**GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT**

First, it was a privilege to be elected in the May 2021 elections to represent the Winchcombe and Woodmancote division of Gloucestershire County Council for the next four years. Thank you to all voted for me.

Following my election I was invited by Mark Hawthorne, the leader of the Council, to join the Cabinet as the member responsible for Environment and Planning.

A FEW UPDATES

The County-council part of Council Tax was pegged at a 2.99% increase. 1% of that being ring-fenced for Adult Social Care. Hopefully, this is considered an acceptable increase given the emerging inflation figures and the widely acknowledged need to address the growth in needs within social care.

The increase reflects a 7% increase in spending, a large part of which is funded by probably the most positive funding-settlement from central government for a generation.

This additional funding enables Adult Care and Children’s Services Budgets to have realistic budgets, budgets that reflect both demographic pressures on both those services and the need to improve the level of service provision. Theses service will see a combined increase in spending of around 10% growth per annum.

Central Government was also true to its word and fully-funded the additional costs incurred due to Covid.

For the first time the budget includes £1m for financing our response to climate change, including tree planting and the installation of public e-chargers across the County. The budget also provides funding for our plans to build a 26 mile cycle spine across the County to support active travel, something which was boosted by levelling up funding from central government.

We're also investing more money into highways maintenance, fixing potholes and highways safety schemes, including a £30,000 a year Highways Local fund at the discretion of your county councillor.

A new four-year Capital programmes has also been confirmed of £100 million into roads resurfacing schemes, £145 million into new schools & refurbishment across the county and further investment in cycle routes and drainage schemes.

The additional funding for resurfacing reflects the need to continue to catch up on the historic backlog in investment, with a specific focus on financing more work on local roads.

Excellent news, locally, that Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service will be retained within GCC and not hived-off to the Police. I think that adds significant protection to our local service.

Highways - can I please thank everyone for their continued patience when it comes to local roadworks. Traffic lights can be very frustrating but, ultimately, are necessary as we continue the major task of rebuilding and enhancing our local infrastructure - whether it be our roads, electric, water or gas supplies, upgrading of broadband or building cycle routes.

GRANTS

I'm pleased to have been able to secure grants recently from Gloucestershire County Council under the "Build Back Better" grant schemes for a number of local projects, including supporting the renovation of the roof at Winchcombe museum, renovating the heating system in Dumbelton Village Hall, improving access to Gretton Tower, supporting the opening of new communal allotments in Winchcombe and installing new signs and boot-scrapers in Woodmancote.

I still have access to small amounts of grant money for local, community projects. Please get in touch if you think I can help.

FLOOD INFORMATION

The county council website has recently been updated with a "Flood Guide". A "button" at the top of the home page on the GCC website,  [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk](about:blank) will take you through to comprehensive information about what to do if you are threatened by flood waters.

TOUR OF BRITAIN

One exciting piece of news for the County is that on 8th of June 2022 the women’s and on 9th September the men’s "Tour of Britain" cycle races come to Gloucestershire. Both the Men's and Women's race start in Tewkesbury and finish in Gloucester, with the Men’s race passing through Winchcombe and down Cleeve Hill.

It is still less than a year since I got elected, and I am still very much learning on the job, but I am proud of the work that GCC does for the residents and look forward to ensuring that the residents of my division see further positive change over the term of the Council.

Finally, please do not hesitate to contact me if I can help in any way with any county-council related matter.