

1. Boundary Review

Following consultation on proposals earlier in the year to increase the number of county councillors from 53 to 55, The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has now published detailed proposals for new division boundaries.

The changes are being proposed to address the fact that growth and change in the local population means some divisions are now much bigger than others. The review will adjust the boundaries of the divisions to which councillors are elected in order to make sure that, from the next election (May 2025), every councillor represents a similar number of people.

The Commission is proposing changes to the boundaries of 39 divisions, with 14 staying the same. They are also proposing the creation of two new divisions: one in Stroud and one in Tewkesbury. The Commission is proposing that each division continue to be represented by one councillor.

The Local Government Boundary Commission now wants to hear what residents and local organisations think about their proposals.

The Commission has a dedicated section on its website where people can see the detail of the proposals and comment on the names of divisions and their boundaries: www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/gloucestershire

Consultation on the proposals runs until 11 December 2023.

2. Build Back Better Fund

I still have funds available for community projects and each councillor has been awarded a top-up of £10,000. Funds have to be spent by January 2025, so please do get in touch if you have a project that is ready to go.

3. Flood Forum

At the last Full Council meeting, the council unanimously supported a motion to look at flood prevention and hold a summit to ensure that the most at risk communities have flood risk management programmes in place to minimise potential flooding.

4. Footpath maintenance – weeds

In response to a member question regarding footpath maintenance, the Cabinet member for Highways, Cllr Dom Morris encouraged communities to tackle weeds and grass growing in local footpaths themselves. Cllr Morris said that “This does appear to be the perfect scenario where member led community self help could free up our pressurised highways teams.”

5. Grit bins

Thanks to those who responded about new grit bins in your parish. All applications are being assessed and new bins will be allocated where there is most need.

6. New Bus Funding

The Council has recently been awarded a further £4.4million to go towards improving bus services in the County.

I am delighted that part of this has been allocated to setting up a “Robin” service in the South Cotswolds. The Robin is an on demand rural minibus service which has been operating successfully in the Forest of Dean and (somewhat less successfully) in the North Cotswolds for the last year. I have asked to be involved in designing how that works as this is something I think could be very useful in this area. Please let me know if you have any thoughts on this.

Upcoming meetings

Wed 8th November – Full council – please let me know if you have any questions you would like to ask.