

**COUNTY COUNCIL – September 2023  
PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

<p><b>1. Questioner's name: Cath Hodsman</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</b></p>
<p>I would like to know why Glos' County Council contractors mowed verges just outside the centre of Cirencester on, or before the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023. (see pic attached) The area I am referring to are verges on the roads leading up to Dobbie's garden centre and the roads off and leading up to the main Tesco roundabout. (A419 etc)? In fact, all of the verges in that area..</p> <p>Just days before, the verges were full of flora and fauna and there was a sign on them stating that it was a "<b>Wildflower meadow trial. No cutting</b>". I would be very grateful if you could advise me of the thinking and wisdom behind these acts. Is this an example of contractors' error or a policy of the usual wholesale verge mowing? I'm puzzled as there was no loss of vision for drivers. I would also like to know why a thin strip couldn't have been mowed as a compromise, rather than the destruction of the whole verge?</p> <p>On a final verge-care note: Verges in the wider area, which hadn't been mowed, were greener. It's a commonly known fact that lush vegetation reduces moisture-loss and keeps the ground cooler, (something that is of increasing importance in current times) in addition to providing essential habitat and interconnected wildlife highways for flora and fauna.</p>	<p>We do understand the importance of our verges and roles they play within the wider ecosystem.</p> <p>Cutting of the dual carriageway in Cirencester was undertaken following a number of public reports and safety inspections that highlighted forward visibility for drivers was being compromised and was an issue for road safety. Visibility splays (the central reservation and a 1m swathe) cuts were undertaken concurrently as significant traffic management is required to undertake the work and to ensure the safety of the workforce and travelling public. The area identified and planted as a trial for wildflowers and signed (on the Swindon arm of the roundabout) was not cut at this time.</p>
<p><b>2. Questioner's name: Georgia Moore</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</b></p>
<p>What is the status of the current TRO already submitted for Minchinhampton Parish, including a 20mph speed limit for Well Hill?</p>	<p>First stage feasibility work, collecting data, site visits and preparing a draft design, has been completed. The project is now at the second stage, which includes informal consultation with local stakeholders including Cllr Turner and the Parish Council. Once this feedback is received the scheme designs / layouts will be reviewed against the feedback and this will form the basis of any proposals that will be taken to formal consultation if this is</p>

	<p>appropriate. This will also form the basis of any Community Match Application that the Parish Council may want to make.</p> <p>Next step will be to invoice the Parish Council for their share of the TRO payment and carry out Formal consultation with the police and statutory stakeholders. This will be followed by a full formal public consultation. Timings for this are difficult to predict until the informal feedback is received but it is likely to be at the end of 2023. Typically formal consultation will last for 21 days.</p>
<p><b>3. Questioner's name: Georgia Moore</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</b></p>
<p>If the status is pending, what is causing the delay?</p>	<p>I am pleased to report that officers are actively working on this scheme.</p> <p>We have a very large TRO work programme this year with over 100 schemes being progressed by officers. Every month those Councillors with TRO schemes in the programme are provided with an update on the TROs in their division.</p> <p>You may find it useful to be in contact with your local Councillor so that they can keep you updated on the progress.</p>
<p><b>4. Questioner's name: Georgia Moore</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</b></p>
<p>What action are GCC taking to tackle the misuse of the lorry management zone running from Avening and Birdlip? This has caused damage to property and many near misses to a lot of residents, including on Well Hill.</p>	<p>The Cotswolds Lorry Management Zone (LMZ) was introduced in April 2009 - HGVs are still permitted to access the area should their point of origin or destination be within the zone. The enforcement body for any vehicles not legitimately allowed to enter the zone is police.</p> <p>Of course with a large scale zone there may well be legitimate access by HGV's that is not in the immediate vicinity of your location or where the lorry was seen.</p> <p>Through the Gloucestershire Road Safety Partnership (RSP) the</p>

	<p>police have developed the Community Matters app to support the Commercial Vehicle Watch project. We encourage residents to download the app to report inconsiderate parking, bad driving, speeding and road restriction contraventions (e.g. weight limit contraventions) by commercial vehicles. Details will be automatically submitted to the Gloucestershire RSP's team, helping gather comprehensive evidence to inform future decisions.</p>
<p><b>5. Questioner's name: Mary Leonard</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman</b></p>
<p>Gloucestershire is a predominately rural parish why is it that the Highways polices are written with an urban bias? We are continually told that there are bigger problems else where in the county in urban areas. In fact, we were told this once again in the public meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 2023. The inference being that rural lives matter less than lives of people in towns and cities. Villages such as Kingswood can have significant highway safety issues but can never compete on volume of traffic. The problems in Kingswood are because of Kingswood being lucky enough to have a fantastic school such as KLB in their parish. Children are bussed in from far and wide. The result is that the roads are not safe for the children of Kingswood to walk to Kingswood Primary or to KLB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. When will Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) have polices that take account of the rural nature of Gloucestershire and start taking account of safety for the many people who live in villages and rural locations.</li> <li>ii. When will GCC assess the significant dangers that the children from Kingswood face walking to school, due to the large number of children who are either bussed or driven to KLB.</li> </ul>	<p>In November 2022 Cabinet agreed a Road Safety Strategy that applies across the county in both rural &amp; urban areas. The Council's policy is underpinned by the high level of concern about the rise in the number of fatalities and serious injuries across Gloucestershire. We are serious about making Gloucestershire safer for our residents and this is why we focus our resources on those areas where people from our communities are being killed, or being injured, particularly where those injuries are serious. Our road safety policy is entirely consistent with this approach whether this is in our rural or urban areas, but our resources and officer time need to be focused on those areas where we know we can make a real impact.. To underpin this we increased the budget by £800,000 this year to help make our roads safer.</p> <p>Collisions happen for a variety of reasons – most are due to driver inattention or error, but sometimes just down to pure chance when circumstances align to result in something quite tragic for those involved. As Road Safety experts &amp; engineers, we use data from Police reports of collisions resulting in personal injuries – they are measured as those killed, seriously injured or slightly injured.</p> <p>We use the data in several ways – to look at junctions and route lengths across the entire 3,500 mile road network. We analyse the data over a rolling period, shortlisting sites where we feel</p>

iii. When will GCC access and put in solutions to the lack of safe crossing points, the give way point on Wotton Road, the parked cars outside of KLB and on Wotton Road and the speed of the traffic on Wotton Road.

engineering intervention i.e. by physically altering the road layout or road infrastructure could make a difference. Through our prioritisation process, those sites that score highest are then considered first for a safety scheme.

By carrying out an annual review of the collision data we are able to take into consideration changes in road safety across the road network from year to year, from site to site – so that we are always focusing our efforts where they hopefully will do the most good.

ii. My local Area Team have contacted adjacent landowners, to ensure that private hedges are cut back and to avoid any footpath encroachment. Nearly all hedges are landowner responsibility - any hedges that the Council owns are cut back annually over winter as part of our cyclical work programmes. The bus operators that go through the area and take children to KLB school are not GCC led services. We have made contact to ask if they would consider an alternative route, but as yet to no avail.

iii. The lining at the give way point on Wotton Road has recently been refreshed (as well as the other lining through Kingswood), to further highlight to vehicles the road layout and seek driver compliance. The lining outside KLB and leading into Kingswood was refreshed last year to deter parents from parking outside the school at pick-up/drop-off time.

There are multiple dropped kerb crossing points through Kingswood with tactile paving on the approach. The Parish Council have been advised that to prevent vehicles from parking near the give-way section in Kingswood, would require a new TRO for parking restrictions. However, the residents of the adjacent properties would more than likely object during the statutory consultation.

	<p>At a recent meeting held in Kingswood Parish Hall, the Police advised they have recently undertaken speed surveys in the area. These results determined that there was a very small minority that were speeding through the village and that the Police would be continuing speed checks within the area.</p>
<p><b>6. Questioner's name: Mary Leonard</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b></p>
<p>We now understand that the Applegates school bus service is a commercial service, and the route is registered with the Office for the Traffic Commissioner.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Has GCC contacted The Office for the Traffic Commissioner and informed them that this route poses significant risk to the children of Kingswood and that there is an alternative route which needs to be considered as a matter of urgency. If this has not been done why not?</li> <li>II. The vehicles employed by Applegates are not fit for purpose as they are too large to negotiate normal sized junctions. When will GCC stipulate the maximum vehicle size for rural environments so that they can turn right or left without having to mount the kerb or collide with pedestrians or parked vehicles.</li> <li>III. What contact has GCC had with south Gloucestershire County Council (SGCC) to discuss the significant risk that the Euro Coaches that are tendered by them pose to the children of Kingswood walking to school.</li> <li>IV. Given that highways in rural villages were designed for the horse and cart and bicycle in the 1800s and have not been improved since when will GCC take action to make these highways safer for pedestrians of all ages</li> </ol>	<p>The Office for the Traffic Commissioner is responsible for regulating bus services. Contacting the Commissioner, now that a review by GCC Highways has been urgently completed due to the concerns raised, is a possible course of action. However, at this stage we have only shared the report with the County Councillor and the Parish Council. In producing the report, the Road Safety team made a number of visits to the area and met representatives on site.</p> <p>Whilst the Council has no legislative control over vehicles providing commercial bus services, however, I am of the view that it is not necessarily the size of the Applegates or Eurocoaches that are the key factor here. I am happy to share details of the background that officers have provided to me and a copy of the accident plot of the wider area.</p> <p>This underpins the Council's duty of care to its communities.</p> <p>We liaise with SGCC routinely on operational matters, however, I will now ensure that we specifically raise this concern with them.</p>

and publicly admit it has a duty of care for us all.

**7. Questioner's name: Chris White**

**Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray**

**Subject M5 Junction 9 A46**

I posed a question at the GGC Council meeting in May 2023, to which I would like to seek clarification, as I was not available to provide follow-up questions at the time.

Question 28. Questioner's name: Chris White Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray.

What are the council's views on using the '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?

**Answer received**

The 'Grey Route' option does not reduce M5 Junction 9 to only 2 way.

**My follow-up questions**

In our MP's statement, in Westminster Hall, he clearly states, 'the grey route proposal to half-close junction 9 — should be taken off the table completely.

Hansard, 9th May 2023

[A46 at Tewkesbury - Hansard - UK Parliament](#)

1. Are you stating in your response that Junction 9 will remain 4 way, on and off to the north and south?

1 - The grey option would elongate the M5 J9 junction. The elongated junction option would continue to provide north and south facing slip roads, but with a new link road between the north facing slips at their present location and new south facing slips relocated further south.

2 – I cannot comment on Laurence Robertson's views. I have stated above that the grey route would continue to provide all movements at M5 J9.

3 - Various options are currently being assessed and some will be discounted prior to public consultation on the basis of their relative technical merit. This is consistent with the DfT's guidance (TAG – Transport Assessment Guidance) on the approach to assess the viability of larger highway schemes.

<p>2. If so, what do you understand half closure to mean in terms of changes to the current entry/exit layout?</p> <p>3. Given LR's specific challenge about the 'grey route', will this be removed prior to the Public Consultation?</p>	
<p><b>8. Questioner's name: Chris White</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</b></p>
<p>As the consultation into the changes to the A46 and M5 has now been put back even further, can you please provide the revised timetable through to completion of the changes to the M5 and A46?</p>	<p>There was a recent National Highways' announcement confirming that pipeline schemes would now be progressed as part of the RIS 4 programme rather than RIS 3. This means that the scheme would be constructed between 2030 and 2035, should the scheme be entered into the RIS 4 programme by DfT.</p> <p>We are working with stakeholders, including National Highways, Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) and the Garden Town team to re-programme the scheme to account for these changes and to align further with the emerging joint local plan process.</p>
<p><b>9. Questioner's name: Chris White</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</b></p>
<p>A recent Gateway Review by Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) into the planning process of the Garden Town (GT) states, TBC GT planning, did not involve coordinating with GCC over changes needed to the A46. Therefore, how could GCC forge ahead with plans to change the A46 and M5 without proper consultation with TBC, as well as the developing plans for the GT?</p>	<p>I'm not able to comment specifically on information that you are referring to that we provided by TBC officers, hence you might be best placed to contact TBC for clarification.</p> <p>However, I am happy to confirm that GCC and TBC have continuously and positively liaised over improvements to the A46 / M5 J9 scheme, including reviewing proposals and accounting for the proposed Garden Town in the design process. Indeed TBC is a member of the A46 / M5 J9 Programme Board, which meets regularly to discuss issues and approve progress. This liaison will continue in the future.</p>

<b>10. Questioner's name: Chris White</b>	<b>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</b>
<p>With Atkins already planning multiple routes before the final suggestions are made, how much of GCC funds have been spent on planning routes that will never be an option or even having a full understanding of the needs of the GT?</p>	<p>The ongoing scheme development is a filtering process that involves the identification and assessment of a long list of scheme options and continued refinement and short-listing to ensure that a wide range of viable options have been considered before a preferred route is selected. This is consistent with DfT's Transport Assessment Guidance and a pre-requisite for any major transport scheme.</p> <p>This is an essential part of ensuring value for money, as well meeting statutory requirements within the planning process. The emerging short-listed scheme options all align with the present thinking of the Garden Town Master Plan and other developments in the Ashchurch area. As the Garden Town proposals develop further, there will be a further opportunity for any short-listed scheme options to be refined.</p>
<b>11. Questioner's name: Chris White</b>	<b>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</b>
<p>What processes are GCC putting in place to overcome this obvious lack of communication with TBC and the GT team?</p>	<p>I don't agree with you that that there has been an obvious lack of communication.</p> <p>As stated above, GCC and TBC have continuously and positively liaised regarding the emerging A46 / M5 J9 scheme, including reviewing proposals and accounting for the Garden Town in the design process. This includes TBC attending the regular Programme Board meetings. This will continue in the future.</p>
<b>12. Questioner's name: Roderick Rhys Jones</b>	<b>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</b>
<p>Cllr Chloe Turner has advised me to write to you about my concerns about the state of Dark Lane Chalford. She kindly sent me a copy of</p>	<p>Dark Lane is inspected on a routine basis and pothole repairs carried out in accordance with our Highway Safety Inspection</p>

<p>the questions raised by my neighbour Rob Airton (copied)) and answered by Councillor Morris at the meeting in May 2023. I have some further questions on his replies and some ancillary questions. I have also added two photographs of an area of the road that has caused accidents to emergency and other vehicles in the last two years. See attached pdf.</p> <p><a href="https://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/documents/b22340/Council%20Questions%20Wednesday%2024-May-2023%2010.00%20County%20Council.pdf?T=9">https://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/documents/b22340/Council%20Questions%20Wednesday%2024-May-2023%2010.00%20County%20Council.pdf?T=9</a></p> <p>Question 16: when was the road inspected, by whom and can we see the report?</p> <p>Question 17: what are the results of the trialling of different materials? What is the result of the investigation of the holes in Dark Lane promised in the answer?</p> <p>Question 18: Could we see a copy of the report of the visit on 16 February 2023?</p> <p>Question 19: The road in question is only 2.0 metre wide at its narrowest with a high wall on one side and a ditch on the other this makes the issue of the verges particularly important. Is Cllr Morris aware of this narrowness?</p> <p>Question 20: Thank you for response we will reported mud on the road to 08000514514 at the next downpour.</p> <p>Question 21: the siting and collection of signs has improved.</p> <p>Question 22: Noted</p>	<p>Policy. The road was last inspected on 31 August 2023 where five safety defects were identified for repair. In addition, we also carry out inspections in response to reports of potholes that we receive from the public.</p> <p>Progress on the use of new materials has been positive, although further appraisal is required to provide a more qualitative overview and how it fairs over the forthcoming winter. Our audit of repairs done in March did not highlight any workmanship issues on those pothole repairs completed. We have carried out further repairs in August and our audits on these have highlighted 2 non-standard repairs which have been picked up for remedial action.</p> <p>With 75% of our road network being rural, the Cabinet Member is conscious that many roads are narrow and steep, as well as being lined with dry stone walls or buildings and that they present a challenge in comparison to flat roads. More so due to surface water run-off helping pothole formation and high wear from vehicles accelerating and braking on the steep inclines. They often present a technical and logistical challenge to carry out pothole repairs and resurfacing due to the size of our equipment. However we do operate small vans for these circumstances, but they have more limited capacity for carrying materials and tools so repairs sometimes take longer and/or require several visits.</p>
<p><b>13. Questioner's name: Roderick Rhys Jones</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</b></p>
<p>Is Cllr Morris aware that the surface of Dark Lane at the junction of Commercial Road has been destroyed. Along 7.5 metres of road</p>	<p>Currently Dark Lane is not in our forward programme for resurfacing, but our local depot team will continue to monitor the</p>

<p>there are approximately 25 filled in pot holes and a similar number of potholes that need filling – see photographs? Is he aware that in the last two years a number of vehicles have lost traction at this junction due to the state of the surface and become stuck, blocking the road and requiring recovery services? These included a police car, a district nurse on call and a number of delivery and service vehicles.</p> <p>Is he aware of how important this road is for Chalford, France Lynch, and Bussage residents to access the A419 when adjacent access roads (Old Neighbourhood and Toadsmoor) are closed?</p> <p>Does he appreciate that for these reason it is therefore important that Dark Lane is brought up to the standard of its access roads?</p> <p>Would Cllr Morris arrange for the resurfacing of Dark Lane between Skiveralls and the A419? Would he be willing to meet us on site to look at the extent of the problem?</p>	<p>area, and we will continue to inspect this road and similar rural roads to respond to any defects reported ahead of any future resurfacing plans.</p> <p>Dark Lane is a Class 4 road, very narrow and steep. It would not form part of any local diversion route in the unlikely event that both Toadsmoor Road and Old Neighbourhood Road would be closed at the same time – not something our streetworks team would agree to. A more suitable diversion route would be used to divert local traffic.</p> <p>Our capital resurfacing schemes are prioritised by data and programmed by financial year; however, the effects of winter weather often change priorities and therefore our programmes change – new urgent schemes are prioritised, other are postponed diverting resources to more urgent works elsewhere in the county. A local example of this is the A419 London Road from Bowbridge crossroads to Chalford. This is likely to be our biggest (longest) resurfacing scheme this financial year in the whole county, in the region of a £1.0M investment, being delivered 12th September to 17th October (night-time working).</p>
<p><b>14. Questioner's name: Sharon Phelps</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b></p>
<p>In the letter sent to all Councillors on 23 June, it highlighted Freedom of Information evidence of the impact on the staff team at Heart of the Forest Community School. In addition to those questions answered, the information on disciplinaries and Occupational Health referrals were refused due to the time it would take to get the information (which would seem to indicate high levels of each). What policies and procedures does Gloucestershire County Council have in place to identify a red flag highlighting where significant numbers from either a particular team or establishment (eg as seen previously in the serious bullying culture at Gloucestershire Industrial Services) have high numbers of</p>	<p>Policies and procedures in relation to a school are set by the governors of the school. Whilst model procedures are provided by Gloucestershire County Council that schools may use or adapt, due to the nature of the delegated responsibilities, there is no requirement for schools to follow the council's model procedures, nor to buy into its Traded Services for functions such as Human Resources (HR), Payroll or Occupational Health (OH). As such, governors are not obliged to notify GCC of any disciplinary matters. Referrals to OH are confidential unless the individual agrees for the council to be included in the sharing of the report. It is for the</p>

<p>disciplinaries, referrals to Occupational Health and resignations?</p> <p><b>Follow Up Question</b>          If there are Policies and Procedures in place, why did they not highlight to the relevant Team the high rates of staff turnover, disciplinaries and Occupational Health referrals at Heart of the Forest Community School, and why were these not followed up?</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>If the Council does not have any relevant Policies and Procedures to red flag a team/establishment how are they able to fulfil their Duty of Care to staff and safeguard staff from potential bullying and intimidation?</p>	<p>governing board to have in place a process for dealing with any allegations of bullying, or any other grievance. The duty of care to staff is the responsibility of the governing board of the school under their delegated responsibilities.</p> <p>The council aims to work with schools in the county providing support and advice on continuous improvement. All schools are inspected by Ofsted and support is provided to help the school address any recommendations made by the regulator. Additionally, and without compromising the responsibility of the school, complaints or concerns are followed up as appropriate and under the relevant legislative framework.</p>
<p><b>15. Questioner's name: Sharon Phelps</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b></p>
<p>Have the Council instigated a full investigation of the information identified in the Freedom of Information request and in particular requested the information not provided on staff disciplinaries and Occupational Health referrals?</p> <p><b>Follow Up Question</b>          If yes, what was the outcome of this investigation? If not, why does the Council not think that under their Duty of Care to all staff, the staff at Heart of the Forest Community School staff would not be included?</p>	<p>Owing to the delegated responsibilities of the governing board, the Council does not have the powers to intervene in the day-to-day running of the school or undertake an investigation of the kind described.</p> <p>However, and as stated in the response to question 14, the council aims to work with schools in the county providing support and advice on continuous improvement. All schools are inspected by Ofsted and support is provided to help the school address any recommendations made by the regulator. Additionally, and without compromising the responsibility of the school, complaints or concerns are followed up as appropriate and under the relevant legislative framework.</p>

<p><b>16. Questioner's name: Sharon Phelps</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b></p>
<p>There have been Constructive Dismissal claims against the School as a result of bullying and intimidation. There would have been evidence used in these cases that the School and their Solicitors must have received. Why did anyone from HR/Education Department not want to look at this evidence (from the School and the staff member) which would have provided the balance of what had been happening at the School, rather than just listening to the Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team. Especially if these cases were agreed out of Court which you may indicate School there was a case to answer. What policy and procedures are in place to have independent scrutiny where cases have been settled out of court?</p> <p><b>Follow up Question</b> If not, why does the Council not think they would get a better understanding of the culture within a team/establishment that preceded the Constructive Dismissal case and could make recommendation as appropriate?</p>	<p>GCC has no powers to undertake independent scrutiny of school employee cases settled out of court.</p> <p>Schools may seek independent legal advice and any case brought at an Employment Tribunal is brought against the governing board of the school and not the local authority.</p> <p>Policies and procedures are for the governors of the school to set. Whilst model procedures are provided by GCC, due to the nature of the delegated responsibilities, there is no requirement for schools to follow the council's model procedures, nor to buy into its Traded Services for these functions e.g. HR, Payroll, OH. As such governors are not obliged to notify or involve the council in any disciplinary matters.</p>
<p><b>17. Questioner's name: Edward Weir</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</b></p>
<p>I would be grateful if you could confirm whether or not GCC buildings are safe from RAAC-associated risks. I'm particularly concerned about Gastrells school in Stroud and places like Stroud library.</p> <p>It would be good to know (a) that there is no RAAC within these buildings (b) that these buildings have been properly inspected by structural engineers and passed as safe.</p> <p>It is not sufficient to confirm that no risks have been identified, as this implies, but does not confirm, that this follows full surveys by</p>	<p>We are currently undertaking risk assessments of other council buildings and will be taking similar actions as outlined for schools.</p> <p>Gartrell's School has been assessed and does not contain any RAAC.</p>

<p>independent structural engineers. Please note therefore that my question is whether all buildings have been professional inspected and actively declared safe by people qualified to make this declaration.</p>	
<p><b>18. Questioner's name: Katya Laug</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b></p>
<p>Would Council outline their expectations for actions taken in the following scenario: a school had a change in leadership and subsequently serious concerns about staff and student safety, extremely high number of staff leavers, high percentage of sick leave, significant number of staff referred to Occupational Health for stress and Mental Health, and multiple allegations regarding bullying and intimidation, was brought to the attention of various stakeholders within the council. These concerns would have been raised by governors past and present, staff past and present - through whistleblowing and grievances - trade unions, parents past and present, and family and friends of present and former staff."</p>	<p>GCC always listens to complaints and concerns arising in maintained schools referred to the Council. We take them seriously and follow the formal processes available to us in line with our duties to look into those concerns.</p> <p>GCC's School Improvement team work closely with all maintained schools to ensure schools are well-supported and improving.</p> <p>Ofsted is the external regulator of schools, and they provide that objective review of the school through the school inspection process. Members of our School Improvement team will come alongside a school throughout an inspection and attend the inspection feedback session so that the School Improvement service are sighted on any issues arising and can support the school to plan and deliver any improvements.</p> <p>Where concerns are raised with the Council, complainants will be directed to follow either the school's own complaints procedure or its grievance procedure. As outlined in terms of delegated responsibilities, the Council has no ability to intervene in employment matters delegated to the Governing Board.</p>
<p><b>19. Questioner's name: Michael Bloxham</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</b></p>
<p>Approaching 3000 people so far have signed a petition against the imposition of the draconian parking regulations of Zone 15 in</p>	<p>The details of the parking surveys carried out for Cheltenham Zone 15 have been available for the public to view since the informal</p>

<p>Cheltenham.  <a href="https://www.change.org/p/stop-the-enforced-parked-permit-scheme-zone-15-cheltenham">https://www.change.org/p/stop-the-enforced-parked-permit-scheme-zone-15-cheltenham</a>  The parking surveys were carried out both pre and during lockdown. This data, due to changes in commuting, working from home and shopping habits, is now obsolete. Data collected during covid is not fit for purpose for very obvious reasons and should of never been used.  GCC have now stated in its FAQ on social media, that a third survey was carried out post lockdown.  “ Surveys were completed before, during, and after the Covid lockdown. The results were reviewed with local councillors and were shared with residents in the first consultation to define the scheme boundaries and sense check the initial proposals”  This contradicts the following published information from GCC.  “Parking surveys were carried out across Gloucestershire in 2020. The surveys took place across two weekdays and two Saturdays, with counts being taken during the AM-peak, inter-peak, and PM-peak for each day. This was undertaken for Cheltenham before a UK wide COVID-19 lockdown took place as well as during the lockdown in late May and early June.”  There has been no mention of this post lockdown survey in any of the correspondence or in the TRO so it is very surprising to see GCC use it as a justification for this unwanted scheme.  Can you please provide the dates when the post lockdown survey was carried out, along with the data collected?</p>	<p>consultation: <a href="https://www.change.org/p/stop-the-enforced-parked-permit-scheme-zone-15-cheltenham">SNC-Lavalin Atkins 16x9 Template</a> (<a href="https://firebasestorage.googleapis.com">firebasestorage.googleapis.com</a>)  You are aware of the Councils FAQ’s that have been published on our website and these are designed to help people to understand the operational arrangements and provisions within the zone.   Officers have also recently uploaded a short summary of the process followed in analysing, proposing, consulting on and adjusting the zone proposals. I do hope that this has provided you with some reassurance of the process followed as I appreciate that not everyone has been able to read the full, and very thorough, TRO report that has been published on our website for the last 10 weeks.   Lockdown had begun to be eased by the time of the second survey (Saturday 30th May 2020 and Tuesday 2nd June 2020). Therefore, this survey took place during the overall COVID-19 lockdown process (starting in March 2020), but also after the initial lockdown period (March 2020-May 2020).  There has not been a third Survey for Zone 15.   I’m not entirely clear on the issue being raised here. It is clear that you don’t support the need for managing parking in the wider zone and you indicate that the previous surveys were flawed or obsolete due to their timing during Covid. Whilst I don’t agree that this is the case, I think we all recognise that, if anything, surveys during Covid would have under-estimated the impact of commuter parking on our residents rather than somehow create a stronger rationale for managing the parking.</p>
<p><b>20. Questioner’s name: Stella Hobley</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent’s name: Cllr Dom Morris</b></p>
<p>Almost 3,000 people so far have signed a petition online or in shops and businesses against the imposition of the overly restrictive Zone 15 permit parking scheme. See:</p>	<p>The Council’s Monitoring Officer, has confirmed to you in writing that, he is satisfied Gloucestershire County Council has acted lawfully and proportionately, in the implementation of Zone 15. In</p>

[Petition · Stop the enforced Parked Permit scheme Zone 15 Cheltenham. · Change.org](#)

The second point in your Vision statement, as you will be well aware, states that it is to **'help improve the quality of life for every community'**.

I contend that that this scheme **does not** do that for the residents and businesses in the vast Zone 15 area.

These oppressive parking restrictions, with an online only permit application process, clearly discriminate against those who do not have access to, do not know how to or do not wish to use an online system (which may not even be secure) and a strict limit of 50 visitor parking permits per year and swathes of double and single yellow lines (with no parking 8am-8pm, 365 days a year}, clearly do not help residents and local businesses to have a better **'quality of life'**.

How can you argue that it will **'increase residents' chances of finding a parking space in their own neighbourhood'** as Alexis Newport, Parking Manager, claimed in her letter to some residents in July 2022? There has not been an issue regarding parking in most areas of Zone 15 and, where there are issues, you have used a huge sledgehammer to crack a small nut.

What are the viable greener options available to the people of Cheltenham to go about their daily lives? Where are the local buses that you keep promising? Services continue to be cut. There are no local buses in Zone 15 so how are the elderly and less mobile going to get into town, get to church or see friends and family? This is another example of discrimination.

On Human Rights grounds alone you are depriving people of their freedoms, flexibility and spontaneity and you have the audacity to charge them for this infringement of their rights.

Separately, please could you provide a copy of the security audit and assessment report that Chipside is required to have obtained from a recognised independent security company? With Cheltenham as The National Cyber Innovation Centre, it would

particular, in relation to Article 8, this is a qualified right rather than an absolute right, which means it can be interfered with in order to protect the rights of other individuals or the wider public interest.

In this case, the introduction of the scheme was necessary in order to effectively manage parking within the area after councillors and local residents expressed concerns about the impact of long stay commuter parking and the risks of parking displacement into other streets when existing zones are expanded.

All representations made during the formal consultation period were analysed and considered in line with the legislative process. The outcome of this process, resulted in a number of modifications to the scheme, which have been detailed within the published TRO report. The analysis considers and addresses all the feedback, and an overwhelming opposition to Cheltenham Zone 15 was not found to be the case.

Although the petition against Cheltenham Zone 15 was created after the formal consultation period, further FAQs have been added to the engagement website to address the issues raised in the petition and a summary of the process that has been followed has been added as I appreciate that not everyone has been able to read the full, and very thorough, TRO report that has been published on our website for the last 10 weeks.

[\(9b4fe2645770905be0bb957519af1e76\\_Cheltenham\\_TRO\\_Report\\_Full\\_v3 - signed.pdf \(amazonaws.com\)\)](#).

Prior to the implementation of Cheltenham Zone 15, many communities expressed concerns about on-street parking in residential areas where there is high demand for on street parking. The responses to the consultation also highlight that many people considered parking an issue.

Our surveys found that 80% of parking spaces in the area were

reflect badly on you as the employer of Chipside if the MIPemit system has not been rigorously checked and a data breach, similar to that which happened to the Northern Ireland Police, happened here.

filled on weekdays, and that many of these were non-local vehicles. This indicates commuters and shoppers were competing with residents for space to park and it is affecting locals' ability to find spaces when needed.

The main benefit of Cheltenham Zone 15 is that parking for residents is prioritised over others.

The chances of finding a parking space as a local resident will increase due to no longer having to compete with commuters or long stay shoppers. By removing non-local all-day parking, spaces can be used by residents and those visiting them.

The aim for the scheme is to keep parking spaces which are within a 15-20 minute walk from the town centre prioritised for residents. We want to encourage commuters to use car parks or travel more sustainably. The parking scheme will cover a larger area than is currently used by commuters as we want to avoid simply moving the issue to other nearby roads.

As detailed on the GCC Highways website ([Resident permits and visitor vouchers - Highways \(gloucestershire.gov.uk\)](https://www.gcc.gov.uk/resident-permits-and-visitor-vouchers-highways)), residents can apply for a permit by telephone if they do not have access to the internet.

The council has a contract in place with Chipside that outlines the security measures that the supplier is required to undertake to secure GCC data.

A Data Protection Impact Assessment was undertaken in March 2022 in relation to the contract. And there is absolutely no evidence to suggest that the current system is not secure.

Chipside take data security extremely seriously and have PCI/DSS Level 1 accreditation in relation to their systems and they also have

	<p>Cyber Essentials accreditation, the supplier also has an Information Security Policy where system vulnerability testing is undertaken, including internal and external penetration tests and assessments.</p>
<p><b>21. Questioner's name: Howard Eason</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Phil Robinson</b></p>
<p>Why has the authority not stepped in to address the huge loss of staff, and increased absence due to illness and stress?</p>	<p>I presume this question is referring to the Heart of the Forest Special Community school. GCC always listens to complaints and concerns arising in maintained schools referred to the Council. We take them seriously and follow the formal processes available to us in line with our duties to look into those concerns.</p> <p>GCC's School Improvement team work closely with all maintained schools to ensure schools are well-supported and improving.</p> <p>Due to the delegated responsibilities of the governing board, the Council does not have the powers to intervene in the day-to-day running of the school or to 'step-in' as described.</p>
<p><b>22. Questioner's name: Howard Eason</b></p>	<p><b>Respondent's name: Cllr Phil Robinson</b></p>
<p>Why didn't the local authority investigate this?</p>	<p>I presume this question is referring to the Heart of the Forest Special Community school. GCC always listens to complaints and concerns arising in maintained schools referred to the Council. We always take them seriously and follow the formal processes available to us in line with our duties to look into those concerns. GCC's School Improvement team work closely with all maintained schools to ensure schools are well-supported and improving.</p> <p>Due to the delegated responsibilities of the governing board, the Council does not have the powers to intervene in the day to day running of the school or undertake an investigation of the kind described.</p>

<b>23. Questioner's name: Bryan Cooper</b>	<b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b>
Given the content of the letter dated 22nd August 2023, sent to all councillors and relevant heads of departments at Shire Hall, does the council realise that an independent investigation is now necessary, and will it commit to organising this as a matter of urgency.	Owing to the delegated responsibilities of the governing board, the Council does not have the powers to intervene in the day-to-day running of the school or undertake an investigation of the kind described.
<b>24. Questioner's name: Bryan Cooper</b>	<b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b>
In the event that the Governors of the Heart of the Forest Community Special School are involved in litigation as a result of allegations of intimidation and bullying of staff members, and results in the Governors settling those claims, does the council receive full copies of documentation relating to the litigation and what steps would the council take to ensure the Governors are not facing similar litigation in the future.	The governing board may seek its own legal advice that does not involve the Council. As such the documentation for any case will be between the governing body and their legal representatives.
<b>25. Questioner's name: Maria Ardley</b>	<b>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</b>
I'd like to ask for the specifics on the historic reasons for not installing solar PV on county-owned properties, such as schools and colleges, and for not enabling capacity to enact this across the county.	There are a number of GCC properties where solar panels have been installed. These are generally provided on buildings during their construction or significant refurbishment. Shire Hall and Quayside House have significant solar panel provision as well as in new schools including the new Cheltenham Secondary School. Retrofit roof mounted installations were previously planned for many GCC premises but the feed in tariff changed during its planning stage that resulted in the abandonment of the proposals. Investigations are underway looking at current opportunities. As part of the One Public Estate Programme we are working with Stroud District Council who are leading a pilot project looking at retrofitting public buildings. This will be used to inform future policy development. If you would like to get in touch with any specific

	building then I will see how we can assist.
<b>26. Questioner's name: Ian weaving</b>	<b>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</b>
<p>Review agreement</p> <p>We are requesting that a review of the scheme takes place within 3 months.</p> <p>We have real concerns that if a review is not granted promptly, the damage to businesses due to loss of staff will be significant. Also, the isolation being created due to virtual permits on the old and vulnerable will have a detrimental impact on resident's mental health</p> <p>As there have been many issues with the previous Atkins parking survey, for example incorrect data and poor consultation, how can Gloucestershire County Council guarantee that the review of the scheme which has been agreed with MP Alex Chalk will be conducted in an unbiased , fair and timely manner?</p>	<p>It has been agreed to review the Zone 15 scheme in 12 months' time. This is considered to give sufficient time for the scheme to bed in and the changing nature of the parking demands, throughout the year to be experienced, whilst the scheme is in place.</p> <p>All public consultation and communication in relation to Cheltenham Zone 15 to date has followed the statutory TRO process. The review of Cheltenham Zone 15 will also follow relevant statutory procedure.</p> <p>The review is good practice for any new zone but will also help to ensure that the days and hours of operation of the zone, its benefit or impact on residents and the operational provisions (vouchers, permits mix of bays) are appropriate for the needs of the area.</p> <p>Regarding local businesses, short stay parking bays are provided as part of the scheme. This will encourage people to access local services free of charge, and then move on to leave the space for others providing a higher turnover of visitors for the local shops and trade. The aim of the scheme is to ensure that space is available for residents and short stay visitors using local business and services.</p> <p>As detailed on the GCC Highways website (<a href="http://www.goucestershire.gov.uk">Resident permits and visitor vouchers - Highways (goucestershire.gov.uk)</a>), residents can apply for a permit by telephone if they do not have access to the internet.</p> <p>More detailed Zone 15 FAQs are also available <a href="#">Cheltenham</a></p>

	<a href="https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/parking-zone-15-faqs-highways">Parking Zone 15 FAQs - Highways (gloucestershire.gov.uk)</a>
<b>27. Questioner's name: Adrian Oldman</b>	<b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b>
<p>I understand that GCC has been given £2.2m additional funding by central Government to spend over the next two financial years. I understand that this funding can be spent on supporting existing services, enhancing existing services or for new bus services. Stagecoach tells me that they have given the council several ideas for what they can spend it on, some of which includes enhancements for services in Stroud in the evenings and weekends. Can you please advise how that additional funding is to be allocated?</p>	<p>Recognising the increasing possibility of bus service withdrawals and the slower recovery of patronage levels, which continues to put pressure on the commercial market, the County Council, alongside the County Councils' Network' has continued to lobby DfT for additional funding to support bus services in rural areas.</p> <p>We were therefore delighted with the DfT award of £2.2m in 2023/24, with more to potentially come in 2024/25. This is great news for our communities and current and prospective bus users in Gloucestershire.</p> <p>There are numerous ideas to be reviewed, including those submitted by Operators. These ideas are being reviewed to see if they meet 2 criteria; a) meet the DfT's requirement for spend on bus services, and b) have a high likelihood of being commercially sustainable at the end of the funding period in April 2025.</p> <p>A proposal covering will be brought to the GCC Cabinet meeting of 20 September 2023.</p>
<b>28. Questioner's name: Adrian Oldman</b>	<b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b>
<p>There have been a number of discussions and suggestions that the area of Merrywalks bus stops is to be improved imminently. Can the Council please confirm the extent and commencement date for these works.</p>	<p>Thank you for your work with Officers from the Integrated Transport Unit so far to discuss Merrywalks bus stops. As you'll know from your work at these meetings, the project is not yet at a stage where designs and timelines can be confirmed.</p> <p>Funding is already agreed from the GCC Capital programme, with a bid also being made to the Stroud CIL fund. I would encourage the local community and local member to lobby Stroud District Council for contributions from their CIL fund as I think we both agree that this would be entirely appropriate use of CIL funding that</p>

	<p>the Council otherwise struggles to get access to for key projects such as this.</p> <p>Once a final funding package is secured, a design can be shared for review and a timeline for installation agreed.</p>
<b>29. Questioner's name: Adrian Oldman</b>	<b>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</b>
<p>Given the fact that £20,000 has been spent recently on promoting the Robin in the north Cotswolds area, can the Council please provide details of the uplift in passenger numbers (fare paying and concessions), and how those figures compare against their targets for uplift.</p>	<p>The Robin marketing project is only just underway and starts with a scoping exercise. No promotion has taken place yet so we do not have any figures to supply. We do not expect to see any uplift until the marketing begins, which is likely to be late in 2023.</p> <p>It is also important to note that all marketing activities are being funded via the DfT's Rural Mobility Fund, no GCC funding is being spent. Any part of the Rural Mobility Fund that is not spent on The Robin would have to be given back to the DfT.</p>
<b>30. Questioner's name: Adrian Oldman</b>	<b>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</b>
<p>How many schools in the county that the GCC funds or controls currently have solar panels or heat pumps? How many have got plans in place to install solar panels or heat pumps in the current or next financial year?</p>	<p>We are aware of 20 schools with either solar panels and/or heat pumps although some may have installed systems that we are unaware of. We are not aware of any other schemes being carried out this financial year. We are investigating opportunities for 2024/25 however existing funding for schools is generally directed at priority repairs and maintenance.</p>
<b>31. Questioner's name: Adrian Oldman</b>	<b>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe/</b>
<p>What is the council's policy on installing solar panels or heat pumps on its schools and other public buildings?</p>	<p>The council does not currently have a policy. It does have to comply with all standards and regulations when carrying out works to buildings or construction of buildings. We will be developing a framework of providers and installers to ensure that any works carried out in future are done so by suitably qualified organisations.</p>

