

Council

25 March 2019

Public Questions (6 total)

1.	Question from Andrew Riley to the Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>Serious accidents that have occurred in the town since the commencement of phase 4 have not been considered in the decision to extend the trial even though they were on roads which have been directly affected by traffic increases, on one short stretch of All Saints Road there have been 3 accidents in as many months during phase 4, yet only 1 has reached the accident map that was considered when deciding to extend phase 4, local residents cannot previously recall any crashes on his stretch of road. So why were all 3 crashes not taken into account when deliberation was taken over this trial. How will all accidents be considered when it comes to the final consideration of the CTP.</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>Section 170 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 requires drivers involved in traffic accidents involving personal injury on the road or other public place to report the accident in person at a police station, or to a constable. All road accidents involving human death or personal injury occurring on the Highway ('road' in Scotland) and notified to the police within 30 days of occurrence, and in which one or more vehicles are involved, are to be reported.</p> <p>Severity of injury is specifically set out. A Serious injury includes (but is not limited to): fracture, internal injury, severe cuts, crushing, burns, concussion and fatalities occurring 30 or more days after the crash. Serious casualties are often (although not necessarily) detained in hospital for treatment.</p> <p>All injury collisions (as defined above) are shared with both the County Council and the Department of Transport. The County Council collect collision data following the national standard across the Country (called Stats 19 and Stats 20) which specifically excludes reporting of 'damage only' collisions.</p> <p>The up-to-date collision data available for the whole of the County is located on the following link; https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/road-safety/collision-and-camera-map/</p> <p>The trial restriction of Boots Corner to general traffic is being undertaken by an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO). Once started, ETROs run for 18 months, to allow for changes to be made during the experiment. The current trial started on 28th June 2018 and can run until 28th December 2019.</p> <p>Due to these small sample numbers of injury collisions, the highway authority usually average over more than one year to increase the reliability of the data. Collision data will be analysed as part of the Traffic Regulation Order report at the end of the trial.</p>
2.	Question from Andrew Riley to the Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>Within 2 weeks of the completion CTP phase 2 works a young man was killed in an RTA when walking to work at the junction of Clarence street and Crescent</p>

	<p>Place. Phase 2 made the north side of imperial square 2 way, enabling a new west of town to East route into Rodney road and the Regent Arcade, a route that includes this junction. What investigation has been done into the increased traffic at this junction as a result of the phase 2 changes ? What consideration was given to this investigation prior to the implementation of phase 3 and when hailing phase 2 as being a success.</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>I believe this refers to the tragic incident in April 2017 where a 34 year old woman was knocked down. The driver was subsequently charged with causing death by dangerous driving and convicted for driving without due care.</p> <p>No changes were made to the highway in the vicinity of the incident during 2017 as part of the Cheltenham Transport Plan.</p> <p>Data collected as part of the CTP monitoring is set out below. https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/47/cheltenham_development_task_force/1452/boots_corner_trial_closure_data Information is also available on the Gloucestershire County Council webpages https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/major-projects-list/cheltenham-transport-plan/ The GCC pages includes traffic flows https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/major-projects-list/cheltenham-transport-plan/cheltenham-traffic-plan-traffic-data/traffic-data/</p>
3.	<p>Question from Tom Bowhill to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p>
	<p>It is stated in official documents that the Boots Corner one way system would be reviewed before <u>final implementation</u> (or words to that effect). Attempts to find out who, what and when this review would be performed have not been forthcoming. I am repeatedly passed between Cheltenham and Gloucestershire councils and various departments to no effect. My question is- who, what and when will this review take place and be published ? By now a full specification for this analysis should be available ? E.g. air quality was a significant quoted important factor. So where are the original measurement sites ? Weather conditions, dates etc ? Also comparable readings during and at the completion of the trial ?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>The final decision concerning the Boots Corner trial rests with the GCC Traffic Regulation Order Committee.</p> <p>CBC considered the wider impacts at the Council meeting on 21st January 2019 and the papers and minutes of that meeting are publicly available, as is access to air quality monitoring data.</p>
4.	<p>Question from Tom Bowhill to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p>
	<p>Similar questions must also be asked and critically analysed for footfall at Boots Corner and other affected areas of the town. The effect on small businesses and large businesses in the town. One shop has informed me of significant loss of revenues. There is also the question of what has been the effect on other areas of the town from the diverted traffic ? Previous attempts to obtain information have been met with obstruction, deflection, denial and generally 'not my job' (is it Gloucester's or Cheltenham's job and reverse). Only one department and its staff come out well, "The Freedom of</p>

	<p>Information Department". But they are only as good as the information they are given. I am not "deluded" as has been suggested but a very experienced "troubleshooter".</p>
	<p>Response from</p>
	<p>CBC appointed independent specialists to undertake before and during trial footfall counts. That data is publicly available and has been reported in the press. The data and methodology is publically available at https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/47/cheltenham_development_task_force/1452/boots_corner_trial_closure_data</p> <p>The dates for which data has been collected are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Week 1 commencing 11th June - Week 2 commencing 2nd July - Week 3 commencing 8th October - Week 4 commencing 14th November <p>Inevitably there were events taking place during all of these weeks, that's the nature of life in Cheltenham:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Week 1: food and drink festival 15-17th June - Week 2: Music festival, Midsummer fiesta on 7th July, - Week 3: Literature festival, Promenade market on 12th October, - Week 4: November Races 16-18th November. <p>In all cases, it's difficult to know the full impact of the events on Boots Corner at the times sampled (the hours beginning 8 a.m., 12.30 p.m. and 5 p.m.). For example, with the Literature Festival focussed on Montpelier gardens, would that lead to a positive or negative impact on the footfall around Boots Corner? There are many other 'external' factors which impact the counts, e.g. the World Cup was taking place during the second week and there is evidence of drops in footfall coinciding with England games; the weather, whilst generally good, deteriorated markedly during the last days of the third week.</p> <p>So, in order to try to provide a balanced view we commissioned surveys covering a number of weeks and averaged out post-closure data across all the weeks sampled. And that's also why we have sampled three periods during the day and looked at individual periods separately to look for inconsistencies in the data.</p> <p>Whilst the economic performance of any town centre is a function of a myriad of factors, CBC considered the wider town centre impact at their meeting on 21st January 2019 and the papers and minutes of that meeting are publicly available.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Question from Adam Lillywhite to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p>
	<p>Boots Corner, Given that the 'environmental argument' failed to convince the TRO committee or the GCC Cabinet that they should allow this scheme to proceed, the Cheltenham development Taskforce has had to resort to behind the scenes intervention and a letter to plead the case to give the scheme a lifeline. Even then they only managed to get this scheme trialed, of which only one of the three options recommended to be trialed is being trialed. I think that we can safely say that the traffic removal has not been 'embraced'. How can it be possible that such an important economic factor as the development of the Municipal offices, which</p>

	<p>is recently been cited by the Civic Society as generating over £20 million pounds plus for the public purse, is not worth flagging to the public or publicly to the members of this Council who were at an extraordinary meeting called specifically to make a decision on this matter. Why was this given the highest priority of any risk in the Task Force, the body that was created principally to facilitate this scheme and yet CBC have gone to such lengths to hide this intention from the public of Cheltenham and not inform them of this world Class public space?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>I think it is important to clarify several points.</p> <p>The Task Force did engage in the GCC cabinet process, along with many members of the public and wrote in 2015 in support of the Cheltenham Transport Plan phased scheme; a copy of that letter has been provided to Mr Lillywhite so hardly 'behind the scenes'.</p> <p>The Task Force was not established principally to facilitate a Municipal Offices redevelopment scheme; its purpose was to address the work previously badged Civic Pride and critically to bring forward a host of schemes, of which Royal Well was one. The fact that the Brewery Quarter, John Lewis store, Regency Place have all been delivered and that the railway station, Quadrangle, Honeybourne Place and transport plan to name a few are all in progress would attest that there have been other priorities.</p> <p>The Civic Society is an independent body and I suggest that any reference to their analysis is posed to them, as I have seen no financial assessment to validate the statement. Interestingly the document you cite was produced after the CBC meeting held on 21st January 2019. The reason that no mention was made in the report simply reflects that there is no clear plan beyond that ambition for a world class space. The Task Force flagged that it would not be possible to comprehensively redevelop or upgrade either the Municipal Offices or Royal Well until there was clarity over the Cheltenham Transport Plan; a situation that remains at this moment as a final decision will not be taken until later this year by the GCC traffic regulation order committee.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Question from Adam Lillywhite to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay</p>
	<p>Detailed traffic volume data has now been released but is not present for Old Bath Rd, Gloucester Rd, or Princess Elizabeth Way, it is not feasible to determine the impact of this scheme without understanding traffic changes on these, the three alternate trunk routes to which traffic is supposed to be disbursed. Data is unreadable for Ambrose street and many of the other permanent collection sites. Any discussion over the viability of restriction of Rodney rd should have been informed by this data, but it was not released in time despite many requests and promises. The Road most likely to suffer from this further restriction, All Saints Road, has already seen the largest traffic increase in any reported route, this is both in real and percentage terms of 25%, yet this was not presented to the Councillors for consideration. All Saints Rd was only mentioned for its 'surprising' and unexplained 15% increase Southbound which was due to be monitored, yet no information was given to the Councillors on the Northbound increase, which will be compounded by the changes agreed at that meeting.</p> <p>With regard to the pollution map, it is misleading to present this data when it is for before the changes occurred, the 2018 data will only be relevant if it is entirely</p>

	<p>post 28/6/2018, can you assure that this will be the case? The GCC Lead cabinet member did not identify any serious detrimental impacts in residential areas. Perhaps if he did not sit on the Cheltenham Development Task Force, the body which has been created principally to facilitate this scheme, despite its previous rejection by GCC in 2008 and at the two statutory consultations in the town, then his report may have been less constrained on its impact on residential areas.</p> <p>The development in question has long been completed so it is misleading to the Councillors and Public to attempt to claim that these figures are any longer dependent on the closure.</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p>
	<p>The sites used to collect traffic flow data for CTP monitoring are a combination of GCC's in-situ fixed Automatic Traffic Counters (ATCs) and additional sites on routes which were flagged as potential residential routes which may experience displacement effects.</p> <p>I am not quite sure why Mr Lillywhite has made an assertion that the information was not given to the councillors, as the traffic data is clearly presented in the Jan 21st 2019 council papers. The report provides the average hourly flow for each direction on All Saints Road and also goes on to note "The Northbound data shows reductions in the peak hours between September and November, with slight increases during the interpeak hours".</p> <p>Given that the funding for the Cheltenham Transport Plan was secured by GCC with support from CBC from the DfT Local Sustainable Transport Fund, with a Treasury Green Book analysis as the underpinning evidence, it seems entirely reasonable to make an assessment against that initial base, which was what was presented to full Council. The document was debated and endorsed by Council.</p>