

MEMBER QUESTIONS

CABINET MEETING –21 June 2023

Question 1: Cllr Chris McFarling	Respondent: Cllr Mark Hawthorne
<p>Agenda Item 7: Procure and Award a Contract to Deliver an Adults Healthy Lifestyles Service</p> <p>Could the cabinet member please indicate how the Adults Healthy Lifestyles Service could incorporate social prescribing, walking for health and active travel into their programme, and seek the resources needed to provide the essential infrastructure that will support these activities whilst realizing the co-benefits of a more sustainable Gloucestershire.</p>	<p>Social Prescribing The Service Provider will be required to develop integrated pathways with social prescribing providers to ensure a seamless offer that enables service users to benefit from complementary support. For example, a social prescriber might support a service user to engage with the Healthy Lifestyles Service (HLS) for more specialised behavioural and pharmacological support to quit smoking, and the HLS might work with the social prescriber to support the service user to access complementary support to help them to sustain their 'quit', for example by connecting them to activities within their local community.</p> <p>Walking for Health We recognise the key role of physical activity in supporting overall wellbeing, which underpins sustainable change across the range of lifestyle behaviours. The HLS Provider will be required to signpost and support service users to access the range of available activities and support to become more physically active, which includes Walking for Health initiatives.</p> <p>Physical activity opportunities are included within the range of social prescribing options and as such these connections will be reinforced via close working links with social prescribers.</p> <p>Active Travel The Workplace Health Award Scheme, which over 100 local organisations are working towards, will continue under the new HLS.</p>

	<p>This award supports local employers to increase participation in active travel to work.</p> <p>Furthermore, HLS is delivered within local communities, and encourages service users to travel actively to the service. There are numerous examples of this happening. In addition, anyone being supported by the service to increase their physical activity levels will be encouraged to travel actively for short journeys as a sustainable way to achieve their lifestyle goals.</p>
<p>Question 2: Cllr Chris McFarling</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Agenda Item 8: Community and Adult Skills Programmes 2023/ 2024</p> <p>With respect to the community and adult skills programme for 2023/24, could you please indicate how ‘green skills’ for green jobs will be integrated into the programme in line with the council’s economic growth strategy for the county and the growing green economy?</p>	<p>Initial scoping work for a routeway into ‘green/sustainable’ jobs is being undertaken with DWP and other partners. This will be developed, promoted and delivered in AY 2023-24 if it is viable to do so.</p> <p>In the meantime, several community learning courses incorporate elements that incorporate ‘green/sustainable’ skills and the team already offers a range of online programmes supporting sustainability. https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/adult-education-in-gloucestershire/courses/cpd-courses/sustainability/#main</p> <p>The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) has developed resources to enable training providers to embed sustainable development in learning courses and programmes and these will be reviewed and, where appropriate, adopted by the Adult Education Service in AY 2023-24. https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/resources/esd/esd-resources/teaching-sustainability-tool/</p> <p>All Adult Education learners are offered information, advice and guidance (IAG) during their learning programmes/courses and this</p>

	<p>includes information about green skills and jobs and how they can progress into the 'green/sustainable sector'. https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2022/11/07/what-is-a-green-job-everything-you-need-to-know/</p>
Question 3: Cllr Colin Hay	Respondent: Cllr Stephan Fifield
<p>Agenda Item 5: Finance, Performance and Risk Monitoring Report</p> <p>Some of the underspends in the Adults Directorate stem from not having been able to recruit to some really significant roles – what has been the impact of not being able to fill these roles, and how have we managed that impact?</p>	<p>There are a number of vacancies across the adult's directorate. There have also been some significant senior vacancies filled. In some cases where needed, agency staff have been used backfill, for example in some in-house services. The respite services operated a more flexible model of service delivery, whereby staff would be consolidated to work across 1 or 2 sites, as opposed to open all 3 sites at once, until all posts can be filled permanently.</p> <p>The Adult's Recruitment and Retention strategy has supported the recruitment to vacant posts across the directorate and we now have two of the six teams with a full complement of social workers. Where teams still experience staff shortages, we have introduced new processes to risk rate incoming work across all teams to help identify those most in need and therefore prioritise them support. We utilise locum social workers wherever we can to cover shortfalls and also share more complex work across locality teams when capacity becomes an issue. If necessary, colleagues can be asked to temporarily transfer to other teams when the need arises.</p>
Question 4: Cllr Colin Hay	Respondent: Cllr Lynden Stowe
<p>Agenda Item 5: Finance, Performance and Risk Monitoring Report</p>	<p>Progress on projects approved as part of the budget are being closely monitored. An update will be presented at each meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny. Separately, I will ask Democratic Services to provide a copy of those updates to all members.</p>

<p>Could all Members receive an update on how the projects to be funded by successful amendments at Budget Council are progressing thus far?</p>	
<p>Question 5: Cllr Colin Hay</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5: Finance, Performance and Risk Monitoring Report</p> <p>Can you summarise the overall net impact on our budget position of the current high interest rates, as this is costing the Council money in contracts and energy prices but also boosting our income through the residual waste contract and through our investments – what is the net impact?</p>	<p>The overall impact in 2022/23 was positive – contract prices are generally agreed at the beginning of the year and electricity prices are also fixed (buying and selling). Therefore the only unbudgeted impact was an improvement in the returns on our investments where we generated an additional £3.9m of interest income. All our historic loans are taken out at fixed interest rates and no new loans were taken out in 2022/23 so interest rate changes did not impact our capital financing costs.</p> <p>Forecasting the impact of high interest rates and inflation on the Council’s budget in the current financial year and future years is complex and will only become apparent as the financial year progresses.</p> <p>The positive impacts this financial have been the higher electricity sales income from the energy from waste plant and continuing improved returns on our investments. Both of which were included in the approved budget for 2023/24.</p> <p>The additional costs relate to contractual inflation and pay awards – the forecast impact of these increases were also included in the Revenue Budget approved in February 2023. Current forecasts are that these costs can be absorbed within the approved budget.</p> <p>The situation will be closely monitored during the rest of the financial year.</p>

	The inflationary and interest rate impact on future years budgets will be reviewed as part of the budget setting process.
Question 6: Cllr Colin Hay	Respondent: Cllr Lynden Stowe
<p>Agenda Item 5: Finance, Performance and Risk Monitoring Report</p> <p>It is concerning to see slippage on our capital projects, as often these projects are delivering infrastructure on which other aims may be dependent. What is the medium term-plan to bring our capital spending back towards our stated targets?</p>	<p>The Council has an extensive capital programme with ambitious delivery dates.</p> <p>There can be delays in the delivery of the capital programme due to issues beyond the control of the Council such as planning delays or lack of capacity in the construction market.</p> <p>It should be noted that £11.7m of the £26.5m slippage relates to Invest to Save / Transformation Capital Fund. Several schemes are currently being worked on, but this had not direct impact as all schemes will be self-funded.</p> <p>The delivery of the capital programme is a key area of focus and delays are kept to a minimum. The Council will continue to strive to implement capital schemes in the most efficient and effective way and avoid unnecessary delays.</p>
Question 7: Cllr Rebecca Halifax	Respondent: Cllr Stephan Fifield
<p>Agenda Item 6: Extension of existing contracts for Gloucestershire Adult and Young Carers Support</p> <p>How have the respective proportions of funding for these contracts between GCC and the ICB been worked out and agreed?</p>	<p>There is an established process for deciding proportions of funding between the NHS and GCC. This contract has been recommissioned several times on these terms.</p>
Question 8: Cllr Rebecca Halifax	Respondent: Cllr Stephan Fifield
<p>Agenda Item 6: Extension of existing contracts for Gloucestershire Adult and Young Carers Support</p>	<p>Both organisations actively encourage feedback from carers and offer a variety of ways in which to do this. For example, from an adult</p>

<p>What information are the two current partners providing carers support collecting from their service users to understand their levels of satisfaction with the service?</p>	<p>perspective, community events, training and activity sessions all include the opportunity to feedback. In addition, an annual Carers Survey is undertaken, random carers are contacted for feedback on their experience, and a “You said, we did” element is included in the quarterly newsletters. Feedback from social media channels is monitored and responded to, regular communications aimed at carers include request for feedback and a carers response group is regularly facilitated. Quarterly monitoring reports include case studies and complements and complaints which are monitored via key performance indicators. Daily calls into and out of the service may include feedback and are captured on a weekly update spreadsheet which is shared with commissioners. The young carers provider offers similar opportunities for feedback and include, feedback from health and wellbeing groups, Our Voice sessions, young adult carers events, multifamily workshops, community events and regular feedback from conversations with young carers.</p>
<p>Question 9: Cllr Rebecca Halifax</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Stephan Fifield</p>
<p>Agenda Item 6: Extension of existing contracts for Gloucestershire Adult and Young Carers Support</p> <p>Disallowing a 1 year extension to this contract, and not commencing even an RFI process unless this current contract is formally ceased means that it was inevitable that the 2 yr extension must be granted in order to maintain continuity of support to our carers. Why was a 1 year extension not provided for in the original terms, or at a minimum an RFI process commenced in a timely way 1-2 years ago in order to compare similar service provision from other providers against the requirement of having to grant the 2 year extension. Are we aware of other service providers who have become active during the 5 years of this current contract term</p>	<p>The original contract with the 5 years plus 2 years was agreed at Cabinet 5 years ago, current officers were not party to that decision but the likely rationale behind this decision was to allow both organisations time to embed into Gloucestershire and provide continuity of carer support. Another reason might have been to ensure that the contract offered security to the successful providers and to ensure that the proffered contract was attractive to the open market at the time of tendering.</p> <p>The current 5-year contract ends in March 2024. Prior to developing this paper for Cabinet, a detailed review of the current services was carried out. During the last two years many carers have been living with the fear of Covid and the emphasis has been on supporting them with as much continuity as is possible. The contracts are well</p>

<p>and has their service offering and commercial terms been examined?</p>	<p>monitored, the providers offer well run services and have done so throughout the 5-year period and therefore the proposal to extend is based on the needs of the carers and the excellent value for money provision being received. The 2-year extension period will give adequate time for a measured and timely procurement in 2025.</p>
<p>Question 10: Cllr Lisa Spivey</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>Agenda Item 7: Procure and Award a Contract to Deliver an Adults Healthy Lifestyles Service</p> <p>The paper references the % of our population that is impacted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Smoking * Excess Alcohol * Poor Diet * Physical inactivity <p>How do we compare with national averages and other local authority areas nearby to us specifically on each of these?</p>	<p>The following figures are county wide averages; some specific areas and groups of people will have higher/lower rates than this in the county.</p> <p>Smoking Prevalence (18+) Gloucestershire - 13% South West – 12.6% England – 13%</p> <p>Percentage of adults drinking above the recommended 14 units per week (2015-2018) Gloucestershire – 25.6% South West – 24.0% England – 22.8%</p> <p>Percentage of adults that binge drink (2015-2018) Binge drinking is defined as more than 8 units of alcohol in a single session for males, or more than 6 units in a single session for females. Gloucestershire – 13.1% South West – 13.2% England – 15.4%</p> <p>Percentage of adults with excess weight (overweight or obesity) (2021/22)</p>

	<p>Body Mass Index (BMI) of 25.0 to <30, is in the overweight range. A BMI is 30.0 or higher, falls within the obesity range. Gloucestershire – 62.4% South West – 62.8% England – 63.8%</p> <p>Percentage of adults (16+) meeting the 5-a-day fruit and vegetable consumption recommendations (2021/22) Gloucestershire – 37.7% South West – 37.1% England – 32.5%</p> <p>Percentage of physically active adults (2021/22) (Doing at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per week) Gloucestershire – 71.1% South West – 71.7% England – 67.3%</p>
<p>Question 11: Cllr Lisa Spivey</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>Agenda Item 7: Procure and Award a Contract to Deliver an Adults Healthy Lifestyles Service</p> <p>Can you give an examples of what services being co-designed with communities and stakeholders might look like under the new contract?</p>	<p>This part of the new HLS offer will be led by communities at a hyper-local level, in collaboration with the HLS Provider and GCC commissioners.</p> <p>It will prioritise neighbourhoods identified as greatest risk of health inequalities according to the national Index of Multiple deprivation, as well as protected characteristic groups identified via our Equality Impact Assessment to be at greater risk of lifestyle-related ill-health.</p> <p>Examples of current activities, that we aim to build on, include:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer support for people aiming to stop smoking • Coproduced, bespoke weight management support for groups who are underrepresented within 'standard offers' e.g. a South Asian women'. • Health coaching training and support to enable communities to participate in delivering 'Weigh and Go' brief interventions and peer support.
<p>Question 12: Cllr Lisa Spivey</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>Agenda Item 7: Procure and Award a Contract to Deliver an Adults Healthy Lifestyles Service</p> <p>How will bids be scored when the new contract goes through procurement, in terms of weighted scores for service quality, value for money and social value?</p>	<p>Scoring will be weighted as follows:</p> <p>70% Service Quality 10% Social Value 20% Value for Money</p>
<p>Question 13: Cllr Lisa Spivey</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>Agenda Item 7: Procure and Award a Contract to Deliver an Adults Healthy Lifestyles Service</p> <p>What steps will we take as part of the procurement exercise to ensure that the local VCS has a realistic opportunity to secure this contract, rather than only larger national providers being able to consider bidding?</p>	<p>All bids will be evaluated on merit. However, our market testing suggests that there is not currently a local VCSE organisation with the expertise and track record of delivering evidence-based specialised behaviour change services.</p> <p>The contract will therefore specify a community development approach, which will build health behaviour change capability within communities. The intention is for this to lead to the transfer of some budget to local community organisations over the duration of the contract as appropriate.</p> <p>Meanwhile, our approach will help to align system offers (complementary community and specialist behaviour change activities and support) to maximise collective strengths, experience and learning.</p>

	<p>Bidders will be evaluated on their response to a specific question regarding how they will work with local communities to deliver this element.</p> <p>In scoring the bids for this contract additional credit will be given to Providers who produce evidence that that have collaborated with community organisations in preparing their response to their tender.</p>
<p>Question 14: Cllr Linda Cohen</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Agenda Item 8: Community and Adult Skills Programmes 2023/ 2024</p> <p>Do we have a wider strategy and vision for adult learning in Gloucestershire, and what role does this play in decisions about contract awards to providers?</p>	<p>The commissioning/subcontracting of adult learning by GCC as part of its community and adult skills programme is based on local needs and on the provision that the ‘in house’ Adult Education in Gloucestershire service is not able to provide but which is important locally (e.g. learning for people with disabilities).</p> <p>Adult Education in Gloucestershire’s accountability agreement explains how its provision meets local and national priorities.</p> <p>https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/adult-education-in-gloucestershire/about-us/policies/adult-education-in-gloucestershire-accountability-agreement-2023-24/</p> <p>GCC’s adult and community learning commissioning/subcontracting is undertaken with reference to and consideration of this accountability agreement and the Gloucestershire Skills Strategy 2022-27 https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/2022/gfirst-lep-gloucestershire-skills-strategy-2022-27.pdf</p> <p>GCC and the Adult Education Service has also played an active role in the development of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for</p>

	<p>Gloucestershire. This will be published and launched in July and focuses on the skills needs of local employers. This will enable Adult Education Service providers subcontracting with GCC and other local skills providers to align their services even more closely to the needs of local employers. Initial findings can be found at https://www.businesswest.co.uk/grow/LSIP/lsip-gloucestershire</p>
<p>Question 15: Cllr Linda Cohen</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Agenda Item 8: Community and Adult Skills Programmes 2023/ 2024</p> <p>What role does past performance play when assessing the suitability of providers when they bid for a renewal as part of these call-off contracts?</p>	<p>Providers' past performance is taken into consideration and in some cases this has led to decreased ESFA funding being made available to certain providers and increased funding being made available to others.</p> <p>GCC/Adult Education Service is very aware of the need to make best use of limited funding and so this is built into the contract process and into in-year performance management of subcontractor providers.</p>
<p>Question 16: Cllr Linda Cohen</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Agenda Item 8: Community and Adult Skills Programmes 2023/ 2024</p> <p>What steps do we take to ensure that smaller local providers are able to have a realistic chance of being awarded contracts as part of this bidding process?</p>	<p>GCC/Adult Education Service recognises that some smaller local providers are able to reach, engage with and deliver high-quality learning to residents that complements the work of the in-house Adult Education in Gloucestershire service/team. It therefore takes steps to promote tendering/retendering opportunities when these become available through our framework contract arrangements. This includes the usual channels of publishing via ProContract but also promoting through local learning partnerships including the Gloucestershire Wiltshire Training Partnership that works with a wide range of smaller local training providers as well as the colleges. http://www.gw-partnership.ac.uk/</p>

	<p>Our duty is to ensure that all learners supported by the GCC Adult Education Service receive high quality learning so, inevitably, some smaller local providers are not selected to deliver to our learners if they are unable to meet the financial sustainability or quality standards required by both us and the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).</p>
<p>Question 17: Cllr Linda Cohen</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Agenda Item 8: Community and Adult Skills Programmes 2023/ 2024</p> <p>What due diligence do we carry out as an authority to ensure that potential providers are suitable and have a good track record of success behind them?</p>	<p>We complete full due diligence on all providers that submit a bid, this information is also monitored by the Employment and Skills funding agency (ESFA). It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Companies House records - Insurances - ICO registration - Quality reports such as Ofsted - Criminal convictions and declarations - Financial health
<p>Question 18: Cllr Linda Cohen</p>	<p>Respondent: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Agenda Item 8: Community and Adult Skills Programmes 2023/ 2024</p> <p>Do we commission provision that supports people who are in work but currently on long-term sick leave to enable their return to work?</p>	<p>Anyone can access the courses we offer within Adult Education if they meet the following eligibility criteria set by the Employment and Skills funding agency (ESFA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aged 19 or older on 31st August within the current funding year - Resident within the UK for more than 3 years or proof of residency - Earn less than £20,319 annual gross salary