

## Member Questions for Council - 21st September 2022

Question	Response
<p><b>Questions for Councillor Juliet Layton, Cabinet Member for Development Management and Licensing from Councillor Nikki Ind</b></p> <p>Having attended the very informative Member Development – Gypsy &amp; Traveller Cultural Awareness Training in July, could I please ask what, if any, progress CDC is making with the County Council and other District Councils in Forward Planning for a transient stop over site in Gloucestershire?</p>	<p>The Gloucestershire local authorities have commissioned RRR Consultancy Ltd to undertake a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for the period 2021-2041. The Council expects to receive a final draft in the coming weeks.</p> <p>The results will be used as an evidence base for policy development in housing and planning and supersede any previous GTAA (including any levels of accommodation needs calculated prior to this assessment) for the Gloucestershire local planning authorities.</p> <p>The requirement to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, Showpeople, non-Gypsy and Traveller Gypsy and Traveller residential caravan dwellers, and boat dwellers is established through national guidance contained in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (DCLG, 2015).</p> <p>In relation to transit provision (the focus of the question) the emerging GTAA is likely to recommend that in addition to the existing transit pitches, that Gloucestershire authorities adopt a negotiated stopping policy. This involves caravans being sited on suitable specific pieces of ground for an agreed and limited period of time, with the provision of limited services such as water, waste disposal and toilets. This is land temporarily used as authorised short-term (less than 28 days) stopping places and in some cases may not require planning permission.</p> <p>The Council has committed to work with Gloucestershire partners to translate needs presented in the aforementioned GTAA into sites. This will be the subject of a separate commission, which Gloucestershire councils are looking to commission following the final receipt of the GTAA.</p>

	<p>This commission will need to reflect the findings of the GTAA and in particular the reasons for unauthorised encampments. E.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a lack of available permanent pitches in suitable locations and certain times in the year (e.g Stow Fair, Cheltenham Races and summer solstice); households temporarily moving through the study area;</li> <li>- insufficient number of transit sites to: find work, undertake holidays and attend weddings and funerals; and</li> <li>- there is a need for additional transit provision within Gloucestershire and neighbouring authorities. This is in addition to the transit site consisting of 32 pitches located in Tewkesbury and the 15 transit pitches at Bromsberrow, in the Forest of Dean.</li> </ul> <p>When considering new emergency stopping places / sites it should be borne in mind that it will only be used for a proportion of the year and individual households will normally only stay on the agreed location for a few days. Amenities such as portaloos and showers (or access to alternative nearby facilities) and skips or wheelie bins should ideally be made available for the duration of the agreed period.</p> <p>Furthermore and beyond the confines of the local planning system, agreements could be made with households residing on sites and yards and allowing visiting family and friends to stay for agreed periods of time. This could lead to fewer unauthorised encampments and therefore reducing the impact on the local community.</p>
<p><b>Question to Councillor Rachel Coxcoo, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning from Councillor Nikki Ind</b></p> <p>Can you please confirm if CDC has applied for</p>	<p>The Council has applied for funding via the On-street Residential Chargepoint scheme (ORCS) to install EVCP in the Rissington Road carpark, Bourton on the Water and the carpark at Trinity Road Cirencester. The outcome of this bid is awaited. Both car parks are available to the public free of charge overnight and</p>

<p>grant funding via the On Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme or if we are working in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council to secure this funding, to allow us to proactively support and deliver the rollout of electric vehicle charge points?</p>	<p>would provide access to charging for nearby residents. This is part of phase one of our EVCP infrastructure plans which has already seen new units installed in the Beeches car park, Cirencester and Old Market Way Carpark, Moreton in Marsh. Further locations are planned for phase 2 although the ORCS funding will be replaced by the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding.</p> <p>We are also liaising with GCC to ensure plans for on-street charging supports the needs of our Cotswold Communities.</p>
<p><b>Question to Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance from Councillor David Cunningham</b></p> <p>The Government's initiative to put funds directly into local projects via the Rural England Prosperity Fund is to be applauded. A number of Parish Councils are eager to gain access to CDC's proportion of this pool of cash, in order to help promote and fund local projects for rural communities. Will the Cabinet Member for Finance please set out in detail what is required for a project to be deemed eligible for such a grant and how Parish Councils can apply.</p>	<p>The Rural England Prosperity Fund was launched on 3 September and is being provided as a top-up to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). Cotswold District Council was allocated a total of £764,292 to be spent in the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25.</p> <p>Under guidance issued by Government, project eligibility under this new fund will be broadly the same as the UKSPF with two additional interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas</li> <li>· rural circular economy projects</li> </ul> <p>Councils will need to submit an addendum to their UKSPF plans by 30 November. The submission window opens on 3 October.</p> <p>This is a very recent announcement and DEFRA is holding briefings for lead officers at councils on 22 and 23 September. Following those briefings, the Council will have a clear understanding of the Fund requirements and eligibility and will then consider how to engage with key stakeholders and communicate further information about the Fund.</p>
<p><b>Question to Councillor Mike Evemy, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance from Councillor David Cunningham</b></p>	<p>Whilst there is some variation depending on mounting and fixing etc. each sign costs around £170 to purchase and install. The amount spent on replacing signs so far in 2022/23 is £7,532. Last year £1,818 was spent with £14,116 spent in 2020/21.</p>

At a recent Council meeting Councillor Joe Harris reported to this Council that the cost of replacing street signs would be offset by the sale of old signs. In light of the budgetary concerns so often espoused by Cllr Harris, can he please give an update on the actual cost to date of this project.

Total expected spend for the project is £27,200. This is to be funded from underspends in the street sign budget in 2020/21 and 2021/22 which were transferred to an earmarked reserve. A number of old signs are due to be sold at auction in October 2022 to raise revenue and enable residents to own a piece of local history.

**Question to Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council from Councillor Stephen Hirst**

In view of the ever-increasing number of electric cars being used on a daily basis, could I ask when all the District Car Parks will be fitted with Quick Charging Points in order to provide a valuable service to all motorists who drive cars requiring battery charging on a regular basis?

The electric vehicle charging market is in flux, not least since the number of electric vehicles being sold is increasing more quickly than had been forecast a couple of years ago.

That's a good thing in itself, but the rate of growth in demand for electric vehicle charging is creating its own problems – examples are:

- the challenge for electric vehicle chargepoint installers / operators / equipment manufacturers to scale-up their businesses fast enough to keep up with demand;
- too much merger and acquisition activity in the charge point market leading to distraction and inefficiency;
- increasing costs of equipment and installation caused partly by global supply lagging demand (and global supply chain problems from, eg, Chinese drought conditions and other things), often over short timeframes;
- pressure on local electricity distribution companies for connections, leading to longer lead times and the need for more (expensive) upgrade work to local supplies

All of the above makes it hard for the electric vehicle charging providers to keep up, including the Council as a provider of electric vehicles charging facilities.

The Council has been in contract with a supplier for the provision of electric vehicle charge points in Council-owned car parks for more than a year, but that installer has been impacted by all the factors above, and this has meant our roll-out is going more slowly than we had expected.

Our phase 1 roll-out included the Rissington Road car park at Bourton-on-the-Water, plus the council offices in Cirencester.

We are very keen to progress with phase 2 as well, which could include sites in other principal settlements (eg Tetbury), but we are first trying to overcome the current blockages for phase 1 projects, and making sure the same delays won't affect phase 2 projects.

Owing to the above we can't make firm promises right now on when all the car parks in the district will contain EVCPs, but it remains a priority for the administration and we have dedicated project management resources working on it right now.

In respect of the other part of the question – specifically the rate (power) of charging, it is unlikely that any town centre locations will be appropriate for the fastest (“ultra rapid”) charge points.

At the top end, these can charge at up to 350kW DC, and are only ever going to be relevant for main motorway and trunk routes where drivers may need that filling speed (and note that very few current electric vehicles can charge at these speeds). All town centre locations are likely to be mainly 22kW AC or lower, with the occasional so-called rapid charger operating around 50kW DC, or perhaps around 40kW AC.

The reason for this charger choice is that demand for car park charging is for shoppers or users of local services ‘topping up’ while they go about their business – not for drivers in a hurry from A to B over a long distance needing the maximum fill. Around 80% of electric vehicle user's charge mainly at home (which is why EVs are still cheaper to run than fossil burners,

	<p>despite what some papers have said), and therefore car parks are just a convenient top-up, not the sole source of power.</p> <p>For prospective electric vehicle drivers with no access to their own domestic off-street charge point, there are three options that the Council can help with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) look to work with neighbours through a chargepoint sharing facility like Co-Charger (see: <a href="https://co-charger.com">https://co-charger.com</a>). If you're a current electric vehicle user with your own chargepoint, have a look and see if you can provide a paid-for service to your neighbours and local residents.</li> <li>2) Charge in Council car parks near where you live, outside of shopping or office hours – we will be making our car parks available for this purpose</li> <li>3) Look out for on-street charging solutions: Cotswold DC is working with Gloucestershire CC to identify priority streets where on-street charge points can be installed, as part of the Connected Kerb contract to roll-out this kind of technology across the whole county.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Question to Councillor Joe Harris, the Leader of the Council from Councillor Tom Stowe</b></p> <p>Given the nature of the content of the last "Cotswold News" which included in total 10 photographs of yourself (including identical ones in the issue) will the Leader of the Council please confirm that there will be no more issues printed this side of the all-out elections in May 2023. Will he also please confirm the total costs incurred in printing and distributing the last two issues?</p>	<p>Staying in touch with residents across the Cotswolds is important to our administration. Cotswold News is one way we do this alongside press releases, social media and email.</p> <p>Cotswold News is delivered twice per year in Autumn and Spring. The autumn 2022 addition is scheduled to be delivered in October 2022 and is currently in development. Another edition is scheduled to be delivered in March 2023.</p> <p>Total costs incurred are as follows:</p> <p>October 2021- £14,699</p> <p>March 2022 - £14,975</p> <p>The next edition will be particularly important in terms</p>

	<p>of signposting residents to the support available as they seek to survive the cost of living emergency.</p>
<p><b>Question to Councillor Jenny Forde, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing from Councillor Tom Stowe</b></p> <p>Leisure Centres are disproportionately affected by the current energy price increases and other inflationary pressures. Bearing in mind Chipping Campden Leisure Centre's unique dual-use arrangement with CDC, will the Cabinet Member please confirm they are open to a dialogue to increase financial support to the school to enable it to weather the current challenges, thus maintaining services to the people of the North Cotswolds and keeping it on a level playing-field with Cirencester Leisure Centre?</p>	<p>As you may recall, I met with you and Cllr Blomefield in June this year to discuss the support Chipping Campden School has from the Council. The school currently receives £70k per annum which goes towards upkeep and maintenance of the areas used by leisure visitors.</p> <p>I'm very sympathetic to the school and the financial challenges it faces. I have suggested that following the very successful overfunding of their new Ampitheatre via our Crowdfunding platform on Crowdfund Cotswold, it might be a great way to generate some support for the leisure facilities supporting a more sustainable approach to its long term future supported by the communities who use it.</p>