

## **Report to Great Rissington Parish Council 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 by County Councillor Nigel Moor**

### **The A417 Missing Link invitation to public consultation**

Thanks to our lobbying and a £4m investment in feasibility work, this scheme is progressing and government have agreed the funding. Highways England are organising a public consultation on a preferred route omitting the Green Bridge between 13<sup>th</sup> October and 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Details are available online at [www.highways.org.uk/a417-missing-link](http://www.highways.org.uk/a417-missing-link)

This is an opportunity to have your say on this crucial project, which is also important for the North Cotswolds, as I believe with a fast route between the M4 and M5, there will be an opportunity to divert HGV's presently using the A429 Fosse Way. At a recent online presentation Highways England indicated a possible start on site in 2023 with completion in 2026. Highways England have also agreed the construction cost for the work on junction 10 of the M5 motorway so as to make it an always junction together with improved access to Cheltenham. This will facilitate work on the West Cheltenham Cyber Park

### **Background to the Legal notice served blocking Stow Horse Fayre**

A notice was served by the county council on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October to stop the Stow Horse Fayre from going ahead on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October. Using its powers under Covid-19 regulations, the county council and Gloucestershire Police had jointly served the landowner with a 'notice of concern' on Monday, 12 October, giving them 48 hours to address concerns raised by the county council, Police and Cotswold District Council (CDC). As no further steps were taken to make the event Covid secure, the decision was taken to block the event from going ahead so the legal notice was then served.

It follows close partnership working between the county council, Police, CDC and the county's traveller liaison service in the last few weeks to ensure the necessary evidence and information had been gathered before legal action was taken.

Sarah Scott, director of public health for Gloucestershire, said: "We carefully considered the rights and views of the travellers, local community and the landowner when coming to this decision. Taking legal action is not something we do lightly but with Covid infection rates rising locally and nationally, it was the right thing to do. "We needed to protect families who would have attended the event and the wider community. We know the traveller community

is disappointed but really appreciate their understanding that we needed to act in the public interest.” Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October passed without incident. There was some frustration expressed on social media about the time taken to block the event but given that new legislation was being used, it was important to ensure that this was properly complied with so as to avoid challenge. A point that seemed to escape some of the critics.

## **No child will go hungry in Gloucestershire**

Every child in Gloucestershire who is entitled to a free school meal, will be helped this half-term. Parents and carers simply need to call 01452 328518 or 01452 426818, give their child’s name and a food voucher code, that can be used at local shops and the big supermarkets, will be sent direct to their mobile. For each of the school holidays since the Covid pandemic started the council has offered holiday hunger support to all vulnerable young people. This half-term is no different. The same support package will be in place over the Christmas holidays with the addition of any further help that it’s possible to offer struggling families during the ongoing crisis.

Since March this year, the council has also been able to support more vulnerable children, young people and their families, greater numbers of working age adults and older people through its enhanced Welfare Grant Scheme, which provides help with food deliveries, supermarket vouchers, essential household equipment, gas, electricity and essential items of furniture.

Details on how to apply can be found at <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/gloucestershire-welfare-support-scheme/> Anyone who can’t access the information online can call 01452 328518. (during office hours).

Leader of the Council Mark Hawthorne said: “We have been working hard for months now to make sure no child goes hungry and this support and commitment will continue today, tomorrow and over the Christmas period. A nutritious meal every day is the very least every child should have. “Our commitment is clear, no child in Gloucestershire needs to go hungry. There is a range of schemes in place and I would urge all those that need support to take advantage of what is available. We all need help and support at some point in our lives - that’s what we’re here for.” Over 4,700 children eligible for free school vouchers were helped in Gloucestershire over the October half term.

## **Ash-Die Back and Tree Planting**

GCC Highways are carrying out work along the A429 Fosse this autumn dealing with Ash Die-Back and the danger this poses to road users. For the financial year 2020/21 the council had agreed to commit £500,000 for this work across the county but reflecting the severity of the problem, GCC has agreed ahead of next year's budget to provide a further £700,000 from the Insurance Fund to provide further finance for this important work. The A429 Fosse will be closed from Moreton to Stow from 5<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> Nov from 8am to 4pm (excluding weekends) to allow contractors to do this essential work. The diversion will be via the A44 to Troopers Lodge and then the A424 to Stow.

At cabinet on the 14<sup>th</sup> October I obtained approval for the adoption of the Gloucestershire Tree Strategy prepared by the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership, of which GCC is a member. This is an ambitious vision for a thriving network of sustainably managed trees and woodland covering at least 20 percent of the county by 2030 (the present cover is 13.4%). As more than 40% of woodland is not presently managed there is considerable scope to improve woodland management which will be a significant contribution to this aim. Amongst the initiatives to pursue this ambition there is a Gloucestershire Community Tree Planting scheme with the Woodland Trust which community groups and parish councils can bid for. A report is going to GCC Cabinet in December 2020 providing details of the scheme.

## **A436 Adlestrop Bridge (7.5 tonne weight restriction)**

The first tranche of monitoring data has been collected at four monitoring points:

A44 Near Fire Service College Moreton

A436 Close to the Adlestrop Bridge

A436 Oddington Road Stow

B4450 Main Street Bledington

I am promised a report later in November which will compare these results with base data collected in February 2020 before the pandemic, which should be available for your meeting in December.

## **Local Highways**

Lamp Post No.6 Main Road . Skanska have confirmed that this work will be done on the 14<sup>th</sup> December but could be brought forward if GCC Highways can bring forward an earlier road closure notice. The drain by the Church is completely blocked and clearance is required.

## **HRC Winter Opening hours**

From Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October the opening hours at all County Council HRCs changed to 10am to 4pm. This will remain until the clocks go forward in March. (Our summer hours are 9am until 5pm)

Sites are open six days per week (they are closed one mid-week day a week). At this time of year the demand for the HRCs reduces by around 25% and it makes operational and financial sense to slightly reduce availability at either end of the day. It helps with site safety over the winter, helping to avoid the “slips and trips” that can sometimes happen with frosty mornings and the darker evenings.

- Some 9,000 bookings per week will be available over the winter (this is a reduction of around 2,000 per week on our summer hours).
- The vehicle booking system introduced when the sites reopened after lockdown has been well received by our customers. After a survey of over 1,100 customers some 80% were in favour of it remaining whilst social distancing measures are needed on site, and 70% in favour of maintaining it long term.
- We’ve not yet reached a decision on whether to make the booking system a permanent feature, but do expect it to remain in place throughout the winter, as the need for Covid-19 prevention measures such as social distancing remain in place.

- It is important to remember that:
  - Those with symptoms of Covid-19 or who are self-isolating must not visit a HRC. They should stay at home, and follow the most up to date government and NHS advice.
  - When visiting a HRC remember to stay at least 2m apart and to keep washing your hands regularly
- More information about our HRCs and how to book go to [GloucestershireRecycles.com](http://GloucestershireRecycles.com)
- Please note that these notes are written on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> October following the announcement of a shut down from Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November and there may be changes to these opening hours.

**Please contact me at : [nigel.moor@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.moor@gloucestershire.gov.uk)**