

Meeting of Swell Parish Council Tuesday 16th March 2021

Report of Cllr Nigel Moor Gloucestershire County Council

Annual Budget 2021/22

- Gloucestershire County Council has approved a budget of £483m for 2021/22 – an increase of £14.8m on the previous financial year. The budget includes additional funding of £8.9m for adults and £7.3m for vulnerable children. There is also capital investment in key areas like children's services, highways and tackling the climate emergency, as well as planning for the Council's continued response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Council will raise in the region of £7.0m to help fund services through a 1.99% increase in council tax. It will also apply the national social care precept at 2.76% to raise an additional £8.75 m. This amounts to a total increase of 4.75% which will result in about a £5 monthly increase for the average Band D council taxpayer. No increase is ever welcome but this will enable the Council to continue its support of its most vulnerable residents as well as investing in our infrastructure. The budget includes a fifth year of the £150 m road resurfacing programme.

Rural Mobility Fund

- GCC has been shortlisted out of 56 bids submitted to the DfT's Rural Mobility Fund seeking £1.3m to pilot a demand responsive public transport project in the North Cotswolds and the South Forest of Dean. The Business Case was submitted on the 8th February and we hope to hear by the summer. The scheme will offer two fully accessible minibuses who will respond to demands for journeys that cannot be undertaken by existing public transport routes. The services will operate between designated pick -up points, such as existing bus stops or village centres. Feeder journeys will link to local interchange Hubs and train stations. Bookings will be possible either by phone or on-line via a ThinkTravel Journey Planner. The scheme will work in conjunction with existing community transport providers.
- **Shire Hall project scoops national award**
The project to transform Shire Hall in Gloucester into an energy-efficient and sustainable building has picked up a prestigious national Constructing Excellence award. It now has solar panels and highly insulated cladding systems, which have significantly reduced its carbon footprint and heating bills and will ensure the building is self-sufficient over the summer months. Leaders of the county council wanted to renovate the existing building rather than build new offices elsewhere to support the city centre economy and reduce costs. The redevelopment has acted as a catalyst for the regeneration of the city centre.
- **Ash-Die Back Community Replanting Scheme**
The scheme has had a very positive response from town and parish councils across the county. Planting in the spring will include nearly 8000 trees and 2400 hedging plants either by GCC teams or through donations to parish councils. In the autumn a further 7000 trees are planned. Regeneration is already taking place in the cleared hedgerow area with Blackthorn, Hazel, Sycamore and Field Maple growing from the

seed base in the soil. It is estimated that a further 1,500 trees will come from this source.

Local Highways Budget

- With the support of Western Power and a contribution from my Local Highways Budget we have been able to secure a connection for the installation of a lamp standard in the highway at the entrance to the Stow Surgery on the right hands side when viewed from Mangersbury Road.
- At our Council meeting in February the Local Highways Budget was set for 2021/22.

Carriageway Resurfacing

As we move into the fifth year of our £150m resurfacing programme, there is an extensive programme starting from the 1st April to 31st August 2021 in the North Cotswolds. This includes B4068 Lower Swell Road, C/131 Adlestrop Junction, 3/126 Aston Magna to Batsford, A429 Fosseyway Unicorn Junction Stow-on-the-Wold, A436 Sheep Street, Stow-on-the-Wold, B4077 Stumps Cross to Ford Manor, Temple Guiting, A429 Stow Road, Moreton in Marsh (North Cotswolds Hospital) to Longborough /Donnington junction.

A436 Adlestrop Bridge (7.5 tonne weight restriction) Experimental TRO

There is a meeting with officers of Oxfordshire County Council on Monday 15th March to discuss the results of recent traffic surveys across the two counties to assess the impact of the Adlestrop and Burford weight restrictions. I will provide a report on the meeting.