

Paragraph 12.02 of Part 4 of the Rules of Procedure contained within the City Council's Constitution provides that a Member of the Council may submit a written question to any Cabinet Member.

This document informs Members of Council of written questions put to Cabinet Members and written replies thereto.

**Council is recommended to RESOLVE to note the written questions submitted and corresponding responses.**

No.	Question from/to	Question
1.	From Councillor Coole to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods	The recently released Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2019) show that areas of my ward remain amongst the 3% most deprived LSOAs in the Country, with other areas having fallen up to 3000 places in the rankings, becoming more deprived since 2015. What does this say about the administrations programme for the City?
<b>Response:</b>		
<p>The statistics that are produced are important to understand the social needs and challenges in a community and for individuals, but it's important to know they don't give us the full picture. Whilst we note the negative changes in Matson, we must also note that Westgate 4 and Barton and Tredworth 2 no longer feature in the top 10% most deprived nationally, therefore showing changing patterns across the City. Statistical research methods and evidence can tell us what has changed but not why patterns have changed.</p>		
<p>Gloucester City Council and partner agencies including the Police and County Council take an asset-based approach to allow us to understand the strengths and assets within the community, and ensure the residents are involved and able to take part in discussion and actions on issues faced by their communities and their aspirations. This "Community building" approach has supported local residents to use their strengths and skills to bring about positive action on issues that matter to them.</p>		
<p>Podsmead is one of the very first examples in the UK of a district council devolving responsibility to its residents to manage their own green spaces. It has created some fantastic outcomes for the environment and for wellbeing. The Podsmead Big Local, £1million in National Lottery funding with a bid that was entirely community-led, is supporting a number of projects. Many of these address local employment needs, enable volunteering, and create space for residents to meet and connect. Public health is supporting a food project that's helping to understand the barriers to enable and increase healthy eating. All of these initiatives not only have an impact on employment, income, crime and physical health, they also boost wellbeing and mental health in the area.</p>		
<p>Matson is also a good example of this work with growing community assets, a planned estate regeneration, active citizenship, growing cultural activities and</p>		

	<p>great efforts to increase employment opportunities through Gloucestershire Gateway Trust and Gloucester Services. All which benefit housing, employment, health and well-being.</p> <p>It's this innovative, community-led approach that has been recognised by the innovation foundation Nesta, and we'll be sharing the learning with other councils in the UK in a new project looking at how we can get upstream of social issues- something which data will not show results for instantly. It has also given us a lot of qualitative data and learning which has come directly from speaking to the residents in our communities. That qualitative data has been vital in helping us support the community to achieve what's important to them and know where there's still room for improvement.</p>	
2.	<p>From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods and Cabinet Member for Environment</p>	<p>How many incidences have occurred of unauthorised overnight camping (pitching a small tent) on the council's public open spaces in the last 18 months?</p>
	<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>Rough sleeping is not considered to be the same thing as camping. We work with individuals who use tents, but their use is sporadic. Some individuals may use a tent one night and then stay in another location without a tent another night. Individuals may also move a tent several times. More than one individual may use a tent which means that the number of instances may not equal the number of individuals involved.</p> <p>Tents are also put up in the city for use during the day/evening by non-rough sleepers.</p> <p>The Outreach Team monitor/record the number of individuals worked with, but not the number of tents.</p> <p>The City Improvement Team are aware of 6 instances of unauthorised camping in Hillfield Gardens where Amey attended after the individuals had moved on. We are also aware of one incident on Alney Island.</p>	
3.	<p>From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods and Cabinet Member for Environment</p>	<p>Could you list the open spaces affected by unauthorised camping?</p>
	<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>This varies throughout the week/month/year. The Outreach Team are aware of hot-spots/areas typically used by rough sleepers.</p> <p>In terms of pitching tents, Hillfield Gardens, Alney Island and Westgate Lake, as well as the pathway behind the bowling club on Trier Way are areas where tents have been known to be pitched in the City.</p>	
4.	<p>From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods and</p>	<p>How many incidences of overnight camping were the result of a homeless person/s having nowhere to live?</p>

	Cabinet Member for Environment	
	<b>Response:</b>	
	Tents are not only used by rough sleepers. They can be used by a variety of individuals for a place to 'hang-out', drink and use drugs. Individuals often have homes they are not allowed guests to stay in so they sleep out, and people who have homes that suffer from complex needs may also sleep out on occasion. There is 24/7 provision for rough sleepers in the County, including emergency beds and sit-ups. (NB: Rough sleeping is rarely due to a lack of accommodation, but instead a wide range of complex needs and chaotic lifestyles.)	
	As mentioned above we are specifically aware of 6 instances in Hillfield Gardens and 1 in Alney Island.	
5.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods and Cabinet Member for Environment	What action does the council currently take to move the person/s on from pitching a tent on our public open spaces and to resolve their homeless issue?
	<b>Response:</b>	
	The Outreach Team work with rough sleeping individuals throughout the time they are rough sleeping. It can take between one day and in excess of a year to encourage an individual to engage with services and accept accommodation/reconnection. Rough sleeping is not illegal, but the Outreach Team will work with Solace and other partners if anti-social behaviour is also taking place. It is important to take a supportive approach rather than simply rely on enforcement, in order to build relationships with the individuals who often have mental health problems and severe distrust in public authorities.	
6.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods and Cabinet Member for Environment	Does the council have a site where people can pitch a tent with approval and where basic toilet facilities are available?
	<b>Response:</b>	
	We do not recommend any form of rough sleeping, including tent sites. Sites like this can be very dangerous for rough sleepers and outreach staff. They also encourage others to use the area and disengage from services. There is no need for such a site as we have 24/7 provision of accommodation.	
7.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods	How many people are currently sleeping rough in the city of Gloucester?
	<b>Response:</b>	

	<p>This changes on a daily basis; recent outreach experience would suggest between 1 and 10 depending on the evening. Official Rough sleeping counts/evidence-based estimates are conducted annually and can be found on the gov.uk website. The next date set is 6<sup>th</sup> November '19. Rough sleeping has reduced since the implementation of ACTion Glos and Somewhere Safe to Stay.</p>	
8.	<p>From Councillor Brazil to the Leader of the Council</p>	<p>The council has received three quotes to carry out the rebuilding of the Wellington Parade Garden as per the design that was subject to a public consultation.</p> <p>Can the Leader of the Council confirm that funds are now available to do the work starting by the spring of 2020 at the very latest?</p>
	<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>In addition to the £6000 the Council currently has allocated for this project, we have applied for £49k from the GWR Customer and Communities Improvement Fund (CCIF) to carry out the re-design and source some artwork, we will have a decision from that in the next month or so. When we have that decision, we will be working with officers to identify ways of meeting any shortfall.</p>	
9.	<p>From Councillor Brazil to the Cabinet Member for Environment</p>	<p>Can the Cabinet Member for the Environment please tell me how many trees were planted by them in 2019?</p>
	<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>Over the past 12 months the City Council has planted 1320 trees; 800 of these went to create a new hedgerow at Horsbere Flood Management Area. In addition to the trees planted by the City Council, we have also assisted local groups to plant a further 400 trees.</p>	
10.	<p>From Councillor Coole to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>How many homeless ex-service personnel has the City Council engaged with in the last 12 months?</p>
	<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>We do not hold information specific to homeless ex-service personnel for the following reasons:</p> <p>We collect information about all housing applicants whether or not they are homeless. Data from October 2018-October 2019 tells us that 38 applicants stated they served in the armed forces.</p> <p>The Homeless Reduction Act (HRA) application only asks if an applicant has served in the armed forces if they have a support need. This means that those who do not have a support need do not get asked this question which means our data is incomplete to answer the above question. Data published from April 2018 to March 2019 suggests that 34 individuals with support needs had also served in the Armed Forces.</p> <p>In the previous 12 months (From September 2019), 8 ex service personnel have been re-housed in Gloucester through the Gloucestershire Homeseeker Choice</p>	

	Based Lettings Scheme with our allocations policy enabling them to benefit from priority need. These individuals were not necessarily homeless at the point of being housed.	
11.	From Councillor Field to the Cabinet Member for Environment	With reference to page 129 of the Matson and Podsmead Supplementary Planning Document, where it states: 'The Green Infrastructure Strategy 2014 identifies an existing Green Corridor along the Sharpness Canal and a proposed 'Green Corridor' along Tuffley Crescent to improve pedestrian/cycle links.' Please elaborate.
	<b>Response:</b>	
	<p>The Green infrastructure document is part of the evidence base for the Joint Core Strategy. As such it is primarily a land use planning document to be used when negotiating with developers. Thus if a large development came forward in the vicinity one of the sites identified then the objectives described would be part of the discussions between the Local Planning Authority and the applicant.</p> <p>The strategy also has a pro-active role in that when bidding for resources it has the potential to be a useful supporting document. Certainly this strategy was heavily drawn upon when submitting the bid for the ESIF funding.</p> <p>The Canal corridor is clearly a very good and functioning element of the green infrastructure asset in Gloucester given its value for amenity, landscape, biodiversity and access. It is the intention to protect and enhance this asset through the development control process.</p> <p>A small area of Podsmead was identified as a potential green corridor due its existing value and its potential, in particular the link from Podsmead over to the open countryside on the Western side of the Sharpness canal.</p>	
12.	From Councillor Field to the Cabinet Member for Environment	With reference to page 129 of the Matson and Podsmead Supplementary Planning Document, where it states: 'The open space at Milton Avenue has been identified as a European Structural and Investment Funding (ESIF) bid area. Funds will be spent by the council to enhance biodiversity in this area.' Please elaborate.
	<b>Response:</b>	
	<p>The detail of this proposal has not as yet been developed but we will be looking at the following interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimising the flood mitigation benefits of the basin</li> <li>• Meadow planting</li> <li>• Wetland planting</li> <li>• Tree planting</li> <li>• Bird &amp; bat boxes</li> <li>• Seating</li> </ul> <p>The works are programmed to be carried out in 2021 and will be subject to consultation.</p>	

13.	From Councillor Field to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy	The townscape character assessment mentioned at 2.4.11 on page 132 of the Matson and Podsmead Supplementary Planning Document, refers to the possibility of listing certain buildings in Podsmead and creating conservation areas, as indeed it does for many other wards. Where are we with this process?
<b>Response:</b>		
<p>The proposal to prepare a 'Local List' of heritage assets in the City was approved by Cabinet at its most recent meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> November. The Local List would include non designated properties and other assets that are of special local architectural or historical significance and is an important opportunity to identify and protect buildings and assets that are important to the community but do not justify a formal listing. I would emphasise that inclusion within the Local List would not give the same statutory weight and protection to assets as a designated Listing.</p> <p>The identification of suitable properties for the local list would be carried out in partnership and full consultation with representatives of the community. Furthermore, reference to the designation of further conservation areas was included in the recently adopted Heritage Strategy.</p> <p>The project is being implemented as part of the Great Place scheme, and our Community Engagement Officer has been recruiting volunteers over the past few months to undertake surveys of targeted areas, including Westgate Street, to review suggested local list candidates on a pilot basis. Should it be successful we would aim to roll it out to the rest of the city over the next couple of years. We are taking a piecemeal approach, deliberately drawing on the involvement of the communities themselves.</p> <p>If there is a community group that would be interested to commence work on producing a local list anywhere in the City, our Community Engagement Officer, Sarah Orton, would be pleased to work with them.</p>		
14.	From Councillor Haigh to the Leader of the Council	The 27 Jan 2020 is Holocaust Memorial Day and marks the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The theme for 2020 is 'Stand Together' and will explore how genocidal regimes have deliberately fractured societies by marginalising certain groups. What plans do Gloucester City Council have to mark Holocaust Memorial Day 2020 and to support organisations who wish to be involved in commemorating the day.
<b>Response:</b>		
<p>This date is in the forward calendar managed by the Equalities Working Group, which will be meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> December to plan a programme of activities in 2020. The Council has already purchased a special flag and is planning to fly this on 27<sup>th</sup> January. Through the Equalities Working Group, the Council is very willing to work with partners to ensure this event is marked appropriately, and to provide support as required.</p>		