. I reported them (and one on Skiveralls) several weeks ago and seem to be told that this will be noticed when next inspected on a schedule and nothing will be done until then. Is this your policy? Do you not appreciate residents reporting problems? The drains remain blocked. As a result all water from Abnash and Skiveralls and Dark Lane gushes down dark lane, taking with it your botched partial pot hole repairs and part of the bank of my land. Is this acceptable?</p>	<p>Thank you for reporting these issues. As a result of your reports I can confirm that at Skiveralls a job was raised on the system on 26th April to rod and clear the drains. This is now being programmed. At Abnash our team emailed you on 12th May to arrange a site meeting to review the issues in person and potential solutions.</p>

<p>I believe that given the catalogue of problems, unresponsiveness and waste of scarce money that the Gloucester Highways Department is unfit for purpose. Lack of money cannot be blamed as this all of the problems described above does not occur in neighbouring counties. If it is not expected to improve the department should be put under special measures as the residents deserve safe roads and money spend wisely.</p>	
<p>23. Questioner's name: Anthony Smith</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>What commitment has Gloucestershire County Council to reinstate a regular bus service between Blakeney and Cinderford to include Soudley and Ruspidge? Which companies have been approached to tender for the route?</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 27 (Lydney to Cinderford). Unfortunately, no bids were received. We use a dynamic purchasing system which means all bidding opportunities go to all approved operators in the county.</p> <p>We advise residents of Soudley and Ruspidge to use The Robin demand responsive service, and the timetabled 781 (Wednesday only).</p>
<p>24. Questioner's name: Jan Mallet</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>I am asking this question on behalf of Teddington & Alstone A46 Advisory Group and the question is in respect of the M5 J9 & A46 Transport Scheme. We refer to the debate in Westminster Hall on Tuesday 9th May between Laurence Robertson MP and Richard Holden as representative for the DfT. Why did GCC submit their SOBC including proposed route options to the DfT in September 2022, when the leader of the GCC objected to one of the proposed routes? Mr Holden made it clear that it was GCC who were leading this project and that the 4 routes had been decided on by them.</p>	<p>Since 1998 when the need for an M5 junction 9 and A46 upgrade were first mooted, over 30 options have been considered, many evolving as adaptations of others. Four schemes remain at a design stage as part of the Strategic Outline Case submitted to the DfT. One of these schemes, which technically works, was probably the most favoured by the Department for Transport, but the County Council believes it does not serve the area well and would support an alternative.</p>

25. Questioner's name: Chris White	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
<p>Dr David Land, Principal Transport Planner GCC confirmed on 21st April 2023 to a Tewkesbury constituent, that the spend on the M5 J9 & A46 project for 22/23 was £3,292,527.66.</p> <p>Can the council now confirm the spend for 20/21 and 21/22?</p> <p>In addition, can GCC confirm the anticipated spend for 23/24?</p>	<p>The total expenditure in 2020/21 was £2,776,785. The total expenditure in 2021/22 was £2,649,991. The anticipated expenditure for 2023/24 was outlined in the GCC Cabinet report dated 29th March 2023 and will be delivered within existing budgets.</p>
26. Questioner's name: Chris White	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
<p>Why was it not made clearer to Members back in June 2020 when C£3m was first requested for the business case for the A46 development, that this amount could increase many times?</p> <p>Is this the end of additional fund requests, or might this figure increase yet further?</p> <p>If so, will this be discussed in cabinet and voted upon?</p>	<p>GCC Members are fully briefed and understand that a business case for a major scheme requires funding over consecutive years.</p> <p>Until National Highways takes over the scheme GCC will continue to provide funding.</p> <p>Every year Cabinet is asked to consider and approve ongoing funding for the scheme.</p>
27. Questioner's name: Chris White	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
<p>In a recent debate, Laurence Robertson, MP, questioned the cost of the scheme, to date, for the A46 scheme and if the council has obtained value for money from Atkins. Especially as the plans do not take any account of the changes he feels are needed now to the existing A46. Does the council think they have achieved value for money from Atkins on behalf of Gloucestershire people?</p>	<p>Yes. Atkins are GCC's term consultants and were awarded the contract after a competitive process, which includes assessment of value for money.</p>
28. Questioner's name: Chris White	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
<p>What are the council's views on using the proposed 'Grey Route' mentioned by L Robertson MP, which would reduce Junction 9 to only 2 way, is this really an option based on local need?</p>	<p>The 'Grey Route' option does not reduce M5 Junction 9 to only 2 way.</p>

29. Questioner's name: Tricia Watson	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>Chalford's bus route cull has changed the lives of many residents here for the worse, significantly hampering their ability to go about their daily lives. As a district council, we have some responsibility for resident wellbeing, so would like to work constructively with anyone who can rectify this appalling situation for one of the largest villages in the county.</p> <p>We have received parish and resident support to increase usage to give Stagecoach financial justification to put more services back on our route. This may need temporary county support to run trials. Please confirm that county is willing to support this financially on a short term basis.</p>	<p>GCC is not able to provide any further funding for transport services.</p> <p>The council has committed all its bus service subsidy resource to maintaining the current network. This is particularly difficult with the impact of inflation on the cost of bus services, and the lingering effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on passenger numbers.</p> <p>We are happy to be involved in any discussions with local councils and Stagecoach, but we are not able to provide a financial guarantee to protect Stagecoach against their commercial risk.</p>
30. Questioner's name: Tricia Watson	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>A recent Stagecoach meeting highlighted that Gloucestershire is one of the few counties in Stagecoach South West region without a formal Bus Partnership. This enables district representatives (and others?) to contribute to service decisions and is required for effective corporate and govt funding submissions. Please advise how soon this arrangement will be formalised, with Districts included in the membership, to help us all work together to co-create crucial improvements for a functional regional bus service that meets wider community needs than the current skeleton service around Stroud?</p>	<p>GCC and Stagecoach had a productive meeting in April where we agreed some refinements to the draft Enhanced Partnership agreement. These changes are being finalised before circulation to the statutory stakeholders for consultation.</p> <p>We expect this to be completed in Summer 2023 with an immediate launch of the Enhanced Partnership board and associated sub-board groups.</p> <p>We are working closely with the Department for Transport to ensure we are prepared for all future funding rounds.</p>
31. Questioner's name: Tricia Watson	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>We are told that no funds are available to subsidise any more bus routes to rural communities where private operators deem a service not financially viable, yet some of the current funded services are no</p>	<p>The Council uses its subsidy funding to try and provide contracted bus services in areas where commercial services are not viable.</p>

<p>longer required. How is the subsidised network decided and how often is this reviewed, to ensure these vital funds are directed to the most needed services?</p>	<p>There are no specific criteria for a subsidised service, the current bus network has evolved over many years.</p> <p>The responsibility of the Council is to provide a stable network therefore contracts are procured for up to 7 years at a time. We avoid reallocation of funding from one area to another to ensure a stable network and to avoid simply moving problems from one area to another.</p> <p>The two main methods for new subsidised services are using developer funding and successfully bidding for national funds.</p>
<p>32. Questioner's name: Tricia Watson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>I'm sure this won't be the only pothole related question, with the current levels of public outrage at the rapid deterioration of our rural road network. Recent pothole filling has become such poor quality that they are not lasting more than a few weeks at best, some washing away after just a week, others sinking, or crumbling at open edges. This renders the whole expensive exercise ineffective, requires residents to re-report and a return visit by the crew instead of dealing with other new potholes, with the added issue of further silting up the drains with what I can only assume is inadequate materials. Please advise what quality controls and financial recompense is in place with the contractor to ensure pothole filling is returned to some kind of meaningful standard and to reassure us all that vital funds are not being literally washed away?</p>	<p>If any pothole repair fails due to quality issues then our contractor returns and repairs at their cost. We are investigating different materials to see what is best for pothole repairs and working with our contractor to make sure we are using the right material for the right repair.</p>
<p>33. Questioner's name: Tricia Watson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>

<p>Please advise when the A419 between Chalford and Stroud will be resurfaced? It has gone way beyond patch dressing along most of its length.</p>	<p>This road has experienced a significant deterioration following last winter. Having secured additional funding from central government we have been able to add this to this year's resurfacing programme and it is currently scheduled for Sep/Oct 2023.</p>
<p>34. Questioner's name: Tricia Watson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>We are constantly told funding is not available to adequately maintain our literally crumbling rural road network around the county, yet massive 'junction improvement schemes' are soaking up hundreds of millions of pounds to encourage yet more traffic onto our deteriorating roads. Please advise what plans are in place for allocating sufficient funds to proactive maintenance of our existing road network to make them all fit for purpose?</p>	<p>Wherever possible we bid for additional funding which is available for maintenance activities. The major projects referred to are from separate funding sources (in the main HMG Department of Levelling Up) these funds are allocated on a scheme specific basis and cannot be redirected into other works by GCC.</p>
<p>35. Questioner's name: Tricia Watson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>There has been a significant increase in oversize delivery vehicles using our country lanes for inappropriate access routes in the last couple of years causing damage to resident walls, driver and resident angst and traffic delays on tight bends, with a recent blockage preventing ambulance access. In Chalford, Toadsmoor has been the recommended truck route up the hill out to Bisley along that same road since the Manor Farm estate was built, as per signage still in the A419 layby in Brimscombe. We are advised the current Traffic Order renders all roads equal with '7.5tonnes except for access' the default for all roads, aside from the few that are 'unsuitable for HGVs/motor vehicles' (depending when the signage went up). I am advised Toadsmoor is still the preferred route on truck satnav, which many cos don't pay the premium to use and large construction traffic management plans still recommend this route, confirming its status as the preferred lorry route. Please</p>	<p>Many of the roads across the Stroud Valley are covered by an area wide Traffic Regulation Order banning HGVs over 7.5T from using the roads unless for lawful & legitimate reasons to make deliveries/pick-ups. Toadsmoor Road is one of the roads in this area restriction and is a main route to Bussage, Middle Hill, Chalford and Bisley.</p> <p>The purpose of the area restriction is to keep HGVs on the main A & B roads as far as possible – roads that are more appropriate for larger and longer vehicles – and thus protecting some of our more minor & narrow roads from verge overriding and residents from congestion etc.</p>

<p>advise how we can formally recognise this as the only viable route up the hill for delivery vehicles larger than 7.5 tonne and make access beyond there only where the destination is within the village, not for through traffic?</p>	<p>Regrettably, it is an unpleasant fact that businesses and residents do rely on HGVs to make deliveries, and so HGVs will never be absent from our minor roads.</p>
<p>36. Questioner's name: Nigel Adcock</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>I asked a question at the last full meeting concerning the loss of the Woodmancote E service bus. I did receive a response which suggested that questions were being asked of Stagecoach by officers.</p> <p>Hopefully a response has been received and you can share it with me.</p>	<p>Officers answered via email to Mr Adcock on 15/05/2023.</p> <p>The response from Stagecoach is that this isn't feasible. Before the pandemic they were only seeing on average 57 trips per day from Woodmancote. This number fell even further and had not recovered to the pre-pandemic level before Stagecoach made the changes to their network in November last year.</p>
<p>37. Questioner's name: Cllr Sarah Sawyer</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Do you think that the current turn around for TRO's in the County of 3 years is acceptable when previously they took 6 months? Residents in my ward of Longlevens have been waiting this long for important double yellow lines.</p>	<p>It is regrettable that you have had to wait this long. This is due to unforeseeable staffing changes that resulted in a backlog of work which officers have been busy tackling.</p> <p>Plans have been put in place to increase capacity and use external support to reduce this backlog, enabling significant progress to be made over the past 6 -9 months. During this period we have prioritised TRO work required for Major Schemes, COVID-related schemes and road safety improvements.</p>
<p>38. Questioner's name: Cllr Sarah Sawyer</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Currently there is one person dealing with all TRO request across the County, do you think that the TRO team is sufficiently staffed?</p>	

	<p>This is not strictly correct. For much of the past year the TRO Team has been commissioning a third-party consultant to provide additional capacity to tackle the backlog of schemes. More recently an experienced traffic and road safety engineer has been brought in to provide additional support.</p> <p>Additional funding has been agreed in the 2022/23 and 2023/4 budgets to recruit permanent GCC staff to the team this summer.</p>
<p>39. Questioner's name: Cllr Sarah Sawyer</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Are there any plans to employ more people in this team?</p>	<p>Yes, as explained earlier we plan to start recruiting to new posts this summer. This is part of a new Road Safety and Traffic Engineering Team structure which will streamline internal procedures and increase our internal capacity for scheme development and delivery.</p>
<p>40. Questioner's name: Cllr Sarah Sawyer</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>The current Highways policy on gritting pavements around Schools is to prioritise Secondary Schools and those on a hill. Gloucester is flat so primary schools in the city are not prioritised. This winter the pavements turned to Ice for a week, grandparents and young children were falling over on the way to and from the schools in my ward. Can this policy be reviewed to include primary schools in Gloucester as I am concerned about the safety of residents if this happens again.</p>	<p>We do not currently treat footways as all of our available resources during prolonged cold periods or snow are needed to ensure the key road network is kept clear. The roads leading to or close to secondary schools are included on our key route network and some primary schools adjacent to or near the Key routes will also be treated. Unfortunately, it is not feasible to treat the road network to all primary schools due the limited resources and the size of our current fleet of gritters.</p> <p>As part of the Council's budget setting for 23/24 additional funding was provided to support additional winter action plans and locally sited grit bins. Resources are currently being put in place to</p>

	<p>support this work. We have a large number of communities within the county with Winter Action Plans which identify local priority areas. These documents set out how they manage their response during winter conditions including the treatment of footways at priority locations with either a hand salt spreader and/or the use of bagged salt to either replenish grit bins or deal with local problem areas. Through the additional resources we hope to increase the number of communities with Winter Action Plans in place.</p> <p>Part of our annual summer review will include how we can engage with our local communities to help deal with local footways during periods of snow and ice this will also include where appropriate the provision of grit bins, bagged salt and a community offer for Hand spreaders. We will also work with colleagues in Education to see what we can do to help their planning for winter too.</p>
<p>41. Questioner's name: Cllr Sarah Sawyer</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>When a new development is waiting to be adopted by Highways, does this impact on whether the children who move into the development before it is adopted are included in the catchment area for schools- Primary and Secondary?</p>	<p>The adoption of a highway in a development does not play a part in the admission process. It is the registered home address that is used together with a school's catchment area, if appropriate, when allocating school places.</p>
<p>42. Questioner's name: Cllr Linda Castle</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>Since the public drop in event on Friday 16th September 2022, at the Hubb Glos University regarding the proposed cycle lane from Elmbridge Court to Cheltenham Road roundabout, Longlevens councillors have not been kept informed of any developments to the plans.</p> <p>Could I please have an update of plans and specifically what is the proposed layout for the Cheltenham Road roundabout leading to</p>	<p>The consultation carried out in Autumn 2022 covered the B4063 Cycleway Scheme from Oxstalls Lane to Elmbridge Court. Following the consultation, the feedback has been reviewed in detail and improvements implemented to the design. Shortly, a 'you said – we did' summary of the consultation feedback and outcomes will be published on the scheme website along with updated plans.</p>

<p>London Road? At the moment it is very dangerous for cyclists coming down Wotton Pitch onto the roundabout as cars cut across the cycle lane.</p>	<p>The above consultation did not include Estcourt Road Roundabout (see question 43 for further detail).</p>
<p>43. Questioner's name: Cllr Linda Castle</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>Could I please have a list and time scale of who has been consulted on the design layout for this roundabout since September 2022, when the roundabout was not included on the plans.</p>	<p>Estcourt Road Roundabout forms an integral part of the cycle spine and is earmarked for improvements. A number of design options are currently being investigated as part of an ongoing feasibility design stage. Once these options have been developed further we will be keen to present the scheme for public consultation.</p>
<p>44. Questioner's name: Graham Ayre</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Stephen Davies</p>
<p>How does every councillor ensure they fully discharge their responsibilities as a Corporate Parent given the apparent omission of highly relevant information in the Corporate Parenting Reports submitted to the County Council meetings? As noted in those reports "The responsibility of a Corporate Parent is to make sure the decision making, planning and provision for care experienced children and young people affords them the opportunities and outcomes that other children have. This routinely includes being concerned about their care, health, education, and preparation for adulthood".</p> <p>Recent examples of omitted information, specifically relating to Trevone House, include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The absence of any reference to the death of a young person in the care of Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) at Trevone House even though this was publicly reported by Gloucestershire Live on 15 September 2022 and included a statement from the Executive Director for Children and Young Persons Services (Chris Spencer) at the time. 	<p>This council is an ambitious parent for children in our care and care leavers and wishes to inspire partners across all sectors and our communities to join with us to become a successful corporate family that champions children in and leaving care.</p> <p>The report of the corporate parenting group to every full council is one of a number of ways in which councillors learn about, champion and exercise their responsibilities as corporate parents.</p> <p>In terms of governance, the Corporate Parenting Group is chaired by the lead member for children and early years and comprises a representative group of councillors, lead officers and partners. Its role is to oversee the delivery of corporate parenting priorities.</p> <p>Cabinet and Full Council will take decisions about such things as the Sufficiency Strategy for children in and leaving care, and will review quality, performance and budgetary information on a quarterly basis.</p>

2. The failure to report the overall assessment of the Care Quality Commission review of the well being suites at Trevone House (issued July 2022) which was “Requires improvement”. Two of the five aspects of operation assessed, “Is the service safe” and “Is the service well-led” were both assessed as “Requires improvement” and influenced the overall conclusion.
3. While reference has been made to GCC commissioning an independent review of Trevone House, what hasn’t been reported is that such a review was initiated as a result of a recommendation following a complaint of maladministration made against GCC. Furthermore, the independence of the review is also questionable as the organisation undertaking it (Institute of Public Care at Oxford Brookes University) had previously been “commissioned by Gloucestershire County Council to support them in reviewing and refreshing the County’s Sufficiency Strategy for looked after children” which included the Trevone House facility.
4. There has been no reference to either the MacAlister review of children’s social care (an independent review commissioned by the UK Government) or the views of The Children’s Commissioner for England (Dame Rachel de Souza) which both advocate the use of small establishments for children and young people in care or leaving care, not the large-scale facilities such as Trevone House.

The need for complete and balanced information which allows every councillor to fully discharge their corporate parenting duties is essential given GCC’s decision to develop a similar facility to Trevone House on an even larger scale at Southfield in Stroud.

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee will scrutinise progress against planned improvement and decisions of council as well as consider implementation and impact of strategy, performance, service delivery and the council’s response to new and emerging pressures.

Group leaders are also be provided with information that is specific to a child or situation when necessary on a need to know and confidential basis.

Elected members also sit on the children’s Continuous Improvement Board and Children’s Wellbeing Coalition where reports include information about the progress and outcomes for children in and leaving care.

Beyond this, councillors have opportunities to exercise their responsibilities by:

- Meeting with or hearing from children in care and care leavers in a variety of ways and responding to what they say (e.g. Bright Spots Survey or meeting with Ambassadors and the Forum)
- Knowing what’s in their ward – children’s homes, foster carers, supported accommodation.
- Asking about children in care and care leavers when visiting schools, colleges, joining governing bodies, speaking with businesses, sitting on licensing, planning and other committees etc
- Considering how all council decisions impact children in and leaving care
- Supporting and promoting fostering in the county, helping others understand the disadvantage that care experienced people can face and helping overcome barriers
- Constantly asking of services and approaches, ‘would this be good enough for my child?’

	<p>In relation to points 1-4.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. It would not be appropriate for this to be reported at full council, a review process has been initiated by the safeguarding partnership (following a child death review process, although the young person was an adult) in order to bring partners together and secure any learning from such a sad event.2. CQC and Ofsted judgments are in the public domain and may be considered by councillors. Reports are considered internally and follow up action taken as appropriate. The most recent CQC judgement for Trevone House wellbeing suites is Good in all areas and Good overall (February 2023) not requires improvement as stated in the question.3. There were a number of reasons for the commissioning of an independent evaluation of Trevone House, including it being a recommendation in response to a complaint from a group of residents that live in the vicinity of a planned new supported accommodation development. Its findings will help shape plans for the new development. <p>The council is not aware of any partiality on the part of the University undertaking the evaluation which has been commissioned as an independent look at what works and what can be improved. This is a serious and incorrect accusation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. The care review and government implementation strategy in response to it (Stable Homes Built on Love) is in the public domain and was discussed at the most recent Corporate Parenting Group in March 2023. This is reflected in the report to May's council meeting.
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	<p>Corporate Parenting Training has recently covered responsibilities for councillors and was delivered by LGA, including reference to the Care Review and the views of the Children’s Commissioner as to what constitutes a good corporate parent.</p> <p>The sufficiency strategy for Gloucestershire (Home@TheHeart) sets out our approach to developing sufficient high quality care and support options locally and ranges from provision of foster care, through development of children’s homes within the county to residential and community based family assessment and supported accommodation for young people developing their independence.</p> <p>It is in line with many of the recommendations within the Care Review, including developing high quality local provision of all types and supporting young people’s progress towards independence. As set out, this involves challenging the market dominance of high cost, distant residential homes by developing high quality local options.</p> <p>That strategy was considered by Cabinet in January 2023 and Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee (CFOSC) in May 2023.</p>
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