

QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Questions	Answers
<p>1. COUNCILLOR ROZ SMITH How many employees does the Council employ who are paid a yearly salary of £80,000 or more, and how often, and at what cost were consultants used to advertise and recruit to posts within the last two years?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID ROBERTSON, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL The Council currently employs 48 people who earn £80,000 or more per annum. This number includes 21 individuals in schools. We do use recruitment consultants for some, but not all, senior appointments and we have contractual arrangements in place with leading agencies via Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation's (ESPO) Framework - most local authorities have similar arrangements.</p> <p>The fee for appointments at this level is typically around £20,000 - this is the industry norm. The precise cost will vary from case to case, however, depending on the type of approach taken - executive search, national press advertising, specialist journals etc. Using recruitment consultants enables us to target our approach most effectively in terms of the post being filled and takes full account of the prevailing job market at that point in time. Over the past 2 years we have successfully filled a number of such posts via recruitment agencies - 6 vacancies (non schools) filled at a cost of c£100k.</p>
<p>2. COUNCILLOR ROZ SMITH How many subway structures is Oxfordshire County Council responsible for, and how many of them are built to the Disability Discrimination Act with regard to their gradients?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT IMPLEMENTATION The Council is responsible for 28 subways around the County, including 18 in the Oxford City area.</p> <p>Department for Transport advice, based on the Disability Discrimination Act, currently recommends 1 in 20 as the preferred ramp gradient. Notwithstanding the design standards which applied at the time of their construction, it is thought that 15 of the County's 28 subways would comply with this. Retro-fitting the remainder is unlikely to be practicable, since in most cases the flatter ramps would undermine the adjacent retaining wall foundations necessitating their reconstruction. There could also be problems with adjacent building levels (i.e. as in the case of Westgate Subway outside County Hall which has ramp gradients of approx 1 in 12).</p>
<p>3. COUNCILLOR JEAN FOOKS The public are understandably frustrated when apparently simple traffic measures take many months to be</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT IMPLEMENTATION Meetings of the Transport Decisions Committee are generally monthly, except for the Summer recess and Christmas. There was also a gap this year due to the elections. We do not feel</p>

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<p>implemented. Reports that miss one meeting of the Transport Decisions Committee (TDC) have to wait until the next, which is some six weeks away. Could the TDC meet more often, at least once a month, to reduce delay to traffic measures for which the public have probably been waiting for a very long time?</p>	<p>meetings are needed more often.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I am a little concerned whether Councillor Rose understands how many weeks are in a month because I have had a look at the dates of the Transport Decisions Committee as it is now called. From the 1 October to the next meeting was 8 weeks, the next gap was 6, the next gap was 5 and the next gap was 6. That cannot be described as approximately monthly. I think that absolutely makes the point that we do need to have meetings more often, about once a month was what was suggested. Would he perhaps reconsider his answer that he does not see that more are necessary? It is too long for the public to have to wait if something just misses one meeting?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>It was certainly the officers' and my intention that we hold them roughly monthly although it does not always follow the calendar month. Certainly the election did have a great impact on when this Committee could meet. However, if there is any particular scheme that you know has been held up, please let me know outside the meeting and I will see what I can do about it.</p>
<p>4. COUNCILLOR ZOÉ PATRICK Can the Cabinet Member consider</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT IMPLEMENTATION</p>

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<p>setting up a Service Level Agreement with Southern Electricity or other electricity providers to ensure street lighting is fixed in a timely fashion and our streets are not left dark for weeks on end?</p>	<p>Street lighting fault repairs are normally fixed within five days by our contractor (Southern Electric Contracting). However, electrical cable faults (i.e. supply faults with no mains power) can only be tested and repaired by the distribution network operator who are also the owners of the supply cable. Any power failure due to cable faults is outside the control of Oxfordshire County Council and has to be dealt with by the local electricity supply company. These faults may take between 10 and 60 working days to repair, depending on their staff resources and how serious the fault is.</p> <p>Electricity companies generally prioritise supply restoration work in the following order:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High voltage faults affecting large areas of housing or commercial premises etc. 2. Low voltage faults to groups of, or individual, housing or commercial premises etc. 3. Traffic signals/Zebra crossing/Pelican crossing. 4. Large groups of street lights (commonly caused by cable failures). 5. Small groups of street lights. 6. Individual street lights. <p>Oxfordshire County Council's contractor is not permitted in any way to interfere with or try to repair electricity supply faults, as they would be in breach of the statutory safety regulations if they tried to do so.</p> <p>The service level agreement targets have been agreed with distribution network operators, however there are no financial penalties which are attached to this (as it is an agreement rather than a contract).</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I think that 60 days is too long for people to have to wait in this particular area when you have got dark nights and people do not understand why these faults are not being fixed. More needs to be done. In his final paragraph, he says no financial penalties are attached</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I usually find when things go wrong, especially matters like street lighting repairs, that they probably have not been reported. So I would ask in future that you double check that they have been reported and make sure that all parish councils and anybody else have the number 0800 317 802 to report these faults; they can also do this online.</p>

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<p>to this as it is an agreement rather than a contract. That looks like we are not putting any pressure on the electricity companies to meet their obligations. I would ask that the Council takes this matter seriously and sees if we can get some financial obligation into the agreements to make them adhere to their duties.</p>	
<p>5. COUNCILLOR ALAN ARMITAGE</p> <p>In view of the funding crisis affecting town museums, could Section 106 money allocated on the back of developments to the county council museums service, be allocated in whole or in part to support these town museums?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES</p> <p>Negotiation of contributions for local museums is a District responsibility.</p> <p>The monies secured by the County Council have been based upon the specific need to improve/expand the Museum Resource Centre (MRC) at Standlake.</p> <p>In the vast majority of agreements where contributions were secured towards museum service infrastructure, the use of the monies is explicitly tied to use at the Museum Resource Centre at Standlake.</p> <p>Of the £112k already secured about 2% could potentially be used on local museum infrastructure. However, if that amount was looked to, in order to divert towards local museum (town museum) services, several factors would need to be taken into account which would further reduce the amount of contributions which may be reasonable to use at town museums, these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diverting money could open the county up to charges of misappropriation of the contributions as the developers are entitled to ask where the money has been spent and the basis for all negotiations was that the need arose from the MRC provision. • the money is already tied to the provision of the improvement of the MRC facility, a facility which benefits all of the county and so diverting to other uses would impact upon that scheme

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it would need to be focused on capital expenditure • the money is spread around various towns and so the maximum in any one town is a few hundred pounds - it could not be pooled across the county other than towards the MRC. <p>So in short little support other than by improving the MRC can be given.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I understand that diverting Section 106 and central money may be ultra vires in this case. However, the situation for a lot of town museums in Oxfordshire is very severe and the Museum of Oxford is very likely to close despite a very large number of volunteer helpers and so forth. The Vale and Downland Museum in Wantage, for example, spends a very substantial portion of its budget on charges by the Oxfordshire Museum Resource Centre at Standlake. Would the Cabinet Member consider waiving or perhaps postponing some of charges that are made by the MRC in order to help museums simply to continue to exist?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Thank you very much for your observations on the reply I gave. I suppose the short answer is no, but that is not the right way of answering any sort of question like that. I take on board his comments but I believe that the answer that I have given to his original question is succinct and explains the position at the moment. The MRC at Standlake is a resource that everyone can use within the county and because of that it is obviously very valuable to the county and town museums. I really do feel that the way the answer is reported about diverting money and the money that is tied up with the improvement of the MRC facilities explains fully the situation the County is actioning at the moment.</p>
<p>6. COUNCILLOR LARRY SANDERS</p> <p>What is being done to replace the bicycle racks that have been removed during the work on Queen Street?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT IMPLEMENTATION</p> <p>All stands that were taken out from Queen Street have now been, or are in the process of being, replaced by new brushed stainless steel ones. Additional ones (over the original numbers) have been supplied at the outer area to the subway at the New Road end and outside BHS. To date, the stands to the subway corner at New Road end, outside The Abbey at Carfax and outside BHS have been installed.</p>

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	<p>We are also looking to replace the current ones (and potentially increasing numbers) outside the Halifax on the subway slope to the same specification in the near future.</p>
<p>7. COUNCILLOR LARRY SANDERS What is being done to replace the bicycle racks removed during the work on East Oxford Primary School?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT IMPLEMENTATION Property Services visited the school in mid-October and spoke to the site manager who informed him that 15 cycle hoops were removed as part of a capital scheme, a small extension and some internal remodelling. The scheme was completed 12 to 18 months ago but the cycle hoops were never reinstated. However, replacement hoops have been ordered and they should be in place and ready to use within a month.</p>
<p>8. COUNCILLOR LARRY SANDERS The administration of the German City, Bonn, has published its views to the effect that they were sorry to have proceeded with the building of an Incinerator. Has the Cabinet considered these, which would be pertinent to the Incinerator proposals for Oxfordshire? If not could they do so. If they have, what do they think of these views?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, CABINET MEMBER FOR GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE Thank you for a copy of the report prepared by Cllr David Williams of Oxford City Council. I note this was prepared following the City Council's visit to Bonn. I have now had an opportunity to look through the report.</p> <p>I note from the report that the City of Bonn are very proud of their high recycling rate and I hope that Oxford City Council can achieve similarly high recycling rates. I also note that the city of Bonn are very proud of the fact that very little waste is sent direct to landfill disposal, something they achieve by combining high recycling with energy from waste technology.</p> <p>Across Oxfordshire we have made very good progress with reducing, recycling and composting our waste and are putting in place plans to increase this further. However as Bonn have found there is always residual waste to dispose of and we too hope that we can use energy from waste to minimise the amount of waste we send to landfill.</p> <p>I was very interested to note that in Bonn the energy from waste facility has been operating since 1992 and they have no concerns about health effects.</p> <p>The report did express some concerns about tonnage requirements. In Oxfordshire's case we have no minimum tonnage requirement so there is nothing to stop us recycling and</p>

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	<p>composting as much as we can. The delivery of in vessel composting and anaerobic digestions facilities in Oxfordshire under a County Council contract is a demonstration of this authority's and this county's commitment to making better use of our resources and to pushing towards zero waste.</p> <p>In terms of making better use of waste and recovering value in line with the waste hierarchy the proposed energy from waste would provide enough energy for at least 24,000 homes.</p> <p>The County Council remains committed to a residual waste treatment solution that delivers value for money and real environmental and financial benefits to the people of Oxfordshire.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Councillor Hudspeth has answered some of the things that suited him. The part I am more interested in might not suit him so well which is that the people in Bonn who are responsible for waste disposal are sorry that they went down the incinerator route 20 years ago, perhaps when there was more excuse for them to go down that route. One of the problems they face on a daily basis is the increasing amount of waste being transported over large distances because of the improvement in their waste prevention strategies. Now if we succeed in our waste prevention strategies over the next 20 or 25 years, will it not mean that, in order to maintain the contract, there will be waste brought over substantial distances into Oxfordshire?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I would like to thank Councillor Sanders for providing me with a copy of the report to which he is referring. It is not actually a Bonn report. It is a report by three City Councillors who went on a trip to Bonn and who put their names to it. Interestingly, one of the councillors who went on the trip did not want to put his name to this report as he could not agree with it, which I find quite interesting. So, in response to the question about my views with regard to waste reduction, as you know, we are fully committed to Strategy 9 which is about minimising waste and reducing waste.</p> <p>However, if you were at the special Cabinet Meeting (I cannot remember if you were), you will see that for the preferred bidder who was chosen, there was no minimum requirement. It is a myth that we are going to be trucking in rubbish to be put in there because, as far as Oxfordshire County Council is concerned, there is no minimum requirement in the contract. So, we will be dealing with our rubbish and residual waste and, if we are reducing them, that is fantastic news. You have got to bear in mind that the County is due to have an extra 50,000 homes by 2026 and so there is going to be an increase in the amount of waste generated, even though, at the same time, we are trying hard to reduce it by our current processes.</p>

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<p>9. COUNCILLOR LARRY SANDERS</p> <p>What are the Cabinet or appropriate Cabinet member doing with regard to proposals to construct a large, under-cover, secure cycle hub in the City Centre area?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT IMPLEMENTATION</p> <p>I will ask property and transport officers to carry out a brief desktop study of the possible costs involved in taking on a city centre shop unit for bike parking.</p>
<p>10. COUNCILLOR LARRY SANDERS</p> <p>Has there been a follow-up to determine the safety impact of the Cowley Road alterations? If so, what are the results? If not, could this be done in the near future, to inform future work elsewhere and the possible need for further changes in Cowley Road?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT IMPLEMENTATION</p> <p>The impact of the scheme on safety has been closely monitored since its completion in 2005. The overall reduction in accidents (35%) measured to date is very much in line with the target for the scheme and compares favourably with control sites nearby (which have seen only a 6% reduction in accidents), and a 16% reduction on roads in Oxford as a whole. The safety performance specifically for pedestrians and cyclists has also been appreciably better than the control sites.</p> <p>We are nevertheless aware of the need to continue monitoring safety and a study is currently in progress to look at addressing some of the known remaining problems (both in terms of safety and congestion), including the maintenance of the surfacing which in some areas has worn significantly.</p>
<p>11. COUNCILLOR LARRY SANDERS</p> <p>There has been a number of reports of the difficulties the CAB and other advice agencies have had to keep up with the pressure of demand for their services. There have also been further research showing the huge scale of benefits, to which the people of Oxfordshire, and most particularly, older people, are entitled, and which they are not</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JIM COUCHMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SERVICES</p> <p>We sympathise with the challenges faced by Citizens' Advice Bureaux and other advice agencies, especially given the increase in demand as a result of the economic situation. However, it is the district councils that predominantly deal with benefits thus we would see this as something to discuss with district council colleagues. It is worth mentioning that there are also a number of national benefits advice services that Oxfordshire residents have access to, alongside nationally funded projects delivered by local advice agencies (including Citizens' Advice Bureaux).</p>

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<p>claiming. What does the County plan to do to improve advice resources?</p>	<p>Of course, Oxfordshire County Council supports older people and adults with a disability that have an assessed need through the work of Social & Community Services. We hold a number of contracts with Advice and Information Services, including Age Concern and Citizens' Advice Bureaux, which may include benefits advice, though the purpose of the arrangements is for income generation for our clients. Essentially, we give as much support as there is demand for. Our Access Team provides a single point of contact for all social services queries and can direct those in need to an appropriate contact.</p> <p>Social and Community Services is looking at how best it can provide advice and information in the future as one of the workstreams that support its Transforming Adult Social Care strategy.</p> <p>I will make sure that your concerns are fed into that review.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I am disappointed in the answer from Councillor Couchman because he has been working with Social Services officers very effectively towards intervening earlier in the needs of people with disabilities and I think everybody within that service agrees with that approach. But we find here, that what he is saying is, that the County Council does not intend to provide the kind of advice and advocacy that would help older people and people with disabilities to get the benefits to which they are entitled unless it is something that will bring money directly into the County's coffers, i.e. people are getting services. That is what your answer says Councillor Couchman: it</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>The question of grants and subventions to Citizens' Advice Bureaux (CAB) is a very complex one. Generally speaking the district councils and the City Council have taken on the responsibility for the CABs. We do as a County Council already provide: I have got some slightly out of date figures but I think that the City's CAB receives £24,000 from this authority and we also provide to West Oxfordshire's CAB for the over 60's £34,800 and for the under 60's £5,000. Those make up a very small proportion of the £431,000 that, this year, we are giving in grants to advice, a large proportion of which goes to Age Concern and certainly will cover a wider spectrum of advice than we give from the in-house service which is indeed designed for Care Managers to maximise people's benefits. We do not, as a County Council, seek to get into the business of debt advice, per se, but we will signpost to the advice bureaux, particularly in the City where debt advice is available.</p>

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<p>says the purpose of the arrangements is for income generation for our clients. The result is that there are tens of thousands of people in this County who are entitled to benefits who do not get them because they do not know about them, or they have not got the self confidence to ask for them. I think it is a legitimate and a necessary function of this Council to provide that assistance. It has two effects. First, it brings in needed finance to people with real difficulties which is good for them and good for the county and good for the future; second, it provides a large amount of spending of tens of millions of pounds which is not bad for the economy either. So, for those two major reasons, I am disappointed by the narrow focus that seems to be implied by this answer and I hope that Councillor Couchman will show me to be wrong.</p>	
<p>12. COUNCILLOR LARRY SANDERS In the light of recent restaurant failures in the Castle site, what plans are there to improve the prospects for other businesses in the area?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID ROBERTSON, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL We have recently approved a letting of the unit formerly occupied by the Ha Ha Bar to Wetherspoon plc.</p> <p>We are in discussions with Trevor Osborne of Oxford Castle Limited about potential occupiers of the Tootsies premises following their closure. He is contacting potential occupiers and we have asked him to consider possible uses other than restaurants/bars.</p>

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	<p>Oxford Castle Limited are also reviewing their marketing policy for the Castle to seek to increase the numbers of visitors. They are planning various events at the site in the pre-Christmas period.</p> <p>It is worth noting that Malmaison Hotel is still operating with a high level of occupancy. Several of the other restaurants are also performing well.</p> <p>As regards other areas outside the Castle complex, we are working closely with the City Council and the City Centre Management to improve the City Centre and thereby encourage visitors to the business and evening economy. The first stage of the Transform Oxford project has been completed and Queen Street is now a more pleasant environment in which people can walk and shop in safety.</p> <p>We encourage local small and medium size businesses to engage with the County Council and our 14 day payment policy has helped with their cash flow.</p>
<p>13. COUNCILLOR SANDY LOVATT Does the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure welcome the news from the Highways Agency that they are prepared to consider opening up Lodge Hill to become a Four-Legged or Diamond junction?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, CABINET MEMBER FOR GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE Yes, the Cabinet Member does welcome the decision by the Highways Agency (HA). Since receiving the news from the HA, OCC have been working with Halcrow (OCC term Transport Planning Consultants) to model the effects a diamond interchange would have on the surrounding network and the A34. Officers would expect to have the modelling results early in the new calendar year.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION Please could the Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure enlarge upon the next steps that might be in the process of getting this item to implementation? As he is aware, there has been some misleading and</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER That was a very full supplementary. Of course, you have got to remember that the reason I wrote the letter to the Highways Agency was in response to Councillor Marilyn Badcock who had asked me to do it and from that has come forward that the Highways Agency are allowing the County Council to look at modelling. I think that we should know the results of the modelling in the beginning of the new year and what the recommendations may or may not be before we can make any further timescale decisions. Picking up on AbITS, I think if you go</p>

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<p>incorrect information concerning the relationship between this matter and the Abingdon Integrated Transport Strategy (AbITS), given by one of the opposition parties to residents of the Dunmore Ward in Abingdon during a recent by-election. This included a totally incorrect statement that the County Council had removed Lodge Hill junction from this project when, because of cost, it could never have been part of it, only in aspirations. Thus, since the party concerned for the 22 years up until June of this year represented the division concerned and were members of the Cabinet when this project was signed off in 2004 they would have known this. I wonder if the Cabinet Member approved of this sort of deceit on the public. I am also curious that the MP for Oxford West and Abingdon made a personal commitment to ask the Secretary of State for Transport to provide the funding for this development. What influence does the Cabinet Member think a minor MP of a minor opposition party will have on this Minister?</p>	<p>back to the original AbITS consultation period which you quite correctly state was not just the Conservatives and, in actual fact, if you look at the AbITS consultation document at the bottom, it had the Oxfordshire County Council's logo, the Abingdon Town Council's logo and the Vale of White Horse District Council's logo and so everybody was involved. In that consultation document, it did refer to Lodge Hill and it did refer to the second bridge crossing but it was considered by all those parties at that time that they were long-term aspirations and therefore could not be included in it. I think in answering the question about deceit, we have got to be clear about the facts and it was not just the County Council pulling it but it was with the full agreement of all those Councils. I think it is very difficult for me to answer your question about a certain MP but I think for the benefit of Abingdon residents perhaps the best person for them to elect is Nicola Blackwood so then she can go and call on Theresa Villiers straight away to ask about funding.</p>

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<p>14. COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY Does the lack of an adopted Minerals Plan place Oxfordshire in a position of disadvantage when deciding on locations for sand and gravel extraction?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, CABINET MEMBER FOR GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE Planning applications should be decided in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.</p> <p>The development plan currently comprises: the South East Plan and saved policies from the Structure Plan, Minerals and Waste Local Plan and District Local Plans.</p> <p>Together these provide a comprehensive suite of policies which cover matters such as mineral supply, recycling, protection of public amenity, natural and other assets, and restoration and afteruse. There is therefore a clear framework against which to determine planning applications for mineral working.</p> <p>But the development plan does not at present contain up to date allocations for future mineral working. One of the key purposes of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework will be to identify suitable areas or sites for mineral extraction, to guide the industry in making planning applications and the Planning Committee in deciding them. The lack of site allocations in the development plan does not prevent decisions being made on planning applications but when we do have these it should make decision making simpler.</p>
<p>15. COUNCILLOR IAIN BROWN Can the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure confirm what this Council is doing to reduce the number of plastic bags that are used in Oxfordshire?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, CABINET MEMBER FOR GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE Initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The distribution of reusable bags at OWP events. • Production of a Recycling Guide containing messaging about “smart shopping” and reuse of bags. • Production of a ‘lonely hearts’ themed TV advert, shown in April and May 2009. The ad focussed on promoting reuse of bags under the banner “A Relationship for Life.” This is currently hosted on the OWP website and due to be aired again in February 2010. • The ‘Don’t be a sheep’ campaign, aimed at promoting reuse amongst Oxford’s university students, features the character ‘Ramsay’ who carries a reusable bag. • Production of “local” reusable bags by some of the CAG (Community Action Group)

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	<p>groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plastic-Bag Free scheme, funding local groups to develop innovative projects to reduce numbers of disposable bags used in their area. This has included a text reminder scheme in Thame, and Witney traders issuing vouchers to residents who reuse their own bags. In Witney, vouchers are then collected by local schools. Schools have also been involved in the design of the reusable bag and promotion of the scheme.
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member be rolling 'Ramsay the Sheep' out to schools for educational purposes on reusable bags?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>If I get the request, I will roll out the sheep to anywhere you ask.</p>
<p>16. COUNCILLOR CHARLES MATHEW</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure confirm the amount of work that has been carried out by the council since July 2007 and in the light of the Pitt Review?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, CABINET MEMBER FOR GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE</p> <p>Since the floods in 2007 the Drainage team has spent over £2,000,000 on completing over 120 schemes and jetting culverts throughout the County. This does not include the money spent in the Maintenance Section clearing up and cleansing drainage systems and the work done by the Bridges section in de-silting and bridge repairs.</p> <p>The County has signed up to the Pitt report and endorses the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new developments must include Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) All schemes constructed by this Council will include SUDS where possible. <p>We are also working much closer with all of the districts within the county and the Environment Agency. This is proving invaluable and we are seeing some successful outcomes.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member join with me to congratulate the Hanney Flood Group and the Eynsham Flood Group in their</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Yes, I would but I think it is actually to decrease the flood risk in their areas.</p>

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co-operation with the Environment Agency to improve the flood risk in those areas?	
<p>17. COUNCILLOR CHARLES MATHEW</p> <p>Does the Leader agree with the writings of Cicero in 55BC "The budget should be balanced, the Treasury should be refilled and public debt should be reduced?"</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR KEITH MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>Quidem!</p> <p>You might have expected me to point out that the quotation attributed to Cicero continued as follows: "..... the arrogance of officialdom should be tempered and controlled, assistance to foreign lands should be curtailed lest Rome become bankrupt, the mobs should be forced to work and not depend on government for subsistence."</p> <p>To which I would similarly reply: Quidem! ***</p> <p>*** <i>For those without a Latin education, "Quidem" is translated as: "indeed" or "certainly".</i></p>
<p>18. COUNCILLOR NICK CARTER</p> <p>Are there any plans to support greater financial education in our schools, to ensure that an understanding of money management is available?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MICHAEL WAINE, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS IMPROVEMENT</p> <p>Schools are required to prepare children and young people for the experiences and opportunities of adult life. As part of that, secondary schools in particular, devote considerable time to Personal Social & Health Education (PSHE) which can include, among other things, awareness of the importance of effective personal money management. The precise nature of PSHE in schools is determined at a local (school) level. We believe that the money management element is sufficiently well represented not to require any additional promotion in that context.</p> <p>More generally, we have a '14-19 Strategy Group' through which we are seeking to increase the breadth and relevance of the curriculum. All of the new qualifications, such as Diplomas, include projects that enable young people to practise financial management and planning. We offer a great deal of support to develop such courses.</p>
<p>19. COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY</p> <p>Does the Cabinet Member for Safer and Stronger Communities agree that any</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES</p> <p>Trunk Roads within Oxfordshire are the responsibility of the Highways Agency and it is for them to determine how they consult on proposals and who with. The Chief Fire Officers</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>changes to our trunk road network must comply with the best safety advice available including the important experiences and opinions of our excellent Fire and Rescue Service?</p>	<p>Association seeks to ensure that engineered solutions form part of the processes to remove dangerous bends and to seek to redesign roads or areas where there is a history of accidents. I would expect the Highways Agency to consult with the fire and rescue service as one of the emergency services.</p> <p>For the remaining roads within Oxfordshire, including all main A roads, the Transport Service consults with Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service on all major and minor schemes as a matter of course. Any concerns are fully considered as part of the design phase before implementation.</p>
<p>20. COUNCILLOR ARASH FATEMIAN Are OCC buying their electricity on fixed contracts or through a central purchasing body(CPB)?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR KEITH MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL I refer you to the Annual Report on the Property Portfolio submitted to Cabinet on 20 October 2009 and, in particular, paragraph 25 which states: The processes for procuring energy were reviewed during 2008/09 by the Energy Procurement Forum and it was decided that, from Autumn 2009, supplies would be secured through ‘flexible’ contracts arranged by Laser (Kent County Council). [Contracts are] ‘flexible’ in that the final price charged by suppliers is built up via a number of purchases of proportions of the total annual requirement, following established risk management rules. This allows for quick decisions to take advantage of market movements and is designed to achieve lower mid- and long-term prices than would be achieved from traditionally procured contracts. Prices for gas for the year from November 2009 will be similar to the last two years. Electricity prices for larger sites will also remain stable. Electricity prices for the smaller sites will reduce by about 20%. By way of explanation Laser are energy purchasing specialists based at Kent County Council, who act on behalf of members of the Central Buying Consortium. Laser procure what should be best value prices through a number of purchasers using agreed risk management principles and wholesale energy market information. The process is intended to reduce price volatility and obtain lower prices (generally 5-6%) than traditional purchasing strategies.</p>
<p>21. COUNCILLOR STEWART LILLY Are there any plans to offer newspaper and canteen facilities at Thornhill Park and Ride, perhaps by leasing some</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT IMPLEMENTATION The possibility of introducing a concession at Thornhill and other Park & Ride sites is being considered as part of general improvements and enhancement of Park & Ride, including expansion at Thornhill.</p>

Questions	Answers
space for such facilities?	
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Having been chosen as the bus champion, I would like to be kept informed as to the progress of bus initiatives which will hopefully provide additional income. Will you do this?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Yes I am happy to do so.</p>
<p>22. COUNCILLOR NICK CARTER Could the progress of the "Bicycles in Oxford" scheme be reported?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT IMPLEMENTATION</p> <p>I have understood this question to be about the idea for a cycle hire scheme for Oxford. This is something that was investigated to establish whether it could be self-financing. Whilst there was some interest expressed by potential providers of a scheme, it became clear that ongoing financial support would be necessary. It would also have been necessary to locate cycle hire spaces where existing cycle parking is at a premium. Consequently this scheme has now been dropped.</p>
<p>23. COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE Are there any plans to support education and training programmes to the H Riders club, who meet in my division, and any other established motorcycle clubs in Oxfordshire?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES</p> <p>The Road Safety team, within the Transport Service, is liaising with the H Café Motorcycle Club to consider what can be done to reduce casualties to motorcyclists across the county. Measures will include education at events such as H Café's bi-annual safety day and other major motorcycle meetings as well as likely physical measures such as warning signing on high-risk routes. We also work with the Oxfordshire Motorcycle Federation and are currently devising programmes for new and existing riders.</p>
<p>24. COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE In the light of the increasing concern among local residents in the Dorchester</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT IMPLEMENTATION</p> <p>Our emerging motorcycle activities will almost certainly include a presence at events, including</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>area over the noise and dangerous driving by a small minority of the motorcyclists who collect at the H Café in Berinsfield, can Councillor Rose please tell me if the County Council has a policy on training and speed awareness for young motorcyclists? Also can he please tell me if the Council intends to take any actions to try and educate these young drivers in order to protect other road users and themselves?</p>	<p>the H Café Safety Day, which will provide an opportunity to engage with motorcyclists and challenge any irresponsible behaviour. Unfortunately many will probably only respond to enforcement and the Thames Valley Road Safety Partnership has just introduced a programme to give those apprehended for law-breaking a choice of education in lieu of penalty points on their licence. This system has the advantage of directly targeting those who are behaving irresponsibly.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>What do you see as the real benefit of working with groups like the motorcyclists at the H café?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I must congratulate the local member on engaging with the bikers at the H café at a quiz on a recent Sunday lunchtime. The large group of mature bikers are very keen to help new young bikers, the ones who meet at the H Café. Through peer pressure, we can also make contact with them in an informal and supportive way. It will be very much easier to reach them through clubs that operate out of places like the H café.</p>
<p>25. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Are all new schools in Oxfordshire schools built and fitted with sprinkler systems. Can the portfolio holder say if this is the case and how many and what percentage of our schools have them fitted?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MICHAEL WAINE, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS IMPROVEMENT</p> <p>Completely new build schools will be fitted with sprinklers as a matter of course as are major new build projects at existing schools with floor areas of over 1500m². In the case of projects which are less than 1500m², cost-benefit assessments are made to see if sprinklers are warranted.</p> <p>Two projects on site (the Marlborough School Science Block and the Oxford Academy) and a number of projects in design stages (Chipping Norton Science Block; Bayards Hill Primary School, Oxford; Woodfarm Primary School, Oxford; and St Andrews Primary School, Chinnor) will have sprinklers fitted.</p> <p>Future projects in the current Capital Programme which will also result in such installations</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>including: Rose Hill Primary School, Oxford as well as various new schools constructed as a result of Housing growth such as those in Banbury, Bicester, Didcot and Grove.</p> <p>One primary school in the county currently has sprinklers fitted.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>It says at the end of the answer, one primary school in the County currently has sprinklers fitted. I assume therefore that no secondary schools have them. Only one school in the whole county currently has sprinklers fitted. Would the Cabinet Member agree with me that this is appalling from at least two points of view? It means that it costs much more to insure our schools against arson or maybe they are not even insured at all and secondly it puts our children in danger.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>As far as the one primary school is concerned, I know which it is but I know of secondary schools with new buildings which have gained from the new policy statement of the County Council. As far as dangers are concerned, the evidence based nationally tells us that putting in sprinklers is not an issue to do with life and limb although it could be and it is more an issue to do with property and as far as I am concerned the property of staff and children who are sitting there which could amount to hours and hours of work and the whole emotional base behind them where course work is involved. The policy has been agreed by the County Council and this administration will continue to follow it on the basis explained.</p>
<p>26. COUNCILLOR JOHN SANDERS</p> <p>Is the Portfolio holder satisfied with the level of bus subsidies and is it enough to encourage people out of their cars and onto the buses?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT IMPLEMENTATION</p> <p>The Bus Subsidy budget is not designed to achieve modal shift but to meet the travel needs of communities that are not served by commercial bus services. Clearly additional funds would enable us to do more but we have to prioritise our overall budget carefully to achieve the best outcomes across the whole Transport agenda.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I am grateful that Councillor Rose has pointed out that they want to prioritise the small amount of money they have</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>The Council Tax, I suspect, would have been an awful lot higher so the proportion would have been a lot lower had there been a Labour administration in this chamber. All routes are by local request. The question actually refers to whether they would give modal shift but modal</p>

Questions	Answers												
<p>for this, but does he realise that the increase in subsidy over the last 4 years was 1.4% whilst the increase in Oxfordshire's Council Tax was 17%, that is 12 times as much tax increase as bus subsidy increase? Is the Cabinet Member really satisfied that the real terms' decrease in subsidy is appropriate? I hope you do not roll out the current Tory excuse that it is lack of Government support:: this Government has put more money into this authority than any previous Government.</p>	<p>shift is not the purpose of bus subsidies. The reason we spent less money this year is that the tendering has been superb and we have had some superb lowered quotes from all the bus companies we went to.</p>												
<p>27. COUNCILLOR RICHARD STEVENS</p> <p>It was recently acknowledged that that £6.7 million is the annual cost to the County Council of external consultants and interim managers.</p> <p>How much of that money is spent on interim managers? How many interim managers are employed in each Directorate?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID ROBERTSON, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>For the period 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009, the County Council covered 7 posts with interim managers, giving a total cost of £363,458.</p> <p>A breakdown by directorate, post and cost is shown in the table below. As can be seen, interim managers are used sparingly across the organisation, often filling a post on an interim basis whilst activity to secure a permanent recruitment is underway or to support/cover a particular activity for a specific period of time.</p> <p>Interims (July 2008 - June 2009)</p> <p>Total Cost: £363,458 Total Number: 7 Posts overall (split below)</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="757 1217 1890 1444"> <thead> <tr> <th>Directorate</th> <th>Interim Cover</th> <th>Quarter Ending</th> <th>Cost £</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>CYPF</td> <td>Acting Head of Service – Raising Achievement</td> <td>Sept 2008</td> <td>42,660</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CYPF</td> <td>Acting Head of Service – Raising Achievement</td> <td>Dec 2008</td> <td>55,093</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Directorate	Interim Cover	Quarter Ending	Cost £	CYPF	Acting Head of Service – Raising Achievement	Sept 2008	42,660	CYPF	Acting Head of Service – Raising Achievement	Dec 2008	55,093
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Questions	Answers			
	CYPF	Acting Head of Service – Raising Achievement	March 2009	50,660
	CYPF	Acting Head of Services – Commissioning, Strategy & Locality Development	June 2009	17,533
	CYPF Total	2 Posts		165,946
	Shared Services	Income Manager	Sept 2008	19,762
	Shared Services	Income Manager	Dec 2008	12,112
	Shared Services	Finance Business Partner	Dec 2008	24,840
	Shared Services	Payroll Control Manager	Dec 2008	25,025
	Shared Services	Payroll Control Manager	March 2009	23,000
	Shared Services	Payroll Control Manager	June 2009	7,525
	Shared Services Total	3 Posts		112,264
	Corporate Core	HR Programme Manager	Sept 2008	11,389
	Corporate Core	HR Programme Manager	June 2009	13,837
	Corporate Core	Assistant Chief Executive	Sept 2008	42,475
	Corporate Core	Assistant Chief Executive	Dec 2008	17,547
	Corporate Core Total	2 Posts		85,248
	Grand Total	7 Posts		363,458

Questions	Answers
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>If I read these figures correctly, over a period of 9 months, the Council has spent almost £150,000 on acting heads of service for raising achievement. I appreciate that there may not be an answer now but what is the Council's contractual commitment, in financial terms, under the contracts for services entered into in respect of interim cover for the CYPF directorate for each of the quarters ending 30 September 2009 (actual) and 31 December 2009 (projected)?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>You may, or you may not, be surprised that I do not have that answer to my fingertips at the moment but I will certainly commit to giving a written answer as long as somebody can provide the question again.</p> <p>Councillor Waine added that the suggestion is that the money has been spent on one person: there have been two interims, one of whom has only been employed since September.</p>
<p>28. COUNCILLOR LIZ BRIGHOUSE</p> <p>I understand that services such as Youth Mentoring and Face to Face counselling which are directed at some of our most vulnerable young people have had their budgets cut. How much was taken from these budgets? Has this money been used to fund generic Youth Workers and if so how many and where are they working?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LOUISE CHAPMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES</p> <p>A review of Oxfordshire's Youth Mentoring Service (OYMS) and Face to Face Counselling Service (F2F) was undertaken earlier in the year. As a result, a three month consultation was held which ended in September. Senior Managers conducted one-to-one and group interviews with staff, young people and stakeholders. This was also discussed at a Directorate Members' Briefing with councillors and the lead member for Children's Services.</p> <p>These services are highly valued by the council. Senior management within Oxfordshire's Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS) are keen to make efficiencies in how they work in order to improve service delivery to young people by integrating them more closely with other services and ensuring they reach the most vulnerable young people who would most benefit from the provision and could not access such support elsewhere.</p> <p>We will still be ensuring that the same level of service is maintained, but are seeking to reduce management costs and manage how the services are delivered and supported differently and to expand the use of volunteers. There is no increase in management across the IYSS.</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>Despite the current financial climate and consequent constraints on local authorities, all savings made are to be reinvested in core youth work provision for young people in response to increasing demands to open young peoples' centres at weekends and to work with younger children. This will supplement the additional grant of £150,000 that the Council has recently agreed for this purpose. Staff members who are affected by this restructure are being offered posts within youth services and the fact that IYSS will be reinvesting back into youth work means that there will also be additional opportunities there. Relevant posts from recruitments in IYSS have been held back to offer them as redeployment opportunities to staff affected. The full reinvestment will only be known once the recruitment processes to the restructured posts have been completed so the area of work ie weekend opening has been identified but not the actual posts yet.</p> <p>Both services would be located within the Pre-Court and Prevention Team, but with accountability to the Service Manager for Targeted Youth Support and not the Youth Offending Service, given they would be reaching a range of vulnerable groups and not just young people involved in the youth justice system. Other services within the Pre-Court and Prevention Team also target a wider range of vulnerable groups.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I would just preserve the question that I asked in the first place. I wonder if Councillor Chapman, when she knows how much money has been saved in terms of these two services, will let me know about the reinvestment and where it is. I would simply want to be sure that the vulnerable children, particularly living in my division who have access to these services, are going to have an enhanced youth service experience when these services end. Once the</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Yes Chairman I am happy to provide those. What I would say about this venture and the consultation, which was a three-month consultation, is that this is a win-win situation for young people in Oxfordshire as not only are we going to end up with an enhanced service for our vulnerable young people but we are also going to see youth clubs open on Friday and Saturday nights. I will just mention some of the areas: Blackbird Leys, Rose Hill, Banbury, Didcot, Abingdon, Wallingford. We have already started at Wood Farm of which I am sure you are well aware. This was about taking money away from management costs and reinvesting into the front line. So I am quite happy to give the figures as and when we finish the project.</p>

Questions	Answers
information is known, could I have the details?	