

## QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Questions	Answers
<p><b>1. COUNCILLOR JAMILA BEGUM AZAD</b></p> <p>Mental health issues can affect anyone, at any time in their life but sadly young people are affected disproportionately, with studies showing that more than half of mental health problems start by the age of 14 and three-quarters by 18. Young people can struggle with pressure of modern life, the demands of friendship and relationships, can all affect mental wellbeing. We know that early intervention, along with giving young people the confidence to access support can progress their wellbeing. What plans does Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group have to stop this happening at early age?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR STEVE HARROD, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN &amp; FAMILY SERVICES</b></p> <p>I would like to start by thanking Councillor Azad for the focus this question has rightly brought to the issue of children and young people’s mental health. She points out that children and young people who have been traumatised, who experience conflict or who have complex mental health needs, should be able to get the help they need, from the right professionals quickly.</p> <p>By way of background, it is important to note that this Council already jointly funds with Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service provided by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust. A new contract for the service was agreed in May this year bringing the total investment in CAMHS to £8.4m. This has increased by more than £2m over the past three years as a result of targeted investment by the NHS.</p> <p>Despite this performance figures published by Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, show that waiting times are still too long, although some improvements have been made. Let me remind you, however, that any child that has a mental health emergency will of course be seen the same day and ‘urgent’ referrals are seen within two weeks.</p> <p>There were 6153 referrals to CAMHS during 2016-17. At present there are 1141 children waiting for a first appointment, with up to 580 new referrals being received every month. There has been a significant increase in the number of referrals over the past three months. This has undoubtedly impacted on waiting times with only 53% of children now having their first appointment within 12 weeks.</p>

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	<p>This increase in referrals is not, however the only challenge CAMHS Oxfordshire faces. Perhaps the greatest challenge is the shortage of specialist CAMHS doctors and nurses and this has been recognised by Health Education England. This is not just an Oxfordshire issue but is nationally a problem. Every Clinical Commissioning Group in England and Wales received additional funding over the past three years and therefore every local area is looking for new doctors and nurses. Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust already has an ongoing recruitment drive but despite this up to twelve clinical posts will be vacant at any one time. So it is not about lack of funding, and it is not only about more referrals but critically it is about a current shortage of appropriate staff, both doctors and nurses.</p> <p>These challenges are why OCCG has agreed a new contract with Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust to deliver a new service model for Oxfordshire. The new Oxfordshire CAMHS will provide an integrated service with voluntary sector partners that will build community and individual resilience, educate other agencies around emotional wellbeing and mental health, prevention, early consultation, advice, treatment and self-management. These partners include: Barnardo's, Autism Family Support, Response, Oxfordshire Youth, SOFEA (South Oxfordshire Food and Education Association), TRAX, RAW, Ark T, Synolos, BYHP (Banbury Young Homeless Project).</p> <p>As well as harnessing expertise of the voluntary sector the new CAMHS will offer new online support and information for young people, families and schools. CAMHS is also working directly with schools, school health nurses and our own Locality Community Support Service (LCSS) to make sure there is a joined up approach to working with children and families.</p> <p>I would therefore contend that setting up a new service which the evidence before us would indicate, would be almost impossible to staff, is counter-productive. I propose that we give the new CAMHS the opportunity to deliver what it has been commissioned to do; to work with our current services such as</p>

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	<p>the LCSS teams to make sure that children, young people and families are getting access to the right service, and to increase the work it does in our schools and colleges.</p> <p>I will also undertake to write to Health Education England to express this Council's concern about the shortage of CAMHS doctors and nurses and to ask what plans they have to address the issue urgently.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Young people at primary school and infant school age are getting mental health as well; so we need to know what the local authority is doing for these children in schools at that age.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I find that difficult to answer because I don't have any responsibility for schools, but certainly from the point of view of children services, I know that the officers are actively implementing more early intervention plans, there is a move afoot to implement a localities based system which is already seeing a change in the proportion of mental health cases that are being put forward and also finally if one looks at the increase in referrals to children's services they are up by 46% on the other hand, of those referrals, 69% of them result in no further action. So things are improving and we are aware of the need for early intervention.</p>
<p><b>2. COUNCILLOR LYNDA ATKINS</b></p> <p>What assessment has the Cabinet member's staff made of the cost of re-doing all the lamentably poor pothole repairs on non-A, non-B roads across the County when the repairs fail next time there is rain followed by frost? The latest methodology could be described as 'chuck in a bucket of tar and run away' leaving the road surface uneven, bits of tarmac littering the surface and plenty of large gaps for water to fill before it freezes. I would</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>Due to the budget pressures the Council has faced and the need to appropriately manage the defects, the council has had to make some hard decisions. Last financial year a decision was made to 'sweep and fill' on the lower classification roads rather than carry out a 'cut and fill' repair. A 'sweep and fill' pothole is significantly cheaper to carry out and is an appropriate way to repair the road in many locations. This practice has been continued into this year.</p> <p>On some occasions these defects do fail but the cause is usually because of the overall state of the road rather than because the repair is of poor quality and can also happen when potholes are repaired using "cut &amp; fill". Highways Officers do</p>

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<p>be happy to supply pictures of the many potholes filled in this way in my Division.</p>	<p>monitor the quality of defects and raise concerns with the Contractors where the quality of repair is deemed unsatisfactory. Sometimes repairs are completed to ensure the highway remains safe for users while more substantial works are planned.</p> <p>We are currently working closely with Skanska to extend the use of dragon patcher repairs and preventative work onto more of the network as my predecessor announced earlier this year (link to announcement : <a href="http://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/coming-soon-to-a-road-near-you-in-oxfordshire/">http://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/coming-soon-to-a-road-near-you-in-oxfordshire/</a>)</p> <p>In addition, the recent restructure within the Communities Directorate will deliver better cross-team working and greater efficiencies in road repairs and resurfacing.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Can Councillor Constance ensure that we have a very rigorous measure of quality control over the repairs that are being carried out because as she may have seen from the pictures that I sent, what is actually happening is appalling. There was a repair done to the pavement near me where we had a drop of about 1 inch and the fill on that now has created a raised trip hazard of about 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>Thank you for the question. I have asked officers to look into that specific example and to report back to me. Our roads are not in pristine condition. We know that, we do however have a really active policy of pothole filling but if you fill a pothole next to a patch of failing road unfortunately the failing road gives way as well. There is a grand intension to move towards patch repair rather than pothole repair. In my division, that is visible on every one of our roads .I can just assure you that better times are coming but I have asked for special interest in your pavements.</p>
<p><b>3. COUNCILLOR LYNDA ATKINS</b></p> <p>Can the Cabinet member please tell us how many older people with assessed eligible</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR LAWRIE STRATFORD, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</b></p> <p>I can reassure Councillor Atkins that all older people who have assessed eligible social care needs will be offered a place in the new Community Support Service,</p>

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<p>social care needs, who will no longer be able to access Health and Wellbeing Centres from the end of September, have agreed clear and deliverable care plans to be in place at the beginning of October, and how many have yet to be reassured that their very important need for care is going to be met.</p>	<p>which will be operational from Monday 2 October 2017 following the closure of the Health and Wellbeing Centres on Friday 29 September 2017.</p> <p>Everyone with an assessed eligible social care need has a support plan that details their needs and how they are to be met.</p> <p>Letters to people with assessed eligible social care needs are being sent out in the week beginning 11 September 2017. These letters will set out the details of the centre where they have been offered a place, the day(s) of attendance and transport arrangements.</p> <p>We hope these letters will reassure people, and that everyone who is offered a place in the new Community Support Service will choose to accept it.</p> <p>The Community Information Network team is continuing to work with individuals who do not have eligible needs to identify alternative options and activities in the local community. Some people have already left the Health and Wellbeing Centres as they have started to attend their new day time services.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Does the Cabinet Member agree that in sending out letters to these very vulnerable residents just two weeks before the implementation of very major changes to the services we provide, we are not actually serving our most vulnerable residents well.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>It has been a challenge, I know in my own area people have been notified somewhat ahead. Unfortunately, due to the nature of the users it goes out of their hand very quickly and repeat letters are necessary. It is a fine balance. I appreciate across the piece there will be a lot of people who are disappointed, there are others who will have received letters and thought that is nothing to do with them and park it, but I hope our officers, and I have every confidence, are continuing to monitor the take up and the response to letters, but I do appreciate that it is a bit of challenge.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p><b>4. COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN</b></p> <p>According to a recent report from accountancy firm Moore Stevens, one in six care home companies are presently in danger of insolvency. What steps is this council taking to evaluate the financial security of care homes across the county, particularly those with which the council has a contract?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR LAWRIE STRATFORD, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</b></p> <p>Thank you for your question. The council is aware of recent reports about financial resilience in the care homes sector.</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council understands the crucial role that commissioning authorities play in making sure that service providers deliver quality and there is a sustainable market available for the foreseeable future. The County Council has responsibilities under The Care Act to facilitate the same for all residents in Oxfordshire and care homes play an important part in helping to deliver this.</p> <p>The County Council uses a risk based approach to managing its contracted services. Performance information is gathered from various sources and this is used to develop broad intelligence about all providers. This helps us to form a view about the care market and providers in general that we contract with.</p> <p>In terms of supplier resilience, and in particular financial resilience a number of strategies are employed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At a local level a key source of information comes from us maintaining close relationships with providers to hear their general views and concerns about the care market and any emerging cost pressures that they are likely to experience. This is important as the county council only purchases about one third of the bed stock in Oxfordshire; the other two thirds being purchased mainly by private individuals, with a small proportion being purchased by health commissioners and other local authorities.</li> <li>• To supplement our local intelligence, the Council uses an information system called Procurement Catalyst that helps to analyse risk across our supplier portfolio. This system gathers financial data from a variety of sources and aggregates the same to give an overview of a provider's financial resilience</li> </ul>

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	<p>and risk. Information can be interrogated at both individual provider level and organisational level. The system is configured to provide 'Alerts' on a regular basis for our top suppliers so that prompt action can be taken if necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At a national level the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has a Market Oversight role. Market Oversight is a statutory scheme through which it assesses the financial sustainability of those care organisations that local authorities would find difficult to replace should they fail and become unable to carry on delivering a service. The Care Quality Commission is required to inform local authorities where these services are delivered as soon as it believes that this failure is likely to happen. By giving an early warning of likely failure, the Commission intends to help local authorities to carry out their statutory duty to ensure continuity of care when providers fail. It's important to note that being listed on the scheme does not mean that a provider is at risk of failing, it only means that the provider would be difficult to replace if they did fail. The Director for Adult Services has confirmed that the Council has not been alerted through this scheme to any services that are at risk of failing.</li> </ul> <p>Furthermore, there is good communication and regular meetings between commissioners and the regulator to ensure that good quality services are maintained. The above information sources are also used to support our price review process and our tendering processes for care home services in Oxfordshire.</p> <p>Overall we believe that we have good services in Oxfordshire and an expanding care homes market that has seen growth over the last few years. We believe we pay good rates for services, with the quality of services above the Care Quality Commission national average. Despite this we are maintaining oversight of the same to ensure that the interest of the vulnerable people who use these services is maintained and they are safeguarded throughout.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>With one in six care homes threatened across the country I am wondering if there are any of which you are of aware in this county that might be in danger of insolvency?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>We continue to monitor closely for some of those homes that might be more vulnerable. We do keep track of them and take advice from CQC. We also have to recognise that, at the moment there only about one in three placements that we have placed, but we do try and monitor all care homes. One of the areas that is most at risk is the smaller care homes, either being absorbed into a larger organisation which may mean the way in which they operate changes significantly.</p> <p>the other area is where the small homes perhaps have less business acumen and understanding to ensure they continue to operate with changing legislation and this Council did agree in the last budget proposal to provide some money to provide that sort of business support for care homes to ensure that they were aware of what is coming down the line and for us to offer support. That is not an inconsiderable sum when you look at our budget, £100k over a two year period and we will be monitoring how that take up is, but we are all careful to monitor care homes, we recognise there is a growing demand and the pressure on that service area is becoming more and more critical.</p>
<p><b>5. COUNCILLOR JENNY HANNABY</b></p> <p>What progress has been made towards a new Contract for Street Lighting upkeep and repair to replace the Contract terminated eighteen months ago.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>The service is developing a significant capital investment bid to convert/replace the remaining 85% of the lamp columns and lamp heads to a Smart LED solution. By doing this, the Authority will make significant savings on its energy and maintenance bill (approximately £1.5m per annum). The operational and maintenance requirements for a smart LED network however, are significantly different to the existing routine maintenance requirements for the conventional light source estate which the council currently has. As such, the service has deferred a tender on a new contract until such time a decision has been taken on this investment proposal to ensure that the next contract delivers both good</p>



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	<p>value to the council and is fit for purpose for delivering the needs of road users and residents.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this, the service is working with the interim street lighting contractor (Amey OW) with a view to extending the current arrangements and scaling up the level of service that the Authority originally procured to ensure that service levels better reflect user's expectations."</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Recognising the new contract will be delayed until a decision is made about the investment, wouldn't it be prudent to get on and extend the existing maintenance contract with Amey's OW and hopefully improve the service for our residents as we come to the crucial winter period as 85% of us are not LED?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>The best I can say to you is that we will certainly follow up the suggestion and we will get back to you.</p>
<p><b>6. COUNCILLOR MAURICE BILLINGTON</b></p> <p>Cherwell District Council is proposing to build thousands of houses in the Kidlington/ Begbroke/ Yarnton area to help relieve the pressure on Oxford City Council who are unable to meet their quota of house building in their own Local Plan. Could the Leader assure me that he is working to identify infrastructure funding to help mitigate the additional houses that Cherwell have to build</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council robustly test all emerging local plans to ensure that any proposed development can either be accommodated in infrastructure terms or that the appropriate mitigation is identified. In relation to funding of any identified infrastructure mitigation, I can offer assurance that all possible funding streams are and will be explored. Currently we have a team preparing infrastructure funding bids through the Housing Infrastructure Fund and within this bid package are a series of schemes included to support growth in the areas you identify.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
to assist Oxford City Council?	
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>When I went to a consultation at Kidlington, Exeter Hall regarding these 4,400 houses in Yarnton, Begbroke, Kidlington and Gosford, I asked the question how much would the new structure cost for the roads and they said £3.5 billion. I would like to know how much you think we will get and also the area that concerns me as well is the A34 by the Turnpike as you go the other side there are two bridges and that definitely needs widening as it is absolutely chaos at that roundabout and if there is nothing done we have got 2,800 houses going there and no traffic will move at all.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>There is a lot of work going on at the moment, the OXIS strategy is going to go before the Growth Board on 26 September, which will provide the entire infrastructure that is required, and that is £8 billion across the County. We are working with the National Infrastructure Commission to see about governance and deliverability of all these issues, we are also working together with our Districts and City colleagues on what is nationally called the Place Base Sustainable Growth Proposal that was submitted earlier this week, which is about talking to government and getting additional funds so we can actually work and get up the schemes for delivery and more importantly over 30 years, have £30m per year to deliver those schemes.</p> <p>Next week at Cabinet there is going to be the housing infrastructure bid considered of which there are three areas: North Oxford, West Oxfordshire Smart Corridor and Didcot Garden Town in relationship to the North Oxford. This is around the Woodstock, Begbroke, Yarnton area and the Northern Gateway and that is proposing a bid of £152m for transport improvements around there, and whilst the detail is not in there I am sure we could look at the road between Peartree and the Turnpike because I do know that there are issues there.</p> <p>West Oxfordshire - the bid will be around the Witney/Carterton area with the already approved A40 strategy for around £135m and the Didcot Garden Town bid would be in the region of around £240m for the infrastructure including Clifton Hampden bypass, the Culham bridge, the Science bridge and these will all be going towards delivering the houses coming from the infrastructure requirements. They will be going before Cabinet next week, it will be done on a prioritisation basis and there is very strict guidance as to which the priority will be, but if you come to Cabinet next week you will be able to understand and listen to the debate.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p><b>7. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</b></p> <p>How much extra money in real terms are schools in Oxfordshire likely to receive from the government's amended National Funding Formula?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR HIBBERT-BILES, CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH &amp; EDUCATION</b></p> <p>Unfortunately, at present, we are still awaiting details from the DfE which will clarify what the promised additional £1.3 billion for schools and high needs across 2018-19 and 2019-20 will mean for Oxfordshire and its schools. Once we have these we will make them available to councillors.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Could I ask you to agree to include representations about funding for special education needs transport in view of the fact that the DfE is now having a review of the guidance in relation to SEN transport which may alert certain groups of what the law actually says at present and could involve us in an area where we are already overspent on the budget; and to ensure that the department does not forget that local authorities still have functions and it is all very well having a national funding formula for schools but they also need a national funding formula to ensure local authorities are properly funded for their responsibilities.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I will do that, I have picked this up just this last week about the transport and I have already enquired with our officers where we are going on that.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>8. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</b></p> <p>What progress has been achieved in reducing the time taken to obtain a school place for children taken into care following the letter written to the Minister by all six of the county's members of parliament drawing attention to the issue?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR HIBBERT-BILES, CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH &amp; EDUCATION</b></p> <p>To date, I have yet to receive a response to the letter I sent on 5 July 2017 to Lord Nash, Minister for the school system. However, Victoria Prentis MP has received a response from Nick Gibb MP, Minister of State for School Standards. Unfortunately, his letter does little more than re-state what the current position is, although he does hold out the prospect of some future action to improve matters when he states that "we will give further consideration to delays of the admission of some looked after children in Oxfordshire when we next revise the Code. Of course the problem isn't in Oxfordshire, it sits with academies in other local authority areas, but any measures to improve the timeliness of the admission of Looked After Children would be welcome.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>I gather that the Minister has now replied this morning that he is extremely disappointed that it has taken ministers something like six weeks to reply to our six MPs and even longer to reply to the Council Member about the issue for these particular children who are some of our most vulnerable. I hope that she will agree to continue to press the DfE to ensure that children who are taken into care have the same right to get back into school as they are imposing on parents to take children out of school on holiday. It is unacceptable that they should be out of school for so long.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>We are in agreement over this. In fairness, the letter from Nick Gibb actually came here and not home and it took a week to get to me. I have already gone back to Victoria Prentis who wrote the original letter to him explaining your issues Councillor Howson and explained that they got it back to front and the issue is not in Oxfordshire, the issue is with other authorities when we are sending our children to them, but I will continue to press on that.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>9. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</b></p> <p>What representations has the County Council made in relation to Oxford City Council's published consultation concerning plans for the future of Oxford Station?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>The County Council has responded to the City Council's consultation on the Oxford Station SPD – please see appendix for copy of response. We did not send detailed comments due to the need to not prejudice any scheme coming forward in the future, but rather focused on the principles of the station area for the future so a more flexible approach can be adopted.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Is the Leader aware of any actions by the City Council to secure the funding for the Station project or are they just seeking to take the praise while somebody does all the hard work, as indeed with East/West Rail where of course they refused to join the partnership? Had they done so, perhaps we might have had the funding for the Station redevelopment by now.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I think it is interesting you are linking the East/West Rail project with this. It has been very disappointing that the City Council have failed to engage on this important project when actually they should be one of the main beneficiaries for that, and it has meant that it has dragged on.</p> <p>You will see from my response that we have got to be very careful to make sure that the Council does not prejudge anything. However, as I have just mentioned, the housing infrastructure fund and the growth placed package deal, could be a route through for us to get it and I am pleased to say that I am working well with my colleague at the City Council, Councillor Bob Price, in delivering those sort of things, so they are working towards that and I hope the positive outcome will be working to get the funding for Oxford Station rather than the approach they have taken over the East/West Rail which has not been as positive.</p>
<p><b>10. COUNCILLOR JOHN SANDERS</b></p> <p>It is unfortunate that the cabinet has agreed that Queen Street is to be closed to taxi and bus traffic. However, will the cabinet member explain why the plan:</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>Q1 Does not permit unloading outside the Town Hall main entrance but instead expects HGVs, catering vans and wedding limousines to operate from Blue Boar Street which will require dangerous vehicle manoeuvres,</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>1. does not permit unloading outside the Town Hall main entrance but instead expects HGVs, catering vans and wedding limousines to operate from Blue Boar Street which will require dangerous vehicle manoeuvres,</p> <p>2. requires taxis to perform a dangerous U-turn to join the queue in Cornmarket Street rather than open up Turl Street and Market Street for access to taxis only.</p> <p>3. does not include the introduction of benches for example in George Street, New Road and St. Aldates to assist visitors with walking difficulties now that they will need to walk further from their bus stops to access city centre shops?</p>	<p><i>A1. Loading will be permitted outside the town hall outside the hours of 12-8pm under the new arrangements, except for within marked loading bays. Prior to the consultation, it was identified that between 12 and 8 pm are the busiest times on St Aldates, and this was the time that loading should be restricted, to allow for a better flow of buses and reduce congestion. We have met with the town hall during the consultation period, and identified that there is space for loading on Blue Boar Street, which could act as a replacement for the loss of loading on St Aldates between 12-8. We intend to meet again with relevant officers on this matter.</i></p> <p>Q.2 Requires taxis to perform a dangerous U-turn to join the queue in Cornmarket Street rather than open up Turl Street and Market Street for access to taxis only.</p> <p><i>A.2 Taxis will not be able to use Turl Street / Market Street to access the queue, due to the automatic rising bollard in place at the entrance to Turl Street. Should this be lowered to allow taxi access, it would be possible for other vehicles to access these roads, and enforcement of this would be very challenging. It is envisaged that the rank will be very slow moving with taxis potentially queueing both sides of the 'U', and taxis are currently carrying out a similar manoeuvre on Queen Street, during the temporary closure for construction. We are meeting regularly with COLTA and the city council to discuss safety and operation of the rank, and have assurances from COLTA that their members will act accordingly, as they have done during the current temporary rank on Queen Street. This will be closely monitored once in effect.</i></p> <p>Q.3 Does not include the introduction of benches for example in George Street, New Road and St. Aldates to assist visitors with walking difficulties now that they will need to walk further from their bus stops to access city centre shops?</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>A.3 <i>It is unlikely many routes will have longer walking distances as a result of the closure, as the city centre is gaining 15 new bus stops. Buses will be serving more of the city centre as they will serve the new Westgate centre, and this will give more opportunities to board at different locations around the city compared to at present. In addition, operators may decide to create more 'through' routes to avoid turning buses in the city centre, and this again would assist passengers (please note that this is a decision for operators to take, and not one the council can enforce).</i></p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member reconsider, as Queen Street closure and the rerouting of taxis into the Cornmarket experiment is only to last for eighteen months, then it seems reasonable to rely on traffic signs to prevent unauthorised vehicles from using the Turl/Market Street circle and would the Cabinet Member also reconsider the inconvenience of the Town Hall users weighted against the slight inconvenience of leaving a space with no bus stops opposite the Town Hall and also would the Cabinet Member consider walking with me and highway officers to inspect possible sites for benches for people with walking difficulties.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I think you are seeking to undo all that has already been decided in careful consultation with both Westgate and the City Council. That said, I won't say no to sensible proposals, I am happy to walk the route with you and explain.</p> <p>I do however, emphasise that the unloading question is perfectly reasonable, there is only one unloading outside the Town Hall, just not between 12 and 8pm, during those hours Blue Boar Street behind the Town Hall is a suitable alternative. I note also that the use of Cornmarket as a U-turn for taxis has been carefully considered and is in operation already. I further note that far from people having to walk greater distances for buses, there will be 15 new bus stops in the city centre. Yes, happy to walk it with you, but I do not think that I see a particular case for change here, I think it has been well considered and well agreed with both Westgate and the City Council, but I will meet you for the walk John.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p><b>11. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>Botley Road, Oxford, is probably the most congested street in the County. The problems are mostly caused by <i>eastern</i> end of the street, near the railway station. In view of this, why are we proposing to spend a lot of money on the <i>western</i> section of the street?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>OCC carried out a corridor study along Botley Road, which identified measures required to improve the route. The study also estimated the cost of these works along sections of the route, and can be found here. <a href="https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/ltp4-area-strategies">https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/ltp4-area-strategies</a> . Building on the corridor study, we submitted a bid for £5M to the National Productivity Infrastructure Fund in June to implement some of the measures, and an announcement of whether this was successful is expected in the autumn. The bid focused on the area between Binsey Lane and Eynsham Road, and the proposals identified in the corridor study. The NPIF bid can be found here <a href="https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/national-productivity-investment-fund">https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/national-productivity-investment-fund</a>.</p> <p>The area in the bid was identified in the corridor study as having the potential for most improvement, and work will focus on providing consistent pedestrian, cyclist and public transport facilities (fully segregated where possible) along the length of the route. The improvements along this stretch would be the first phase of several phases, with the city centre / station end positioned as phase 2, once there is more certainty over the development context in this area.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Why did the County Council not work closely with the City Council on this, because they didn't at all, and the City Council was adamant that the area of Batley Road that needs the most improvement is the area near the railway station and immediately to the west of it, because it is patently obvious to everybody in this room, and outside it, that</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I can only stand by the answer as it is at the moment, but also to point out that the absence of work with the City Council does interest me because there has actually been a lot of work to cooperate and work in partnership. I will be meeting with the City Council, I think in 10 days' time, and this is an item that I will raise with them and I think we certainly need to establish our reasons for the work at the wrong end as you put it; it is open for further examination.</p>



<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>that is the pinch point in Batley Road which desperately needs improvement.</p>	
<p><b>12. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>Many people are put off from cycling because they feel it is unsafe. One of the things that make people feel safer on their bikes is good, visible road markings, e.g. for cycle lanes and advanced stop lines. In many parts of the County these have faded so much as to be almost invisible. Please can you dedicate more money to re-lining in future budgets?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>There is only a limited amount of funding for the maintenance of our road network the spending of which has to be considered against the value it brings for users but also to protect the condition of our network. There is currently a specific budget allocation of £609,000 for signs and lines across the county for the roads that we maintain. Some lining, such as that which you have mentioned, brings greater value than those others. With limited funding being available it is key that officers work with local members to work up a programme that reflects local priorities taking into account the wider network need. You have my commitment that I will ensure this happens more effectively than it does at present.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>This is about lining, refreshing lines on the roads. I think this answer is an attempt to divide and rule I am afraid, so my question is really to repeat what I asked before but perhaps in slightly different words which might illicit a better reply. Please can you guarantee that all roads which have heavy traffic including lots of cyclists will have their cycle markings renewed when they fade? This will save lives.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I can only emphasise that there is a budget to remark the lines, there are priorities that are set, your definition of what is a busy route might not be that of the Council, it is work again that we do with the City Council and I can assure you that we will do all that we can to meet your expectations.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>13. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>One of the most valuable lifelines for older people and people with disabilities are our community transport services, such as Comet and Aspire. They have become especially valuable since the removal of the subsidies to bus services that the scandalous government cuts have forced us to carry out. Please can you tell me how we can help these vital services to expand, since they are hugely over-subscribed?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>The Oxfordshire Comet is definitely a success, providing transport to approximately three hundred plus people (includes Parish Group bookings) across the county as and when they need it, however, due to operational restrictions, vehicles are only available between 10.00am and 2.00pm due to Day Centre and School routes so it does have its limitations.</p> <p>Aspire is a social enterprise with charity status, that is a private not for profit organisation.</p> <p>Fleet services are currently trying to find ways to improve capacity on the Comet service but this is proving to be challenging due to the limited resources of drivers and vehicles available.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>I think a lot of us are very worried by the fact that Comet cannot cope with the demand, certainly in my division people keep ringing Comet and told, sorry we cannot help you, so my question is, please can we have assurances by say a month from now, or by the end of October, that we will be able to expand this vital service because it is vital for people who are not able to use public transport and if you cannot give us those assurances, please can you tell us what you do propose to do.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I cannot guarantee that it will be expanded. I am delighted to find that it already serves the interests of 300 people; it does not serve people in my division simply because the depots are too far for anybody seeking to use it to pay the costs of the vehicle getting to them. In the absence of that I have tried to persuade the S106 funded transport along the A417 for instance, to divert to pick up passengers, so far I am failing but I keep going on that, and I would add also that if Councillors work with their parish councils in particular and their communities there are real opportunities for community bus transport, but it is something that requires an input from the local residents as well as funding you find from other sources, but it is a very important feature of where I live. I invite you to consider that in your area.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>14. COUNCILLOR HANNAH BANFIELD</b></p> <p>Councillors want to see that changes to day care meet the needs of those who currently use these services as well as those who will need them in the future. In some areas Elderly People have raised concern that the services they have relied on to give them support and their careers respite may no longer be available. They feel insecure about attending centres where there will already be friendships groups and where they will feel outsider's .Concern has also been raised about Transport. Can the member for Adult Social Care re-assure the Council that no-one will lose the provision they have relied on?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR LAWRIE STRATFORD, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</b></p> <p>I can reassure Councillor Banfield and the Council that everyone who is currently attending our Learning Disability Day Services and our Health and Wellbeing Centres is being seen by a dedicated team of Oxfordshire County Council staff working in partnership with the Community Information Network to review people's needs, provide assessments and support people to consider their options.</p> <p>For those people who do not have eligible needs for our new Community Support Service, the Community Information Network team is assisting them to find alternative options and activities in their communities, which could include for example: befriending, transport and practical support from a good neighbour scheme; attending a local lunch club; or joining a local social group.</p> <p>There over 200 community and voluntary groups providing daytime support across the county, many of which provide opportunities to socialise, activities and hot meals; the majority of these have not previously received funding from Oxfordshire County Council.</p> <p>I am therefore confident that suitable alternative day time options will be available for people, should they choose to use them. In fact, some people have already left the Health and Wellbeing Centres as they have started to attend their new day time services.</p> <p>Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA) is supporting voluntary and community services to identify alternative transport options where this is necessary, which includes the Council's bookable service, The Comet.</p> <p>I appreciate that these changes may be difficult for some people, and that there may be understandable concerns about attending a new place.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>As demand for social care grows and government funding reduces, the changes we are making to our daytime support provision will ensure that the core service is secure for the Oxfordshire residents who need support now and in the future.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Councillors want to see that changes to day care meet the needs of those who currently use the services as well as those who will use them in the future. In some areas elderly people have raised concern that the services they have relied on to give them support and their carers respite may no longer be available.</p> <p>The question is Councillor Stratford, will you push the start date back for the implementation of 1 October for the day care centres as you said it has been a challenge and that also the letters have only gone out this week.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I am not prepared to move the date, steps are already ahead. I have liaised with our staff and if there is a local issue and it might need to go back a few days to deal with some of the changes in the buildings, I am flexible. We have actually done changes with our staff as you may be aware, jobs have been reassessed, we have got our staff getting geared into new posts for 1 October, I do not think moving it back at this late stage is appropriate.</p> <p>However, I know our staff are working to ensure that people are aware, we are still going to ensure that those that are entitled to have eligible needs will receive that. For those people that don't have eligible needs but do enjoy the facilities, I appreciate that is a bigger challenge for some of those and I can see why they are concerned, I have the same issue in my patch, but I have no reason at the moment to consider moving the implementation back.</p>