

County Councillor report

January 2025

Firstly, I would like to wish you all a very happy and healthy new year .I hope this year is kind to us all. Please see below items from December 2024

Winter Plan unveiled by the Integrated Care System

The winter season is upon us, the One Gloucestershire Integrated Care System (ICS) has unveiled its comprehensive Winter Plan for 2024/25.

The plan is designed to ensure that health and care services across Gloucestershire are well-prepared to meet the increased demands typically seen during the colder months. The plan focuses on several key areas to provide robust and responsive care to the community. The development of the Winter Plan was a collaborative approach which involved a number of stakeholders, including NHS trusts, local authorities, and voluntary organisations to ensure this is comprehensive and will address the needs of the entire community. The One Gloucestershire ICS is committed to working together to deliver high-quality care and support during the winter months. By focusing on urgent and emergency care, supporting vulnerable populations, promoting vaccination, supporting the workforce, and integrating community and primary care, the plan aims to provide robust and responsive care to the people of Gloucestershire.

Still Time to Have your say on budget

You have until the 10th Jan to give your opinion on the budget. The Gloucestershire County Council's Cabinet approved the proposed budget along with plans to launch a public consultation at its meeting on Wednesday, 4th December.

The public consultation has run from 5th December 2024 and will close 5pm on 10th January 2025 .It will allow residents to have their say on the proposed spending plans. For more information and to take part in the consultation, Visit the GCC web page.

The proposed spending plans for 2025/26 will see spending rise by more than £32.7 million on 2024/25 levels, to almost £650 million.

The council is in a good financial position meaning it is able to continue support for existing services as well as make significant investments across the county.

The £649.6 million proposed budget includes significant investment into the council's priority areas of highways, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), adult services, infrastructure, and the environment.

A further £10 million is proposed to be put towards delivering on the council's £100 million four-year commitment to go on improving Gloucestershire roads, with a greater focus in 2025/26 on tackling rural roads.

A total of £12.8 million is set to go towards a new £16.5 million 200 place special school.

Young people with SEND and their families would be supported with an extra £2.1 million.

£7.5 million towards the future construction of three new adult care homes is being set aside, with further investment planned in future years.

The council plans to increase capacity and improve school buildings and facilities of other schools across the county with a £12.4 million investment.

Household Waste Recycling Centres across the county will see improvements with a £1.3 million injection.

The budget proposes raising £16.5 million to help fund services through a council tax increase of 2.99%. The proposals would also see £7.8 million raised specifically to support work with the most vulnerable adults in the county through a further 2% increase in the adult social care precept.

Despite this increase the council still expects to have one of the lowest council tax levels of any county council. Based on a band D property, residents would pay an additional £6.65 each month.

The council continues to challenge itself to work more effectively and as a result has identified £24.5 million in savings, additional income and efficiencies for next year.

If you require additional information do please contact me .

Gloucestershire County Council Receive Response From Jim McMahon, OBE MP, regarding Motion 944 recently passed at Full Council

The Motion 944, regarding the Standards of Conduct by Councillors resolved Gloucester County Council write to the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State asking them to review the then Government's decision taken in 2022 not to bring forward legislation to provide local authorities with the power to suspend Group Leaders to take action to ensure that all members of their group adhere to the seven 'Nolan' principles of standards in public life:

Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership. The Audit and Governance Committee to consider what amendments or revision could be made, both now and in the future, to the Council's Code of Conduct in order to promote, maintain and assist in the achievement of high standards of conduct. I understand that the Government are considering the options to strengthen the standards regime for local government and provide local councils with more effective means to address serious misconduct by elected members.

You can read the letter from Jim Mc Mahon, OBE, MP on the GCC site. I personally have the *code of conduct* on my notice board as a constant reminder. It also reminds me of why I wanted to be your county councillor and why I wanted to serve my community, and the qualities required to be a good representative.

You Still Have Time To Have Your Say On The Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA).

Every three years, the Health and Wellbeing Board has to publish, and keep up to date, a statement of the needs for community pharmaceutical services in Gloucestershire. This is referred to as a pharmaceutical needs assessment (PNA).

The PNA helps to identify whether more pharmaceutical services are needed in the county. The PNA looks at the demographics of the Gloucestershire population, the health priorities of the county, and identifies how community pharmacies can contribute to improving healthcare for Gloucestershire's residents.

Not only do pharmacies dispense prescribed medication to the public, but they also provide many other essential services such as the promotion of healthy lifestyles, support for self-care and signposting. The PNA gives residents the chance to tell the Health and Wellbeing Board whether more pharmaceutical services are needed in Gloucestershire and in which areas. The consultation opened on Friday 20th December and will close at 5.00pm on Friday 21st February 2025. Have your say by visiting the GCC web site

Fix My Street

Last winter the County Council launched Fix My Street, a quick and easy way to report a wide range of issues, from pavements and potholes to streetlights and blocked drains. Since then, more than 35,000 reports have been submitted. The site is user friendly and enables the council to process queries far more quickly. You can see if problems have already been reported. New features that have been added throughout the year. For example, it's now easy to report problems with roadworks such as **poor-quality repairs** by utility companies. The council works in partnership with Ringway to address many of the issues reported. Together they have also been testing new machines and methods for more efficient pothole repairs.

This summer in the battle of the pothole repair machines a Spray Injection Patcher, JCB Pothole Pro, Roadmender and Bobcat were deployed in competition across the county. Since 1 April this year 40,506 potholes have been repaired. Ringway also deliver proactive repairs, through *Find and Fix* teams that have fixed 24,031 smaller potholes before they develop into safety hazards. I do appreciate the great inconvenience caused during the road resurfacing work in some areas. I hope most will agree the work was beneficial.

Gloucestershire taking part in the UK's largest mobile connectivity Survey

The River Severn Partnership Advanced Wireless Innovation Region (**RSPAWIR**) has commissioned the UK's most extensive independent study of real-world mobile connectivity, and Gloucestershire is included.

Expert surveyors "Streetwave" have been appointed to study on-street mobile connectivity. To enable the collection of comprehensive data across the county, **Ubico** is supporting the project by allowing mobile signal recording equipment to be installed on their refuse collection vehicles in Gloucestershire.

If landowners across the county are interested in understanding the extent of off-street mobile coverage, survey equipment is also available to borrow upon request and as the survey rolls out, the public will be able to see the detailed coverage picture for their areas.

The RSPAWIR has been awarded £3.75m of funding from the Government to support the growth of wireless innovation and technology in some of its key economic sectors.

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