

Council

21 January 2019

Public Questions (38) – Final Version

1.	Question from Anne Smith to the Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Who had the casting vote for closure of Boots Corner? This decision seems to be causing more pollution, inconvenience, & loss of revenue to the businesses in the town. When will common sense prevail?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The decision was two-fold. This Council confirmed on 26 th January, 2015, that it supported the outcomes of the GCC Traffic Regulation Order committee and GCC cabinet confirmed the TRO committee recommendations on 22 nd July, 2015. That process confirmed the phased approach with a trial phase for Boots Corner, which is what is currently being delivered.
2.	Question from Fiona Mcleod to the Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Can I ask please when the decision to close Boots Corner to general traffic will be reversed so that reasonable traffic flow through that town is restored. Closing Boots corner has done nothing to improve traffic flow in the town, it has made the back-log of traffic outside A&E ten times worse during peak times and it has made the town centre far more dangerous for pedestrians. The ridiculous scenario that cars are now racing down Rodney road and piling up outside the new John Lewis is nothing short of dangerous. As pedestrians gaze at the new John Lewis and step out of the shadows under the scaffolding outside the LloydsTSB building into cars racing up Rodney Road it is a fatal accident waiting to happen. Which councillor is going to swallow their pride, admit it hasn't worked and reopen that traffic flow? I look forward to being able to drive safely back to Pittville again.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	A petition requesting the re-opening of Boots' Corner is being considered by Council at its meeting on 21 st January, 2019. However, it should be recognised that the scheme, including the trial, was funded by central government as part of a wider strategy to encourage individuals to consider alternative means of transport. GCC, as Highways authority, plans to make amendments to the scheme to respond to concerns raised, including potential traffic calming on Rodney Road.
3.	Question from David Evans to Cabinet Member, Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Whilst I support the closure of Boots corner I feel that no real alternative measures have been put in place to take the traffic to properly transverse Cheltenham. Because of this if it came to a vote I would vote against the closure.

	<p>My question is does CBC agree that this is probably the most embarrassing decision that they have made since the introduction of the Noddy train?</p> <p>If the closure becomes permanent what alternative plans are in place to ensure traffic flows better through Cheltenham and would these plans involve demolishing buildings as has been done in the past and destroying the very character of our town?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>The trial is exactly that, so until a final decision is made, it is difficult to progress permanent changes.</p> <p>Such changes, if the net benefit of the trial is confirmed, would include amendments to signage, but would definitely not include demolishing property.</p> <p>The objectives of the Cheltenham Transport Plan include protecting the key features for which Cheltenham is renowned, so no new roads or associated demolition work is envisaged.</p>
4.	<p>Question from Peter Walsh to Cabinet Member, Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p>
	<p>What is the total cost of the experimental closure of 'Boots' Corner' and how was it justified in the face of widespread opposition to the plan and at a time when resources available to the Council were scarce and could/should have been devoted to more pressing needs.</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>Boots' Corner is the last phase of a whole package of works funded through a successful GCC bid (supported by CBC) to the Department for Transport Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) for £4.95m. Beyond this, CBC has funded the temporary works at Boots' Corner to demonstrate how much space can be reclaimed from the streetscape and how differently it can be used. This cost £45,970.</p> <p>Should the scheme be made permanent, a higher quality solution, similar to that recently delivered on the High Street between Rodney Road and Cambray Place will be developed, as part of an on-going wider public realm uplift and several of the components of the current temporary scheme at Boots' Corner will be re-used elsewhere.</p>
5.	<p>Question from Sharon Roberts to Cabinet Member, Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p>
	<p>Regarding the increase in footfall at boots corner. Does council think this could be partly due to the opening of new shops such as John Lewis etc. and more people parking on the Montpellier side of the high street and walking through town due to increased congestion driving to car parks on the other side of town?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>It is never easy to directly attribute 'cause and effect' in dynamic situations with a number of variables at play. Equally, one could argue that the very reason that significant new retail entrants have appeared locally is in response to the phased roll-out of the Cheltenham Transport Plan. The key however is the cumulative effect on footfall, at a time when government is calling for local authorities to take action to protect their town centres.</p>
6.	<p>Question from Sharon Roberts to Cabinet Member, Development and Safety,</p>

	Councillor Andrew McKinlay															
	What does council propose to do regarding the increased levels of congestion and pollution levels in the small residential streets such as St Luke's Road, College Road, Ambrose St, and St George's street?															
	Response from Cabinet Member															
	<p>CBC has been working collaboratively with GCC throughout the delivery of the Cheltenham Transport Plan. GCC has been monitoring traffic flows, recognising that the Department for Transport anticipates background growth in traffic, which is why the scheme is promoting alternative transport options. CBC has been carrying out additional pollution monitoring and will be able to assess if nitrogen-dioxide levels have increased against statutory limits when sufficient data has been collected. At this stage, it is too early to compare results against the annual legal limit. It should also be noted that traffic, whilst significant, is not the only factor contributing to air pollution levels.</p> <p>Certain areas suffered from traffic hotspots prior to the Cheltenham Transport Plan implementation and it is pleasing to note that GCC has recently confirmed funding to improve the traffic lights on the A4019 corridor, which should assist with the wider circulation of traffic. This may also impact positively on nitrogen-dioxide levels at longstanding pollution hotspots along that road corridor.</p>															
7.	Question from Bharat Gupta to Cabinet Member, Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay															
	What has been the new pollution level on two known pinch points on College road and near the St. Georges Street and do they exceed the EA guidelines?															
	Response from Cabinet Member															
	<p>Pollution levels for College Road and St George's Street are made available on our website soon after the results are received https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/downloads/file/6643/no2_raw_data_2018</p> <p>The last four months of NO2 data is as follows for College Road and St George's Street (but please bear in mind this data snapshot must not be taken out of context as it is not 12 months of bias adjusted data). December's data will be added to the website as soon as it is available.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>August 2018</th> <th>September</th> <th>October</th> <th>November</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>15 College Road</td> <td>21.67</td> <td>23.82</td> <td>28.64</td> <td>29.94</td> </tr> <tr> <td>50 St Georges Street</td> <td>25.70</td> <td>32.89</td> <td>25.82</td> <td>37.21</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>There are no Environment Agency guidelines in relation to this. It is too early to assess whether the DEFRA annual nitrogen dioxide limit has been exceeded, as we are waiting for the national bias adjustment figure. The national hourly nitrogen dioxide limit has not been exceeded at these locations.</p>		August 2018	September	October	November	15 College Road	21.67	23.82	28.64	29.94	50 St Georges Street	25.70	32.89	25.82	37.21
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8.	Question from Bharat Gupta to Cabinet Member, Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay															
	How much reduction in car numbers has the Boots Corner scheme made in the centre of town and what benefits have resulted to the trade as a result?															

	Response from Cabinet Member
	Daily traffic flows on Clarence Parade, on the approach to Boots' Corner have reduced by approximately 80% since the introduction of the trial restriction.
9.	Question from Clare Winter to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	I would like to know if the closure of Boots Corner has resulted in more or less total air pollution in Cheltenham (not just around Boots Corner), as it seems to me that the resultant near stationary traffic in roads a little further out of the centre but still close to the centre during busy times of the day (e.g. College Road, St Luke's Road, St James Square, St George's St, Clarence Square, Clarence Road...) may be producing more overall fumes, not less. So whilst the town centre itself may be benefiting from less traffic, surely the consequent impact on areas just outside is a prohibitively high a price to pay. These areas are largely residential, so people cannot choose not to be there, unlike the town centre, and the roads are clearly not fit for the sudden massively increased volumes of traffic as a direct result of the closure of Boots Corner. Journeys are significantly longer in terms of both distance and time, and much, much slower, all of which surely increases overall pollution in Cheltenham.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The Council measures the main pollutant of local concern (nitrogen-dioxide) at a number of locations around the Borough and has installed additional nitrogen-dioxide and particulate monitoring points, in response to concerns relating to the Cheltenham Transport Plan. We have a statutory duty to monitor and assess local air quality and to report on this annually, but the duty to meet national air quality standards rests with the government, reflecting the cross-boundary nature of pollution sources. We are collating December's results and waiting for the national bias adjustment figure to be released, before we can finalise our annual assessment. We are also awaiting the outcome of a 'Detailed Air Quality Assessment' which we commissioned to better understand the local air quality situation. We will publish the results of this work on our website, but it will not be possible to determine the exact contributions that the Boots' Corner restriction has made to overall air pollution levels in the town (if any).
10.	Question from Jan Walters to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Are the Council aware that closure of Boots Corner has only driven the traffic further back up the High Street as cars seeking a way through now come up Rodney Road onto the High Street, up Winchcombe Street, into Albion Street and mostly along St Georges Place?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	GCC has been monitoring traffic flows since before the first phase of the Cheltenham Transport Plan was undertaken. The Council recognises that the trial at Boots' Corner has resulted in increased traffic on Rodney Road and colleagues at GCC are exploring options, such as traffic calming, as a means of mitigating this impact and discouraging traffic from using this route. As Cheltenham grows (and there is significant planned growth), the issue of air quality was always likely to become more challenging. One of the key aims of the

	<p>Boots' Corner scheme is to encourage more use of public transport, walking and cycling, especially for shorter journeys. Regardless of the outcome of the experimental traffic order, Cheltenham needs to achieve some modal shift in the future to help manage pollution and congestion issues and this assumption is built into traffic impact assessments relating to the Joint Core Strategy.</p>
11.	Question from Jan Walters to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>In the light of recent publicity about the dangers of pollution particularly to our children, sick and elderly, are the Council aware that the closure of Boots Corner has led traffic to find alternative routes which include College Road, where there is a school, a hospital with A and E and a playground for young children?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The data from GCC identifies various locations with traffic growth categorised into growth between 5-10% against expected levels of background growth and above 20%. College Road is in the first category.</p> <p>CBC has a statutory duty to monitor local air pollution and to implement improvement measures through an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) if levels are exceeded. We are also carrying out additional monitoring in response to public concerns about the Boots' Corner restriction. However, any level of air pollution has some adverse impact on health, so we all have a collective responsibility as a community to minimise our individual contributions, for example by choosing more sustainable and active means of travel wherever possible.</p>
12.	Question from Derek Plumb to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>What specific criteria are being used to measure the social, economic and environmental impact, both positive and negative, caused by the closure of Boots Corner? For each criteria, what are the critical threshold values that have to be breached in order for Boots Corner to be re-opened to traffic?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Given that the funding was secured from central government to reduce severance on the High street and encourage regeneration and modal shift, a range of measures have been considered. These include footfall movements at Boots' Corner, jobs generated and the usage of non-private motor vehicle transport.</p> <p>Full details of these measures are contained in the Council papers for the meeting on 21st January – for example the number of jobs generated, compared to an independent Treasury Green Book analysis, as part of the LSTF bid.</p>
13.	Question from Neil Smith to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>I have analysed the arguments for the closure of Boots Corner to normal traffic and not one of them stands up to serious scrutiny. Who are the real beneficiaries to this scheme because it isn't local residents or businesses?</p> <p>As a general population we are addicted to our cars. In some cases travel by bus simply isn't a practical solution – for example I have equipment and tools which I need to take everywhere with me. We are at the start of electric vehicles but over the next 10 to 20 years the pollution problem will become far less as a result. The</p>

	arguments for closing Boots Corner just don't add up. Personally I think the earlier parts of the Cheltenham Transport Plan have worked out well – but not this bit.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The scheme is part of a wider ambition to maintain the vibrancy of the town centre in line with government policy e.g. the recently announced Future High Streets Fund.</p> <p>The purpose is to encourage footfall by reducing the former severance at Boots' Corner. Data sets showing increased footfall, cycling and bus patronage suggest that the scheme is having a positive impact and evidence shows that people travelling to town using these methods are the greatest spenders.</p> <p>Cheltenham is behind the curve on this, as many towns and cities have already removed traffic from the town centre e.g. Worcester, Bath and Oxford and believe that it contributes to long term performance of the town centre.</p> <p>The objectives of the Cheltenham Transport Plan were never specifically targeting an improvement in air quality, but the Council is concerned about this issue generally, as demonstrated by the extensive monitoring activity which the authority is engaged in and associated action planning.</p>
14.	Question from Neil Smith to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	What has to happen or what has to be proved to enable the trial to be cancelled early?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The monitoring would have to show a severe impact on the performance of the wider road network beyond background growth and a detrimental effect upon the performance of trade more generally within the town centre.
15.	Question from Alan McDougall to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Is the Council and Cllr. McKinlay (Development & Safety), in particular, equally as satisfied with the changes made to the protected pedestrian crossing at Boots Corner, as they are/he is with health and safety issues resulting from the increased Non-protected pedestrian area between Rodney Road and Winchcombe Street at the John Lewis end of the High Street?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The pedestrian crossing at Boots' Corner was retained following consultation with the disability forum prior to the trial. Should the scheme be made permanent, I would not be satisfied with the current arrangement and would push for the signalling to be permanently 'on green' for pedestrians and only red when traffic approaches, rather than 'on-call' as at present.</p> <p>GCC advises that they will be exploring traffic calming on Rodney Road, which will aim to reduce both the volume and speed of traffic. Once this has been implemented we will need to see what other changes are required, given that this area is desperately in need of an uplift following the successful Rodney Road to Cambray public realm improvement works on the High Street.</p>
16.	Question from Alan McDougall to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay

	Can the Council assure the electorate that the 'partial closure' of Boots Corner intention is not being driven by development proposals in respect of the Municipal Buildings, its adjacencies or Royal Well, made by the Council (or other associated agencies such as the Cheltenham Development Task Force, BID, the Chamber of Commerce, etc.) either in consultation with or at the request of Developers e.g. Blackrock, Hammerson, Intu or Financial Institutions e.g. Canada Life?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	There are no development proposals for the Municipal Offices beyond a development brief for the area, which was approved by this Council in 2013. Many individuals have hypothesised options, but it is unlikely to appeal to the developers cited, who generally prefer retail parks, which given the heritage status of the buildings concerned is not going to happen.
17.	Question from Chris Owen to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Why has the so called trial closure of Boots corner been extended even further despite the massive amount of adverse feedback received from the rate payers and also the affects on the roads around the centre of town and the rise in pollution in those areas?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The trial is being run as an experimental traffic order made by GCC. Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders can run for up to 18 months. The trial Boots' Corner restriction commenced on 28th June 2018, so can run through to December 28th 2019. GCC has now reviewed the traffic data and suggested amendments to mitigate certain impacts. Meanwhile, other data sets such as footfall, cycling in the Boots' Corner area and bus patronage suggest positive improvements.</p> <p>We are collecting evidence about changes to air quality in Cheltenham (by measuring certain pollutants) and will share these results when enough months' monitoring data has been received to allow valid conclusions to be drawn.</p> <p>In the meantime, monthly monitoring data has been published to the Council's website providing full transparency regarding the position in relation the main pollutant, nitrogen-dioxide.</p>
18.	Question from Cat Metcalfe to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Has the impact on number of visitors to Cheltenham town centre been measured?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	That data is collected annually, so it is probably too early to be certain, but anecdotally, we are aware that the November race meeting achieved record numbers and that CBC car park patronage has been very strong. Neither of these factors suggest a reduction in visitor numbers.
19.	Question from Cat Metcalfe to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Has there been an impact on house prices? I'd be interested to know an estate agent's view on the desirability of living in Pittville/Fairview/Prestbury etc. now it's harder to access.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	As I am not an estate agent, I do not feel qualified to answer this question.

20.	Question from Lorraine Du Feu on behalf of Cheltenham Green Party to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>The council will be aware of the shocking reports published last week concerning the effects of air pollution on the health of unborn children and children travelling in cars. Although we view the Boots corner closure as a positive move in terms of discouraging traffic in the town centre, it is also unlikely to improve the air quality in the town as a whole as most drivers will use other routes.</p> <p>It is a disgrace that Cheltenham has had such poor air quality for so long and the main reason for this is a failure to address the problem of the large number of cars travelling through the town. Simply diverting cars from one route to another will not solve this, but measures such as alternate number plate days and congestion charging, which must be supported by robust investment in alternative transport infrastructure, would make a big difference.</p> <p>We would like to know if the council has considered these options and if not, what measures they intend to take to bring air pollution in Cheltenham under control once and for all?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The Council will be fully assessing the local air quality situation for 2018, once the last month's data is received and the national bias adjustment figure is released.</p> <p>We are awaiting the outcome of a 'Detailed Air Quality Assessment' which we have commissioned. All of this will inform an Air Quality Action Plan, containing measures to improve air quality and protect health, particularly at any locations where relevant limits are exceeded. Tackling the issue effectively will require behavioural change at a national level and Cheltenham is working with GCC in relation to this issue, recognising the cross-boundary impacts of air pollution.</p> <p>We are also part of a countywide 'Air Quality and Health Partnership' and will take guidance from public health colleagues about the effectiveness of future interventions locally. The Boots' Corner trial is certainly encouraging modal shift, with Stagecoach reporting 5000 extra passenger journeys per week.</p> <p>I note your helpful suggestions should further action be necessary and will be liaising with GCC as Highways authority in relation to these matters and the viability of improvement strategies.</p>
21.	Question from Peter Gibbons to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>I understand the purpose of closing Boots corner to general traffic is to encourage shoppers to use the Lower High Street as well as the High Street. Is this action really necessary? Surely it is, first and foremost, the facilities in the Lower High Street that will attract pedestrians, who still in any event have to negotiate the same crossing at Boots Corner, albeit with a lighter traffic flow.</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The footfall across Boots' corner since the trial began has seen a significant increase, thus reducing the historic severance that was experienced at this point. I appreciate that the pedestrian crossing remains, but many people are crossing without utilising that facility, as the traffic has reduced by around 80-85%. The crossing was retained following consultation with the local Disability Forum prior to the trial.</p>

22.	Question from Peter Gibbons to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	The resulting serious congestion in many side streets, especially during rush hour, together with the carbon-dioxide fumes in these residential areas, also makes this a grave mistake. Does the Borough Council acknowledge these factors?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Nitrogen-dioxide is the main pollutant of concern in Cheltenham in relation to traffic and human health, not carbon dioxide.</p> <p>CBC, working in conjunction with GCC, has been monitoring traffic and nitrogen-dioxide and particulate matter pollution data across a range of locations and in response to requests from the public, further pollution monitoring points have been installed. Data from this monitoring will be an important part of the wider determination of the success or otherwise of the scheme.</p>
23.	Question from Tom Bowhill to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Please confirm the original projected costs and man hours of the original proposal as compared to the actual numbers as of today i.e. the current estimate to complete the trial and when will that be and what the parameters are for its success or failure?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The costs of delivering the Cheltenham Transport Plan physical changes were part of the original LSTF bid, which secured £4.95m. GCC as the highways authority controls the budget for the implementation of that fund.</p> <p>The parameters for the success or failure of the project as a whole are a combination of the economic effects, modal shift and traffic impacts.</p>
24.	Question from Tom Bowhill to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>On the subject of the enforcement cameras, what were the initial estimate of violations week days and weekends as compared to the actual and what reductions were expected from learning curves?</p> <p>If the project is being managed correctly. All this information should be available within 24 hours. So no excuses will be accepted!!</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The question relates to enforcement, which is a highways authority issue, so I will have to refer this question to GCC.</p> <p>I can add that the purpose of the enforcement is simply to deter individuals from driving in a restricted zone. On this basis, I do not believe that specific estimates were established prior to the enforcement taking place.</p>
25.	Question from Ken Pollock to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Cheltenham has a notoriously deficient 'road network', (for historical/heritage

	<p>reasons), with now zero 'ring road' circuits. Boots Corner closure should never even have been "triallyed" whilst it is obvious that there are no alternative free-flowing south-to-north routes.</p> <p>Do you realise that GCC acting as Highways Authority cannot 'trade off' its responsibility for avoiding harm to Cheltenham's traffic <u>viability</u> (or to safety or air quality) against a CBC-claimed assortment of "economic" or other non-highways benefits, lest it be open to judicial review for straightforward procedural error?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p> <p>The data sets provided by GCC monitoring suggest that traffic is still flowing and because it is a trial, amendments are proposed to help further mitigate the impacts identified to date. It is also worth noting that there were congestion issues prior to the implementation of the Cheltenham Transport Plan and that a 'do nothing' option would not be without consequence in traffic and pollution terms.</p> <p>Both CBC and GCC are aware of their statutory obligations.</p>
26.	<p>Question from Ken Pollock to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p> <p>Since the Trial commenced, the congestion and pollution impact on Gloucester Road (northbound) from as far back as Alstone Lane is severe stacking and pollution. This road leading to the A4019 junction has no prospect of flowing easily through the hugely increased traffic which will be generated by the JCS-approved 'Cheltenham North West' urban extension, (which has now been stalled for over one year by Highways England on Transport difficulty grounds).</p> <p>Is it not grossly unreasonable that CBC (and GCC) in their current and earlier reports have evaded modelling and monitoring of the obvious <u>western</u> 'alternative routes' (i.e. Gloucester Road and Princess Elizabeth Way), and have also minimised focus on St. Lukes's Road and College Road?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p> <p>The announcement by GCC of the completion of a separate traffic study along the A4019 corridor, with capital funding to address both existing congestion hotspots and to allow for future growth associated with JCS strategic allocations, suggests that the highways authority is planning for growth. A further example, is the GCC led delivery of the £22m 'Growth Deal 3' monies recently secured to allow the development of the Cyber Park at West Cheltenham.</p> <p>Pollution monitoring is being carried out at the locations mentioned – Gloucester Road, Princess Elizabeth Way, St Lukes/College Roads; and the results will be fed into the overall assessment of the trial.</p>
27.	<p>Question from Geoffrey Bloxsom to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p> <p>At the October Scrutiny committee the issue was raised about pollution counters being placed in open areas where the pollutants are readily dispersed by the wind. Particulates do not concentrate as they do in confined areas such as the narrow parts of St George's Street or All Saints Rd. It is these confined areas that matter, where people live, at residential façade, where residents cannot open their windows</p>

	<p>due to the pollution. Yet we see these monitors, at the junction of St George's Street and Swindon Rd, on the corner of Clarence Rd and North Place and now at the junction of Pittville Circus Rd and All Saints Rd, not in the confined areas but in the most exposed ones, where the particulates are flushed away by the wind and pedestrian exposure is only transient and occasional. Monitoring should be at residential façade to understand the permanent levels of exposure to the residents. There is no point in taking readings from these open selected spots. What has been done to address this since it was raised at the scrutiny committee and why are we spending money on these counters until they are put in meaningful positions?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>We are carrying out two types of air quality monitoring: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statutory monitoring of nitrogen-dioxide against legal limits using diffusion tubes. In order for these results to be considered as 'relevant exposure' for health, the tubes must be sited appropriately, which we have done as far as practicable. This network of diffusion tubes helps us to understand 'the permanent levels of exposure to residents'. 2. We are also carrying out additional monitoring in response to specific concerns about the Boots' Corner restrictions. We are using air gas mesh pods, which measure both nitrogen-dioxide and particulate matter and this equipment produces faster results. The mesh pods are not part of the statutory Local Air Quality Management network, so do not need to comply with 'relevant exposure' and other elements of the EU Air Quality Data Directive. Regardless of this, we have sited the monitors as sensibly as possible to gather useful results. For example, the monitor on the corner of St George's Street and Swindon Road abuts a residential property and is co-located with our roadside unit – so in fact, results at this location will be the most robust in Cheltenham.
<p>28.</p>	<p>Question from Andrew Riley to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p>
	<p>Can you please outline the accident reporting statistics and how long a particular accident will take to appear on the statistics for consideration. On the 23rd November 2018 I recovered a chap from a written off Lexus from outside my house, as we helped the driver we were subject to abuse from passing drivers who had been backed up along All Saints Road as we had not been able to move the car off the road, this was after another accident in late summer at the junction of Selkirk Street. In the past 14 years I have lived in this house I am not aware of a previous accident on this stretch of road. (even though it is home to the driving test centre) How have these accidents been considered in the decision to extend this trial?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>There is a legal requirement for drivers involved in a traffic collision involving personal injury to report these collisions to the Police. It is this injury collision data that will be used to help determine the future of this trial.</p> <p>The time taken to process each injury collision can vary dependant on a number of factors, including the complexity of investigation, available Police resources and accessing witnesses. The majority of injury collision reports are processed within about 6 weeks of the date of the incident.</p>

	<p>The following link to the GCC Highways web pages allows access to the most recent 5 years of collision data in Gloucestershire https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-rights-of-way/road-safety/collision-and-camera-map/</p>
29.	Question from Andrew Riley to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>John Lewis has undoubtedly added to footfall on the high street but how much more would town visits have increased had it not been for the closure of the main arterial road, at Boots Corner. A brief scan of social media would have you believe people turning away from Cheltenham in favour of other towns.</p> <p>What work is being done to understand the impact of the new John Lewis as opposed to the traffic scheme and remove this from the stats to present an impartial and balanced view for the councillors to consider? Why are you allowing this scheme to undermine the boost brought to Cheltenham by John Lewis?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The owners of the site, which is home to the new John Lewis store, made it clear that delivering the Cheltenham Transport Plan, especially the Albion Street phase was a key determinant in their store acquisition negotiations.</p> <p>The increased footfall data at Boots' Corner suggests that Cheltenham town centre is generally benefiting economically from both the trial and the significant number of new entrants to the commercial heart of the town over the phased delivery of the Cheltenham Transport Plan.</p>
30.	Question from Peter Sayers to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>If the Council had been clear from the start that the closure of Boots Corner was felt necessary to facilitate the development of the back of the Municipal Offices, the public may well have supported the initiative and the much needed financial boost expected. Instead a variety of reasons, none credible, have been put forward to justify the closure. Does he now feel that progress could be achieved by a public apology to those so disrupted and angered and by a discussion as to the real motive?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>There are currently no plans to develop the rear of the Municipal Offices beyond a development brief for the area, which was approved by this Council in 2013.</p>
31.	Question from Peter Sayers to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>There is increased awareness that pollution from traffic is indeed a serious issue. In fact so serious that the Government limit of permissible pollution may well be lowered. Allowing traffic to 'find its way' and raise pollution in residential areas is not a responsible solution. Closing Boots Corner without an overall traffic plan for alternative routes has caused much anger. Please can the trial be halted and a credible traffic plan that covers the whole town, not just one small section, be initiated?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>GCC traffic data monitoring was on-going prior to the implementation of the Cheltenham Transport Plan and its various phases. In response to the recent data, GCC plans to make amendments to the current trial scheme, as part of a package of</p>

	<p>mitigation measures which it was always anticipated may have been necessary.</p> <p>The Council has a statutory duty to monitor air quality, regardless of the local transport plan. We will be refreshing our air quality action plan in the next few months and this will be informed by the detailed air quality assessment once completed.</p>
32.	Question from Helen Little to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Why was no formal Traffic Impact Assessment commissioned in advance of the changes to the traffic flows?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	The scheme was extensively modelled to assess impact utilising a PARAMICS traffic micro-simulation model. Additionally, GCC carried out equality impact assessments prior to works being commenced. Details of these assessments are available via the GCC website.
33.	Question from Helen Little to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Why has there not been any vehicular emission pollution monitoring at one of the busiest most dangerous road junctions i.e. the area opposite St Gregory's church and school with the double roundabout at Clarence Street- Ambrose Street – Knapp Road? Is monitoring planned for this now 'inner ring road' and will particulates be included in addition to NO2?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>We are measuring nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter pollutants (linked to vehicular emissions) at this location and indeed, the results have been published on our website – see link below.</p> <p>https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/downloads/download/1645/air_quality_briefing_notes</p> <p>The monitoring point near to St Gregory's Church has been returning the lowest readings out of the four additional monitoring points installed in response to Boots' Corner restriction concerns from the public.</p>
34.	Question from Adam Lillywhite to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>Please explain why two of the three Trials recommended by the TRO Committee for Boots Corner are not being performed as part of this newly extended trial period.</p> <p>These entail the narrowing of the Carriageway to a single lane to make it easier to cross and the restriction of traffic from the area during shopping hours. Both these options would resolve many of the congestion issues as well as those of pollution and dispersing traffic into residential streets throughout the night and around schools at the beginning of the day.</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The TRO committee and subsequent GCC cabinet report identified a range of options; it did not specify what was to be trialled.</p> <p>The carriageway has been narrowed at Boots' Corner as part of the trial; this space has now been reclaimed for use by people, rather than vehicles. Whilst not to everyone's taste, the temporary 'astro-turf' has demonstrated how the space can be better used and the dwell time data suggests that whilst only temporary, members of the public have responded positively to the newly created space. Should the scheme be approved long term, we would seek improvements in line with the standard set by the recent works undertaken further along the High Street.</p>

	<p>The suggested on-going amendments to the scheme are designed to address concerns raised.</p>
35.	<p>Question from Adam Lillywhite to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p> <p>CBC officers report states that only on four sites is the traffic increase greater than 20%, yet the GCC report identifies 7 on the month for month data. The pollution data is also under reported; Winchcombe Street/Fairview Road junction, where Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels have risen from 29.66 micrograms per cubic metre in October 2016 and 31.36 in October 2017 (before the Boots Corner closure) to 42.02 in October 2018. Gloucester Road has also seen an increase from an already high 45.65 µg/m³ in October 2017 to 47.23 in October 2018. Meanwhile, the data from the newly installed air quality monitoring point on Princess Elizabeth Way has exceeded the 40 ug/m³ mark for the last two recorded months (41.24 in September and 43.37 in October 2018).</p> <p>Yet the CBC officer reports that NO₂ levels remain 'below the trigger levels for the EU', it only mentions Poole Way as still being in exceedance but does not identify that the 40 ug/m³ level is being exceeded in new residential locations, why are the Members not being unambiguously informed of these breaches by this report. This is not 'Broadly neutral' but identifies new breaches which are now in residential areas so individuals suffer constant exposure. How do CBC officers consider it necessary and acceptable to not pass this information on to its members and the general public even though this is an extraordinary meeting?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p> <p>The air quality results have unfortunately been taken out of context here. 12 months worth of data (January to December) is required in order to evaluate local levels against the national annual mean limit – hence why it is called an 'annual mean limit'. There is also a statutory 'hourly limit' which has not been exceeded.</p> <p>We will share results for 2018 monitoring, including details of any exceedances of the annual mean, once the evaluation has taken place – we are awaiting December's results and the national 'bias adjustment' figure, and the results of a local detailed air quality assessment first. This information has been published on our website on an annual basis for many years and more recently, new monthly raw data which has not been bias-adjusted.</p>
36.	<p>Question from Mary Nelson to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p> <p>On the 14th April 2015, Full Council was asked to agree CBC's Accommodation Strategy as part of the Corporate Strategy.</p> <p>This included an agreement to commence the process of securing a partner to enter into a joint development project with CBC for the rearward re-development of the Municipal Offices as part of the Royal Well Development Plan. In the supporting paperwork for this meeting there was one risk listed in the Risk Matrix which was deemed to be "<u>High</u>" – i.e. coloured red with a high score of 16, and this risk related solely to the CTP as follows:</p> <p><i>"If GCC are unable to close Boots corner (Inner Ring road) to through traffic</i></p>

	<p><i>then it would significantly reduce the development potential of the Municipal building and Royal Well and may render the development as marginal, as it would only allow the Municipal Building to be remodelled without the holistic benefit of Royal Well. (Ref Cheltenham Task Force risk TF.12.)”</i></p> <p>In the current ‘Economic and Environmental Case’ for the CTP there is not one mention of the above high risk and obvious major economic concern for CBC.</p> <p>Why is this high risk, and its stated negative economic impact, not mentioned anywhere in the CTP Economic Case, and will the Leader confirm that CBC’s desire and justification for Cheltenham’s inner ring road closure (as stated in the above risk) has always been, and still remains, an important driver for CBC to ensure that the inner ring road remains closed?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>CBC has concentrated on other priorities in the intervening years, given the phased approach to the delivery of the Cheltenham Transport Plan.</p> <p>CBC has not progressed any joint development agreements, or other options concerning the Municipal Offices. Instead, the property team has been focussing on the performance of the Council’s wider property portfolio, in response to declining central government support for local government and the need to generate income to help protect core services, which benefit the people of Cheltenham.</p>
<p>37.</p>	<p>Question from Mary Nelson to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p>
	<p>The recently commenced air quality monitoring on Princess Elizabeth Way is showing high and increasing NO2 figures, breaching EU limits.</p> <p>Why did CBC/GCC only start monitoring air pollution on Princess Elizabeth Way in August last year, <u>after</u> Boots Corner had been closed, when it had long been recognised by residents during the CTP public consultations, that traffic going from the south to the north of Cheltenham would use PE Way once the inner ring through the town was closed?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>The additional air quality monitoring on Princess Elizabeth Way is not currently evidencing data that breaches EU limits. The monthly results cannot be compared against an annual mean – 12 months data is required for that and the national bias adjustment figure.</p> <p>There have been no exceedances of the EU hourly limit for NO2. The funding for this additional monitoring was not available to the environmental health service in August last year and it was not possible to undertake modelling within the air quality budget at that time.</p>
<p>38.</p>	<p>Question from Jayne Lillywhite to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p>
	<p>"What is John Lewis’s position on the additional traffic emerging from Rodney Rd and travelling along the High street? Can you assure me that given the increased volumes of traffic taking this route since the closure of Boots Corner, if it is to be addressed, then it will be during this trial so that the impact of the additionally</p>

	displaced traffic on other routes can be assessed and not masked until it is too late when the trial has been completed."
	Response from Cabinet Member
	I cannot answer a question directly relating to a third party. The recent GCC lead cabinet member report cites 'investigation into options for traffic calming on Rodney Road' as an additional element of proposed changes, so one assumes that this will be within the trial period.