

Executive Director Report – 15 November 2023

Pre-submitted questions and written answers

Arle Court Transport Hub

- 1. I note the business case for the operation of the hub has been submitted to BCAG – who are they?** The business case was presented at the Business Case Assurance Group (BCAG) last week, BCAG are a group of GCC support services staff that offers feedback on business cases, prior to attending Cabinet.
- 2. What input will CBC and Councillors have into this, can we see it, and will it include things like pricing policy to ensure the offer is sufficiently attractive to ensure maximum patronage?** The cabinet paper will be published, and CBC will be able to ask questions about the paper in line with the council cabinet question process. The current parking arrangements/pricing policy will continue at the site e.g. free parking if catching the bus, £6.40 to park and walk off site, with pricing potentially to be reviewed in April or earlier depending on Member decisions and existing Lead Cabinet Member process for agreeing pricing.
- 3. What is the capacity of the facility?** Prior to the development there were 576 spaces, once phase 3 is delivered this will increase to just over 1,000. Currently there are 2 bus bays on site, the new development will have 5. 100 EV Charge Points are being provided on the site. The site will have adequate numbers of disabled bays the ground floor of the car park with easy access to the hub.
- 4. How is that split between commuter and shopper/tourist use?** Demand forecast modelling was undertaken for the site, which given timescale uncertainties around a number of developments and transport post covid focused on the core P&R service, we don't have figures on the split of use between commuters, shoppers and tourists however the facility is designed with all in mind, we have the park and walk/cycle offer on site for employees of local businesses and are currently in talks with a number of well-known coach operators regarding using the site for inter urban coach services.
- 5. Who will sign off the business case?** Cabinet are being asked to authorise the procurement and award of the relevant contracts. Delegated powers would normally be granted to Colin Chick (Executive Director of Economy, Environment & Infrastructure) or Jason Humm (Director of Transport & Highways) to award the contract and enact any extension options (via Delegated Decision Reports).

City Fibre

- 6. Do we know when fibre works by the likes of City Fibre will be completed within our county?**
Pinpointing the exact completion date for fibre network installations in Gloucestershire, such as those by City Fibre, is challenging due to the complexities involved.

The uncertainty in completion dates and what can be publicly stated stems from several factors:

- **Commercial Sensitivity:** Suppliers keep detailed commercial plans confidential. While we may access some information through BDUK, non-disclosure agreements prevent us from disclosing it.

- **Public Disclosure:** Information about fibre rollout plans is typically shared directly with residents or made available on the supplier's website or through an availability checker.
- **Commercial Builds:** The county council focuses on public subsidy-funded builds, as commercial builds involve suppliers defining areas or premises for development without subsidies.
- **Unforeseen Challenges:** Factors like survey discoveries, cost increases, budgeted build costs, investment availability, build complexity, wayleave refusals, and internal release processes can impact timelines.
- **Permits and Resource Availability:** Obtaining necessary permits and securing sufficient resources can also influence project schedules.
- **Focus on Urban and Semi-Urban Areas:** Commercial builds tend to prioritize urban and semi-urban areas rather than rural areas.

Despite these uncertainties, the overall expectation is that commercial fibre builds in Gloucestershire will be largely completed by late 2026, with Project Gigabit potentially extending this timeframe to 2027-2030. Those premises at the end of builds are likely to be the harder to reach.

With specific regard to City Fibre the company is stating that their rollout in Gloucestershire is due to be completed at the end of 2024. It is worth noting that City Fibre and their contractor Kier Group, parted ways, and we do not have any up-to-date information on the delay this might bring to the build.