

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 Field to the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure	<p>Please confirm the total amount of section 106 money for the Blackbridge project</p> <p>When will this money or some of this money be released to the Blackbridge Community Land Trust in order for them to progress the project and the publicity for it?</p>
Response:		
<p>The S106 for the development of the former Civil Service Sports Club requires the payment of a financial contribution of £1,626,250 for "the development of the Blackbridge Community Hub and the improvement or provision of other sports facilities in the administrative boundaries of the Council".</p> <p>It is no more specific about how that money may be split. The money is paid at three points;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% Upon commencement – paid • 25% when the first dwelling is occupied – should be within the next couple of months • 50% when the 50th house is occupied. 		
2.	From Councillor Field to the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure	How will maintenance of the Blackbridge Sports Hub landscaping be carried out once the project is complete?
Response:		
The Blackbridge Sports Hub is not planned for completion until towards the end of 2022 so it is too early for this decision to have been made.		
3.	From Councillor Field to the Cabinet Member for Environment	Is it still the policy of this council not to increase the total number of bins in the city?
Response:		
If the Councillor is referring to litter bins our litter strategy fully outlines what our policy is for the medium term and I encourage all Councillors to read it (on website). This week we have successfully been awarded grant funding of £25,000 to upgrade our litter bin infrastructure. This is a direct result of our litter strategy which has been recognised by WRAP as an example of best practice		

	<p>and follows the right bin right place principles. Our bid included introducing new on the go recycling bins in the gate streets of the city centre and in Kingsholm near the rugby stadium. We will also install this new dual use litter and recycling bins in key open spaces where there are sports pitches, large playgrounds or outdoor gyms and the aim is to capture plastic bottles and cans for recycling. The successful funding application also allows us to replace some of the more aged infrastructure in particular post mounted bins and those without lids which encourage windblown litter.</p> <p>If however he is referring to waste bins our allowance of a 240l waste bin for a family of 5 is really generous in comparison to some of our nearest neighbouring authorities. We still allow additional capacity for larger families, those with specific health needs or two children in nappies. If we are to increase our recycling rate we must consider reducing the amount of capacity we give for waste, for this reason it is not our intention to give any more bins for residual waste except for new build properties.</p>	
4.	<p>From Councillor Field to the Cabinet Member for Environment</p>	<p>The Milton Avenue ESIF project has understandably been delayed due to Covid. Do we now have a provisional start date?</p> <p>How will the maintenance of the site be carried out once the project is complete, in order to ensure the funding does not have to be returned?</p> <p>Does the city council own the entire site at Milton Avenue, or is there any land at the site owned by others?</p>
Response:		
<p>The work has already begun with the control of bramble/plant growth and rubbish clearance by the Podsmead Clearance Team and city council contractors. We intend to go out to consultation late spring/early summer, if acceptable begin works later in the year. The actual work timetable will be dictated by weather and season with respect to earth moving, tree planting, bird nesting etc. We would hope by this time next year most of the works will have been completed.</p> <p>To ensure funding is not returned we have to show a biodiversity benefit. Management will help ensure this and it is the intention that our contractor in partnership with the Podsmead PCT carry out maintenance work.</p> <p>The ESIF/ERDF identified site is in city council ownership. The land to the immediate west is still owned by the developer but the expectation is it will come over to the city council on completion.</p>		
5.	<p>From Councillor Field to the Cabinet Member for Environment</p>	<p>Our parks and public open spaces have been more used during the various lockdowns. This is a good thing, of course, but inevitably more litter is left. How are the council dealing with this problem?</p> <p>The increased use also revealed an inequality of access for differently abled people. What considerations are the council taking to improve access to our parks, for example by improving paths in order to help wheelchair users?</p>
Response:		

	<p>Litter has become a national problem and since Covid 19 litter collected from litter bins in the city has increased by more than 100% (by weight). This has inevitably put a strain on the service, but our volunteer litter pickers are slowly returning, our contractor continues to provide a flexible reactive service and we have introduced more mechanical methods for example litter blowers working alongside small street sweepers in the city centre. Our parks will have new litter bins and recycling bins as a result of the successful grant funding bid. Keep Britain Tidy have delayed the Great British Spring Clean event until later in the year, but we fully intend to take part and engage as many volunteers to help as we have done in previous years.</p> <p>All new playgrounds are installed with accessibility in mind, and in recent years we have made improvements to paths in Randwick Park and put in new paths in Hempsted Rec, Westgate Park, Sydenham Gardens and the Tuffley Rose Garden (from s106 funding) these improve accessibility for all. We will continue to make adjustments when requested to do so as budgets allow.</p>																						
6.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy	What is the number of properties built as affordable homes or social rent in Gloucester in each of the last five years?																					
	Response:																						
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response:</th> <th>All Affordable Housing Completions</th> <th>Social Rent Completions</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Year</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015-2016</td> <td>62</td> <td>34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016-2017</td> <td>96</td> <td>22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2017-2018</td> <td>63</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018-2019</td> <td>183</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019-2020</td> <td>288</td> <td>12</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Response:	All Affordable Housing Completions	Social Rent Completions	Year			2015-2016	62	34	2016-2017	96	22	2017-2018	63	20	2018-2019	183	18	2019-2020	288	12
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	<p>Current <u>estimated</u> completions for 2020-21 are 295 homes of which Social Rent total 15</p> <p>The announcement by Homes England in February that the new Affordable Homes Programme, due to run from this year till 2026, will deliver roughly 32,000 social rent homes outside of London. The Government have said that this would double the amount of social rent homes funded when compared with the current programme, and for the first time ever this covers Gloucester without it affecting the number of Affordable Homes built.</p> <p>Housing Association Registered Partners can now base grant bids on Social Rent in Gloucester City as part of the new Programme I am recommending that Officers will support Social Rent bids to Homes England taking advantage of the new Affordable Homes Programme.</p> <p>In light of the Governments approach I have asked officers to review local data around the affordability of rents in the City and will consider the appropriate Policy responses based on the outcome of this work.</p>																						
7.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Environment	How many individual houses have reported not having their bins emptied by operator Amey in each of the last five years? Please list this by black bin, garden waste bin, recycling and food waste.																					
	Response:																						

	Missed collections	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	Domestic	1139	1340	1253	1197	939
	Garden	651	1285	1130	1474	866
	Recycling	787	1730	1297	2293	1226
	No of collections undertaken in one year based on 57,000 properties	Domestic 1,482,000 Green 525,000 Recycling 2,964,000				
	% missed	Average 0.08%	Average 0.12%	Average 0.11%	Average 0.14%	Average 0.09%
<p>The KPIs measure this every month and some of the data is reported in the quarterly corporate performance report.</p>						
8.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth	How many noise complaints have the city council received in each of the last five years? Please list by council ward. How have the complaints been resolved?				
Response:						
<p>For the period 01/04/16 to 09/03/21 2154 requests for service regarding noise have been received. These figures cover the entire City and average at 430 a year & 8.26 a week across a city with 18 wards, approximately 155,000 residents and approx and approximately 18,000 businesses.</p> <p>April 16 to March 17 - 392 April 17 to March 18 - 385 April 18 to March 19 - 350 April 19 to March 20 - 420</p> <p>April 20 to Feb 21 We have had 607 complaints during this period which is understandable as it was a period of lockdown and most families were at home.</p> <p>The data is currently not available by ward, (due to the number of entries) and will be made available as soon as the analysis is completed. It is the policy of the Council and the Community Wellbeing Service to resolve noise complaints by engaging with the complainants and the alleged noise makers to find an amicably acceptable solution a small percentage (>1%) result in statutory action. The response time to these complaints is 5 days in all cases.</p>						
9.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Environment	Please list by council ward the number of reported incidents of fly tipping in each of the last five years? How many prosecutions have been brought for these incidents?				
Response:						
<p>Our system (Focus) can only provide the address of where the fly-tip was located/reported and not the Ward in which that address is found. The only way</p>						

	<p>to obtain the number of reported incidents by Ward is to physically go through each address and divide them into wards, which is a very laborious and time-consuming exercise.</p> <p>The following are the number of fly-tipping incidents reported to the Council in the last five years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016 – 2339 • 2017 – 1715 • 2018 – 2061 • 2019 – 2138 • 2020 – 2245 <p>Prior to 2019, when 3GS were not in operation in Gloucester, we did not have a systematic programme of issuing FPN or prosecuting offenders of Enviro-crimes. In 2020, 208 people were prosecuted and 178 were convicted at court. In 2019, 80 people were prosecuted and 73 were convicted at court.</p>	
10.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources	How many electric vehicles does the city council own? What did they cost to purchase? How long has the city council owned them? How many miles have the vehicles done since they were owned by the city council?
	Response:	
	The City Council do not own any electric vehicles. For information purposes the City Council do currently have one electric vehicle (Nissan Leaf) as part of the Enterprise Car Club vehicles on hire.	
11.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources	How many insurance claims have council owned vehicles been involved in? What was the nature of the claim? How much was the claim for?
	Response:	
	There have been no insurance claims on Council owned vehicles in the last 3 years. There have however been 2 claims on the Enterprise Car Club vehicles as follows:	
	2019 - £4,080 – Costs for the repairs to vehicle.	
	2020 - £750 – Vehicle repair excess	
12.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods	How many complaints were made to Gloucester City Council by private rental tenants about their landlords in each of the last five years. Please list by council ward. What was the nature of the complaints? How have the complaints been resolved?
	Response:	
	The council received the following total number of service requests relating to private sector housing over the last 5 years:	
	2016/17	336
	2017/18	287
	2018/19	198
	2019/20	268
	2020/21 (ytd)	281

	The data relating to these service requests does not consistently include the request type, ward data, or resolution. Officers are exploring opportunities to improve the reporting functionality for private sector housing service requests.	
13.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth	How many reports of rats and mice have been made to environmental health officers in each of the last five years? Please list by council ward.
	Response:	
	For the period 01/04/16 to 09/03/21 302 requests for service regarding pests such as rats and mice have been received. The data is currently not available by ward, (due to the number of entries) and will be made available as soon as the analysis is completed.	
	These figures cover the entire City and average at 60 a year & 1.16 a week across a city with 18 wards, approximately 155,000 residents and approx. and approximately 18,000 businesses.	
	April 16 to March 17 - 89 April 17 to March 18 - 69 April 18 to March 19 - 47 April 19 to March 20 - 31	
	April 20 to Feb 21 - 66 complaints during this period which is understandable as it was a period of lockdown and most families were at home.	
14.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Environment	In last five years how many trees were felled in our public open spaces and how many were planted? Please give data per calendar year.
	Response:	
	We do not have records for 2017 & 2018. With regard to planting the figures equate to city council run projects on city council owned open space. The figures do not include highway trees for planting or felling. 2019 trees planted 1100 whips 25 standard trees. 22 trees felled 2020 trees planted 2100 whips 50 standard trees 27 trees felled 2021 trees planted 1000 whips 60 standard trees 25 felled.	
15.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth	What plans does the administration have to improve the Friday farmers' market on The Cross?
	Response:	
	Firstly, we have no plans to improve the Friday Farmers market; it is a superb market and greatly loved by the residents of this City. The farmers market does not require improvement in any way shape or form.	
	We have been dealing with the Operator of the Farmers Market for over 10 years. GCC and its officers have a good working relationship with him. Prior to Covid we had a thriving Farmers Market with at least 15 stall holders attending each week. Sadly during Covid these numbers dropped off for various reasons. From Friday 6th June to date this wonderful operator has continued to turn up week in week out. We stay in constant contact with him and are working on a plan with him at the moment to support him and his stall holders in various ways which include Covid safety when the Gate Streets open back up properly.	

	We will always work with our valued suppliers to assist them in any way that we can. We are scheduled to meet with him this week to discuss what assistance he may require so that we can make provisions to assist.	
16.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth	How many stray dogs were transferred to our holding kennels in the last five years?
	Response:	
	<p>We have requested 5 years data but at present we await 2016 and 2017. When this arrives it will be forwarded. The stray dogs service was contracted out to Worcester regulatory service in 2015 this is a shared service between Gloucester, Tewkesbury & Cheltenham. Each year's figures cover the entire city. This information is not available by Ward. We estimate that there is a 1 dog in every 4 households in Gloucester. We have approx. 54,780 households throughout the entire City which would estimate that there are approx. 13,695 dogs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018 – 94 Dogs - which equates to less than 2 dogs a week. • 2019 – 122 Dogs - which equates to 2.34 dogs a week • 2020 – 59 Dogs - which equates to approx 1 dog a week - this drop in figures is to be expected as so many people were at home for lock downs. <p>Please note prior to 2015 the figures for Gloucester in the same service were at three times higher. This was because in 2015 we implemented a new system. This system brought in charges that needed to be paid for owners to collect their stray dogs and also meant that in order to collect them they had to go to Worcester. This acted as a huge deterrent against owners who acting irresponsibly.</p>	
17.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth	How many stray dogs collected by the city council in the last five years were put to their death?
	Response:	
	<p>Since 2015, there have been a total of 31 dogs, which were collected within the City of Gloucester that sadly had to be put to sleep. This decision is never taken lightly and is made by more than one partner in order for it to take place. The correct protocol being followed at all stages. 19 of those were a banned breed and the remaining 12 dogs were put to sleep for one of the following serious reasons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog was a banned breed - • That the dog has severe temperament issues ie, is aggressive & potentially dangerous. • That the Dog was sadly too ill & despite the very best veterinary treatment were suffering and/or could not survive. <p>Note: Banned Breeds - Section one of the Dangerous Dogs Act, introduced by the government in 1991, bans four breeds of dogs in the UK. - Pit Bull Terrier - Japanese Tosa - Dogo Argentino - Fila Brasileiro</p>	
18.	From Councillor Joanne Brown to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods	At the Budget Council in February 2020, an amendment was approved to install additional defibrillators as detailed below:

		<p>“The money plan will be amended to include a Defibrillator Reserve of £6k. A piece of work will be undertaken by officers to establish the location of existing publicly accessible defibrillators, before deciding where additional defibrillators could be located.”</p> <p>There is a need in my ward for these life-saving devices and, no doubt, across the city. I would be grateful for an update on how the £6k approved a year ago is being used.</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>A survey of Defibrillator Provision has been conducted (list attached) and is available to all councillors. Due to the pandemic no further progress was made, the fund has been reserved for the coming financial year 21/22 and we will work with the community to support the provision of units as need.</p>	
19.	From Councillor Joanne Brown to the Cabinet Member for Environment	At the September 2020 Council Meeting, I asked if you met regularly with the Environment Agency to monitor the quality of the rivers as there are two running through my ward. You responded that you had met the previous week. As there has been a lot of rainfall over the past couple of months, have had subsequent meetings and how regular.
	<p>Response:</p> <p>It is not necessary for me to meet with personnel from the Environment Agency on a regular basis. Officers have regular contact, generally at least weekly and more frequently than that when flooding is possible, and they keep me informed of any issues arising. If you have noted water quality issues after flooding or heavy rainfall, please contact the appropriate officers, who will contact the EA if necessary.</p>	
20.	From Councillor David Brown to the Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth	Over the past 12 months there has been a shift in the modes of transport used by the public, along with a growing awareness of the benefits of walking and cycling. During this time has air quality monitoring carried out by the City Council shown a reduction in levels of harmful air pollutants such as Nitrogen Dioxide and Sulphur Dioxide?
	<p>Response:</p> <p>It is important to note that from March 20 to date that this Country has been in and out of lock down. Excluding the hard lockdown period more individuals have opted to work from home. So it makes sense to confirm that in the past 12 months there has been a shift in requirement for the public to travel. The comparison between 2019 and 2020 showing the outcome that would have been expected during this period for all the reasons highlighted above will be circulated to you and is available to any Councillors who would like to be sent a copy. It will be very interesting to see if any shift occurs following the easing of all lockdown restrictions.</p>	
21.	From Councillor David Brown to the Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery and Growth	Do the City Council plan to improve or expand air quality monitoring by the addition of new monitoring points or new technology, for example near schools?
	<p>Response:</p>	

As many councillors will already know, the answer to the question is “That we do and are”. GCC have put a tube up outside Kingsholm school at the request of County Council as part of a Countywide County Council project. The first result was well below the national threshold. Monitoring will continue as Lockdown measures ease as traffic levels are likely to increase. We do have the flexibility to add additional monitoring points throughout the city. This is driven by National Guidance & individual requests when required, which to date only one such request has been received by Cllr Gravels. When this request was made by Cllr Gravells a measuring point was added within a month, and the results that were found showed that the levels found were once again well below the national threshold. For Clarity the results found on both occasions were actually 50% below the National threshold.