



**REPORT TITLE: Executive Director's Report, Economy, Environment & Infrastructure**

<b>Scrutiny meeting</b>	Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee – 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2023
<b>Chair</b>	Councillor Matt Baggage
<b>Presenting Officer</b>	N/A – To be taken as read
<b>Item Type</b>	Information
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To provide information regarding progress and proposals for each of the areas within EE&I.
<b>Recommendations/ Action sought</b>	N/A
<b>Forthcoming Decisions</b>	<b>Relevant forthcoming decisions, by date due:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <a href="#">Procurement of street lighting works and services and revised council approach for management and administration of service</a> <b>Decision due:</b> 19 Jul 2023 by Cabinet</li><li>▪ <a href="#">Gloucestershire Economic Strategy – approval to commence seven-week public engagement.</a> <b>Decision due:</b> 19 Jul 2023 by Cabinet</li><li>▪ Public Transport Network Review [pending publication – September Cabinet]</li><li>▪ Dynamic Purchasing System for Transport [pending publication – September Cabinet]</li><li>▪ Additional DfT funding for Bus Network Planning [pending publication – September Cabinet]</li></ul>
<b>Background Documents</b>	N/A
<b>Appendices</b>	N/A
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## **1.0 Highways**

### **M5 J10**

- Land agents progressing land acquisition/negotiations in partnership with GCC Property.
- Galliford Try have been awarded the Early Contract Involvement contract for Stage 1 of the M5J10 works. This contract provides the project with support through the DCO process to develop the detailed design and appoint supply chain ahead of determination of the DCO.
- J10 & A4019/link road main works – Work continues on the draft DCO documents, as well as detailed design, land acquisition and local engagement.
- Arle Court Transport Hub – Kier Construction have now (May 23) begun a 14month construction programme at Arle Court. Work has progressed well under near faultless weather conditions, with excavations complete for concrete pads to enable the MSCP overground works to start.
- A38/A4019 Coombe Hill – planning permission has been granted. Land acquisition and negotiations continue.

### **West Cheltenham Walking & Cycling Infrastructure**

- Some small-scale cycle and pedestrian improvements now being constructed south of the A40 corridor on Benhall Avenue, Campden Road and Miserden Road.

### **Gloucester SW Bypass / Llanthony Road**

- Works commenced in July 2022. Work is progressing well and completion is still expected in late Summer 2023. Planning amendment for working evenings and weekends has been granted.

### **A435 Cheltenham to Bishops Cleeve Cycleway**

- Design progressing well. The recent news about the successful ATF3 Change Control bid will enable works to continue.
- Public consultation events were undertaken in May 2023 as part of wider consultation exercise to seek input on the emerging scheme proposals.
- Works are due to commence between Racecourse Roundabout and the Prince of Wales Stadium in late 2023/24

### **A419 Junction Improvements (Stonehouse)**

- Proposed 30mph speed limit on Horsetrough Roundabout has been successfully consulted upon with local member and police support. Alongside this will be minor amendments to Downton Road junction traffic merge to be completed later this year.

### **B4063 Cheltenham to Gloucester Cycle Scheme**

- Works between the M5 and Elmbridge Court Roundabout are now underway and expected to run until Spring 2024. The ATF4 funding announcement will allow the Elmbridge to Estcourt Road section to be tendered with works expected to start in Autumn 2023. Consultation recently completed on the Elmbridge Court to Estcourt Road section of the route with proposals generally well received – modelling has been undertaken to understand impact on signal-controlled junctions.
- Design for Estcourt Road roundabout being developed.

## Structures/Geotechnical Schemes

- Walk Bridge – working with Stroud District Council. Aiming for construction 2024 with ecology surveys and mitigation in 2023.
- Charlton Hill – Work started on site March 2023 and currently progressing well. Programmed to be off site by Autumn 2023 to co-ordinate with A417 Missing Link works.
- Half Penny Bridge in Lechlade – RTC damage requiring closure of bridge until full assessment and any necessary repairs carried out.

## Highways Contracts/Delivery

- Term maintenance (Ringway) – Fifth year of the contract underway. Cyclical maintenance and defect repair performance remains on target. Safety defects now at relatively low level and therefore maintenance resources supplemented with additional find and fix gangs, spray injection patching machines and patching gangs which are targeting other areas of poor road condition in a preventative programme for summer 2023.
- Professional services (Atkins) – Fifth year of contract underway.
- Structural maintenance (Tarmac) – Second year of four-year contract - delivery of capital resurfacing programme on track.
- Street lighting (M Group) – Performance on key indicators remains satisfactory.
- Depots/property – ongoing programme of minor improvement works across depots.

## 2.0 Traffic and Transport

### Recent DMMO Statistics - to 20 June 2023

Total number of 'unresolved' applications:	213
No. of new 'min.14(1) compliant' applications received in 2023 to date	6 (21 in 2021, 35 in 2022)
Number of applications 'resolved' in 2023 to date	3 (11 in 2021, 5 in 2022)
Number of routes added to DM&S by 'other means' in 2023 to date	2 (3 in 2021, 4 in 2022)

Currently resolving, on average over the past 5 years, 7.6 applications a year (between the 2 Officers, plus support from 1 Technician).

### Number of all 'undetermined' applications:

	Undetermined	Undet-Archived	Undet-Non14(2)
No.	53	51	72

*("Archived" applications are whereby the intended effect of the application is likely to be nullified by a subsequent change in legislation (for example, the NERC Act); "Non14(2)" applications have not been 'fully made' but are still valid applications in terms of needing determination.)*

Number of all unresolved 'determined' applications:

	Apps at publication/ confirmation stage	Apps with unresolved objections	
		Submitted to SoS	Awaiting submission
No.	2	1 - on 30/6/2022 1 - on 08/03/2023	33

Recent CROW Ctte / Internal Officer Panel determinations:

Previous CROW Ctte / IOP	<p>1 App on 8 Feb 2023 - decision not to make an order, on the grounds that public motor vehicle rights have not been retained under NERC2006. Now resolved.</p> <p>1 App on 8 Feb 2023 - as application was superseded by S119 Diversion Order, DMMO resolved not to make additional Order. Now resolved.</p> <p>1 App on 28 Mar 2023 - decision to Make an Order. Order now out to consultation.</p> <p>1 App on 6 June - decision to make an Order for RB (ex rail line near Tetbury Goods Shed)</p>
Next CROW Ctte/IOP	<p>(subject to change if late rebutting evidence is submitted)</p> <p>Summer 2023 - Officer Delegated to determine 2-4 applications</p> <p>October 2023 - CROW Committee to determine 1 application</p>

### Streetworks Performance

- The following utilities are on informal improvement plans, City Fibre, National Grid, Severn Trent and Gigaclear. Senior organisation level engagement from City Fibre and Kier and a long-term strategy for the further rollout in Gloucester and Cheltenham is being worked on now by them. Twice weekly meetings are taking place to ensure the timeline is met and further issues are reported to the correct people to get a resolution.

### Highways Development Management

- The volume house builders are slowing housing completions, although workloads continue to increase as developers focus efforts on longer term strategic allocations or varying existing commitments to reduce costs. In particular West, North-West Cheltenham and Ashchurch are progressing swiftly and a new Robert Hitchens growth area has come forward at Whitminster adjacent to Junction 13 on the M5.
- The team are currently heavily involved in Stroud Local Plan examination in public; GCC are objecting to the Sharpness new town allocation due to sustainable transport concerns. GCC are also pressing for changes to the Whaddon allocation on Gloucester fringe to improve accessibility and mitigate impacts at St Barnabas roundabout. Stroud DC's spatial strategy is such that it necessitates infrastructure improvements at Junction 12 and 14 of the M5, which is causing issues about funding apportionment, viability and phasing of growth and mitigation.

## **Public and School Transport**

- There will be no terminations by Stagecoach in Cirencester or the east Cotswolds. It was feared some services would be terminated in the run up to September and replacements would be very costly. Instead, an 8% inflationary contract increase awarded on all GCC bus service contracts for 23/24, along with a small additional some from the Department for Transport, means termination is not necessary and Stagecoach will continue to operate contracts previously at risk.
- A last-minute change by South Gloucestershire County Council and WECA led to the retention of the 84/85 which was due to cease in early June. This is a temporary reprieve whilst the new South Glos administration reviews the decision. There has also been a change of operator with 'The Big Lemon' replacing Stagecoach.
- A 3-year transformation programme by Edge Public Solutions working with the ITU and SEND travel team is underway, focused on delivering improved outcomes and efficiencies in the school transport budget. There are some potential changes in the method of procurement being implemented with the aim of widening access to council contracts.
- Work has begun at Arle Court Transport Hub on the new 1000 space facility. Kier have held a sod cutting ceremony attended by the Cllr David Gray to mark the start of work on the multi-storey car park and public transport hub. Although parking capacity is reduced the Park and Ride service will remain fully operational whilst the new facilities are under construction

## **Corporate Fleet Unit**

- Over the past quarter the team has succeeded in filling a number of vacancies for admin and supervisory roles.
- Following the approval of capital funds in the 23/24 budget work is underway to implement a multi-year programme of electric vehicle charging infrastructure on council premises such as fire stations, highways depots and libraries. This includes chargers at the GIS site in Hempstead to support the recent Cabinet decision to replace the GIS fleet of diesel vans. Initially 10 electric vans will be ordered.
- Considerable work is underway replacing over 60 vehicles used by GFRS and other council service areas including GIS. This includes specialist fire and community safety vehicles, pickups, vans and cars. A common theme is the focus on reducing fleet carbon emissions by switching to battery electric power and using new technologies such as solar photovoltaics fitted to the roof to reduce fuel consumption and extend battery life. This is being done hand in hand with the EV charge point programme outlined earlier. In the past month the team has also started to explore greener options for replacing cars used by the council's parking contractor. This will explore how the current fleet of petrol hybrid cars could be replaced by a fleet of battery electric cars when leases expire in 2024.

## **Road Safety Partnership, ThinkTravel, Electric Vehicles and Parking**

### **Road Safety Partnership**

- In November Cabinet agreed a new Road Safety policy and strategy which set out our ambition to reduce road casualties to zero by 2050 'Vision Zero' and aims to

halve the number of people killed and seriously injured on Gloucestershire's roads between 2022 and 2032. In December the council, OPCC and Police formally launched the Gloucestershire Road Safety Partnership at a meeting chaired by the Cabinet Member for road safety policy and attended by key stakeholders from across the county.

- To date 190 bids have been received from communities for local road safety measures under the £600,000 Community Speedwatch Fund. These cover measures such as speed surveys, vehicle activated signs, Speedwatch cameras, bin stickers and a visit from a road safety officer. In phase 1 we received 119 bids and in phase 2, which closed on 31st January, we received a further 71 bids.

### **Thinktravel**

- Thinktravel have now finished the **Gloucestershire E-Scooter procurement** awarding the new e-scooter contract to VOI Technology. Zwings Ltd will finish on the 31st July 2023 and Voi's new contract will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> August.

### **Electric Vehicle Charging**

- Following grant confirmation from the Department for Transport and engagement with councillors and residents, an order has now been placed for the provision of the first phase EV charge point locations.

### **Parking**

- Gloucester Kingsholm Parking Permit Scheme is currently under construction and will come into effect on 10.07.23.
- Cheltenham All Saints Parking Permit Scheme will follow the completion of Gloucester works with construction due to start in July for a September 2023 implementation.
- GCC's application for Moving Traffic Enforcement powers is being processed with a decision by DfT due sometime in Summer 2023.

### **TROs**

- All TROs are continuing to progress although there are still a small number of contentious, historic schemes to move forward.
- A TRO webinar was held for elected members in June. This highlighted improvements made to the way the council provides this function, including how members are informed of progress.
- The TRO programme spreadsheet is now available for all County Councillors to view and is updated once a month.
- Further improvements to the internal TRO process and digitalisation of all existing TROs are being looked into.

## **3.0 Planning and Economic Development**

### **M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch)**

- The Strategic Outline Business Case for the M5 J9 / A46 scheme was submitted to the DfT in January 2020;
- Strategic Outline Case (SOC) submitted to DfT on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2022.
- GCC Cabinet report (re- future expenditure on M5 J9 / A46) was considered and approved on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023.
- The project is currently being reviewed given the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023 MP debate in the House of Commons and Tewkesbury Borough Council's decision to pause the Tewkesbury Garden Town programme, pending the outcome of an external review.

### **Economic Strategy**

- On the 19 July 2023 Cabinet will be asked to consider approving the launch of a seven-week public engagement programme on the emerging Gloucestershire Economic Strategy.
- A high-level engagement document is being produced which will include a new 2050 vision for the county and a range of emerging proposals to support the delivery of the vision. The key economic themes identified during the stakeholder engagement process will be structured under two headings covering people and place to provide a more logical narrative.
- Subject to approval – it is proposed that the public engagement programme will commence on the 31 July 2023 and close on the 15 September 2023.

### **A417 Missing Link**

- The Secretary of State for Transport approved the planning application for the scheme in November 2022, which will now proceed to construction later in 2023.

### **Local Transport Plan (LTP)**

- The LTP was adopted at Full Council on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021. A review of the LTP is currently being considered later in 2023. Government guidance is currently awaited.

### **Waste Local Plan (WLP)**

- A new WLP is currently being prepared. The target date for adoption is Summer / Autumn 2026.

### **Mass Rapid Transit**

- GCC's Cabinet approved the future (2023/24) expenditure on this project on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The relevant Business Cases will be produced 2023/24 onwards.

### **Local Plans / JSP / CIL**

- Review of the Cheltenham / Gloucester / Tewkesbury Local Plan (formerly known as the Joint Strategic Plan) now underway following an 'Issues and Options' consultation which ended in January 2019.
- The Reg.18 public consultation has now been delayed to later in 2023/24.
- Progress has been made with Cheltenham / Gloucester / Tewkesbury to review the JCS CIL – consultants are now undertaking this task in liaison with GCC officers and stakeholders.
- GCC education and library contributions are in the process of being reviewed by GCC.

- Correspondence sent to all six District Councils outlining the GCC position, with offer to work collaboratively in the future.
- GCC continues to not receive a penny of CIL from Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucester City Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Cotswold District Council, although Cotswold District Council has recently asked for bids from GCC, which are currently being drafted.
- Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury are currently working up governance proposals to distribute the 'strategic' element of their CIL.
- Bids and Expressions of Interest have recently been submitted to Stroud District Council to secure CIL funding in 2024/25.
- Stroud Local Plan – The Local Plan has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration. GCC officers and consultants are actively involved in the Public Examination, which started on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023 and is ongoing.
- Cotswold Local Plan – 'Issues and Options' consultation period ended on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2022. GCC officers submitted representations prior to the deadline on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2022.
- Forest of Dean Local Plan – FoDDC consulted on a 'preferred option' – the closing date for comments was 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021. GCC officers commented before this deadline. The Forest of Dean District Local Plan Second Preferred Option was subject to public consultation (ending 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022). GCC officers formally responded prior to the deadline.

#### **4.0 Libraries & Registration**

##### **Libraries**

- The library service launches its own Library Challenge on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2023 – this replaces the Summer Reading Challenge which is delivered through the Reading Agency. The new scheme will promote all aspects of Gloucestershire's library services alongside encouraging reading through the Summer Holidays.
- The new Oakley centre opens to the public from 15<sup>th</sup> July 2023, where The Library Challenge will be launched. There will be a day of activities to promote the new services on site.

##### **Registration**

- National Registrar's Day will be celebrated on 4 July 2023. We will be recognising the hard work undertaken by the team in Gloucestershire Registration Service as part of this day and promoting it through social media.

#### **5.0 Waste Management**



- A new short-term (3 yr) Resources and Waste Strategy for the county was agreed by the Gloucestershire Resources and Waste Partnership on 25<sup>th</sup> April. A Lead Cabinet Member decision will be taken at GCC to adopt the strategy.
- A number of repairs are being made to the HRCs following a condition survey. A capital bid is being prepared for a major refurbishment and renewal programme as the centres are now ageing and in increasingly poor condition. A paper on this was taken to the council's Property Board on 25<sup>th</sup> April and ongoing project support from finance and property colleagues has been obtained as a result.
- Following an unexpected four-day period of unavailability in May, normal service has now been restored at the Lydney Transfer station operated by Enovert.

### **Sustainability/Climate Change**

- Preparation is underway for the 23/24 tree planting season, with project leads for some 20,000 trees already explored. A bid for further project funding from the Local Authority Treescapes Fund managed by the Woodland Trust is being developed for submission by 30<sup>th</sup> June.
- The team is currently delivering a Biodiversity and also a Composting communications campaign to encourage residents to promote biodiversity through wildlife friendly gardening and also to reduce waste by home composting. The campaigns have been positively received with around 1,000 new sign ups to our Greener Gloucestershire newsletter and over 2,500 entries to a competition to win a hot composting bin.
- Good progress is now being made on developing a plan for using the £900k remaining within the Salix loan fund. an interim member of staff is developing energy efficiency projects with Property colleagues. The fund needs to be spent by Sept 25.

### **Travellers Service**

- New meters have been introduced at all four of the GCC Traveller Sites to allow easier "top up" payments by residents and also to reduce the risk of fraudulent use. Early indications are that electricity usage has reduced as a result of the switch.

## **6.0 Employment and Skills**

### **Co-Ordination of E & S Priorities in Gloucestershire**

#### **Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)**

- The draft report has been shared for internal GCC use by Business West and the HoES is attending the report launch event on 20<sup>th</sup> July. The HoES will also share the findings with the Shared Intelligence team when able to do so, in order to make sure that the Gloucestershire Economic Strategy takes the LSIP findings into account. Once DfE has approved the report, the focus will be on the next phase of the work i.e., working with local partners including GCC, colleges,

independent training providers and universities to shape provision to deliver programmes and courses that meet the needs of local businesses. Timescales for the next phase have been confirmed as:

June – July 2023	<p><b>+15 June:</b> Receive feedback on phase 1 LSIP report (will receive an outline if DfE require further evidence, clarification etc.)</p> <p><b>23 June:</b> Opportunity to address clarifications and resubmit phase 1 LSIP report</p> <p><b>30 June:</b> Deadline for stage 2 application</p> <p><b>July:</b> DfE panel decision making on stage 2 applications.</p> <p><b>+21 July:</b> Approval by Secretary of State of stage 2 applications</p>
August 2023	Decision will be made on phase 2 applications by DfE this month
September 2023 – March 2024	Final resubmission of LSIP Report and Roadmap (if required) early September – if so, approval and publish by October

### Careers Support

- National Careers Service (NCS) – The Local Area Board (LAB) meeting with SeeTec Pluss took place on 7<sup>th</sup> June and this included a helpful summary of the customer data and explanation of the challenges the team has had in moving to another provider (Standguide) and new systems and processes.

### Employment & Skills Chapter of Economic Strategy

- HoES, SLfIE and HoAE have received the ‘peer review’ draft of the strategy and have been requested to provide feedback by 24<sup>th</sup> June to Shared Intelligence colleagues.

### Social Value

- HoES to meet with Social Value Lead in July and August to develop local ‘directory’ and key contacts for employment and skills social value for use with organisations that secure contracts with GCC. HoES discussing with GCC Procurement team and Social Value Portal colleagues ways to incorporate specific measures/initiatives e.g. White Ribbon, links to the Careers Hub and Employment & Skills Hub, etc.

### Specific Employment & Skills initiatives

#### ‘Green’/sustainable skills

- HoES continuing to work with Gloucestershire College on green construction centre development in Cheltenham and will ask SGS College to provide an update on the SDF and SEDF-funded green skills project, as the GEGJC’s last meeting in September will happen too soon for this.

#### Provision for NEETs and preventing young people becoming NEET

- Very limited external funding for NEET prevention/provision remains a significant concern.

### Support for refugees and asylum seekers

- HoES and staff from Adult Education and the E & S Hub are developing a summary of services available for refugees and asylum seekers for initial discussion with the Homes for Ukraine team and GARAS, with the aim of providing effective and suitably resourced provision for these customer groups. HoES responded on behalf of GCC to the Southwest ESOL Strategy survey prepared by SW Councils and will follow-up contact to ensure GCC's involvement in the refresh of the strategy.

### **Adult Education Service**

- Ofsted Full Inspection took place w/c 9<sup>th</sup> May for 4 full days with Sarah Carne (HoS) as lead/nominee. This was the first full inspection since 2014 and the first under the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF).
- The final grades are: (Inspectors pointed out that it is hard to achieve a GOOD grading on the new framework as it is tougher than the previous framework).
  - Leadership and Management – GOOD (areas of outstanding)
  - Behaviours and Attitudes – GOOD (areas of outstanding)
  - Personal Development – GOOD
  - Quality of Education – GOOD
  - Adult Provision – GOOD
  - Apprenticeships – GOOD
  - Safeguarding – GOOD
  - Overall Effectiveness – GOOD)

These grades are now final and have been through the Ofsted Quality Assurance process. The report was accepted by the HoS and has now been published on the Ofsted and Adult Education website.

- The DWP ESOL courses – final contracts are being signed with a view to run 6-week courses, 16 hours a week to cohorts of learners provided to us by the DWP. All courses must be completed by the end of July 2023.
- 2022-2023 Subcontractor agreement work is ongoing with cabinet process set to meet all deadlines.

### **Multiply**

- 6 Fixed term contract tutors have been recruited, all have start dates and some have already started to deliver with great outcomes and positive feedback especially for the NumberFit courses.
- Year 2 partner grant letters have been sent out and all partners are delivering across the county with good learner numbers being processed.
- National Numeracy Champions are being recruited across the county with 258 people already registering for the Numeracy Challenge and 24 to be champions.

### **Employment & Skills Hub**

- We are finalising our “Partnership Agreement” with Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) for formal signing by Cllr Phil Robinson in June. This will formalise and strengthen our relationship with DWP and help underpin the employment support aspects of a future county deal.
- Interviews for the three manager posts under the interim structure have now been completed which has enabled two members of the team to progress into these roles. We will now undertake a recruitment exercise to backfill these posts and fill

the posts funded by the Integrated Care Board (ICB), funding for which has now been signed off.

### **Employment Programmes**

- We have officially signed a partnership agreement with DWP which will strengthen further our relationship with them allowing us to work together to provide a robust offer for people who are unemployed or economically inactive across Gloucestershire, particularly those who are furthest from the labour market and employers.
- Our BAME research project is now gathering momentum after stalling due to staffing issues. Shared Intelligence will be working alongside Hub staff to complete the surveys and evaluation over the next few months. This work will give us an insight into the experiences of young people from BAME communities particularly in education and employment and will help us to ensure we have the right support in place to help them access employment and training opportunities.
- There is a lot of activity around support for people with mental health issues with changes to the IPS (Individual Placement and Support) eligibility criteria, money for employment support in IAPT (primary care) and community mental health transformation. We are working with GHC and providers to establish the pathways and ensure that we have a coordinated approach to supporting people with mental health issues – we are seeing the numbers of people presenting with mental health issues increase across all of our programmes and services.
- After months of work, we have been invited by the John Lewis Partnership to be part of their *Building Happier Futures* programme which offers opportunities to care experienced young people to join their business. This is a national scheme which is not available in every area and we are privileged to be asked to be the Gloucestershire partner.
- **Headline figures:**
  - 866 referrals into E&S Hub to date – target 1000 by the end of September 2023
  - 12 interns (from a cohort of 29) have already secured work following their supported internship and we await news on others
  - 175 referrals into the ESHO Project to the 20<sup>th</sup> of June – we continue to work with Districts to look at continued funding through the UKSPF

- **REPORT END** -