

County Councillor Report - Councillor Linda Cohen

North Nibley Parish Council

January 9th 2022

1. My next monthly meeting to allow residents to meet and discuss concerns and new initiatives will be at The Keepers on Symn Lane in Wotton on Saturday 22nd January 2022 at 11.00am. Due to safeguarding, if residents would like to attend can they inform me in advance by email or phone. Details below. It would be useful if this information could also be shared on the Parish Council website.

2. Budget 2022/2023

The County Council's Cabinet is set to agree a £519million budget. The budget was reviewed by the various scrutiny committees last week.

A public consultation will run until midday on 21 January 2022. At its meeting on 26 January 2022, Cabinet will consider the views expressed before proposing a final budget for the County Council to vote on at its meeting in February 2022.

Please make all residents aware of this. **I would welcome all comments.**

The detail is here: www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/budget2022-23

A summary from the County Council Comms Team:

At its meeting on 22 December, the Cabinet considered spending plans for the council that include an extra £100 million for our roads, funding for 26-miles of cycle track from Stroud to Bishop's Cleeve, a £150 million injection into schools, investment in our market towns

and high streets and ongoing support and protection of the most vulnerable in our communities. There is also a commitment to continuing investing in Gloucestershire's fight against covid-19 and in the county's firefighters.

Spending in 2022/23 will exceed £519million an increase of almost £37million on 2021/22 levels.

£14million additional investment is planned for children and young people services, making sure young people are given the best possible start in life and are kept safe from harm with almost £9million set to be invested in services for vulnerable adults and those living with a disability.

Of the spending planned for schools, the final £4million of the council's overall £9.7million investment in the new SEMH school will be delivered, £6million more will be committed towards the new secondary school in Cheltenham, an additional £4million towards the new Warden Hill Primary School and another £7million towards the new Bishops Cleeve Primary School. A further £19.2million is set aside for a range of other school improvement and maintenance schemes across the county.

A range of cycle routes will benefit from almost £20million investment, including Gloucester to Cheltenham (£10.1million), Gloucester City Centre - cycle spine (£3.7million) and Cheltenham to Bishops Cleeve (£5.3million). There is also a further £500k investment planned for essential drainage works and almost £900k for highways maintenance.

The budget will allocate £30k to each councillor to spend on highways schemes within their division next year

A further £1million fund will also go towards tackling climate change, helping to meet the ambitious targets the council has set itself.

A 300k Community Speedwatch Safety Fund is also being proposed, which would enable the council to work with district, town and parish councils and residents to identify communities where speed

awareness activity or a 20 is plenty campaign would make a difference to community safety.

£2.4million will be invested in the fire and rescue service, ensuring our fire fighters, who operate under incredibly high pressured and challenging circumstances, have the best possible life saving equipment.

£2million more is also being invested in delivering broadband to homes across the county.

The budget includes a council tax increase of 1.99%, which will secure around £9.5 million for services and a 1% adult social care levy, identifying around £3.7million to help protect vulnerable adults. Based on a band D property, this equates to a £42 increase. Despite the extra investment, Gloucestershire County Council still expects to have one of the lowest council tax levels of any county council.

The council continues to challenge itself to work more efficiently and effectively and as a result has identified £13million in savings for next year, helping to meet increased demand and costs.

3. Improving the county's bus services

Gloucestershire County Council wants residents to have their say on the future of bus services in the county.

Earlier this year the government published its National Bus Strategy 'Bus Back Better'. This sets out the vision and opportunity to deliver better bus services for passengers across England, through ambitious and far-reaching reform of how services are planned and delivered.

Within this strategy, Gloucestershire County Council, as the Local Transport Authority, has recently published its Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). This sets out the council's strategic vision for bus services in the county.

The BSIP covers bus times and frequency; bus priority; zero emission buses; fares and tickets; passenger experience; and information and branding.

The council is now working on a partnership with bus operators in the county to set out how they will deliver the improvement plan. Residents across the county can help shape this and have their say on the future of Gloucestershire's bus services by taking part in a survey.

The survey closes on 30 January, 2022, and is available at <https://haveyoursaygloucestershire.uk.engagementhq.com/bus-service-improvement-plan-survey>

All published documentation in relation to the BSIP is available on the GCC website at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/BSIP.

4. Speed Monitoring - TS7125

I have picked this up again with Yakub Mulla at Highways

5. COVID-19 update 07 January:

Key messages

- It is extremely important to get your booster jab to help slow the spread of Covid. There are three ways you can do this:
 - At a GP-led community vaccination centre – you will receive an invite from local GP services to book an appointment
 - At a community pharmacy or the Gloucestershire Royal Hospital JabVan - book via the National Booking System (or call 119)
 - Visit a drop-in clinic.
- You can find information about booster jabs in different languages by visiting the NHS's 'vaccine information in other languages' page.

- Eligible fully vaccinated travellers and over 5s will be able to take a lateral flow test instead of a PCR on or before day 2 of their arrival in England.
 - From 11 January, if you are asymptomatic and receive a positive LFD test result, you no longer need to get a confirmatory PCR test but still must self-isolate immediately. This is a temporary measure whilst Covid cases remain high.
 - If you have symptoms of Covid, you should still book a PCR test via the National Booking System
 - Face coverings are mandatory (apart from in hospitality venues and unless exempt), Covid passes are needed to enter certain venues and events and people should work from home if they can.
 - Covid hangs around like smoke so if you're meeting with others inside, make sure to let fresh air in.
 - Find out more about the latest Covid guidance by visiting the Government website.
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Testing

In the preceding 30 days of reporting (06 December - 05 January) under our local pillar 2* testing sites 443,369 tests have been undertaken in Gloucestershire residents, 6.67% of these were positive.

Mobile Testing Unit (MTU) locations⁶

- Car Park, Oldends Lane, Stonehouse, GL10 2DG (Friday-Sunday, Thursday-Friday)
- Dursley Rugby Club, Hounds Green, Dursley GL11 6AJ (Monday)

Permanent Testing Site Locations

PCR Testing Sites

Gloucester RTS

Hempsted Meadows, David Hook Way, Gloucester, GL2 5LE

Cheltenham LTS

Coronation Square, Edinburgh Place, Cheltenham, GL51 7RG

Stroud LTS

Stratford Park Leisure Centre, Stratford Road, Stroud, GL5 4AF

You can book a test here for one of these sites if you have any COVID-19 symptoms.

Assisted Testing in Pharmacies (LFD)

You can see which pharmacies you can take a rapid test at if you do not have any COVID-19 symptoms.

LFD Home Test Collection

Anyone can collect LFD kits for use at home from any of the locations listed, including some pharmacies and local libraries.

LFD Home Test Delivery

If you cannot get tested at your workplace or are unable to go to a test site or collect test kits, you can order a test kit to your home.

Outbreaks

In the last 7 days, there have been 21 confirmed⁷ outbreaks in high risk settings in Gloucestershire.

Cases

- In week 52 (Monday 27th December- Sunday 2nd January) there were 8097 confirmed cases of COVID19.

Of these cases:

- 1573 were in Stroud
- 1815 were in Gloucester
- 1112 were in Tewkesbury
- 1070 were in Forest of Dean

- o 1485 were in Cheltenham
- o 1042 were in Cotswold

* Please note these figures are provisional and subject to change.
(Source: <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/> as at 18:37 05/01/2022)

The rate of cases in the last 7 days per 100,000 is 1224.8 in Gloucestershire, 1240.5 in the South West, and 1678.2 in England⁹.

Deaths mentioning COVID19

In week 51 (Saturday 18th December – Friday 24th December) there were 4 deaths mentioning “novel coronavirus (COVID-19)”, which is 4.8% of all deaths, this compares with 7 (5.4% of all deaths) in Week 50.

*Please note these figures are based on all deaths registered by the 1st January they are provisional and will be subject to change. They include deaths that make any mention of COVID-19 on the death certificate.

(Source: Weekly provisional figures on deaths occurring and registered in England and Wales by Local Authority)

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