

**COUNTY COUNCIL – February 2023
PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

1. Questioner's name: David Redgewell	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
What progress is be made on a enhanced quality partnership with stagecoach west and other bus operators in Gloucestershire Including setting up the bus service Advisory Board and passenger forum .	The draft Enhanced Partnership will be released for Stakeholder consultation in the next few weeks. Once agreed the relevant Boards and Meetings will be set up accordingly.
2. Questioner's name: David Redgewell	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
With bus service inflation at 47 % on bus service contacts what provision is made in the this years budget for funding support bus services with the county and for the replacement of vital commercial bus services within the county .	<p>Funding to assist with the cost of inflation has been put forward in the draft budget and comes on the back of us increasing contract payments by 8% last summer.</p> <p>The purpose of this council meeting is to review and approve a budget for 2023/24. Subject to Council's decision this funding will allow the council to provide even more support in the coming year.</p> <p>The council is also providing significant support (with a value of over £1m) by providing concessionary fare reimbursement well above the level that is actually used by concessionary customers on bus services. This is to support operators with the on-going impact from the pandemic on the number of passengers, which is still on average only 75% of the 2019 level (and lower still amongst concessionary fare users).</p>
3. Questioner's name: David Redgewell	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
What representations is Gloucestershire county council make to the secretary of state for transport Mark Harper mp about continuing	Officers have fed back to the Department for Transport that on-going

<p>with bus service covid 19 bus operators recovery grant for the county bus Network after 31st march 2023 and £2 fare officer.</p>	<p>support funding for bus services is vital to the security of bus services in 2023/24. In addition we continue to work with other authorities and bus operators to highlight the challenges that the bus market is facing and to therefore ensure that the messages back to Central Government are consistent.</p> <p>The £2 fare is an initiative between the DfT and operators directly, so we are not involved in these discussions. However, we welcomed the initiative from government and we're supportive of Stagecoach taking part in the initiative.</p>
<p>4. Questioner's name: David Redgewell</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Is the county council as transport Authority working with Gloucester City council to improve passenger facilities at Gloucester transport hub. Shopping and cafe facilities Railway information and signage</p>	<p>The main concourse, public toilets and café areas and the structure of the main building of Gloucester Transport Hub are under the control of Gloucester City Council. Whilst Stagecoach have responsibility for operating the buses themselves under an agreement with Gloucestershire County Council, they only have a lease from the City Council for their first floor offices and to provide the public facing information office on the ground floor. The County Council's Integrated Transport Unit have worked closely with the City Council and Stagecoach to deliver the real time information screens, allocation of bays and passenger information at the Transport Hub.</p> <p>Gloucestershire County Council was involved in the work to change the road lay out when the transport hub was constructed.</p> <p>GCC is keen to improve interchanges and the overall bus passenger experience and intends to enter into an Enhanced Partnership (EP) agreement with bus operators to deliver improvements to make bus services more attractive. These include infrastructure and passenger experience elements such as bus shelters, bus priority measures, ticketing, information, timetables, and fares.</p>

<p>5. Questioner's name: David Redgewell</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>What progress is being made to replace bus services in Cheltenham from the 19th February 2023 when stagecoach west service is withdrawn.</p> <p>On service F from coronation sq to leckhampton . Service k Benhill to Cheltenham bus and coach station.</p> <p>From 1st April 2023 The west of England mayoral combined transport Authority Dan Norris is withdrawing the 84, 85 wotton under edge to yate bus and coach station and yate railway station. This is main link out of Wotton under Edge. Except service 60 Thornbury wotton under edge cam and Dursey bus station service</p> <p>What discussion are taking place about continuing these services as this group of services also provide links to KLB school at Wotton under edge.</p>	<p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p>

	<p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p> <p>That said, I am very pleased to report that Service K has been re-procured; Swanbrook Coaches will operate the service from 20 February.</p> <p>The weekend service F will now be the L and will largely match the weekday L.</p> <p>Officers are trying to speak to the relevant person at the West of England Combined Authority regarding their proposals for their subsidised network, that includes the 84/85 services to Wotton-under-Edge.</p>
<p>6. Questioner's name: David Redgewell</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>What progress is being made with Network rail western and First group Great western railway on installing lifts at Cheltenham spa railway station. and on the reopening on charfield station for wotton under edge and stonehouse Bristol road station. On metro west railway on the Bristol Temple meads station to Gloucester central line .</p>	<p>Installing lifts at Cheltenham Spa railway station is a Department for Transport funded Access for All scheme. Network Rail have been working with Western Power to address some property issues that need to be addressed before they can start on site. Provided Network Rail can resolve the issues with Western Power soon, they anticipate starting work on site later this year with delivery during 2024.</p> <p>South Gloucestershire Council, West of England Combined Authority and Network Rail are progressing plans for a new rail station at</p>

	<p>Charfield, just over the border in South Gloucestershire. Gloucestershire County Council isn't the scheme promoter for this scheme.</p> <p>The Strategic Outline Business Case for a new station at Stonehouse Bristol Road/Stroudwater was submitted to the Department for Transport at the end of September 2022. The DfT have yet to make a decision on whether to proceed to the Outline Business Case stage.</p> <p>The MetroWest Phase 2 additional Gloucester to Bristol service is due to start running in May 2023. This will create a half hourly service between the two cities.</p>
<p>7. Questioner's name: Sophia Spooner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>How are you going to help people dependent on public transport in Bussage as it is increasingly being cut off.</p> <p>Due to recent Stagecoach updates the last bus will now be 6.45. However this still isn't good enough . A 40 minute bus journey will now take 2-3hrs between Nailsworth and Bussage. Do you think this is acceptable for young women being left alone in the dark? Students returning from Ruskin Mill college who have additional needs. How are you as a county council going to address these cuts or will it be business as usual. A lot of people are going to be affected</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant</p>

	<p>additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>8. Questioner's name: Lorna Parker</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>I am very concerned about the cuts due 19th Feb and this April in local bus services around Stroud. You are no doubt aware that there is now a "Stroud Needs Buses" Campaign Group asking Stagecoach to reverse some of these changes and the GCC to rethink which local Stroud bus routes it subsidises when.</p> <p>As someone with epilepsy so not allowed to drive, the only way I can take my 14 year old son out of Bussage on a Sunday is the 67 Stagecoach bus. Ever since this started running in Sept 21 we have</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does</p>

caught the 8.58 bus to Stroud where both really enjoy a cafe breakfast together and help the local economy. Always getting that same Sunday bus is a retired, single, Bussage resident with no car who "just has to get out". We chat on the bus and all return on the 11.35 from Merrywalks. Usually at least 3 other passengers on both buses.

Stagecoach is cutting all Sunday 67 buses on 19th February. This is not severe as losing a job but it is precious family time my son and I spend each week and there will be no other way out of Bussage or Chalford on a Sunday for non car owners which can lead to loneliness and mental health problems. Stagecoach have responded to our request for them to run just a very few Sunday buses to allow a way out and return to Bussage but not cut them entirely by saying that route is not subsidised and not financially viable. Please can GCC step in a bit here and grant a minimal subsidy for a very useful minimal Sunday Bussage bus service?

not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.

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In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.

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9. Questioner's name: Steve Hough	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>I am writing to ask you to reinstate the 63 weekday service leaving Gloucester at 15:30 during the school term. Aside from self interest as my daughter uses this service, I would ask for the decision to be reversed for three reasons: it is irrational, it undermines the justification for public subsidy of your services and it exposes children to a needless safeguarding risk.</p> <p>1 Irrationality This service is a very busy service. It arrives at just the right time for children leaving school at Ribston Hall and St Peter's in particular. Those children travelling to Stroud typically buy West Gold Flexi5 tickets, which over the 190 school days a year generates £881.60 per child. I know there are several girls from Year 7 at Ribston Hall, including my daughter, on the bus during term time. Together with other girls from the school and St Peter's it makes the bus a valuable service. I appreciate that bus services with are underused cannot be justified economically, but for this service at this time there is an economic justification, even if it just runs during term time. I would ask in reply on this point you provide data to show how many people use the 15:30 service between Gloucester and Forest Green on average during the week, how many of them are children and the total revenue from that service. If the service is economically viable and carries many passengers it would be irrational to cut the service.</p> <p>2 Public subsidy In addition to the ticket prices for the children on the bus I understand that Stagecoach is rightly subsidised to reflect the fact that the company provides real value to the local community especially those in need and vulnerable. However, if services are cut unreasonably or arbitrarily, such cuts would be irrational for the reasons above. Specifically, for public bodies to act in that way</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach</p>

would be legally unreasonable in the sense of **Wednesbury** [1948] 1 KB 223, [1947] EWCA Civ 1 albeit your company is not a public body. However, the local authority which provides the subsidy to you is of course a public body and should require your company to act reasonably in making decisions. Before making as reasonable decision about changing the service it would be necessary for there to be a consultation and for valid points from that consultation to be taken into account. It seems no such consultation has been undertaken. I anticipate the impact on schoolchildren using this particular service was not considered. The addition of the 62 service is of course very welcome for other bus users but will leave too early, in particular for the girls at Ribston Hall, and will not help those children travelling on to Forest Green. Having received in this letter evidence of the impact of the decision to cut the 63 service I would ask you to take the proportionate step of reconsidering the decision.

3 Safeguarding

I know how seriously Stagecoach takes safeguarding issues, especially in relation to children and other vulnerable passengers. I am reassured that drivers and other staff follow policies which are effective in keeping my daughter safe on her way to and from school. However, the change in the 63 service will expose girls at Ribston Hall to a half hour wait at the Tuffley Avenue bus stop which has no cover, no CCTV and exposes them to risk as isolated school girls at the side of the road. This is pressing concern for me as a parent because it means I cannot allow my daughter to go to school with any confidence she will be safe getting home. In considering how to restructure services, I would ask that extra weight is given to the concern of child safety.

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10. Questioner's name: Heath Gunter

Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris

The paving in Cambray Place and The Strand is in dire need of replacement. The issue has been ongoing for several years and is

Cambray Place will be included in the 23/24 capital programme and will

<p>impacting local businesses negatively. The paving on The Strand is uneven and sinking in certain areas, while Cambray Place has been littered with tarmac infills from previous utility work. The paving in both areas has been neglected with limited maintenance and investment.</p> <p>Can the council provide an update on the planned improvements to the public realm and paving in Cambray Place and The Strand?</p>	<p>be delivered as a maintenance scheme through our Structural Maintenance programme. Plans for the Strand require further work as this is less well developed and extends over a much greater area.</p> <p>In addition the Council continue to work closely with Cheltenham Borough Council regarding these proposals and what contribution they are willing to make to help ensure that the scheme is consistent with the wider public realm within central Cheltenham. This also includes ways in which Cheltenham Borough Council can help manage the access for their operational vehicles serving the town centre or collecting waste, so that the risk of further damage to the paving or any new scheme is reduced.</p>
<p>11. Questioner's name: Iain Dobie</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>I welcome the news that GCC is spending £45000 creating a green corridor for wildlife on the 600 metres of former railway line which join the pathway between Warden Hill and the Park with Warden Hill Road (News Release EV 8597 of 27 January refers)</p> <p>Will the general public have access to this green corridor, which is being created as a general good at local taxpayers' expense?</p>	<p>There are no plans to change the current access arrangements in the short term. The planting will take some time to become established and consultation with residents during spring/summer 2022 found that they did not support wider public access.</p> <p>In the short-term (next five years) the local community and Bournside School who have helped with the planting will be invited to join the council at the site to help with maintenance activities and to check on progress.</p> <p>The site has been planted with a maintenance strip in place, so there may be an opportunity to revisit access arrangements in future years.</p>
<p>12. Questioner's name: Iain Dobie</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>Will the residents of Canterbury Walk, which backs directly on to the green corridor, be allowed access through gates in their back gardens - either now or in the future?</p>	<p>There is no official/legal access to the site from Canterbury Walk at present. In the short-term (next five years) access is likely to continue to be restricted as the site becomes established. Bournside school and</p>

	<p>volunteers from the local community will be invited to the site on particular days to help with maintenance activities and to check on progress.</p> <p>There may be an opportunity to revisit access arrangements in future years.</p>
13. Questioner's name: Bob Woodman	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
<p>Does the Cabinet member for Highways consider that what the Highways Authority have done and are doing to restore, maintain and make safe the highway in the centre of the village of Nympsfield from by St Joseph's School and The Rose & Crown Inn down to St Judes Nursing home, degradation of the surface which has been caused by large volumes of pumped water from The Rose and Crown cellar directly onto the highway over an intermittent period of 2 years or more together with a safety issue to the highway of permanently open damaged cellar trap doors in the highway thereby causing a dangerous health and safety issue associated with an approximate 1.8m unguarded or marked up drop is adequate or does it require more stringent enforcement?</p>	<p>We have completed our works to ensure that the drainage from the Rose & Crown Inn operates correctly without the need for them to pump any water onto the Highway. The road surface has been inspected recently and repairs carried out. Further inspections will be made and repairs prioritised where necessary in line with our Highway Safety Inspection regime.</p>
14. Questioner's name: Shelley Tester	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>The recent stagecoach timetable massacre to my village due to take place this month is causing great distress to young, old and in between. People are going to lose their jobs, be left stranded in the dark for up to 2 hours waiting for connections, not be able to attend evening meetings or further education.</p> <p>What can GCC do to help these people who can't drive due to age or health reasons, or afford a car, to get to work and college and back home safely?</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>However the changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from</p>

taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.

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<p>15. Questioner's name: Dr Chloe Reddaway</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>I understand that Gloucestershire County Council paid Stagecoach approximately £9 million last year through subsidy and concessionary fares around the county, without any checks & balances on where the bus pass holders live or what services they need. I also understand that Stagecoach decide which services to provide and which to cut based on their own unpublished usage figures, and without involvement from GCC.</p> <p>What research has GCC done to establish where those eligible for concessions live and what services they would like to use, including non-service users who are prevented from using buses as there isn't an adequate service where they live and who may therefore be overlooked entirely when services are being planned? If none, can they commit to doing this?</p>	<p>The concessionary fares bus pass scheme is a statutory scheme, we comply with all the rules set out by the Department for Transport and their Concessionary Travel Scheme guidance.</p> <p>Reimbursement for the use of the pass is a requirement on Gloucestershire County Council as the Transport Authority. Bus operators are reimbursed for all passes that are used on their services in Gloucestershire.</p> <p>Bus subsidies where applied are for individual contracts. There are set routes and timetables that the Council procures using a well-established public procurement process. The subsidised network has evolved over many years but cannot be stretched to cover every part of the county.</p> <p>With regard to research relating to service users or latent demand, that could influence any commercial decision, this is for the operator to consider as part of that commercial decision making process.</p>
<p>16. Questioner's name: Kate Dyer</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>I am astonished at the bus cuts that have been decided, without consultation of the users, that have been imposed on the 63 and 67 bus routes, though many ore have been similarly affected. How are we, as a community, ever to have a fully inclusive civic community if we remove buses with such impunity. I have several friends who simply cannot afford to own a car, yet are doing their best to work and earn for their daily bread. They depend on these buses. These cuts will radically alter their ability to work, and put more people into the benefit system at a far greater overall and long term cost to the district council and government than the cost of the wages earned by bus drivers. Furthermore, the bus drivers will be made redundant</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>However the changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and</p>

adding yet further to the cost of people needing benefits.

Isolation is a massive mental health issue in rural areas. Getting the bus out of the village in the evenings or at weekends is a lifeline to many who can't drive. A private bus company has just decided to stop all buses that enable Sunday brunches & lunches and evening socials 'off the hill'.

We are losing so many pubs and cafes in the area, slashing the buses that people use to get to those that are left will escalate the demise of many more. A bus that only has a few people on it is vital to those few people. A non-existent bus route home reduces the passenger numbers on the outward trip leading an ever decreasing cycle of use.

Please can GCC instigate a thorough review into what the Stroud Valleys bus service should comprise to adequately service residents in outlying areas, starting with the 63 and 67 routes that have just had massive cuts imposed without any consultation?

Yes, there will be buses that are not full, but far better than those who do use the services, for that is what buses are: services, being forced back into total dependence on handouts.

with very great respect for all you are doing to remedy this situation and to help our district return to the humane, service providing and hence inclusive, district that it has been and should continue to be.

all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.

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17. Questioner's name: Tricia Watson	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>Chalford has very little employment, no further education for over 16s, close to 7000 residents, no rail service, and is too hilly for most people to practically walk or cycle to the nearest employment centres or transport hubs. Our main way of getting about without a car is buses. Stagecoach seem to have the monopoly on the bus service, which many use regularly and others ad hoc. Stagecoach have just decided to cut all evening and Sunday services, and reduce the half hourly timetable to hourly, based purely on profit margins. A bus service that picks & chooses which routes to run based on profit is not a public transport provision.</p> <p>What are GCC going to do to make sure this large village has a reliable bus service that meets the needs of the residents rather than the bus company?</p> <p>Can this route be offered out to another company who actually wants to provide a meaningful service, with appropriate subsidy if necessary?</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>However the changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p>

	<p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>18. Questioner's name: Jenny Inglis</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>My non-binary sixteen-year-old uses the buses frequently. They have an evening job after school at the vegan restaurant, Karibu, in Stroud. They use the buses to get back home to Thrupp after their shifts as I cannot always be there to go and fetch them in the car (I have two other children to look after, a full-time business to run and a life of my own to lead). They also regularly use buses to get out and about, and to make connections with other buses and trains to travel further afield, e.g. to meet friends in Cheltenham on Sundays.</p> <p>From 19th February, Stagecoach is reducing the half-hourly bus 67 services to hourly times, and stopping the evening and Sunday services altogether. This will mean my child will have to give up their job. It will also mean that they will feel much more isolated as they will no longer be able to go to meet their friends on Sundays. At other times, their journeys will become much longer due to the hourly bus schedules making connections much more difficult. Socialisation has never been more important than for this generation of Covid-affected young people.</p> <p>My child is paid the minimum wage for a sixteen year old of £4.88 per hour, so a taxi is out of the question. Walking home alone at</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels</p>

<p>night is not safe as their shift often doesn't finish until 9pm.</p> <p>Please can you tell me what GCC plans to do to allow my child to retain their human right to have access to a job and a social life?</p>	<p>can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>19. Questioner's name: Jenny Inglis</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>In the GCC Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) from last November, it says:</p> <p><i>"We firmly believe that a high functioning bus service can deliver sustainable transport choices for all residents; ensuring equity of access to education, employment and training, as well as access to services and facilities. But more than just these functional uses, buses should aim to be a de-facto choice for all transport requirements in the county. Social and leisure opportunities</i></p>	<p>The County Council is committed to providing as much public transport as possible to encourage people to leave their cars at home. We have increased our subsidy of public transport in the last two years to at least maintain our subsidised network in the face of inflation and the impact it has on the cost of delivering services. It won't be lost on our residents that due to global factors, it is costing far more to deliver those same levels of service.</p>

are equally important and should be accessible through regular and frequent bus use."

Bus services are in decline all over the country due to increased car ownership. Increased bus use is not going to happen without more public funding. Commercial bus operators are cutting any parts of their services that are not profitable in order to maximise shareholder dividends. This is leading to more and more people having to abandon buses as a means of transport as the reduced services are no longer viable for them. It's a downwards spiral of less and less bus services, forcing more and more people into car ownership, meaning more and more bus cuts.

Meanwhile those that can't drive are completely stuck. People can't get home from work. The elderly can't meet friends on Sundays. Lone females are being left to hitchhike home in the cold and the dark. Teenagers can't access shift work. Carbon emissions, air pollution and congestion are going to increase.

Please could you tell me exactly how GCC is proposing to achieve its aim of making buses 'the de-facto choice for all transport requirements'? This would surely need a major scheme change, like banning cars from town centres and providing free shuttle buses running regularly along all the main bus routes. This would be truly marvellous and would work wonders for tempting people out of their cars, freeing up our roads and our town centres and reducing our carbon emissions. Is that the sort of thing GCC is planning?

We must acknowledge that there are serious challenges facing the transport and bus industry, those are:

- Inflation
- Reduced patronage (approx. 75% of 2019 levels)
- The expected end of Government support funding from April

This does not make it easy to develop innovative solutions like free transport, but as we move forward and look at the long-term strategic picture for the county the Council is very keen to look at all opportunities to grow the use of public transport.

It is precisely because of the challenges that you have highlighted, that we feel it is important to have that long-term ambition stated within our BSIP proposals. This allows us to continue to aspire to that ambition whilst also recognising that the bus industry is facing some immediate and volatile challenges.

20. Questioner's name: Jenny Inglis

Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson

I believe that GCC can decide which routes to subsidise in the county. Currently about £960,000 is being spent on subsidising bus services (Stagecoach and others) in Stroud District.

The Council uses its subsidy funding to provide contracted bus services in areas where commercial services are not viable. There are no specific criteria for a subsidised service, the current bus network has evolved

<p>I cannot find any documents explaining how or why the subsidised routes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially chosen • What the process is to monitor their usage and efficiency of the money spent • The continued need for subsidising that route • How routes that are planned to be cut (such as the 67) can be considered for a subsidy <p>Please could you explain the above matters to me?</p>	<p>over many years and the decisions around subsidies therefore reflect a number of issues such as usage, ease of accessibility, alternative service provision, relative value of the investment etc.</p> <p>Passenger and cost data is collected by the Integrated Transport Unit for analysis. The lasting impact of Covid on the use of bus services has made the previous method of determining value for money (a cost per passenger trip calculation) currently unreliable when considering how to prioritise subsidy. It is therefore more difficult to assess whether a service is no longer providing value for money when the service is still in recovery and the Government is still providing support funding for this reason.</p> <p>The responsibility of the Council is to provide a stable network and as such contracts are procured for up to 7 years at a time. We avoid reallocation of funding from one area to another to help ensure a stable network and to avoid simply moving problems from one area to another.</p> <p>With obvious challenges to Council budgets, the two main methods for funding new subsidised services are by using developer funding and successfully bidding for national funds – these are areas that the Council continue to work hard on to continue to support the bus network in the best way that we can.</p>
<p>21. Questioner's name: Jenny Inglis</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>As far as I can tell, the last major redesign of the bus routes in Gloucestershire was in 2011, which was done at the time in order to achieve cost savings. This seems to be the last published list of subsidised routes (from 2015). Route changes and number changes aside, this looks quite similar to the current subsidised routes.</p> <p>In 2016, GCC agreed a target subsidy cap of £8 per return passenger journey for rural routes. I am assuming that that 'target'</p>	<p>As per the response to your previous question:</p> <p>The Council uses its subsidy funding to provide contracted bus services in areas where commercial services are not viable. There are no specific criteria for a subsidised service, the current bus network has evolved over many years and the decisions around subsidies therefore reflect a number of issues such as usage, ease of accessibility, alternative</p>

<p>still applies today. Adjusted for inflation, that amount today would be £11.15.</p> <p>There is no subsidy for any services to/from Brimscombe, Thupp, Bussage or Chalford, and hasn't been for at least 8 years, and possibly longer. Given the size of the population (Bussage alone is 6,500), that seems strange. Please can you explain it?</p>	<p>service provision, relative value of the investment etc.</p> <p>Passenger and cost data is collected by the Integrated Transport Unit for analysis. The lasting impact of Covid on the use of bus services has made the previous method of determining value for money (a cost per passenger trip calculation) currently unreliable when considering how to prioritise subsidy. It is therefore more difficult to assess whether a service is no longer providing value for money when the service is still in recovery and the Government is still providing support funding for this reason.</p> <p>The responsibility of the Council is to provide a stable network and as such contracts are procured for up to 7 years at a time. We avoid reallocation of funding from one area to another to help ensure a stable network and to avoid simply moving problems from one area to another.</p> <p>With obvious challenges to Council budgets, the two main methods for funding new subsidised services are by using developer funding and successfully bidding for national funds – these are areas that the Council continue to work hard on to continue to support the bus network is the best way that we can.</p>
<p>22. Questioner's name: Jenny Inglis</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Current GCC bus subsidies on routes affected by the cuts</p> <p>66 - Stroud - Leonard Stanley - Gloucester Mon - Sat (Evening) & Sun £70,392.00</p> <p>63 - Gloucester-Stroud-Forest Green Mon-Sat (Evenings) <u>£26,900.00</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">TOTAL</p> <p>£97,292.00</p>	<p>The Council pays for specific trips rather than the entire service as much of those services are provided commercially by Stagecoach. The trips that are subsidised on the 63 and 66 are retained within the Stagecoach network, any deviation from this would result in the immediate termination of the contract.</p>

<p>GCC are currently paying Stagecoach almost £100,000/ year on routes 66 and 63, yet these subsidised services are being significantly reduced. What are your thoughts on this?</p>	
<p>23. Questioner's name: Jenny Inglis</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Finally, the spend per capita for different regions in the UK varies widely, with the South West languishing almost at the very bottom of the table (https://www.statista.com/statistics/1134495/transport-spending-per-head-in-the-uk/). Londoners enjoy buses and tubes every few minutes, yet here we're fighting to keep any services at all on Sundays. For every £1 spent on public transport for me, almost £3 of public money is spent on public transport for each Londoner. We pay the same taxes so this doesn't seem at all fair.</p> <p>Please can you tell me how our region can access more of the funding that is clearly available for public transport in order to level up with London and to keep our vital public services going?</p>	<p>Transport provision within London is delivered very differently, and you may not be aware that the bus services are heavily subsidised by the level of income and profit typically generated from the London Underground. The franchised nature of London's transport service helps to facilitate this. Clearly the density of population and the established tube and bus network also have a significant impact on provision and affordability. Hence, I don't think it is necessarily that useful to compare funding mechanisms with London.</p> <p>That said, the County Council continues to seek additional funding and did put a bid in for the Department for Transport's Bus Service Improvement Plan fund in 2021. Unfortunately, we were not successful in that round of funding (only 30% of councils were), however we are continuing to develop our strategy to put Gloucestershire in a better position to be successful in future rounds of funding and continue to hold talks with the DfT regarding potential next steps locally and nationally.</p> <p>We also have a team dedicated to supporting bid writing for national funds, they are ready to bid for any funding opportunities as they arise.</p>
<p>24. Questioner's name: Bob Woodman</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Dom Morris</p>
<p>Does the Cabinet Member for Highways consider it adequate. prior to road improvements just to provide approximately 7 large cones to advise of the danger of overshoot down a steep bank at Frocester</p>	<p>The traffic cones are a temporary measure to highlight the edge of the carriageway to drivers. A capital safety improvement scheme which includes measures in this location is planned to begin in the first week in</p>

<p>Hill or is he prepared to re- consider additional measures to try to prevent further accidents at the hill noting that for example of the many the one on 22 December resulted in serious injury to two people and the one on the 10th December the driver got out of his car an fell a further 10 feet?”</p>	<p>April. The junction give way lines that are slightly faded are due to be repainted as soon as the weather allows. Additional new and refurbished lining is planned as part of the improvement scheme works in April. The improvement scheme and all of these measures are aimed at reducing risks to drivers and highlighting the road profile.</p>
<p>25. Questioner’s name: Heidi Westerlage</p>	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>My name is Heidi Westerlage, I am the Treasurer of Cam & Dursley Transportation Group and until September 2022 a daily Commuter on the 62 Bus Service from Dursley to Bristol City Centre via Berkeley.</p> <p>The excellent service was run by Bristol Community Transport until the 4 September 2022, when they had to close down. Another service was put in place in a hurry by Gloucestershire County Council, which is only covering half of the journey and totally inadequate for those who need to commute to Bristol City Centre for work.</p> <p>When it came to my attention that there was a direct Commuter Service 626 from Wotton-under Edge to Bristol City Centre provided by Eurocoaches Bristol, I contacted Mr Tom Main, Manager of GCC Integrated Transport Unit to ask if the service could be extended to Dursley. Mr Main told me that the 626 Service was subsidised by WECA (West of England Combined Authority).</p> <p>I then contacted Ms Nicola Phillips of WECA (West of England Combined Authority) to ask if extending the 626 Service to Dursley could be considered as an option to help out those Dursley Commuters who are currently stranded and in desperate need of a regular, reliable Bus Service from Dursley to Bristol City Centre. Ms Phillips advised me that WECA had approached the Operator for a price to</p>	<p>In recent weeks Gloucestershire County Council have been trying to get in touch with the relevant person at the West of England Combined Authority to discuss numerous issues, including service 626. We will make renewed efforts to discuss this with WECA in the coming days.</p> <p>Regarding service 62, there is a procurement process underway at the moment for a continuation of the current service, Officers will supply more detail once it’s available.</p>

<p>extend the 626 Bus Service to Dursley and had forwarded that to Gloucestershire County Council, awaiting feedback whether GCC wished to fund the extension or not.</p> <p>Since then, I have contacted the GCC Integrated Transport Unit twice by telephone for an update, but nobody has come back to me with a reply.</p> <p>As the contract of the current provider of the 62 Service will be terminated at the end of March 2023 by Gloucestershire County Council, please can I get a written response whether the 62 Service from Dursley to Bristol City Centre via Berkeley, as run previously by Bristol Community Transport, is going to be reinstated in April 2023, to allow the residents from Dursley, Cam and Berkeley the opportunity to travel to Bristol City Centre direct for work, health and/or leisure?</p>	
<p>26. Questioner's name: Kelly Till</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>My name is Kelly Till of Nailsworth GL6 0TR. I am extremely reliant on the buses, due to numerous appointments at Gloucester and Cheltenham hospitals I am without other options, as I am no longer medically fit to drive. The reduction of services, means that I have no flexibility of travel and when (not if), a scheduled bus is cancelled, I could lose my vital hospital appointments, or I am not back to Nailsworth in time to collect my child from school.</p> <p>At present, 1 hospital appointment at either hospital, means a full day's travel, as a bus one way is 1 hour - it ends up being a very tiring day and I then have to recover for a full day following the journey, once completing the trip.</p> <p>Another major concern, is the cancellation of early morning buses. The new schedule does not allow people to get the bus to work on</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p>

time, school children to school or further connecting buses. On a weekend, myself and daughter often stay with my parents, which is also on the 63 route. At present we catch the 735am bus, on a Monday morning, to Nailsworth Primary school, which gets her to school in plenty of time. The bus is always at least half full and can be completely full. Taking Archway pupils, vet staff, High school and Marling pupils, Stroud college pupils, people who work in the business/industrial areas and children/teenagers to the connecting bus in Nailsworth to school in Cirencester. Finally taking the hand full of pupils and parents to the primary school. If the new timetable is put in place, all school children will be late or miss connecting buses. As well as numerous workers unable to get to work on time. Is the council and the local MP willing to take responsibility for this? Will they speak to schools and employers about why they are not on time? Will they speak to the other bus companies to delay connecting buses, making a bus full of children late due to the changes about to be put in place?

These changes are ill thought-out and affects the life's of people on these bus routes. Adding a fast bus to Gloucester (62), bypasses all the stops that the passengers get on and off the buses throughout Stroud. It will be a pointless bus route, that doesn't even go to Nailsworth. Meaning that passengers will have to pay for more fares and wait for buses continuously, if trying to get back to Nailsworth from Gloucester - on a road with no proper seating or shelters, with no amenities to toilets, food and drink.

The whole public transport system, is officially a shambles. What was the point of lower fares to encourage the use of public transport, when now it is being taken away.

In the last year, the bus timetables have changed at least 4 times. Which highlights incompetent management in stagecoach and lack of oversight by the council.

The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.

In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.

The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.

The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.

Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.

This needs sorting and the new timetables scrapped. I will be losing even more independence with the lack of service, children will be missing the start of school and people will not be able to get to work on time.

Number 63, is one of the most used and popular service, yet it will be basically cut to the bare bones and isolating Nailsworth.

27. Questioner's name: Lorna Parker

Please can you take the Bussage-Stroud-Cashes Green bus route, linking an area of high population & low employment to Stroud Town centre with the opposite, away from Stagecoach (unreliable/sometimes cancelled) buses and give it to a locally, well-run, easily contactable and very reliable bus company - Cotswold Green Buses? (I have lived in Chalford for 22 years with no car and had to use increasingly rare buses but (apart from on Sundays when they don't run) I can always rely, and do, on the Cotswold Green 54 bus from Stroud to Cirencester via Chalford bottom for my life.)

Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson

I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.

The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.

The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.

The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.

In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn

	<p>by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>28. Questioner's name: Martin Phelps</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>The current Stagecoach service reduction on a number of Stroud bus routes will result in many more car journeys, totally at odds with the impressive transport Carbon reduction commitment just announced across our county.</p> <p>GCC currently supports Stagecoach to provide a service, through concession scheme and some route subsidies, yet seems to have no control over what services they provide or remove.</p> <p>What do GCC intend to do to ensure good value is delivered from the £millions currently used to subsidise this private contractor to help deliver on the 80% reduced carbon transport ambition?</p>	<p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The concessionary fares bus pass scheme is a statutory scheme, we comply with all the rules set out by the Department for Transport and their Concessionary Travel Scheme guidance.</p> <p>Reimbursement for the use of the pass is a requirement on</p>

Gloucestershire County Council as the Transport Authority. Bus operators are reimbursed for all passes that are used on their services in Gloucestershire.

Bus subsidies are in place on a number of individual contracts. They are for set routes and timetables that the Council procures using a well-established public procurement process. The subsidised network has evolved over many years but cannot be stretched to cover every part of the county.

With regard to climate challenges, the County Council is committed to providing as much public transport as possible to encourage people to leave their cars at home. We have increased our subsidy of public transport in the last two years to at least maintain our subsidised network in the face of inflation and the impact it has on the cost of delivering services. It won't be lost on our residents that due to global factors, it is costing far more to deliver those same level of services.

It is precisely because of these challenges, that we feel it is important to have a long-term ambition stated within our BSIP proposals. This allows us to continue to aspire to that ambition for bus services and the support they can provide to our climate aspirations, whilst also recognising that the bus industry is facing some immediate and volatile challenges.

29. Questioner's name: Will Parker	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>I feel Stagecoach is a poor provider of bus services for the Stroud Valley area. By what mechanism can I - as a citizen, bus-user and voter - express my consumer choice and replace this poor provider with an alternative (e.g. Cotswold Green)?</p>	<p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in the Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p> <p>However only Cotswold Green (or any other provider) can decide for themselves if they wish to run a commercial service in place of something Stagecoach have withdrawn, or in direct competition with them.</p>
30. Questioner's name: Jan Mallett	Respondent's name: Cllr David
<p>I am asking these questions on behalf of Teddington & Alstone A46 Advisory Group (TAAG) in respect of the M5 J9 & A46 Transport Scheme.</p> <p>We have been refused a Fol request (reference: 26464937) to see a copy of the Atkins Terms of Reference with the argument this</p>	<p>a. Atkins provide specialist highways and transportation consultancy support to GCC. 'Routes or areas to consider' are determined based on a significant number of factors, including discussions with external organisations such as Department for Transport, Homes England and National Highways, alongside professional</p>

<p>contains commercially sensitive information on routes.</p> <p>(a) Can you therefore confirm that Atkins have been given specific guidance by GCC on routes or areas to consider?</p> <p>(b) Can you also explain the process undertaken by GCC for tendering and awarding the contract to Atkins?</p> <p>(c) To include who signed-off the Terms of Reference setting out the scope and parameters of the work to be undertaken</p>	<p>and technical inputs provided by Atkins. No less than 39 different alternative routes have been looked at and considered as part of the assessment.</p> <p>b. Atkins is GCC's in house term consultant, procured in line with national guidance as part of a multi-year contract.</p> <p>c. Each year GCC's Cabinet approves the future work and associated expenditure on the M5 J9 & A46 Transport Scheme. This is then delivered alongside discussions with external organisations such as Department for Transport, Homes England and National Highways, as well as from professional and technical outputs produced by Atkins.</p>
<p>31. Questioner's name: Poppy Wyeth</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>I am writing with regards to the proposed plans to reduce the 67 bus services in Stroud.</p> <p>This is a route that I use regularly from my home in Chalford Hill, as I do not have my own car and travel into Stroud for studying pottery. It is also a route my elderly father uses to visit me as he lives at the other end of the route in Cashes Green.</p> <p>Travelling by public transport should be encouraged in our current climate crisis and so we need a reliable bus service to support this.</p> <p>Improving the experience for residents would have a positive behavioural effect on bus usage and demand and positively contribute to negating the climate crisis.</p> <p>I encourage you to ensure that Stagecoach hold off bringing the cuts into effect for at least three months, to give an opportunity for</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels</p>

<p>meaningful dialogue while not leaving people in the lurch in the middle of winter.</p> <p>It is a much loved bus route and seeing it reduced would be a huge loss to the village.</p> <p>I would be grateful for you to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What mitigations will GCC and Stagecoach put in place to ensure the elderly and young are not left isolated in rural villages surrounding Stroud? • What will GCC and Stagecoach do to encourage people to utilise public transport to help in the climate crisis? • What will GCC and Stagecoach do to provide a reliable service for residents? 	<p>can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>32. Questioner's name: Liza Darroch</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>I realise that the task of a Councillor is frequently to make difficult decisions and to, in effect, over see a process of rationing but I need help understanding the proposed changes to the route of the 66 bus.</p> <p>1 Are you aware that the new route leaves several communities, especially Cranham, with very little access to any bus hubs in order to provide one more route to areas that are already well served (Gloucester Business Park and Abbeydale)? and if so</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We</p>

2 Can you explain how this fits with the County's own Climate Change Strategy?

3 How can forcing/encouraging communities to get in their cars be anything other than carbon generating?

4 More specifically is this not totally against the County's laudable aim of reducing "Emissions from all sources across county to be net zero by 2050"?

One last question Is it possible to request that Stagecoach delay any changes for three months?

I ask because. when we moved to Cranham in 2009 we made an considered and we felt socially responsible decision to sell our car and make better use of the buses. As a result I am a frequent user of the 66 to access Stroud (and so Cirencester) and Gloucester and Cheltenham. As a regular user I am aware that the numbers using the 66 service between Painswick and Brockworth, Cross Hands are low and are only slowly growing post pandemic but this is not the time to reduce the service so radically. I appreciate that the 166 will provide three journeys per day which may be adequate for the casual Stroud bound shopper but will not be sufficient to enable us to access other bus, coach and train services from Stroud, Gloucester and particularly Cheltenham which we should all be focused on in order to reduce car journeys.

are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.

The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.

In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.

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The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.

Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.

	<p>We recognise that progress with transport decarbonisation will require a very significant shift to bus travel in the county. The scale of change is likely to be beyond that which we can afford as a council. This is why we bid for government funding through the BSIP (Bus Service Improvement Plan) process last year and are continuing to explore funding opportunities with the DfT. Meanwhile we are investing this year in progressing developmental work to put us in a stronger position to bid for funding in future and to improve local transport services. These include bus priority schemes, potential for express routes, local bus interchange hubs and the development of a Mass Rapid Transit system.</p>
<p>33. Questioner's name: Melville Petrie</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>I write to express my severe misgivings and worry at the planned axing of the No 66 bus. This will impact the residents of Cranham in particular:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. School children and college students who will be unable to attend lessons and lectures without being driven or driving to Stroud or Cheltenham. This will increase set carbon emissions in contravention of the Glos plan. 2. Non drivers and the elderly will be denied the convenience and pleasure of convenient Public transport. 3. Medical appointments in Stroud, Cheltenham and Gloucester will become inaccessible for the ill and vulnerable. 4. Cheltenham Racegoers will no longer be able conveniently to access Prestbury at race time from their B&B's along the A46 - a huge source of local income. <p>Please can you do all you can to allow proper Consultation and decision making to take place?</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts</p>

	<p>at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>34. Questioner's name: Chris Rowley</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>As you are aware the current bus service being provided by Stagecoach in the Stroud and surrounding areas is falling far below users expectations and usability with many cancellations. This may to some extent have resulted in the number of current users not reaching it full potential. The proposed cuts to the services will made it incredibly difficult or impossible to live in any one of the Stroud Five valleys and commute to a place of work in another one.</p> <p>Please can you advise what the County Council is doing or going to do to ensure that the proposed drastic cuts by Stagecoach to the Stroud services are delayed until a time when realistic numbers can</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and</p>

be properly and fully assessed and a sensible timetable then discussed and debated?

continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.

The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.

In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.

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The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.

Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.

35. Questioner's name: Chris Rowley	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>In light of the significant current total of signatures on the https://www.change.org/p/stroud-needs-buses Stroud needs Buses petition, along with the recent protest and well attended public open meeting on 31/01/23, (albeit without Stagecoach attending) regarding the forthcoming cuts to Stroud bus services.</p> <p>Please can you advise how the County Council can best serve the Stroud Valley communities to ensure that the proposed drastic cuts by Stagecoach to the Stroud services are delayed until a time when realistic numbers can be properly and fully assessed and a sensible timetable then discussed and debated?</p> <p>I also note that, I believe Sophia Spooner is sending a submission which I propose and support, as she has been making representation for the essential needs of the community.</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p>

	<p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>36. Questioner's name: Ben & Phillippa Green</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>We are writing to you, as I hope many others have as well, to complain about the 'improved service' Stagecoach are preparing to introduce in two weeks time on 19th February. We ask that you raise the question "Are Stagecoach doing their best to serve to communities of Gloucestershire, or are they actually just worrying about their profits?"at the next full council meeting.</p> <p>Our daughter relies on the 67 to get to Stroud, to connect with the 66 to get to Cheltenham so she can attend college. Whilst her daily commute to Cheltenham isn't badly affected, the return journey from Cheltenham only allows two minutes of connection time between the 66 arriving in Stroud at 1743 and the 67 leaving at 1745. This is not the only connection which needs looking at, the final 66 from Cheltenham arrives in Stroud at 1840 and the final 67 leaves at 1845, but if the 66 is delayed by more than five minutes (a realistic possibility) that leaves anyone wishing to connect stuck in Stroud, with a taxi or a lift the only way to get back to Bussage. There are other poor connections through the 'new and improved' timetable that just don't work e.g. the 0843 from Bussage arrives in Stroud five minutes after the first 62 to Gloucester has left.</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels</p>

<p>Our daughter also occasionally goes to Cheltenham on Sundays to help at college open days, or to see friends, but with the new 'improved' service, the total lack of a 67 service on Sunday means that she now has no way of getting there.</p> <p>We understand that there are some underused buses during the day. We can see for example that the half hourly service Monday to Friday between 9am and 3pm, might be too much, but a regular and frequent service (at least every half hour) from 7am to 9am and 4pm and 7pm is vital, as are weekend services to help those who have to work (or want to visit friends), especially on a Sunday.</p> <p>Stagecoach say on their website that "We love our regular customers, getting to know their routines and sharing in their day-to-day lives. It's always great to welcome new faces on board, too, and we're happy to help get them where they need to be." but I am afraid this appears to be very far from the truth. Certainly in the communities outside Stroud.</p> <p>If there is any way you could help and ask Stagecoach to actually run a proper service, it would be greatly appreciated.</p>	<p>can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>37. Questioner's name: Hereward Corbett</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Our family has lived in Chalford Hill for some 25 years, and longer in the Stroud district. We have two teenage boys at home, and I run a business in Nailsworth.</p> <p>Both our boys rely on regular buses in the evenings and on Sundays.</p> <p>One because he attends university in Bath - by train - and does not come home until the middle of the evenings, so he relies on the</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does</p>

18.45, 20.06 and the 21.23 buses to get home from Stroud. On days when he is not at university, he does voluntary work in Tetbury - this usually starts at around midday and again, ends in the evenings. He gets the bus back to Brimscombe, and then picks up the same services back to Chalford Hill from there.

The other son uses the bus to get to and from his Saturday job in Nailsworth. He gets the bus from there to Stroud and relies on the same services to get back home.

Both boys rely on these services for their social lives, which are based in and around Stroud. This generally means them getting a later bus into town, generally on a Friday or Saturday night, and often a bus back on Sunday.

From experience - because I have to go and rescue them when the buses do not run - I know that the reliability of these services has significantly decreased over the autumn and winter.

From a business point of view, we have three members of staff in Nailsworth who either use, or rely on buses to get to work. Because the Stroud/Nailsworth service has become so unreliable, we have had to change shifts around to start and end earlier, to help mitigate the unreliability of journey times home at the end of the day. This in turn has meant that we have had to increase our staffing to cover our opening hours (our business is bookselling) - the net effect of the unreliability is an increase to our staff costs of some 5%. This means, effectively, that we need to increase our sales by at least 10% to cover that cost.

I understand, by the way, that the services to Chalford Hill are not subsidised and are therefore purely 'commercial'. I also note that the population of Chalford is roughly the same as that of Nailsworth (depending on source).

not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.

The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.

In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.

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My questions to those responsible at GCC for transport policy and strategy are therefore:

- In April, 2022, Cllr Philip Robinson stated that "We remain committed to improving and supporting the many bus services we have in the county as buses are a green and sustainable way to travel that will help us meet our carbon emission targets,". What - exactly has the council done to support this claim, and how do Stagecoach's cutting of local service this month form part of that plan?
- Does the council accept that Chalford, with it's geographical challenges, and particular demographic, would benefit from the maintenance and expansion of bus services rather than their cutting?
- Does the council understand that usage of buses depends on a reliable and regular service throughout both the day and the evening? Peak time services alone do not fulfil this requirement. Passenger numbers will only increase with confidence in a reliable and regular service.
- In the light of all the above, would the council lobby Stagecoach to delay all proposed changes to series for at least six months to allow people to plan for the impact to their daily lives?
- Will the council work with local communities to review how each route is affected, and to come up with workable

We recognise that progress with transport decarbonisation will require a very significant shift to bus travel in the county. The scale of change is likely to be beyond that which we can afford as a council. This is why we bid for government funding through the BSIP (Bus Service Improvement Plan) process last year and are continuing to explore funding opportunities with the DfT. Meanwhile we are investing this year in progressing developmental work to put us in a stronger position to bid for funding in future and to improve local transport services. These include bus priority schemes, potential for express routes and local bus interchange hubs.

<p>solutions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the council agree basic service standards (based on community size/location/demographics) with local communities to ensure that service providers understand what sort of service is really required to meet our obligations socially, economically and environmentally? 	
<p>38. Questioner's name: Juliana Burden</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>I am writing to you regarding the cuts to Stroud bus services that Stagecoach will be making later this month. This means that the 67 service to and from Bussage & Chalford Hill which I use regularly on Sundays will not run at all anymore.</p> <p>People who live in these places who don't or can't drive will therefore face either a 2 hour walk to Stroud or £20 taxi fare in future. Clearly this is not an acceptable situation, particularly when these bus services provide such vital links for local villages and rural communities.</p> <p>I'm aware of at least one young person who relies on the 67 bus service to get to work in Stroud from Bussage and back on a Sunday morning and evening - she will be no longer be able work in Stroud on a Sunday if the cuts to services go ahead as planned.</p> <p>I understand that some other bus services such as those provided by Cotswold Green are not profitable either but have been subsidised by the council in recognition of the importance of local villages having a regular service to Stroud.</p> <p>The Stroud Needs Buses petition, which now has over 1,000 signatures gives further cases and details of the impacts, that the Stagecoach cuts will have around Stroud and further afield.</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear of the difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn</p>

<p>https://chnng.it/QQkb4ZQZ</p> <p>Given the opposition to these cuts (which were announced at short notice by Stagecoach), I would strongly urge the council to consider subsidising these services or to enter into discussion with Stagecoach as a matter of urgency.</p>	<p>by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>39. Questioner's name: Denise Hannon</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>I am contacting you with regards to the bus service to Gloucester/Nailsworth.</p> <p>As you will be aware, the 63 route is about to be cut to hourly and the timetable changed.</p> <p>This is going to significantly impact on my family who are reliant on the bus to get to/from school.</p> <p>I do not know if I will be able to continue working as I will have to drive my children to/from school.</p> <p>In rural areas the bus service is crucial and I am hoping that you could help us in some way. We are very concerned about the long term impact of this proposed change.</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear of the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p>

	<p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>40. Questioner's name: Adam Beard</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>At a street stall on Saturday 4 Feb in Stroud we carried a survey that asked people how they felt about a number of statements. 87%</p>	<p>The Gloucestershire Pension Fund is administered by Gloucestershire</p>

<p>felt "Its NOT OK to use my council tax to invest in oil and gas for local authority pensions". This statement generated some good conversations — many people hadn't realised that Gloucestershire County Council pension fund invests in fossil fuels.</p> <p>1. Why does the Gloucestershire Pension Board and its agents (such as Brunel Pension Partnership) continue to invest in oil, gas and coal?</p>	<p>County Council and has over 200 participating employers, of which Gloucestershire County Council is one, and 60,000 members of the Fund. The Fund is legally required to invest in a way that enables it to be able provide sustainable returns, to pay for its members pensions.</p> <p>The Fund has over £3 billion in a diverse range of investments through pooled investment funds, which does include the energy sector, both fossil fuels and renewables. The Funds fossil fuel holdings remain low at 1.09% as at 31 December 2021 (down from 2.9% as at 31 December 2020). As part of the Brunel Pension Partnership, which has been formed to manage the investment of the assets of the Fund, in conjunction with nine other Funds in the South West of England, the Fund believes they are leading the way with their approach to responsible investing, both in terms of the partnerships policy and actions. The Fund now has c£350m invested in sustainable equities, in companies which actively try to provide a benefit to society and also it has an increasing allocation to infrastructure, which includes renewable energy infrastructure. The Fund has also reallocated c£300m into a Paris-aligned passive equity portfolio, which should see further reductions in the Funds fossil fuel revenues position as at 31 December 2022 as a result. These results will be published in the next Brunel Responsible Investment and Stewardship outcomes report, which will be made available on their and the Funds website.</p> <p>As investors, the Fund has a critical role to play as a key source of both capital and stewardship, which is required to successfully transition to a low carbon economy. Divesting will not lead to a change in companies and their behaviours; alongside colleagues in the partnership, the Fund will continue to actively engage with policy makers and companies to build a more sustainable finance system and support the transition to a low carbon economy.</p>
<p>41 Questioner's name: Adam Beard</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>What stops the County instructing its agents to divest from fossil fuel</p>	

companies and invest in greener and more local technologies that have the potential to grow and at the same time support our local economy in the county as other local authorities have already done?

The Gloucestershire Pension Fund has its own decision making.

Gloucestershire Pension Fund is legally required to invest in a way that enables it to be able provide sustainable returns, to pay for its members pensions.

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42. Questioner's name: Will Gibson

Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson

I am writing in the hope that between you you can work to ensure that the public transport service around Stroud is improved, not massively reduced.

The current set of cuts will just increase the first mile last mile problem. People who can afford it will have to use cars, those that cannot will be isolated.

My wife Liz, a life long non driver and advocate/user of public transport is already being forced to learn to drive since we moved to Brimscombe just over a year ago and will be likely be adding another vehicle to the roads soon. The cuts will make that a certainty.

Have you considered running something like the Turkish dolmus system? We have found these to be very effective when we have been in Turkey.

I'm not aware of the Turkish dolmus system, but I will ask officers to provide me with some information about it.

I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.

The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.

The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.

The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.

In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.

The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly

	<p>any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>43. Questioner's name: Nish Noor</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Please please help bring back more buses that are often and reliable in Stroud and surrounding areas such as Nailsworth. I know it does not affect you but as the people that are responsible for many things it would be amazing if you could be empathetic to those who are being affected by the buses that are being reduced. Many people have mobility issues, many rely on buses for work. If these services break down people will be stuck in their homes leading to a breakdown in society</p> <p>I for one have two young children and cannot rely on unreliable busses. It's such a shame because Stroud and surrounding areas have so much to offer yet I cannot experience everything.</p> <p>Please get bus service run more efficiently and regularly</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear about the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant</p>

	<p>additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
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44. Questioner's name: Elizabeth Stanley	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
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<p>I am extremely concerned about the proposed cuts to bus services in Stroud. I hope the Council can put pressure on Stagecoach to reconsider. Has the Council considered the impact on the elderly and on disabled people, particularly in the light of the scarcity of wheelchair-accessible taxis in Stroud?</p>	<p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support</p>
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Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.

45. Questioner's name: Bob Woodman	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
<p>Does the Cabinet member for Highways consider that all road traffic accidents attended to by the police in 2022 at Frocester Hill and elsewhere in the county were notified to the relevant highways department for inclusion on their Collision data reporting database. And did such department fully keep this database up to date?</p>	<p>Casualty and road traffic accident statistics are not notified to the Council by the Police on a case by case basis. The Police maintain a record on their database and this is the accepted national formal record.</p> <p>The police database is a collection of all road traffic accidents that resulted in a personal injury and were reported to the police within 30 days of the accident. The data is collected by the police at the roadside or when the accident is reported to them by a member of the public. The vast majority of road traffic accidents that result in an injury are attended by the police, however the data is backed up by the legal requirement on drivers to report any road traffic accidents to the police where someone is injured.</p> <p>The County Council has access to this database and it is used to help inform our road safety approach and to help prioritise the Council's programmes for investing in road safety prevention and remedial schemes.</p> <p>More recently we have also received reports about this location from our colleagues in the Community Safety Directorate following attendances by firefighters from Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service. This provides us with another valuable source of intelligence to help us tackle the underlying issues.</p>
46. Questioner's name: Lewis Turner	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>1. Has the reduce in demand of the services (including 67) taken into account the services unreliability? Bearing in mind that people do not currently use the service as they fear they will not be able to return.</p> <p>2. Why are the reductions at a time when people are travelling to</p>	<p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We</p>

work, mornings and evenings?

3. Why are GCC unable to ensure that there is a reliable and convenient service that gives mobility to people in the Stroud Valley's area?

4. What can be done to ensure this service is provided?

5. If this service is withdrawn how do GCC and Stagecoach recommend people travel around their local area?

are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.

The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.

In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.

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The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.

Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.

47. Questioner's name: Adrian Oldman	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>Subsidised bus routes</p> <p>In relation to GCC subsidised bus routes, what is the process by which these routes are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially chosen? • What is the process to monitor the usage of these services and evaluate the efficiency of the money spent? • The continued need for subsidising each route? • How existing non-subsidised routes that are planned to be axed can be considered for a subsidy? • When was the last county-wide review of the routes that are eligible for subsidy undertaken, and what are the Council's plans for a further review of the light of the swinging cuts to services across the county in the last six months? 	<p>The Council uses its subsidy funding to provide contracted bus services in areas where commercial services are not viable. There are no specific criteria for a subsidised service, the current bus network has evolved over many years and the decisions around subsidies therefore reflect a number of issues such as usage, ease of accessibility, alternative service provision, relative value of the investment etc.</p> <p>Passenger and cost data is collected by the Integrated Transport Unit for analysis. The lasting impact of Covid on the use of bus services has made the previous method of determining value for money (a cost per passenger trip calculation) currently unreliable when considering how to prioritise subsidy. It is therefore more difficult to assess whether a service is no longer providing value for money when the service is still in recovery and the Government is still providing support funding for this reason.</p> <p>The responsibility of the Council is to provide a stable network and as such contracts are procured for up to 7 years at a time. We avoid reallocation of funding from one area to another to help ensure a stable network and to avoid simply moving problems from one area to another.</p> <p>With obvious challenges to Council budgets, the two main methods for funding new subsidised services are by using developer funding and successfully bidding for national funds – these are areas that the Council continue to work hard on to continue to support the bus network is the best way that we can.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant</p>

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<p>48. Questioner's name: Adrian Oldman</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>'The Robin' on-demand bus service</p> <p>How many vehicles were bought for these two services?</p> <p>Are all of these vehicles available and used on a daily basis?</p> <p>What is the % time the buses are in use/in service?</p>	<p>4 vehicles were bought in total, 2 for each pilot area.</p> <p>Both vehicles are used daily in the Forest of Dean. 1 vehicle is used each day in the Cotswolds, but this is rotated so each vehicle is used.</p> <p>I'm not entirely clear what information you specifically want with regard to the percentage of time that the buses are in use. Clearly the nature of an on demand service is that this will vary on a day-to-day basis. However, if you did want to contact officers direct so that we can understand how the information might be useful for you; and therefore what we can provide; then please do let me know and I will arrange for one of the team to be in contact with you.</p>
<p>49. Questioner's name: Adrian Oldman</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>EV chargers</p> <p>Under the Council's ULEV Chargepoint Project, how many of the double EV chargers have been installed? When and where will the</p>	<p>The installation phase of the project is currently commencing. At present, the first 3 double EV ChargePoint (EVCPs) have been installed</p>

<p>first ones be in Stroud District?</p>	<p>as part of the fleet electrification for the Edge of Care team. They provide a 24 hour emergency service in support of vulnerable children and need fully charged EVs available at all times for staff based in Shire Hall</p> <p>The first phase of public on-street EVCP locations is out for review and will shortly be going out for public review and feedback. The first phase sites are predominantly in Cheltenham and Gloucester with a smaller number in the other districts. These districts will be prioritised for sites in later phases</p> <p>The proposed first phase Stroud District locations are in Stroud and Berkeley</p>
<p>50. Questioner's name: Diana Petrie</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Cranham Bus service 66 beset by roadworks this winter (formerly excellent service 48)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I understand this route is subsidised by central government - is this the case ? 2. What happens to the subsidy money then? 3. Route 66 should not bypass Cranham should not as it is a vital service ? 4. How do I get to work in Cheltenham or Stroud (which I have done for 3 years) if I cannot drive or get a lift to Painswick or Brockworth? 5. Why is an entire community of approx 400 households unable to reach their GP's surgery, or a pharmacy, or even a shop in Painswick without any kind of public transport? 	<p>No bus service is directly subsidised by central Government; however they are providing all bus operators with financial support to mitigate the impact of Covid on the number of passengers.</p> <p>Stagecoach will not be able to claim any revenue support funding from the Government once they have withdrawn the service.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue</p>

	<p>as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>51. Questioner's name: Katie Hadwen-Beck</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>I'm writing with specific reference to the proposal to reduce the timetable of the #67 Stagecoach bus that services the Chalford Hill and Bussage area. This bus service is the one my 18 year old son Henry takes to Stroud College. Henry has autism and Pervasive</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear of the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p>

Developmental Disorder and has received travel training from the Local Authority to catch this specific bus to and from College. Henry is extremely reliant on this service and, as he will not learn to drive, this service will provide the greater part of his transport to and from Stroud as he becomes more independent.

My daughter Alice is due to start her A Levels at Stroud High next September and will also be using this bus service to get to and from Chalford Hill to the High School. She too will be reliant on this service to get her home safely and the last thing I want is for her and Henry to be waiting around, especially during winter, for a service that has been cut to one bus per hour.

Safe and reliable public transport is vital for small communities in small villages and I am asking for the argument for a reduced timetable, and the removal of the Sunday service all together, to be reconsidered.

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	<p>changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>52. Questioner's name: Hilary Burgess</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>From Chalford Climate Action Network (ChalCAN) What is GCC proposing to do about the planned cuts to Stagecoach services (specifically for us the 67 route which is a lifeline out of the Chalford/Bussage hilltop for many) ? What steps can be taken to persuade/induce Stagecoach to re-instate a reasonable service both at peak times and the evenings? If this is not possible will they be taking <i>active</i> steps to support community transport schemes? These bus services are key to reducing reliance on cars and should align with the GCC carbon reduction strategy; in a community of some 7000 residents there are effectively only 3 roads out, which easily become congested as car traffic increases. Whilst lower bus use is given as a reason for the cuts, much of this is self-inflicted damage by Stagecoach since the service has been so unreliable. The cuts impact on school children, people travelling to work and older people in different ways.</p>	<p>I'm sorry to hear of the difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the</p>

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<p>53. Questioner's name: Jane Thomas</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>I live in sheltered housing where many of the residents rely on the bus service to get them to town, doctors, dentists and to see friends and relatives. Many of my neighbours are older, do not drive, may never have driven so rely on public transport.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In very cold weather some have stood waiting for an hour now the local service has been changed from every 20 minutes to every half hour. some have health issues that are exacerbated by the cold. In the hot weather the same issues apply. • Some stops have seats but many don't for example in Stroud town where the stop is next to the closed Peacocks store on a bus road with narrow pavement. • My neighbours do not use the internet or social media so have no idea what is going on. • Some have missed vital hospital and dental appointments through 	<p>I'm sorry to hear of the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p> <p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources</p>

<p>unreliable bus service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of them have a free bus pass. Many times they have been forced to get taxis to get to appointments or to get hom. Incurring extra costs on pensions. <p>On a purely personal note I am awaiting an assement by Stagecoach to use my mobility scooter on a bus. I currently drive but due to health issues I may like the option and to eventually stop using a car. It currently costs £15 for a one way journey into town using a wheelchair taxi. I too have a free bus pass. There is only one taxi and no one takes mobility scooters.</p> <p>Should I wish to go out in the evening there is no option but to drive or arrange a friend or family to take me. My independence is precious and already eroded enough, this further traps me into staying at home.</p> <p>It would appear to me that if you are older or disabled inclusivity is a misnomer.</p> <p>Id like to know what GCC are going to do about this.</p>	<p>from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council/operators can keep pace with inflation, as best as we can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>54. Questioner's name: Christine and Martin Stockwell</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Reliability and regularity of service are key drivers to maintaining and increasing passenger services. Stagecoach has not provided reliable services and is now proposing to cut services eg Bussage</p>	<p>The Stroud-Bussage service is operated commercially by Stagecoach. This means they determine this to be viable without council funding.</p>

will be reduced to an hourly service and evening and Sunday buses cut. I use buses as I don't currently drive and it gives me independence. I appreciate the bus pass. My husband also uses the buses when possible but this decision means we are less likely to do so even though we regard reduced car use to be imperative to tackling the climate emergency. It is no fun standing at a bus stop in rain or freezing weather uncertain whether the bus will come. My husband and I do not use apps, and digital displays at stops do not give real time information. Many stops do not have seats or shelters. One on Toadsmoor does not even have hard standing on which to wait (Only long grass)and another is on a narrow pavement with overhanging hedge.. I walk with a stick so cannot carry a lot of shopping so use a car for a big shop. I am concerned that there seems to be little scrutiny of passenger use and the value taxpayers get from subsidising certain services. Bus drivers tell me recruitment is a problem because of shift patterns affecting their home life and buses being old and frequently breaking down.

Please can you tell me why the Stroud- Bussage service is not subsidised? Which services are? How will GCC monitor value of subsidies to some routes and not others? How will Stagecoach performance be monitored. Will other ways of providing services eg other companies/ cooperatives be considered? Is climate emergency actively considered when the council awards contracts?

However when a company like Stagecoach changes their assessment of commercial viability, the council is not able to simply step in and provide public money.

I'm sorry to hear of the personal difficulties that Stagecoach's changes to their services will create.

The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.

The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.

The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.

In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.

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	<p>any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p> <p>We recognise that progress with transport decarbonisation will require a very significant shift to bus travel in the county. The scale of change is likely to be beyond that which we can afford as a council. This is why we bid for government funding through the BSIP (Bus Service Improvement Plan) process last year and are continuing to explore funding opportunities with the DfT. Meanwhile we are investing this year in progressing developmental work to put us in a stronger position to bid for funding in future and to improve local transport services. These include bus priority schemes, potential for express routes, local bus interchange hubs and the development of a Mass Rapid Transit system.</p>
<p>55. Questioner's name: Georgie Strachan</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>Ahead of the County Council meeting on 15th February, I'd like to submit a question for consideration regarding the impending cuts Stagecoach are making, with very short notice in the middle of winter, to our bus service.</p> <p>The Transport Act 1985 section 63(1)(a) states that local transport authorities must secure the provision of such public passenger transport services as the council consider it appropriate to</p>	<p>The Council has taken serious steps to try and address previous poor reliability on all Stagecoach services.</p> <p>Initially we attempted to work with Stagecoach directly to resolve the issues, however when it became clear they were not improving, we reported them to the Traffic Commissioner. This is the body responsible for ensuring all operators run their services in a reliable way.</p>

<p>secure to meet any public transport requirements within the county.</p> <p>However in contrast, Stagecoach cite that they will only run services that are 'commercially viable' and continue not only to cut services with very little notice but to continue to run an unreliable service with frequent cancellations that are not communicated to its users.</p> <p>Does GCC consider Stagecoach's actions to be legal, appropriate, or fit for purpose?</p>	<p>With regards to the upcoming changes in the Stroud area, Stagecoach have observed all the necessary notice periods to register their changes with the Traffic Commissioner so from that perspective their process is legal.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p> <p>Members of the public can complain directly to Stagecoach or to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner about poor service.</p>
<p>56. Questioner's name: Alan Mossman</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>How do you respond when leaders of District Councils and leaders of employees of staff in parish, town and district councils ask for their pension funds to be divested from fossil fuel companies?</p>	<p>The Gloucestershire Pension Fund is legally required to invest in a way that enables it to be able provide sustainable returns, to pay for its members pensions.</p> <p>The Fund has over £3 billion in a diverse range of investments through pooled investment funds, which does include the energy sector, both fossil fuels and renewables. The Funds fossil fuel holdings remain low at 1.09% as at 31 December 2021 (down from 2.9% as at 31 December 2020). As part of the Brunel Pension Partnership, which has been formed to manage the investment of the assets of the Fund, in conjunction with nine other Funds in the South West of England, the Fund believes they are leading the way with their approach to responsible investing, both in terms of the partnerships policy and actions. The Fund now has c£350m invested in sustainable equities, in companies which actively try to provide a benefit to society and also it has an increasing allocation to infrastructure, which includes renewable</p>

energy infrastructure. The Fund has also reallocated c£300m into a Paris-aligned passive equity portfolio, which should see further reductions in the Funds fossil fuel revenues position as at 31 December 2022 as a result. These results will be published in the next Brunel Responsible Investment and Stewardship outcomes report, which will be made available on their and the Funds website.

As investors, the Fund has a critical role to play as a key source of both capital and stewardship, which is required to successfully transition to a low carbon economy. Divesting will not lead to a change in companies and their behaviours; alongside colleagues in the partnership, the Fund will continue to actively engage with policy makers and companies to build a more sustainable finance system and support the transition to a low carbon economy.

COUNTY COUNCIL –February 2023
Members’ Questions

<p>1. Questioner’s name: Cllr Andrew Gravells</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member please confirm that this Council will waive the fees it charges for Road Closures during the seven days either side of H M The King’s Coronation for people who wish to organise a local community Street Party , as we did for Her late Majesty’s Platinum Jubilee in 2022 ?”</p>	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr Dom Morris</p> <p>As for previous similar events of national significance, road closure requests will be free of charge for the 3-day period of the Coronation.</p> <p>For the Platinum Jubilee last summer, we had a total of 136 road closure requests across the county.</p>
<p>2. Questioner’s name: Cllr Andrew Gravells</p> <p>Using the most recent and complete twelve months data available , please can you tell me</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many fixed penalty notices for failures to comply with the conditions of our Streetworks Permit Scheme have been issued , and • And how many Section 74 charges where works overrun past the agreed end date or where signs and barriers are left on site have been issued , • And which companies or Public Utilities are the worst offenders ? 	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr Dom Morris</p> <p>2,933 fixed penalty notices were given in the last financial year.</p> <p>386 individual sets of works have over run in the last financial year.</p> <p>Severn Trent Water have more overruns but they do considerably more sets of works.</p> <p>STW, National Grid, Gigaclear and City fibre are all on improvement notices and the officers continue to work hard locally and through national organisations to secure improvement.</p>
<p>3. Questioner’s name: Cllr Andrew Gravells</p> <p>Members of the public in my area of Abbeydale and Abbeymead get understandably annoyed when one public utility comes along to do some work ,digs up the road, often disrupting traffic flows and sometimes requiring long diversions, and then another one comes along not long after and digs up virtually the same bit of road up again, or installs three or four way temporary traffic lights again at virtually the same location .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What powers does the county council have to discourage this and how can the County Council continue to exert pressure and influence on Public Utilities and private companies to work together in order to avoid the chaos 	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr Dom Morris</p> <p>The streetworks team deals with all requests that come in from works promoters, this includes utility companies, private road opening licences, and all highway maintenance works. When a permit is received it is considered on due merit where conditions of operation will be applied to it. These conditions have to be legally complied with. If the conditions are breached fines will be applied. Due to the complexity of how utility companies operate including commercial confidentiality (e.g. broadband) and the regulations they have to follow to meet (for example OFWAT) they are not always able to work together. Whilst joint working is the ideal, due to health</p>

and queues we've seen in Abbeydale and Abbeymead over the last few months, and to also work together sharing for example, the same road diversions, and 3 or 4 or 5 way temporary traffic lights .

and safety measures often this isn't possible, even when the same contractor is employed by different utilities.

Utility companies are obliged to give three months' notice of major works and where a road closure is required to complete the work. The period of notice for traffic signals is only 7 days. There can be between 500 and 1000 separate sets of works taking place in the county on any given day so co-ordination is challenging even where utilities have provided the correct information about their works and where their contractors are actually complying with the conditions of the licence.

Spot checks are carried out by the teams however these can only capture a small percentage of the works each day or each week.

Urgent and emergency works can take place without prior notice to the council, for example to restore supplies or to make connection. This is often the case with utility companies declaring works an 'emergency' and subsequently informing the Council once the works are underway and the impact on the network already occurring.

4. Questioner's name: Cllr Beki Hoyland

Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris

Can I ask the cabinet member for Highways, Dom Morris: how much has been spent on roads, including new roads paid for by national budgets, in the last financial year in Gloucestershire.

Total highway maintenance budget for the last full financial year (21/22) including managing and maintaining carriageways, footways, drainage, bridges, structures, lighting, winter maintenance and environmental maintenance was around £55m. This also includes investment in integrated transport schemes and road safety.

This includes about £20m in revenue, our DfT capital maintenance settlement of £25m and the additional £10m per year (£40m over 4 years) that this administration has agreed to invest in improving the maintenance condition of our highways.

The remaining £28m goes directly to support some of our major infrastructure improvements across the County. This includes £2.3m to support the cycle spine, £15m investing in our major

	projects, 12M supporting M5 J10 and £1.2m to support minor schemes such as PROW schemes and Stroud canals.
5. Questioner's name: Cllr Beki Hoyland	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
Can I as the cabinet member for bus transport, Philip Robinson: how much public money has been spent on busses operating within Gloucestershire, both national and local spend.	<p>GCC spends £5m per year on contracts for bus services and £6m reimbursing operators for acceptance of the concessionary fare bus pass.</p> <p>Every year the Council also invests around £16m in our home to school transport ensuring that transport solutions, bus and minibus provision is in place to support children, including the County's children with some of the highest needs, getting to school.</p> <p>The Department for Transport provides support funding via the Local Transport Fund (LTF), this is to support bus operators with the on-going impact of Covid on revenue. The total received for contracted services in 22/23 is £842k.</p>
6. Questioner's name: Cllr Beki Hoyland	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
Can I ask the cabinet member for Education, Philip Robinson, if it is possible to allow schools to give authorised absence for Ukrainian children taking opportunities to visit family in Ukraine that does not coincide with the academic year.	<p>The decisions regarding granting leave to pupils in schools, maintained or academy, sits with the individual headteacher of a school, who will take this decision in line with the school's Attendance Policy.</p> <p>Although the Local Authority has no role in authorising leave for pupils, we will flag up this issue with our Head teacher network as part of our ongoing support for the Homes for Ukraine scheme children.</p>
7. Questioner's name: Cllr Wendy Thomas	Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe
Question re engaging with local stakeholders re GCC's disposal of land near Leonard Stanley school What is GCC Property Services policy and process for engaging with those impacted by their decisions? Leonard Stanley Parish Council and Leonard Stanley school have ongoing concerns	A meeting is being arranged between GCC AMPs, Education the Parish Council and the School.

<p>relating to GCC’s plans to dispose of land adjoining the Leonard Stanley school. They have been engaging with an officer in the Property Services team but they have failed to get Property Services to agree to a meeting with a core group of interested parties (Property Services, Education, LSPC and LS School) to discuss future growth of the school and the best way to parcel the land in question. LSPC and LS School fully understand and believe it reasonable that GCC should be able to raise funds from a portion of the land; they just want an opportunity to discuss the best use and division of the land and they have found it impossible to get this to happen. It would be far more efficient to have one in-person or virtual meeting to discuss the issue as opposed to dozens of emails going back and forth; it would also facilitate better and collaborative decision-making.</p>	
<p>8. Questioner’s name: Cllr Wendy Thomas</p>	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr Dave Norman</p>
<p>Question re engaging with the community/local councils re road safety improvements for Frocester Hill junction, near Nympsfield What is GCC Highways policy and process for consulting local residents and parish/town councils on road safety improvement plans? Residents of Nympsfield, Uley, Frocester and environs are rightly very concerned about the accident hotspot at Frocester Hill/B4066 near Nympsfield. There have been a shocking number of accidents in this rural area: 10 incidents from 11 November to 11 January, most of these involving cars leaving the road and descending down a steep wooded hill; many of these resulting in injuries requiring hospital attention. GCC Highways has improvement plans scheduled for early April this year. Local residents and parish councils have many concerns about the plans proposed, but a core one relates to engagement. Despite numerous requests (from parish councils and me) for a meeting to discuss the junction <i>before</i> the plans were developed, the improvement plans were simply circulated via email, with no opportunity to take residents’ knowledge of that area into account as the plans were developed.</p>	<p>Our Road Safety schemes are generated through use of personal injury collision data (provided by the police) and look to address the specific issues identified in the collision data presented at that time. We employ specialist, qualified engineers to investigate and work up solutions that will address the issues and comply with national regulations, guidelines and best practice. There are many complex rules and best practice that the engineers refer to every day in their jobs.</p> <p>Once a design is ready, it is protocol to share with the local community through Local Councillors and Parish/Town Councils and any key stakeholders that we have contacted during our investigations.</p> <p>Whilst we welcome local peoples’ views, for the above reasons there is often limited scope to make amendments, given that the schemes are designed to address the identified accident and casualty profiles at any given location. In certain circumstances, such as Frocester Hill, we have been made aware of a change in the collision pattern and the current situation means that we have had more extensive</p>

	discussions with our police colleagues and have further information regarding some of the 'damage only' collisions. We have reviewed our proposals in light of the new data provided to us, however, it is still very much data led and specifically designed to tackle the known accidents and identified risks.
9. Questioner's name: Cllr Wendy Thomas	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>Question re the bus subsidy process Can GCC please detail the process by which bus routes are chosen for subsidy (vs those that will be delivered by commercial services)? What are the criteria for this and how are routes assessed against the criteria? If more routes are eligible for subsidy than funding allows, how are decisions made? How often are subsidised routes reviewed?</p>	The commercial network is not set by the Council. Bus operators register their intent with the Traffic Commissioner to operate a commercial service.
10. Questioner's name: Cllr Wendy Thomas	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>Question re The Robin community transport service In a December 2022 press release, GCC reported that The Robin bus service in the Forest of Dean had transported 600 passengers over two months. How many journeys does that represent? How are users booking their journeys, e.g. number of journeys booked on the web, by phone and via the app? What information is held re the demographics of users, e.g. concessionary fare users vs fee-paying? What metrics are in place to gauge users' satisfaction with the service? Could you provide similar information for the North Cotswolds Robin service?</p>	<p>The press release was likely referring to passenger trips in total. Between the launch of the Forest of Dean service on 24 October and the 31 December, the total number of trips made was 1038.</p> <p>The Cotswold service was launched on 17 October, the number of trips made between then and 31 December was 112.</p> <p>The method of booking proportions change from week to week and by area, but on average half of bookings are made via the app, a third via the call centre and the remainder via the website.</p> <p>There is a 'Quality of Service' rating system in place, the initial results are very positive with almost universal approval of the service.</p> <p>Demographic information is possible but not available at this stage, Officers are working with the providers to review this.</p>
11. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson

<p>As you're aware, residents in my division are some of those severely affected by the most recent round of Stagecoach cuts, with many losing work and educational access if the threatened loss of the evening and weekends service for the number 67 bus along the Chalford valley is not reversed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What is being done to tackle Stagecoach on this latest withdrawal of service? Is the Traffic Commissioner involved? Can local members do anything to help? What steps are being taken to widen the pool of operators across the district to redress Stagecoach's near-monopoly and provide a service network that serves residents rather than the company's shareholders? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The changes to the Stagecoach network scheduled for 19 February are to their commercial network, the Council does not have any power to influence or change these decisions. The Traffic Commissioner is the body responsible for approving registration of all bus services. I can confirm Stagecoach have observed the correct notice periods for registration of their changes with the Office of the Traffic Commissioner. Local Members input is always helpful and raising their concerns directly with Stagecoach would help them understand the depth of local concern with their changes. However, as per the answer to a), there is no legal or regulatory recourse available to prevent changes to the commercial network. As part of the mitigation for the previous round of Stagecoach cuts in 2022, Officers engaged with 5 new operators. This work will continue in 2023 to bring in as many new operators as possible to Gloucestershire.
<p>12. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>When is the Council's Adverse Weather Policy next due for review? Please can consideration be given to expanding the strategic road network to include primary schools? We had many incidents reported locally as families attempted to reach open schools on foot and by vehicle - it is not clear why the secondary network is prioritised, when older children can far more easily work remotely, and primary schools have an important childcare function.</p>	<p>Our Adverse Weather Plan is reviewed every summer. We will consult with our colleagues in Education and check our routes against the primary schools. We are also keen to hear from Education colleagues regarding what steps can be taken to support any self-help between the schools and their local communities, given that inevitably issues only tend to occur when there is significant impact across the 6,000+ km of highway network and therefore at times when the Highway teams are already very stretched.</p>

	Historically secondary schools have been identified as their catchments are larger and therefore routes to these schools have been considered due to average length of the school children's journeys, while primary schools generally have smaller catchment areas.
13. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
In other countries, the walking and cycle network is gritted with equal or higher priority over the road network. Given the need for modal shift, as set out in the transport decarbonisation commitment recently signed by the Council, can Adverse Weather Policy be reviewed to ensure that it is compliant with that commitment?	We will be reviewing our Adverse Weather Plan this summer and will review our walking and cycling provision as part of this review.
14. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
Communication with residents over grit availability was poor over the recent cold snap, with residents being pointed by GCC call staff towards parish and town councils, many of whom do not hold material (if any) supplies of grit - this caused considerable aggravation at the local level. Please can consideration be given to some work with the parishes over the warmer months and an agreed approach, so that next year's gritting season is more amicable and coordinated?	Every year we contact Town and Parish Councils to seek their requests for supplies of bagged salt and to offer to work with them on their winter plans. There are 110 parishes and town councils who hold salt for community self-help. Currently we have 47 Parish or Town Councils with winter plans and these vary greatly depending on their resource available – volunteers and paid helpers. We are more than happy to work with our Parish and Town Councils to review and build on this good work.
15. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
When can we expect to hear more about the Council's expanded work in relation to Air Quality in the county?	An update on the council's air quality work will be provided to the Environment Overview & Scrutiny committee in March
16. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton	Respondent's name: Cllr Kathy Williams
	We know that terms and conditions are essential to recruitment and retention so social carers which is why we have dedicated significant

<p>Ed Davey and the Lib Dems are calling for social care staff to have their minimum wage set at £2 per hour more than the national minimum wage.</p> <p>Do you agree with me that they deserve to be paid more and that this policy would help with the recruitment and retention of social care workers?</p>	<p>resource into incentives such as retention bonuses and golden handshakes and worked with care agencies to ensure this reaches the pockets of workers.</p>
<p>17. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Carole Allaway Martin</p>
<p>The county council closed Bohanam House care home in my division. What are the current options for its future use that are under your consideration?</p>	<p>We are considering potential re use of the buildings by either GCC or its One Public Estate partners prior to determining its disposal strategy if a use cannot be found or is viable.</p>
<p>18. Questioner's name: Cllr Jeremy Hilton</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman</p>
<p>What plans do you have to keep the county protected with fire cover in the event of a fire fighters strike?</p>	<p>GFRS has established an Industrial Action Business Continuity Planning Command Structure that has been meeting on a weekly basis for several months. Our BCP arrangements are based upon a planning assumption of there being three permanently crewed appliances which will be staffed by non-striking wholetime and on-call firefighters during any period of industrial action. These appliances will be strategically located at response points in Gloucester, Cheltenham and Stroud to minimise the impact upon our attendance times to life risks or incidents involving property. These crewing arrangements will be supported by the availability of our oncall staff at 16 standalone community fire stations across the county that we anticipate will largely remain available during periods of industrial action. We have been in regular contact with our neighbouring fire and rescue services to establish the impact of industrial action upon our mutual assistance arrangements. And we continue to provide updates to the Home Office on our business continuity arrangements.</p>
<p>19. Questioner's name: Cllr John Bloxsom</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>What action will the Council take to ensure that parish and town councils are aware of the expectations being placed upon them,</p>	

<p>that they respond to the annual message GCC about grit stocks and bins (it has been estimated that 60% don't do so) and that parish winter action plans are in place for all communities?</p>	<p>We will continue to work with our Town and Parish Councils over the summer to ensure there is an understanding about the provision of bagged salt supplies and the support with winter action plans. As mentioned above 110 Parishes and Town Councils responded to us on bagged salt stock supplies at the start of the winter and we topped up 102 of those that required additional stock.</p> <p>Engagement with many parishes during summer can be limited, despite high levels of contact and requests during winter - we anticipate that our proactive contact about winter is probably not on the parishes 'radar' during the summer when the teams need to and are planning the service. Hence any support that can be given by all members to encourage the parish councils to engage with us during the summer when our winter operations are being planned would be gratefully received.</p>
<p>20. Questioner's name: Cllr John Bloxsom</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Will the County Council ensure that all schools, including primary schools, are included on gritting routes and make arrangements with schools and parishes to ensure that adequate supplies of grit are made available with an agreed arrangement as to how this will be used?</p>	<p>We will undertake our annual review of our Adverse Weather Plan and review all our routes to review our provision to schools. We work with our colleagues in Education and have provided salt this year to schools that have run out. We are planning further collaboration for the coming year on salt procurement.</p> <p>We are also keen to hear from Education colleagues regarding what steps can be taken to support any self-help between the schools and their local communities, given that inevitably issues only tend to occur when there is significant impact across the 6,000+ km of highway network and therefore at times when the Highway teams are already very stretched.</p> <p>This has been an incredible difficult period that the teams have managed fantastically. December was one of the coldest since 1900, averaging just 0.8C (33.4F) in Central England and some areas saw a 300% increase in reported burst water pipes.</p>

	<p>During December, Gloucestershire experienced 25 nights at or below 3 degrees with 10 continuous 24 hour periods where temperatures didn't go above zero. We also experienced some significant snow fall across the county and temperatures down to -11.</p> <p>In January, we had another 7-10 period of very cold nights, down to -8, combined with surface water and river flooding across the county.</p> <p>As at 27th Jan 2023 – 177 gritting runs undertaken against a forecast profile of 99 for same period. The cold conditions have been nearly twice as back as 'average'</p> <p>Environment Agency issued 10 Flood warnings in December and 19 Flood warnings during January and numerous weather warnings regarding levels of rain fall.</p>
<p>21. Questioner's name: Cllr John Bloxsom</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>What action will the County Council take to progress the projects that were contained in the Stroud Levelling Up Round 2 bid, which has been rejected by the Government?</p>	<p>This was a bid submitted by Stroud District Council and many of the aspects of the bid are outside the County Council's roles and responsibilities. That said, the County Council is keen to continue to promote active travel measures, such as walking and cycling, throughout Stroud District as set out in the adopted Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan. We look forward to engaging with Stroud District Council to deliver such schemes in the future.</p>
<p>22. Questioner's name: Cllr John Bloxsom</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>What action will the County Council take to halt the vicious cycle of bus service unreliability, leading to low usage and further cuts?</p>	<p>The Council is spending significant sums to try and secure as much of the network as possible. Since March 2020 we have held the concessionary fares reimbursement rate at 90% of the 2019 level despite a large drop in actual use. This decision was taken to provide financial support to operators who are struggling with the loss of revenue.</p>

	<p>In April 2022 the Council also increased the price paid on all contracts by 8% to help bus service operators with the impact of inflation on the cost of delivery. This has also been proposed for April 2023.</p> <p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February and the previous unreliability of commercial services are issues for Stagecoach to tackle. They have recently provided statistics and assurance that their driver vacancies have significantly improved.</p> <p>We have more than made clear our concern to Stagecoach about their ongoing cuts to their commercial network. We have also escalated these concerns to the Traffic Commissioner and to the Department for Transport. We will continue to challenge these decisions in every way that we can and call on partners (such as the ones mentioned) to support us, and Gloucestershire's residents, in this.</p>
<p>23. Questioner's name: Cllr John Bloxsom</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>What action will the County Council take to restore access to public transport for the communities in Cashes Green, Cainscross, Bussage and Chalford whose services will be drastically reduced as a result yet more cuts to the Stagecoach no.67 service?</p>	<p>The County Council currently funds over 100 services in Gloucestershire in addition to an extensive Community Transport network.</p> <p>The changes being made to services from 19 February are made solely by Stagecoach to their commercial network. The County Council does not have the authority to prevent these changes from taking place. We are however in regular contact with Stagecoach and all operators and continue to highlight how important the commercial network is to support accessibility for our communities.</p>

	<p>The Council cannot fund replacements without withdrawing resources from other areas of the county, this is not a feasible solution to the issue as it will leave other areas without transport.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the impact of inflation on the cost of delivering transport, I'm very pleased that the Council has already found significant additional money to ensure that wherever possible current service levels can be maintained. The cost of an additional bus service typically starts at approximately £250k per annum, this level of funding is significant and is not available to the Council to replace these services withdrawn by Stagecoach.</p> <p>The purpose of the Full Council meeting on 15 February is to agree the budget for 2023/24. This includes a proposal to increase the subsidy budget by £389k to help ensure that the Council can keep pace with inflation, as best it can. This highlights the sheer scale of funding that is required to help maintain current service levels. Clearly any increase to service levels and replacing any lost Stagecoach services will bring additional pressures to Council budgets.</p> <p>The Council does not support any reduction of the network especially when they negatively impact the public, however we do not have the authority to prevent Stagecoach making changes to their commercial network. The Transport Act is clear that operators are free to make changes to their commercial network as they see fit, providing the correct notice periods have been observed.</p>
<p>24. Questioner's name: Cllr Steve Robinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Kathy Williams</p>
<p>Given the importance of supporting hospital discharge and care in the community, is there more that the County Council can do to maintain the provision of hot meals, as part of the Community Meals Service, which will no longer be delivered due to the withdrawal of the current supplier?</p>	<p>The current providers contract ends on 31 March. They will continue to provide meals up to and including this date. The Unfortunately the last tendering process did not result in a new provider for this service. Council is working to secure a new provider/s for community meals from 1 April.</p>
<p>25. Questioner's name: Cllr Steve Robinson</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Kathy Williams</p>

<p>Why did the warning in the Cabinet report of September 2021 go unheeded? Namely, "The model for the proposed new contract may not be a viable model; the service provider needs to deliver a countywide service 365 days of the year. However, in introducing a model where only the first 42 days are covered by a subsidy we may make the service less attractive to recipients and therefore not sustainable for the service deliverer".</p>	<p>The re-commissioning of this contract presented an opportunity to bring the GCC model of community meals in line with that of other local authorities. But also, in line with our model of adult social care and the then Council strategy objective of being there when we are needed most. Many councils do not provide this service at all choosing instead to provide links on websites to alternative providers of hot meals, home delivery services and providers of frozen meals. Of the remaining local authorities, the subsidy provided varies. The 2021 community meals Cabinet paper states</p> <p>"Gloucestershire, with a meal cost of £3.50, is now has one of the lowest costs for customers for subsidised meal provision in the country, costs vary from £4.25 to £6.50 with an overall average of £5.26."</p> <p>By implementing these service changes, it enabled the service to be delivered within the budget available. But also to provide support when people needed it the most.</p>
<p>26. Questioner's name: Cllr Gill Moseley</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>The Council has recently announced its intention to stop accepting used tyres at its HRC's across Gloucestershire. Has the environmental risk of this decision been formally considered before it was announced - specifically whether the risk of more tyres being fly-tipped once they could no longer be taken to our Recycling Centres. Is there a criteria the Council uses to assess each decision against its likely environment impact?</p>	<p>HRCs are licenced and funded for the collection of household waste. Tyres are not classified (under the Controlled Waste Regulations 2012) as household waste, and it is our belief that most tyres delivered to the HRC are from commercial sources. These are being disposed of illegally at the taxpayers' expense. The vast majority of householders are not changing motor vehicle tyres at home, but are instead using garages and tyre dealerships for this purpose.</p>
<p>27. Questioner's name: Cllr Colin Hay</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Mark Hawthorne</p>
<p>Could the Leader advise on what the current status is of the 'Glos2050' document? It is referred to in some Council documents as a foundational strategy document; what is its role in relation to the Council's overall direction and 'Building Back Better' strategy?</p>	<p>The Glos 2050 concordat sets out Leadership Gloucestershire's shared response at the time to the work that was undertaken in 2018. This is still available at the following address: https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2083983/gloucestershire-2050-concordat.pdf. This makes it clear that it is the central vision</p>

	<p>and ambitions that matter. The specific ideas that were discussed at the time were just that - ideas - and section 9 of the concordat makes clear Leadership Gloucestershire's position in relation to each of those.</p> <p>However, that concordat represents a point in time, and the discussion and structures continue to evolve. For its part, Gloucestershire County Council has adopted the 8 ambitions that arose into our own Council Strategy (with the addition of a 9th ambition to be a resilient county), and these continue to inform our direction of travel.</p>
28. Questioner's name: Cllr Ben Evans	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
I very much enjoyed walking from Churchdown to Cheltenham last week. What is the implication on the revenue budget for keeping the Chelt-Glos cycle way and footpath usable in all weathers? Will it be on a schedule to be gritted at the same time as the B4063?	We are reviewing our Adverse Weather Plan this summer and this will include a review of the provision for cycle and footways.
29. Questioner's name: Cllr Ben Evans	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
What is the implication on the revenue budget of keeping the cycle path usable in terms of hedge trimming? I notice the hedges have been cut back as far as they can go, but to maintain the full width of the path this will need to be done on a regular basis. Will this be factored into a schedule, and if so can that be made available to the public?	We will be taking all maintenance issues into account to ensure that all new cycle provisions have the required ongoing works.
30. Questioner's name: Cllr Ben Evans	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
What provision has been made post 2024 for maintaining the cycle way and footpath? Hopefully it will not need much in the short term, but in future years it is inevitable it will need money spent on it to keep it usable.	<p>As with the majority of our highway infrastructure regular inspections will be carried out to monitor condition and this information will be used to build in any requirements for maintenance funding.</p> <p>These are important aspects to consider however it is also important to highlight the incredibly successful work of the team that has seen tens of millions of pounds secured by the Council to implement</p>

	<p>fantastic and high-quality cycle provision through Churchdown and along the cycle spine. This very much supports our collective ambitions to encourage cycling and support the decarbonisation of transport.</p> <p>I'm sure the leader of the Liberal Democrats would like to join me in congratulating the team on securing such high levels of investment for a route serving his area and providing safe cycling for his communities and those close to the route.</p>
<p>31. Questioner's name: Cllr Ben Evans</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman</p>
<p>You may be aware that there have recently been 2 fatalities caused by people walking groups of dogs. In one, a baby died when it was attacked when its parents were walking 19 dogs. Just a few weeks ago a professional dog walker was killed when she lost control of the 8 dogs she was walking.</p> <p>Is the Cabinet Member aware of any plans for regulating the dog walking industry in Gloucestershire? Legislation needs to cover what is permitted in public spaces; and also what can take place in designated dog fields – both by professional dog walkers and the private individuals who rent them.</p> <p>If there are no current plans for regulation, does the Cabinet Member have a view on what should or could be done?</p>	<p>These are incredibly upsetting and distressing events and of course the County Council is keen to work the police and any partners on measures that can help to prevent these issues occurring in the future.</p> <p>I'm not aware of any legislation that is planned nationally however as these would typically be most effective through legislation managing this risk within parks and public open spaces I will ensure that the Councillor's concerns are passed onto our colleagues in the District councils who hold responsibility for these areas. I am also more than happy to support you in any contact that you may want to progress with the Gloucestershire Constabulary.</p>
<p>32. Questioner's name: Cllr Linda Cohen</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman</p>
<p>Can the Cabinet Member confirm whether the 20mph pilot scheme is still going ahead?</p> <p>The new Road Safety Policy pays lip service to this objective but does nothing to make it easier or cheaper for communities to secure them. The new edition of the CARS Toolkit has no information on this either. This is in great contrast with the approach in our neighbouring county of Oxfordshire.</p>	<p>The Road Safety Policy adopted by Cabinet in November includes a strategy spanning nine main themes. In my report I acknowledged that the strategy is a live document and that further work would take place that may affect our work programme. Such flexibility is necessary to ensure that our priorities and work programme reflect changes in the data over time and to learn from others.</p> <p>Cabinet set an overarching ambition to reduce by half the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads by 2032. It is my priority to tackle those hotspots and roads where we can achieve the</p>

	<p>quickest improvement in road safety. We are demonstrating this commitment by proposing to increase road safety capital investment from £400k last year to over £1m next year, and by proposing to invest £400k in each of the following two years. We are also proposing an extra £155k in the base revenue budget to increase the capacity and skills of our Road Safety team. These roles will oversee our capital programme and work through the new Road Safety Partnership to engage communities and seek to change behaviours of high risk road users. Councillors will also no doubt recall that we have invested £600,000 this year in a Community Speedwatch Fund and have been working with the Police to enable parishes and community groups to take local action to improve road safety.</p> <p>I recognise that 20mph schemes do have value in creating more walkable and cycle-friendly neighbourhoods and helping us to tackle climate change. With my cabinet colleagues we will keep under review the allocation of funding to improve accessibility and enable more journeys on foot and by bike. This includes work on the Mini-Holland scheme and bidding for external support through the Active Travel Fund.</p>
<p>33. Questioner's name: Cllr Linda Cohen</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson</p>
<p>What plans have the cabinet made to provide a bus service for residents who live in Wotton under Edge, Kingswood, Hillesley and North Nibley who are about to lose the 84 and 85 bus service and as a result the vital connection to school, work and amenities including health provision. Where is the public transport strategy to deliver an effective countywide service that meets the emissions targets and recognises that given the physical geography of our county it is not always possible for people to 'get on a bike'? The private providers have been clear that they can no longer meet their contractual obligations. Why the delay?</p>	<p>The 84 and 85 services are contracted by the West of England Combined Authority (WECA).</p> <p>Our understanding is that WECA have recently taken a decision to end some of their subsidised services in April should the Government Covid support grant funding end.</p> <p>Officers from GCC are trying to contact the relevant Officers at WECA to understand the reasoning behind this and to raise the issue of the impact this will have on Gloucestershire residents.</p> <p>With regard to climate challenges, the County Council is committed to providing as much public transport as possible to encourage</p>

	<p>people to leave their cars at home. We have increased our subsidy of public transport in the last two years to at least maintain our subsidised network in the face of inflation and the impact it has on the cost of delivering services. It won't be lost on our residents that due to global factors, it is costing far more to deliver those same level of services.</p> <p>It is precisely because of these challenges, that we feel it is important to have a long-term ambition stated within our BSIP proposals. This allows us to continue to aspire to that ambition for bus services and the support they can provide to our climate aspirations, whilst also recognising that the bus industry is facing some immediate and volatile challenges.</p>
<p>34. Questioner's name: Cllr Joe Harris</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>
<p>Residents in Cirencester are keen to see a solution on Cricklade Street where traffic continues to drive down the road despite being a pedestrian zone between 0930 - 1630.</p> <p>The police don't have the resource to police the restrictions pro-actively, so the consensus is that a physical barrier is needed in order to stop traffic flow during restricted hours.</p> <p>The County Council presented proposals for public consultation which aimed to try and solve this issue.</p> <p>Please could the cabinet member give me an update on progress and when we can expect to see new proposals?</p>	<p>The County Council has worked closely with the Town Council, District Council and other stakeholders, to propose changes to resolve historic traffic and enforcement issues near the Market Place and surrounding roads.</p> <p>As you will be aware it has been incredibly challenging reaching a consensus across stakeholders regarding what solutions they would like to see at this location.</p> <p>It is also important to remember that traffic access is, as you state, already not permitted between 09:30 and 16:30 and therefore I hope that you will support calls for the Police to enforce the restrictions that are already in place. The current restrictions are legal and sufficient to ensure that the safety of pedestrians can be protected.</p> <p>Following a formal TRO consultation last April we have reviewed feedback with several groups to gain perspectives from disabled blue badge users, taxi drivers, residents and businesses. Our aim is to ensure that any new TRO's are effective, supporting the local place shaping agenda and striking an appropriate balance between the needs of different highway users.</p>

	<p>We are exploring alternative options for managing access, parking and loading in Cricklade Street including the potential of camera enforcement to control access from Market Place whilst retaining essential goods vehicle access. This would be contingent with securing government approval to enforce moving traffic offences.</p> <p>We are redrafting our proposals and aim to brief the key stakeholders of any TRO decision in the coming months.</p>
35. Questioner's name: Cllr Joe Harris	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
<p>Please can the cabinet member tell me how much on-street parking charges in Cirencester are set to rise by?</p>	<p>As part of this year's council budget all fees and charges are set to increase by the level of inflation.</p> <p>All county council highways income goes towards running costs with any surplus being spent only on highways and transport services.</p>
36. Questioner's name: Cllr Paul Baker	Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris
<p>I am delighted to see £250k has been included in the budget for Cheltenham High Street pedestrianisation. I assume in fact this is to resurface Cambray Place which is currently an unsightly mishmash of tarmac, broken and unbroken slabs. Could the Cabinet Member please advise me when he anticipates the design work will be available and who will be consulted, when tenders are likely to be invited and when the work will be finished?</p> <p>Following on from this much needed enhancement of one of Cheltenham's main retail areas can he advise what plans are in hand for the resurfacing of the east end of Cheltenham's High Street, otherwise known as The Strand? As cited by the Cheltenham Civic Society this important retail area is a disgrace, a crazy paved area of ugly tarmac and brickwork with poor drainage and an undulating surface. Refurbishment is long overdue.</p>	<p>Cambray Place will be included in the 23/24 capital programme and will be delivered as a maintenance scheme through our Structural Maintenance programme. Plans for the Strand require further work as this is less well developed and extends over a much greater area.</p> <p>In addition the Council continue to work closely with Cheltenham Borough Council regarding these proposals and what contribution they are willing to make to help ensure that the scheme is consistent with the wider public realm within central Cheltenham. This also includes ways in which Cheltenham Borough Council can help manage the access for their operational vehicles serving the town centre or collecting waste, so that the risk of further damage to the paving or any new scheme is reduced.</p>

<p>37. Questioner's name: Cllr David Brown</p> <p>Loose fitting utility covers on Gloucestershire Highways can produce a great deal of noise and disturb residents living nearby when 'hit' by vehicles. This is particularly upsetting for those living near a busy road and will often result in sleep loss and a general reduction in the quality of life while the noise continues. What is being done to ensure Utility Companies act as quickly as possible to 'silence' (repair) these covers?</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p> <p>There is currently no fix time in regulation for rocking or noisy frames and covers, the Streetworks Team continue to pursue utility companies to ensure a timely repair, this is a national issue and has been taken up with the Department of Transport, who are considering response times.</p> <p>I am more than happy for officers to provide you with contact details for the utility companies as directing your own and the public's contact to them will help to reinforce the messages that the Council are giving to utility companies regarding the importance of these specific (as well as their wider) repairs.</p>
<p>38. Questioner's name: Cllr David Brown</p> <p>Is any consideration given to the negative impact on residents when prioritising repairs of utility covers?</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p> <p>We are assured by utility companies that this is the case and the impact on residents is considered. I suspect there are however operational reasons, such as repairs also requiring a road closure, meaning that some repairs take longer than others.</p>
<p>39. Questioner's name: Cllr David Brown</p> <p>How many utility covers needed repair during 2022?</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p> <p>488 damaged utility covers were reported to the Council. We do not have records of reports that were raised directly with the utility companies.</p>
<p>40. Questioner's name: Cllr David Brown</p> <p>During 2022 what was the average time taken to complete a utility cover repair following the initial reporting?</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p> <p>Utility companies have indicated that this is generally around 28 days for a standard cover, where a cover is broken repairs will be completed in less time, but this is very dependent on the location of the cover and whose apparatus it is.</p>
<p>41. Questioner's name: Cllr David Brown</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p>

Utility Companies often need to carry out planned maintenance work or unexpected repairs and then seek permission from the County Council, possibly restricting use of the highway. When this involves diversions or temporary traffic control swift completion of the work is particularly important. How is an agreement reached on how long a particular job should take?	Utility companies have to provide a detailed works description and an expected duration of the job, the streetworks team can “duration challenge” a request based on the information provided. Durations will vary depending on many factors such as the type of road and the complexity of the work and reinstatement. In effect it should be in the commercial interest of the utility company to make repairs at any given site swiftly, in order to maximise their resources.
42. Questioner’s name: Cllr David Brown	Respondent’s name: Cllr Dom Morris
How often do maintenance or repair jobs take longer than agreed?	386 individual sets of works overran in the last financial year, when compared to the duration of their road space booking.
43. Questioner’s name: Cllr David Brown	Respondent’s name: Cllr Dom Morris
In the event a job does take longer than agreed are penalties against the Utility Company always applied?	Once a job overruns charges can be applied for breaching permit conditions, in some cases a daily charge will be applied for the occupation of the highway past the agreed time.
44. Questioner’s name: Cllr David Brown	Respondent’s name: Cllr Dom Morris
After such work is completed, property belonging to the utility company (barriers, diggers, containers etc) is sometimes left on site for an extended period. What encouragement do the County Council give to these companies to tidy up after themselves?	Fines are applied in all cases where signs, barriers and equipment are left on site. This is classed as a continuation of work. And as indicated earlier it should be in the commercial interest of the utility company to make repairs at any given site swiftly, in order to maximise their resources.
45. Questioner’s name: Cllr Roger Whyborn	Respondent’s name: Cllr Dave Norman
Will the cabinet member please commit to a clear and believable timeline for TRO consultation and subsequent delivery of the 20-mph scheme, (which is largely designed already but not published) for Hatherley Lane and Hatherley Road. This project has been dragging on for what is now years, and residents are getting very fed up and demanding both answers and action on	Considerable time has been spent developing comprehensive scheme proposals in consultation with local members and the police. This has been informed by speed monitoring across a wide area to identify which roads are suitable for a 20mph limit and which ones aren’t. You will be aware that some slippage has occurred as the scope of the scheme has grown based on local aspiration and feedback and we have experienced challenges with staffing,

<p>roads which are suffering excess speeds and near-miss collisions all the time.</p>	<p>electrical works and lead times.</p> <p>Officers are currently developing a consultation package and will be in touch with you this month to firm up the timescale.</p>
<p>46. Questioner's name: Cllr Roger Whyborn</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman</p>
<p>The latest casualty figures for persons killed and seriously injured on Gloucestershire roads during 2022 are seriously concerning. That is to say, 30 fatalities in 2022, and 372 seriously injured; these are the highest figures for 10 years or more. What proportion of these figures are on A roads, B roads and minor roads; and can you break down these figures by speed limit in force on the road?</p>	<p>A review of all injuries on Gloucestershire roads in the 5 years from 2017-2021 shows that on average 4% were on the motorway network, 45% on A roads, 16% on B roads and 35% on unclassified roads.</p> <p>Data over the same period shows that the split of all injuries by speed limit was as follows: Urban/Residential roads:</p> <p>20mph – 2.6% of all injuries 30mph – 40.4% 40mph – 13.1%</p> <p>Rural, non-residential roads: 50mph – 12.8% 60mph – 25.2% 70mph – 5.8%</p> <p>In November I highlighted in the Cabinet report on Road Safety that 48% of fatalities are on 60mph limit road. These are mainly drivers and their passengers. I also noted that in urban areas there are more collisions and injuries overall and pedestrians and cyclists make up a higher share. It is therefore important that our Road Safety Policy is tailored to local needs and does not take a one size fits all approach</p> <p>That is why we have invested £600,000 this year in a Community Speedwatch Fund and have been working with the Police to enable parishes and community groups to take local action to improve road safety.</p>

47. Questioner's name: Cllr Roger Whyborn	Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray
<p>The introduction of a green corridor at a cost of £45,000 in public funds, along the former railway line behind Canterbury Walk in Warden Hill is to be welcomed. Does the cabinet member agree that it would be excellent for health and well-being, and to encourage walking, if this corridor was to be opened up for public access, and will this be done?</p>	<p>There are no plans to change the current access arrangements in the short term. The planting will take some time to become established and consultation with residents during spring/summer 2022 found that they did not support wider public access. In the short-term (next five years) the local community and Bournside School who have helped with the planting will be invited to join the council at the site to help with maintenance activities and to check on progress. The site has been planted with a maintenance strip in place, so there may be an opportunity to revisit access arrangements in future years.</p>
48. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>Could the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Bus Transport please confirm that a bus operator did provide a quote for restoring the complete F bus service, what the cost of this was, and that this was declined by the County Council?</p>	<p>The operator originally put a quote in for a town centre to Leckhampton service, this is the current service L. It was days later that a second quote for a similar service from the town centre to St. Marks and Rowanfield was sent to GCC. This second quote was for £214,000 per year. The Leckhampton service was already agreed at this time. Officers' analysis shows that St. Marks and Rowanfield residents have access to alternative services that are physically closer, more comprehensive, and more frequent than alternative services available to residents of Leckhampton. As such, the resources available were focused on providing some level of replacement service for those with the greatest hardship accessing alternative services.</p> <p>It's important to note that before all the above took place, two full procurements were attempted for a full replacement of service F and for a pared down version, no bids were received.</p> <p>Whilst I welcome the question from you, you may recall that officers provided a written update to you on this very issue on the 21st November 2022.</p>

49. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>Prior to the withdrawal of the weekday F bus service and with the imminent withdrawal of the weekend F bus service, it served St Mark's, where it called at bus stops the most deprived LSOA in Cheltenham (Cheltenham 005C in the 10% most deprived areas in England) and Leckhampton, where it served one of the least deprived LSOA in England (Cheltenham 014D ranked 32,823 out of 32,844 where 1 is most deprived). The replacement L service continues to serve Leckhampton, but service has been withdrawn from St Mark's. Could the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Bus Transport explain how this is in any way compatible with the Conservative administration's Levelling Up agenda, when the most deprived area loses its bus service, but the least deprived area get to keep their service?</p>	<p>Two attempts at a full replacement of service F and for a pared down version were made, unfortunately no bids were received.</p> <p>The decision to focus the available resource on Leckhampton was not based on indices of deprivation, but on access to alternative services. Residents of St. Marks and Rowanfield have access to alternative services that are physically closer, more comprehensive, and more frequent than alternatives available to residents of Leckhampton. As such, the resources available were focused on the Leckhampton side of the F.</p> <p>Whilst I welcome the question from you, you may recall that officers provided a written update to you on this very issue on the 21st November 2022.</p>
50. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>Could the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Bus Transport please tell me what his message is to the elderly or less mobile members of my community, who are telling me that following the withdrawal of the F bus service from St Mark's they are now trapped in their homes and unable to access any public transport, and that this is leaving them isolated and causing considerable worry and angst?</p>	<p>For those residents of Gloucestershire that have mobility issues or otherwise cannot access the public transport network, we advise that they contact their local Community Transport organisation. For residents of St. Marks, this is Community Connexions. They cover the area with dial-a-ride services. They can be called on 0345 680 5029.</p>
51. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham	Respondent's name: Cllr Philip Robinson
<p>Could the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Bus Transport confirm to me that he will urgently look to get some type of affordable and accessible public transport back into the community I represent in St Mark's and Rowanfield to address the public transport black hole left by the withdrawal of the F bus?</p>	<p>Frequent bus services serve Gloucester Road, Arle Road, Orchard Way and the A40. These are a relatively short walking distance for residents of St. Marks and Rowanfield.</p> <p>For those who are not able to walk to a nearby stop, and require a door to door service we advise they contact their local Community Transport Organisation, Community Connexions, on 0345 680 5029.</p>

<p>52. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham</p> <p>The declared Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) for Cheltenham includes the A4019 corridor along the High Street, Poole Way and Swindon Road, but seems at times this seems to have considerable queuing traffic due to what appears to be erratic phasing of the traffic signals. Could the Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood please advise what sets of traffic signals within Cheltenham are operating together on the SCOOT system and confirm that all of the infrastructure for SCOOT to work is fully functional and that the system has been fully optimised for those roads?</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p> <p>The majority of signals in this area are connected to the SCOOT system (and also run MOVA in certain circumstances).</p> <p>Both of these systems help co-ordinate adjacent signals to ensure the most effective throughput of traffic during the busiest periods. These systems can be enhanced and we are working on this system to ensure reliable connectivity to improve traffic flow. We have also had some issues with induction loops which need to be resolved to enable to system to be fully functional.</p>
<p>53. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham</p> <p>In a County Council press release dated 23 January 2023, the Council stated that 19 Olympic-sized swimming pools of tarmac had been used on the county's roads. The Fédération Internationale de Natation facility rules state that Olympic-sized swimming pools must be 50m long, 25m wide, and with a minimum depth of 2m, but a recommended depth of 3m. This means a pool of the recommended depth could hold 50% more tarmac than one of minimum depth, which might suggest the council is misleading the press and the public by using such ambiguously defined units. I asked the Council's communications team to clarify this, but at the time of writing, no information had been forthcoming. Could the Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood please confirm, in metric units, what values were used for the three dimensions of the Olympic-sized pool and the density of tarmac, and will he ensure that future press releases do not non-standard units of measurement that seem designed to mislead?</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p> <p>There was no intention to mislead anyone. The press release was intended to make the scale of the materials used more relatable to the public, than the use of tonnes.</p> <p>As surfacing material density varies by type and mixture specified the total tonnage used to date was divided by the average density of 2.2 ton per m3.</p> <p>With the average pool 25mx50mx1.8m - 2250m3, $2,250 \times 2.2 = 4950$ ton per pool, $98,000$ ton divided by $4950 = 19.79$ pools</p> <p>The actual tonnage of 98,000 was provided within the same release to avoid any confusion.</p>
<p>54. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham</p> <p>The subterranean street lighting cable infrastructure in The Poets area of St Mark's seems to be suffering from repeated multiple street lighting outages leaving whole roads in darkness for many weeks. Recognising this is down to National Grid, rather than the Council, what pressure will he put on National</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dom Morris</p> <p>The street lighting team have regular progress meetings with National Grid. In addition to these meetings the team are in daily contact with National Grid to discuss ongoing and challenging faults</p>

<p>Grid to deliver faster first-time fixes of these failures, or to renew their infrastructure?</p>	<p>in relation to underground cable faults affecting street light operation.</p> <p>National Grid has recently acquired additional resources to deal with faults on their network, including street lighting cable faults, through a new framework contract. While this has generally seen significant reductions in the overall quantity of street lighting faults and their timescales for completion, we acknowledge that there is a separate issue with a small quantity of faults that have reoccurred in recent months.</p> <p>Identifying faults with underground cables is often not a straightforward process, which on occasion require more than one visit to rectify. We continue to work with National Grid to improve the process for reprogramming these works and to improve the quality of information received from them in relation to the type of repairs affected. This should improve timescales for reattendance and provide better information for our use in customer updates. It must be appreciated that National Grid will always look to affect the most cost efficient repair and will only consider replacement of existing underground cables in limited cases due to the high cost.</p>
<p>55. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman</p>
<p>Hester's Way Library (which is actually just inside the boundary of St Mark's and St Peter's Division) is in the most deprived LSOA in Cheltenham. While the Draft Libraries Policy talks about "levelling up our communities", it doesn't explicitly mention helping to tackle deprivation. Could the Cabinet Member for Fire, Community Safety and Libraries give me an assurance that under this strategy, libraries in deprived areas will play an active part in helping tackle deprivation in the locality?</p>	<p>Libraries in all areas of deprivation, including Hesters Way, already play an active part in supporting local people within communities to raise aspiration and tackle deprivation in their localities. The new Library Strategy will provide an updated framework to continue to ensure libraries play this crucial role.</p>
<p>56. Questioner's name: Cllr David Willingham</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Dave Norman</p>

<p>The libraries strategy talks about “adapting to the needs and aspirations of the local residents”, does the Cabinet Member agree with me that in some areas, rather than simply meeting aspirations, we should be going further and seeking to exceed and raise the aspirations of the local community?</p>	<p>The strategy aims to support people’s aspirations and this will include providing local opportunities for people to have access to services or opportunities, such as the library Innovation Labs.</p>
<p>57. Questioner’s name: Cllr David Willingham</p>	<p>Respondent’s name: Cllr Dave Norman</p>
<p>While what is in the libraries strategy generally seems both positive and welcome, with the exception of the case studies, much of it is quite abstract, as would be expected from a strategy document. Could the Cabinet Member advise whether there are currently any more concrete proposals for investing in Hester’s Way library that he could share, and could he advise on the timescales of when this strategy will turn into concrete proposals for each library and how the public, councillors and other interested stakeholders will be able to feed into the processes for the delivery and implementation of the strategy at their local library?</p>	<p>The new library strategy, if adopted, runs for a 5-year period from 2023-2028. The implementation of the strategy will take place over this period and will be reported on a yearly basis. Any significant changes to local library provision will be consulted upon as and when they are introduced.</p>