

...Decisions... Decisions...

These notes indicate the decisions taken at this meeting and the officers responsible for taking the agreed action. For background documentation please refer to the agenda and supporting papers available on the Council's web site (www.oxfordshire.gov.uk.)

If you have a query please contact Democratic Services (E-mail: CommitteesDemocraticServices@Oxfordshire.gov.uk)

COUNTY COUNCIL - TUESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2025

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p>1. Minutes</p> <p>To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2025 (CC1) and to receive information arising from them.</p>	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2025 were approved.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánai gh)</p>
<p>2. Apologies for Absence</p>	<p>Apologies were received from Councillors Field-Johnson, Fletcher, Gordon and Leffman.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánai gh)</p>
<p>3. Declarations of Interest - see guidance note</p>	<p>None.</p>	
<p>4. Official Communications</p>	<p>Council noted the announcements published in the Schedule of Business.</p>	
<p>5. Petitions and Public Address</p>	<p>The Chair accepted the following requests to present a petition or speak on an item on the agenda:</p> <p>Petitions Brenda Boardman 'Transport Hub at Oxford Rail Station'</p> <p>Public Address <u>Item 15 Motion from Councillor Walker</u> Richard Parnham Danny Yee Thaila Carr Bernadette Evans Paul Major Anne Gwinnett Lydia Jansson Robin Tucker Emily Scaysbrook Geoffrey Sutton</p>	

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6. Questions with Notice from Members of the Public	Twenty seven questions were asked. The questions, responses and supplementary questions and responses are recorded in an Annex below.	
7. Questions with Notice from Members of the Council	Sixty three questions were asked. The questions, responses and supplementary questions and responses are recorded in an Annex below.	
8. Appointments Report by the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer Council is RECOMMENDED to: a) appoint a Member to the current vacant position on the Planning and Regulation Committee; b) delegate to all council committees the authority to appoint to its vacant committee seats in accordance with legislation.	RESOLVED (with 2 abstentions and no Member voting against): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to appoint Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak to the vacant position on the Planning and Regulation Committee in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, Regulation 15; • to agree, with no votes against, to vary the political proportionality on the Committee in accordance with Section 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. RESOLVED (unanimously): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to delegate to all council committees the authority to appoint to its vacant committee seats in accordance with legislation if a political group fails to make a nomination. 	
9. Report of the Cabinet Report by the Leader of the Council.	Council received the report of the Cabinet.	
10. Strategic Plan 2025-2028 Report by the Director of Public Affairs, Policy and Partnerships Council is RECOMMENDED to approve	Recommendation approved with 39	DPAPP (S)

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and adopt the Strategic Plan 2025-28.	votes in favour, 12 against and 12 abstentions.	Wintersgill)
<p>11. Financial Regulations</p> <p>Report by the Executive Director of Resources & Section 151 Officer</p> <p>Council is RECOMMENDED to approve:</p> <p>a) amendments to Section 5 of the Financial Regulations increasing the limit for Cabinet approval for new inclusions and variations to capital schemes from £1.0m to £2.0m to align with the key decision threshold of £2m.</p> <p>b) that in exceptional circumstances up to £0.500m funding for exploratory feasibility works can be approved by the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer (following discussion and recommendation at, and with the support of the Strategic Capital and Commercial Board).</p>	Recommendations approved with 3 abstentions.	EDR (K Wilcox)
<p>12. Youth Justice Annual Plan 2025-26</p> <p>Report by the Director of Children's Services</p> <p>The Council is RECOMMENDED to adopt Oxfordshire's Annual Youth Justice Plan 2025-2026.</p>	Recommendation approved unanimously.	DCS (J Dobson)
<p>13. Use of Special Urgency</p> <p>Report by Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Council is RECOMMENDED to note the use of Special Urgency for a Key Decision taken on 1 September 2025 by the Leader of the Council.</p>	Council noted the report.	

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<p>14. Calendar of meetings 2026/27</p> <p>Report of the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>COUNCIL IS RECOMMENDED to approve the calendar of meetings for the 2026-27 Council year attached to the report as Annex 1.</p>	<p>Recommendation approved unanimously.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánai gh)</p>
<p>15. Motion from Councillor Liam Walker</p> <p>This Council notes:</p> <p>The strong opposition from some residents, businesses, and key workers to the Oxford Congestion Charge scheme and their ongoing concerns about its impact on the cost of living, local trade, and access to services across Oxford.</p> <p>This Council believes:</p> <p>The scheme is unfair, harmful to the local economy, and does not have public support and it's time to end the scheme.</p> <p>This Council therefore resolves to:</p> <p>Call on the Leader and Cabinet to immediately end the operation of the Oxford Congestion Charge scheme and ensure no further expansion or reintroduction of similar charging schemes without full public consultation and support.</p> <p><i>Note: The motion, if passed, would constitute the exercise of an executive function in which case it will be referred to the Cabinet together with any advice the Council may wish to give, in accordance with Rule 13.5.1 (i) of the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution.</i></p>	<p>The motion was lost with 22 votes in favour, 36 against and 2 abstentions.</p>	
<p>16. Motion from Councillor Gavin</p>	<p>The time being 4.00 pm, this motion</p>	

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<p>McLauchlan</p> <p>Council notes that in July 2025 a judicial review upheld the Secretary of State for the Environment's decision to approve the proposed Thames Water Resources Management Plan which includes the South East Strategic Reservoir Option in Abingdon.</p> <p>As a result, Thames Water has to have an Emergency Discharge facility in place including the ability to empty the reservoir at a rate of 1 metre per day, possibly over a period of 3 to 4 weeks. This would put water back into the Thames at a rate of 75 m³/s just south of Abingdon c.3x greater than its normal flow.</p> <p>Such a discharge could cause havoc along the Thames, endangering Life, residences, businesses, wildlife and the environment, yet there is no requirement for the reservoir operator to have an emergency plan before building the reservoir, only before filling it. Dealing with the emergency in the wider area will be the responsibility of this Council as the local emergency planning authority along with the emergency services.</p> <p>This Council makes clear its deep concern that we could be made responsible by default for safely managing such an emergency, leaving us with impossible decisions about which lives, homes and businesses to save in a crisis situation.</p> <p>We therefore call on the Leader to write to the Secretary of State to request clarity on how such an emergency discharge would be managed and to provide a commitment that we will be provided with the resources to do so before any Development Consent Order is considered.</p>	<p>was considered dropped in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2.</p>	
<p>17. Motion from Councillor Nathan Ley</p>	<p>The time being 4.00 pm, this motion</p>	

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<i>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA</i>	<i>DECISIONS</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
<p>Pride in the appearance of the public realm is important to our residents. Clean and well-maintained pavements make people feel good about their neighbourhood, reduce accidents, and prevent more costly problems later. Neglect leads to uneven footways, hazards for those with mobility difficulties, and higher long-term repair bills.</p> <p>Routine weed clearance on county pavements was part of highways maintenance until 2007/08, when budget cuts removed the programme. Some parishes now commission their own weed spraying and may be using glyphosate, increasingly opposed by residents because of its risks to health, pets, rivers, and biodiversity. Other parishes are now beginning to trial alternative approaches.</p> <p>Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the historic withdrawal of routine weed clearance and the resulting concerns about accessibility, safety, and neighbourhood appearance. 2. Recognise the Council's statutory duty to keep pavements free of hazards, and that neglect increases both risks and costs. 3. Request an officer report with options for re-establishing pavement weed clearance and scheduled maintenance, including alternatives to glyphosate, and how the Council can support towns and parishes to reduce reliance on chemical spraying. 4. Request that the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation give due 	<p>was considered dropped in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2.</p>	

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<p>consideration to the findings of this report as part of the next round of budget setting.</p> <p><i>Note: The motion, if passed, would constitute the exercise of an executive function in which case it will be referred to the Cabinet together with any advice the Council may wish to give, in accordance with Rule 13.5.1 (i) of the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution.</i></p>		
<p>18. Motion from Councillor Liz Brighthouse</p> <p>This Council, being deeply concerned by the impact of poor mental health on adults and children in the County, asks the Health and Wellbeing Board to request an appropriate overview and scrutiny committee to investigate and report back on how services provided by Oxford Health and other organisations are tackling this issue.</p> <p>Such an investigation needs to address issues of accessibility to services including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessment, • therapeutic support, • medication, • emergency interventions such as “sectioning” and • inpatient beds. <p>How these inventions, or the lack of them, impact on other public services such as Community Safety, Public Health, Housing, Schools, Fire and Rescue and the Police also needs to be understood. Most of all, poor mental health impacts on individuals, families and communities around the County.</p> <p>Council requests that the outcome of the investigation be sent to the appropriate Secretaries of State.</p>	<p>The time being 4.00 pm, this motion was considered dropped in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2.</p>	

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<p>19. Motion from Councillor Maggie Filipova-Rivers</p> <p>Motion to be seconded by Councillor Emma Markham</p> <p>Council notes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfordshire residents have endured successive crises in recent years: Covid, the cost-of-living emergency, underfunding of public services by successive governments, leaving many residents in precarious situations, creating a climate of uncertainty and fear. • Research shows that rising inequality fuels support for far-right movements, eroding trust in institutions and creating fertile ground for scapegoating and division. • Against this backdrop, right-wing media and far-right groups have wrongly blamed migrant communities to further their agendas. • Extensive research, including the Migration Observatory's 2024 study, finds that migration contributes positively to the UK economy by expanding the labour force, addressing skill shortages, and supporting productivity and growth, with little evidence of wage suppression for native workers. Migrants' net fiscal impact is generally positive, with greater contributions in taxes than cost to public services. • Oxfordshire is proud to be the first County Council of Sanctuary, committed to ensuring that everyone who lives here, whether newly arrived or long settled, is treated fairly. <p>Council therefore resolves to:</p>	<p>The time being 4.00 pm, this motion was considered dropped in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2.</p>	

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<i>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA</i>	<i>DECISIONS</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the risks to our communities if the disinformation, suspicion, and intolerance disinformation generates go unchallenged, and commit to addressing them wherever they occur. • Work with partners to ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone in our communities and that racism is confronted wherever it occurs, in schools, workplaces, and on our streets. • Request that Cabinet supports the co-production of a community cohesion action plan with key stakeholders in consultation with councillors, including actions to support community-led dialogue and ensure appropriate resourcing is considered during budget setting. <p><i>Note: The motion, if passed, would constitute the exercise of an executive function in which case it will be referred to the Cabinet together with any advice the Council may wish to give, in accordance with Rule 13.5.1 (i) of the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution.</i></p>		

Questions from Members of the Public

Questions are listed in the order in which they were received.

<p>1. CITY COUNCILLOR JAMES TAYLOR</p> <p>As a local councillor for Headington Hill & Northway, I have repeatedly attempted to contact Cllr Gant's office about the possibility of a new zebra crossing on Westland's Drive but have unfortunately got no response. Can the Cabinet Member please respond to my inquiries about the possibility of a zebra crossing on this road?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Apologies you have not had a response to this, and can confirm I will pass on the relevant officer's details for you to contact directly and discuss the process and costs for the potential of a zebra crossing on this road.</p>
<p>2. JOHN SKINNER</p> <p>How many applications for a frequent hospital patient congestion charge permit uploaded hospital appointment letters containing sensitive medical data as part of their application, and what has since been done with the contents of those letters?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>There have been 217 frequent hospital patient congestion charge permits issued. We cannot say how many uploaded letters containing sensitive medical data as part of their application without manually opening each application.</p> <p>However, we do ask applicants to cover any sensitive data prior to upload.</p>
<p>3. PHILIPPA GIBBONS</p> <p>Will the temporary congestion charge equality impact assessment regarding "age" be updated to note that two sets of OCC safety consultants (WSP and M Group) warned of collisions outside the Swan School in Marston, and recommended moving the Marston Ferry Road filter? This risk is likely to predominantly affect children, and so therefore I think should be noted in the equality impact assessment as a negative impact by reference to age.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The council followed the safety audit process in the normal way. Safety risks at all sites have been mitigated through the design where possible. Any remaining risks have been assessed by the council to be acceptable (no road layout is ever risk-free). Like all new road layouts, the Marston Ferry Road congestion charging point will be safety audited again once the scheme is in place and monitored carefully thereafter.</p>

	<p>The congestion charge scheme as a whole is expected to have a positive effect on road safety, with a forecast reduction of 28 collisions per year, which 22 are pedestrian or cycle collisions. This will benefit all age groups, including the large number of school children who walk or cycle to school in Oxford.</p> <p>The equality impact assessment is a 'live' document and will be reviewed and updated as new information becomes available.</p>
<p>4. KOSTANDIA ISIDOROS</p> <p>For those seeking an unpaid carers congestion charge permit, what mitigations are in place for applicants who are not eligible for a carer's allowance, but have not yet been able to successfully register as a carer with their GP?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Unpaid carers can prove their eligibility in three different ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carer's allowance • GP registration • Oxfordshire Carer's ID <p>Details are available on our website</p>
<p>5. LINDA ELMS</p> <p>What do Oxford business owners need to do, to show that "business cars used as goods vehicles" for goods, tools and equipment "cannot reasonably be transported by foot, cycle, or public transport"? How does Oxfordshire County Council make this evaluation, or is the decision (effectively) completely arbitrary?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Details of the requirements for this permit are available on our website Applicants will be asked to confirm they meet the eligibility criteria, including that they regularly use their car to carry goods, tools or equipment that are necessary for operational business purposes and cannot reasonably be transported by foot, cycle, or public transport.</p>
<p>6. RICHARD PARNHAM</p> <p>Explain why comparative modelling has been undertaken by reference to "flow by vehicle types" and "congested speed (kph)" / "free flow speed (kph)" in a "do nothing" / "do something" scenario, as was disclosed by OCC in 25762 EIR? Did OCC ever ask for this modelling to be undertaken, either by reference to the traffic filters or the congestion charge?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>As we have mentioned, strategic transport models are used to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes.</p>

<p>I am trying to determine if a whole bunch of modelling regarding the congestion charge / traffic filters was undertaken, including traffic speeds and type of vehicles coming into Oxford, then why did only some of that information ultimately get published (i.e. showing traffic flow reductions), and not the rest of it (i.e. data showing no improvements in road speeds, or a mass - and frankly implausible - switches from cars to vans).</p> <p>Supplementary Can you please agree to publish the unpublished modelling, which focuses on the impact on road speeds of the congestion charge, so we can compare the modelled impact, of which we've heard so much, with the real-world impact?</p>	<p>Response I've got no reason to believe that what has been published in terms of monitoring and data is in any way deficient. Mr Parnham has produced a rather detailed question there, which I'm happy to take away and discuss with officers.</p>
<p>7. BERNADETTE EVANS</p> <p>Which shopping neighbourhoods will have their SME with a shopfront turnovers monitored by way of Mastercard spend data (not including the city centre)?</p> <p>Please can you list each neighbourhood separately and break it down into which roads are being included and the number of businesses included on each road. For example, Jericho: Walton Street : number of businesses.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The council will be using a system called Huq Lighthouse to monitor footfall and spend. This system allows the council to examine footfall and spend changes in any part of the city, with the proviso that the areas selected cannot be too small, because the sample size would then be too low, particularly over short time periods (one or two months). Smaller geographical areas may become feasible over longer periods.</p> <p>Areas of interest do not need to be defined in advance, so officers will be happy to work with business to look at whichever parts of the city are of interest (subject to the limitations of the data).</p> <p>Once the scheme starts officers will begin to examine the data and publish updates (monthly where possible).</p>
<p>8. SARA NIXON</p> <p>Why are only certain types of people who are disabled -</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p>

<p>specifically those with a blue badge - eligible for a special type of disability-related congestion charge permit? Other types of disabilities exist but are not catered for under this scheme. For example, I currently have extremely limited mobility, but do not have a blue badge. This scheme directly discriminates against me, by limiting my ability to drive in Oxford by the most direct route for hospital and clinic appointments"</p>	<p>The hospitals are all accessible without passing a congestion charging point. The congestion charging points nearest the hospitals operate at peak hours only.</p> <p>Residents of Oxford and Oxfordshire can apply for a permit providing free travel through the congestion charging points on 100 The hospitals are all accessible without passing a congestion charging point. The congestion charging points nearest the hospitals operate at peak hours only.</p> <p>Residents of Oxford and Oxfordshire can apply for a permit providing free travel through the congestion charging points on 100 or 25 days respectively. We have sought to accommodate a range of different needs through other permits offered. For those with mobility difficulties, the following permits may be relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Badge holder • Disability benefit recipient • Frequent hospital patient <p>Volunteer drivers who provide hospital transport (as part of a formal scheme) and unpaid carers may also be eligible for permits.</p>
<p>9. CITY COUNCILLOR AJAZ REHMAN</p> <p>Regarding the congestion charge equalities impact assessment: How is “monitoring” an effective mitigation for those whose journeys to places of worship will be lengthened as a result of the congestion charge, due to the limited number of permits available to them?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Most places of worship will remain accessible without passing a congestion charging point.</p> <p>The congestion charging scheme and associated permits have been designed (through a series of consultations and equalities impact assessments over several years) to reduce traffic in the city whilst still preserving car access to a wide range of destinations, Most places of worship will remain accessible without passing a congestion charging point.</p> <p>The congestion charging scheme and associated permits have been designed (through a series of consultations and equalities impact assessments over several years) to reduce traffic in the city whilst still preserving car access to a wide range of destinations, including places of worship. One of the scheme’s central objectives is to improve the city’s public transport system and active travel infrastructure, both of which will improve</p>

	<p>access to places of worship for those travelling by non-car modes.</p> <p>Monitoring is an important part of equalities impact assessments, and we will be keen to hear about people's experiences once the scheme starts.</p>
<p>10. INGA NICHOLAS</p> <p>When will the congestion charge monitoring and evaluation dashboard go live, and what metrics will it include?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The dashboard is planned to go live in early December 2025, once the first full month of monitoring data is available.</p> <p>The metrics included are shown in the monitoring plan published in September with the cabinet papers.</p>
<p>11. JENNY WELLS</p> <p>On what date and why did OCC update the 'personal car used as a goods vehicle permit' congestion charge eligibility criteria to include a unique taxpayer reference number, official business bank statement or self-employed tax return as proof of eligibility.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>This was updated on or around 25 September 2025, following user feedback. We aim to accept forms of evidence that are relevant and available to users and are happy to respond to user suggestions.</p>
<p>12. KAJSA WILHELMSSON</p> <p>Why are there no congestion charge repeater signs in the half mile between the top of St Giles and the Hythe Bridge Street congestion charge filter that aren't a) hidden behind scaffolding or b) hidden behind a wall? Does Councillor Gant believe this signage is adequate?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The scaffolding is temporary and the secondary sign at the top of Worcester Street is not hidden behind a wall. There is another sign in Hythe Bridge Street in advance of the filter.</p>
<p>13. NICHOLAS HARDYMAN</p> <p>Using the "Swift" data we know is available to the Council, can Councillor Gant clarify whether buses got quicker or slower travelling southbound, between the Wolvercote roundabout and First Turn, since the bus lane direction</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Since the reversal of the bus lane on Woodstock Road, journey times for buses are slower southbound between Wolvercote Rbt and First Turn. However, as expected, bus journey times, are now faster northbound on</p>

<p>was switched from southbound to northbound?</p>	<p>Woodstock Rd since the change.</p> <p>The modelling undertaken to inform both the temporary congestion charge and the trial traffic filters suggests that under these scenarios, it will be more strategically important to have a northbound bus lane on the approach to Wolvercote roundabout. The bus operators requested the change regardless of the aforementioned schemes. The bus lane reversal will continue to be monitored.</p> <p>The bus lane reversal is a trial with a decision expected early in the new year on whether to keep the current arrangement</p>
<p>14. MEHMET KARAKUS</p> <p>Across all permit types, how many congestion charge permit applications for have been:</p> <p>a) started but not finished (because the applicant halted the process?)</p> <p>b) Accepted?</p> <p>c) Rejected?</p> <p>d) Not yet been fully assessed? by Oxfordshire County Council?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>At the time of writing:</p> <p>Approved – 46,362</p> <p>Pending – 6567</p> <p>Declined – 1293</p> <p>Cancelled - 773</p>
<p>15. ROBIN HAGUES</p> <p>Why does Oxfordshire County Council's unpaid carers congestion charge regime discriminate against people who care for someone who lives at the same address as the person they care for, but only have one car?</p> <p>If they apply for a regular residents permit, they can use their car to drive through any congestion charge location on 100 days, which often isn't enough for someone with caring responsibilities. But they cannot apply for a carers permit for the same car, even though it would help them continue to care the same way as they did before. What are they supposed to do?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>This permit type was added following previous consultations for those needing to travel to or from an address in Oxford to care for someone to provide unpaid care.</p> <p>Those caring for a person who lives with them will not need to travel by car as frequently as someone who cares for a person they do not live with.</p> <p>If the person they are caring for has a blue badge, disability benefits, is a student with special educational needs or a disability, or needs to attend frequent hospital appointment, they may be eligible for a permit which can be used for any two cars.</p> <p>All parts of the city will remain accessible without passing a congestion</p>

	<p>charging point, except a small area of the city centre where residents are exempt and are eligible for visitor permits.</p>
<p>16. GEOFFREY SUTTON</p> <p>With reference my email dated 27th October about the apparent failure in the Oxfordshire Strategic Model to model the traffic flow in and out of the John Radcliffe Hospital, can Councillor Gant please explain the consequences of this failure?</p> <p>Supplementary</p> <p>As the Highways Authority has not denied that the JR data is missing from the OSM output, will Cllr Gant now instruct his officers to rectify any errors, re-run the traffic filters and RUC1 (temporary congestion charge) models and publish the results. If not, why not?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>As set out in the Modelling and Income Forecasting Report, the transport model itself is a strategic model – representing the whole of Oxfordshire and beyond – and is therefore more reliable in terms of its forecast impacts at a strategic level (e.g. impacts on overall car demand), and less reliable at more granular levels of detail, such as on individual roads. However, to provide more detail, outputs at the link flow level have been produced, to explore the changes in traffic volumes in different areas of the city. These are shown in Appendix A of the report. During peak hours, charges at the congestion charge locations at St Clements and Marston Ferry Road are forecast to reduce traffic in parts of east Oxford (the greatest reductions are at and approaching the charge locations). The model does show some increases in areas where there is displacement. These changes are a logical consequence of charges.</p> <p>The temporary congestion charge went ‘live’ on Wednesday 29 October. It will be monitored very closely.</p> <p>Response</p> <p>I thank Mr Sutton for his comments and for his emails on this and again, he has raised a point with a great deal of detail in it which has been responded to, you know, I'm not aware that it is correct to say that there is anything missing from what has been published, but I'm once again very happy to take those detailed points away and discuss them with officers.</p>
<p>17. PETER WEST</p> <p>How can you claim that 'monitoring' is an effective mitigation by reference to disability, where the affected</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have sought to accommodate a range of different needs through other

<p>persons are not entitled to a Blue Badge or a regular hospital visitor when a longer journey or public transport may involve pain or discomfort?</p> <p>In my particular case, and I suspect there are others in a similar predicament, I do not have a blue badge, yet I have recently had to have an injection in my spine such that I cannot sit comfortably for any long periods, walk long distances or stand in one place for any length of time due to pains in my legs and back. A car is my ideal mode of transport, and I support the local bowls club located on Marston Ferry Road attending several times a week. (as many others do!).</p>	<p>permits offered. For those with mobility difficulties, the following permits may be relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blue Badge holder • Disability benefit recipient • Frequent hospital patient <p>Volunteer drivers who provide hospital transport (as part of a formal scheme) and unpaid carers may also be eligible for permits.</p> <p>All destinations in Oxford (except a small area of the city centre) remain accessible by car without a permit. Residents of Oxford and Oxfordshire can apply for 100/25 day passes respectively.</p>
<p>18. CITY COUNCILLOR ANNE STARES</p> <p>How many congestion charge permit applications for unpaid careers have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Started but not finished (because the applicant halted the process)? b) Accepted? c) Rejected? d) Not yet been fully assessed by OCC? 	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>At the time of writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved – 46,362 Pending – 6567 Declined – 1293 Cancelled - 773
<p>19. SAM HARDAKER</p> <p>Why were so many congestion charge warning signs installed in locations where they are obscured by trees, shrubs, or existing signs? Do you accept that the quality control regarding the signage positioning wasn't good enough?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Signage for Oxford's temporary congestion charge scheme has been installed in locations that are operationally necessary to ensure the scheme is both effective and legally enforceable. These placements are guided by national standards and regulations, and take into account road layout, safety, visibility, and environmental constraints.</p> <p>Following installation, an officer-led audit was carried out to assess</p>

	<p>compliance and visibility. Of approximately 90 sign locations, six were identified as being partially obscured from a driver's point of view. Vegetation clearance was then undertaken with care to minimise environmental impact. We can confirm that all six locations have now been attended to, and full visibility of signage has been restored ahead of the scheme's launch. Oxfordshire County Council remains committed to maintaining clear, safe, and compliant signage throughout the life of the scheme, and will continue to monitor and respond to feedback from residents and stakeholders.</p>
<p>20. PAUL PETRILLO</p> <p>Can councillor Gant please tell me how many cars have driven through the congestion charge permit locations without a congestion charge permit, specifying in his answer the total number of cars to do so by each permit location, since the congestion charge went live. Ideally up to and including Sunday 2nd November?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>This and other associated data will be published as part of the ongoing monitoring of the scheme. We start to publish such data as soon as is considered appropriate.</p>
<p>21. STEPHEN LONGTHORP</p> <p>What does Councillor Gant advise that carers who only own one car do about applying for a congestion charge permit?</p> <p>If they apply for a resident's permit, they won't have enough permits each year to do their job. If they apply for a carers' permit, they won't be able to drive through any congestion charge permit area for any other reason than for work. This puts them at a short term disadvantage to residents who have a residents' permit, who can drive through any permit area for the first one hundred days.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Residents in this situation can apply for both permits – a resident's permit and a carer's permit. The same car can be added to both permits.</p>
<p>22. ZACK IQBAL</p> <p>I am writing to submit the following question to Councillor Andrew Gant, for him to answer at the Oxfordshire Council</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The placement and design of congestion charge signage are governed by</p>

<p>meeting on 4th November. I do not plan to ask a follow-up question at this stage, either in person or online.</p> <p>"Why are so many congestion charge signs unlit and high up on poles, where they are not lit by car headlights during the hours of darkness?"</p>	<p>national standards and regulations, including the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016, which outline when illumination is required. Signs within 20mph zones, for example, are not mandated to be lit.</p> <p>All signs have been manufactured using retro-reflective materials, ensuring visibility during hours of darkness by reflecting vehicle headlights. Following an officer-led audit, the contractor has been instructed to adjust mounting heights to the required 2.50 metres above the adjacent footway or verge level, in line with works specifications. The Council remains committed to ensuring signage is clear, compliant, and safe for all road users.</p> <p>While some poles may appear higher than usual, this was done to futureproof for the forthcoming Traffic Filters scheme, which will require larger signage.</p>
<p>23. DR ANNE GWINNETT</p> <p>At the Full Council meeting on 7 November 2023, Oxfordshire County Council affirmed that it is 'proud of our history of welcoming people seeking safety in our county' and committed to becoming a recognised 'Council of Sanctuary'.</p> <p>How does the Council reconcile that commitment with the congestion-charge residents' permit criterion, which effectively excludes Ukrainian refugees whose vehicles remain lawfully registered in Ukraine rather than with DVLA. This appears to amount to indirect discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Under UK law, imported vehicles must be registered and taxed in the UK if used in the UK for longer than six months. Owners of imported vehicles are strongly encouraged to do this.</p> <p>The council can accept permit applications for imported vehicles, provided the applicant can provide proof of ownership (registration documents for their country of origin, for example), and proof of address in Oxford. These will be treated the same as any other application but should only be used for short-term imports unless a special concession has been granted by the Department for Transport.</p>
<p>24. AMIR STEVE ALI</p> <p>Why is there no congestion charge signs along either Cowley or Iffley Roads</p> <p>Both Main Approach Roads to the St Clements Filter.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Advance warning of the filter in St Cross Road is covered by signage at the exit from The Plain Roundabout towards the High Street, which serves traffic from both Cowley Road and Iffley Road. The filter in St Clements is doubly signed on the island at the exit from the roundabout into St Clements St which provides ample warning to use an alternative exit or turn back.</p>

<p>25. MATTHEW BROADWAY</p> <p>How does Councillor Gant respond to the April 2025 ITP report “Oxfordshire bus network: Alternative delivery options”, commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council, which claimed that the introduction of 20mph zones and low traffic neighbourhoods in Oxford had “the impact of slowing down buses” (p15)? Was ITP wrong in their analysis?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The section of the report referred to in the question is a summary of discussions with bus operators and therefore reflects the opinions of bus operators and not any analysis by ITP of this point. The safety benefit of 20mph is well documented and any impact on wider council objectives is considered when making individual scheme decisions. In respect of LTNs, the bus operators have previously stated that public that comments around LTNs is in respect of the timing of other associated measures with the Oxford Transport strategy - which works as a package, and the lack of progress with some of these. This has now been partially addressed by the introduction of the temporary congestion charge scheme.</p>
<p>26. LAURA JANSSON</p> <p>I am eligible for and have obtained both a carer's Congestion Zone permit and Oxford city resident's Congestion Zone permit. I require both because, while I am an unpaid carer from Marston caring for my mother with Alzheimer's in Cowley, not all of the car journeys I make are in a caring capacity. Will the number-plate-recognition system know which of my permits to invoke for a given journey, and if so how? If the system automatically invokes my resident's permit (100 per year) then it will fine me for journeys beyond that even if made for care purposes; if the system automatically invokes the carer's permit then it will cause me to abuse my carer status for journeys not made for care purposes.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Whichever permit is set as default will take precedence. Therefore, if a carer's permit is set as the default, a resident's permit on the same account will not count down.</p> <p>If the resident's permit is set as default, it will count down when used. Users can use this setting to ensure they are using the right permit for the right purposes.</p>
<p>27. ERIC JANSSON</p> <p>My family lives in Marston, within the Cherwell School catchment area, and our 11-year-old child attends that school, which is 1.9 miles away from our house by road.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The school run is a significant contributor to traffic congestion in Oxford and other places.</p>

<p>She cycles usually, but when weather is especially wet, windy, or otherwise dangerous for her cycling, I deliver her to school by car, and this is part of my important care for her. Given the location of the Congestion Zone, that important car journey will now either be subjected to a £5 charge or will count against our 100-journey annual permit. As a Marston parent I will therefore be penalised for safely delivering my children to her local school. Will the Council exempt journeys made for care of children from the Congestion charge?</p>	<p>Exempting school run journeys from the congestion charge would therefore be counter-productive, and would inevitably cause commuters and those making trips for a wide variety of other purposes to seek a similar exemption.</p> <p>Cherwell School is served by frequent buses, which will become quicker and even more frequent once the congestion charge is in place. A “Get Around for a Pound” card is available to under 19s, allowing them to make a single journey anywhere in the city on Oxford Bus Company or Thames Travel buses for £1.</p> <p>Residents of Marston can apply for residents’ permits providing 100 days of free travel per year and up to 3 permits per qualifying address. These are designed for those occasional days when driving is deemed essential. Car pooling may also be an option, and would make day passes go further.</p> <p>All schools in the city will remain accessible without passing a congestion charging point, so taking a different route is another option.</p>
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QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Questions are listed in the order in which they were received.

<p>1. COUNCILLOR JAMES FRY</p> <p>Please will the Cabinet Member explain why they respond inconsistently to opposition expressed in consultations?</p> <p>At last week’s Delegated Decisions by the Cabinet Member for Transport Management (4th September 2025) the consultation on the Abingdon Centre North Proposed CPZs were opposed by 67% of the respondents.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>A consultation is an opportunity to gather views and feedback on proposals before any decisions are made. It is not a vote or referendum.</p> <p>Council decisions are informed by a range of information and not exclusively by the responses to consultation exercises. This can include, for example, relevant local and national policies, financial information, legal information, an equalities impact assessment, a climate impact assessment etc. Each decision is unique.</p> <p>The Gunning principles are a set of rules for public consultation that were proposed in</p>
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At the same time, the Ock Street Abingdon Area CPZ proposals were supported by 52% of those living in the immediate area, who are most affected by the proposed changes. The same proposal was opposed by 67% of those living in the wider area.

In both these cases, the recommendation from the Cabinet member was to withdraw virtually all the proposed changes.

At the same meeting 67% to 75% of the responses to a variety of proposals to lower speed limits on sections of the A4260 Kidlington to Banbury were against the proposals, yet the recommendation was to proceed with the proposed new speed limits, despite the opposition.

In the case of the Congestion Charging Consultation, 74.0% viewed the proposed scheme as negative (60.8% very negative and 13.2% negative). Despite this strong opposition the decision taken at the Extra Cabinet meeting was to proceed, with two minor changes.

Why is the response to the negative responses to consultations so different in the cases of the two Abingdon CPZs and the Congestion Charges?

What is the threshold? If 80% of respondents opposed a proposal would the proposal be withdrawn; or is the threshold 90%? Please

1985 by Stephen Sedley QC and accepted by the judge in the Gunning v London Borough of Brent court case about a consultation for a school closure. A supreme court case in 2014 endorsed the legal standing of the principles. Since then, they form a strong legal foundation from which the legitimacy of public consultations is assessed.

The Gunning principles consist of four rules, which, if followed, are designed to make consultation fair, legitimate and a worthwhile exercise. Rule 4 is that conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made. Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account. This is what we adhere to as a County Council.

<p>clarify.</p> <p>Supplementary</p> <p>How are the gunning principles followed when the majority of the Ock St residents favoured the CPZ, which was proposed in their immediate area, and then they were ignored in favour of the opposition of the wider community?</p>	<p>Response</p> <p>They were not ignored, nothing has been ignored. There are so many things wrong with this question that it's quite worrying that it's coming from somebody who presumably aspires to being in a decision-making capacity. I mean, first of all, the 4th of September wasn't last week. He's also referring to the last CMD (Cabinet Member Decision), but one, having missed one out.</p> <p>And in terms of the schemes that he refers to there, the short answer is turn up to the meetings and listen to the debate, the Gunning Principle, as it says clearly is that conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses.</p> <p>It does not say there is a threshold beyond which a decision is dictated by the number of responses in one column or the other. It simply doesn't say that, and I will happily claim to the councillor that at my CMD meetings, very conscientious consideration is given to consultation responses and the decisions, and he's referred to them as recommendations, by the way, which is also wrong, are very much based on consideration of those things and how they relate to policy.</p> <p>Let me just give you an example. There was an item that came to my CMD not so long ago which had about 1000 responses. Officers identified that nearly 500 of those negative came from a single IP address. By his logic, that means the scheme is off. I think that is irresponsible. Let me give you another one. There was a scheme that came not so long ago to remove car parking in a bus stop. There were lots of objections to that because people said it's convenient for me to park in a bus stop. I think that is irresponsible to take that as being a deciding factor. So, I am proud that the consultation responses are taken into account and if you want to know how, turn up to the meetings.</p>
<p>2. COUNCILLOR JAMES FRY</p> <p>In many of the County's private residential areas, the current electricity grid is unable to supply the power needed to meet future EV</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>Thank you, Cllr Fry, for your question. The network within the County is very constrained. The council has a number of ways of working with the Distribution Networks Operators and National Grid on these issues.</p>

and heat pump power needs. Primary and secondary substation capacities are the responsibility of District Network Operators, which are widely considered to be conservative in their demand forecasts. What is the County doing to achieve capacity upgrades in line with its decarbonisation targets?

Supplementary

The vital issue in the expansion of the electricity supply is its ability to keep pace with the growth in demand, such as from the new Ox Gul-E charging scheme for residents' electric vehicles.

What growth rates are you projecting in demand for the next few years? What will you do if as widely expected, demand grows at a faster rate supplemented by the new national demand from data centres?

The councils are working together on a Local Area Energy Plan, which is a whole-system energy planning framework that creates a roadmap for a cleaner, more affordable and reliable energy system. It is being developed in collaboration with Oxfordshire's district councils, Oxfordshire's three distribution network operators, community energy groups and wider stakeholders. The local area energy plan is identifying priority substations and neighbourhoods for capacity upgrades which we are sharing with the distribution network operators. Importantly for our communities, the Local Area Energy Plan helps to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels, supports the creation of local jobs, makes homes more comfortable, and through this, improves peoples' health.

In addition to this, all councils in Oxfordshire have been articulating strategic investment needs and growth forecasting to the distribution network operators and the National Energy Systems Operator (NESO) via their data collection processes. We are working closely with the network operators to align their network investment plans with Oxfordshire's ambitious plans.

Beyond this, we are actively engaging with NESO on their emerging strategic planning methodology to help shape the process and ensure that it unlocks the capacity required for Oxfordshire. We also are working with the Oxford Growth Commission to further strengthen our ways of working with the energy sector and will be hosting an Energy Summit in November.

Response

Yes, we are dealing with looking at making the local area energy plans and working with NESO. All of these stakeholders are working together to try and see and predict where we might be going in the future. The Ox Gul-E project is very much under Innovative Oxfordshire and I'm afraid that's under Councillor Higgins's portfolio.

<p>3. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY</p> <p>I've had and seen reports of the concern from residents regarding the trees on Warwick Road and Cromwell Road, requesting if there's adequate funding available from Oxfordshire County Council to schedule tree surgery work maintenance on all these trees as part of a planned program.</p> <p>To my knowledge, it's been a few years since all the trees have had any work and have started to get complaints from constituents (other than emergency maintenance).</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member be able to update me on schedule of works on Warwick Road and Cromwell Road?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>All highway trees in Banbury are due to be inspected. These inspections will include all highway trees along Warwick Road and Cromwell Road and any recommendations for tree care identified as part of good arboricultural practice will be undertaken.</p> <p>The Tree Service are slightly behind schedule with the proposed plan for these proactive surveys but expect to complete the surveys and organise any tree care at the start of the next financial year.</p> <p>If any constituents have any specific concerns with a tree, they are encouraged to submit an inspection request on Fix My Street and one of our trained tree professionals will undertake an adhoc inspection.</p>
<p>4. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member for Transport Management, Cllr Andrew Gant, urgently write to Thames Water regarding concerns to critical infrastructure of water utilities in the Banbury Ruscote division?</p> <p>On the 10th September 2025, we saw a water leak that affected North Bar, Banbury and local businesses. This was eventually repaired by Thames Water.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The Network Co-ordination team has raised concerns around the number of leaks and the impact they are having on both the highway network and communities with Thames Water including the incident in Banbury in September. The Council is aware Thames Water are planning a series of improvement schemes in Oxfordshire and will press upon them the importance of ensuring Banbury is part of these improvements.</p>

<p>However, my concern is that the original utility pipework was installed on these roads many years ago and may need survey work to be totally excavated and renew all the pipes work on North Bar onto Horse Fair Road, at substantial cost to Thames Water with permitted works for Oxfordshire County Council.</p> <p>Given that we've seen further a occurrences water leaks in the locality of Banbury and we've not even reached Autumn/Winter, I have concerns that this will be the start of further water leaks soon.</p>	
<p>5. COUNCILLOR ANDREW COLES</p> <p>Councillor Gant will be aware that the commitment given to install the new ANPR cameras to Witney High Street by September 2025 wasn't met. Can the Cabinet Member provide an explanation for this delay please along with a new date for installation?</p> <p>Supplementary</p> <p>I'm wondering, based on what you've said, could it possibly be that the cameras that were</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The contract for ANPR installation was unfortunately limited and as such delivery had to be prioritised ahead of a new contract being procured. This has taken longer than planned to get in place. The tender process for a new camera provider is currently underway, with a new contract expected to begin by January 2026. Outstanding commitments will be programmed as soon as possible and a programme of these will be published; it is expected that Witney will be able to be delivered before end Summer 2026.</p> <p>As well as physically delivering the cameras, there are a number of other work elements that need to be completed to ensure that we are legally able to enforce the restrictions. This includes surveying the locations for cameras and assessing signage and checking the Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), these enabling works are currently being progressed.</p> <p>Response</p> <p>I don't think so, but what I would say is that there is a lot of demand for this. You know it is still a relatively new power for this Council to use ANPR for moving vehicle offences</p>

<p>earmarked for Witney, where they are needed and are wanted, have instead been redirected to Oxford where they're certainly not wanted?</p>	<p>and there are lots of people who want them. You know, I do absolutely take on the chin that this Council did not meet the timescale that it gave, and I regret that, but it's in hand.</p>
<p>6. COUNCILLOR DAVID HENWOOD</p> <p>There are a range of permits linked to the congestion charge scheme, for which people can apply. Many require very specific evidence and information in order to qualify for a permit. Given the scheme's processing of sensitive personal and third-party data, can Cabinet confirm whether there has been a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) undertaken and, if so, where is it published?</p> <p>Supplementary Business applying for a permit for goods vehicles must show evidence of work within the city permit area or central permit area within the last six months. How could a new or expanding business based outside the permit areas comply with these requirements?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>In line with the data legislation and the Council's obligations as a data controller, a Data Protection Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the Oxford congestion charge with the Council's data protection team and reference to partners including the Regulator (the Information Commissioner's Office). DPIAs are not required to be published, but in this case, we are presenting a published version. The DPIA is available upon request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), subject to redactions for sensitive data where there is personal, commercial or security sensitivity. Any privacy impact assessment is considered a "living document", shared and approved internally and may be updated from time to time to reflect operational realities, supplier alterations, processing amendments or legislative or technological updates. This is also the case with the published Privacy Notice which may be updated from time to time with updates or Change of Processing Notice.</p> <p>Response I sorry, I don't know if I'm missing something, but I'm not quite sure how that's a supplementary to Question 6, which is about data protection. The eligibility is as it says on the website.</p>
<p>7. COUNCILLOR DAVID HENWOOD</p> <p>There are significant concerns from members of the public based on their experiences of using, or attempting to use, the on-line system</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>At the time of writing, 54,995 permit applications have been received with 46,362 approved. Only 2% have been declined and 1% cancelled (by the applicant). The vast majority are managing to apply for permits successfully.</p>

for registering their cars and applying for permits for going through congestion charging points. Even IT professionals are describing the system as long-winded and confusing.

This is a problem that could have been anticipated. Indeed, it was flagged by the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee in its report to the Cabinet meeting on 10 September, prior to the decision to implement the scheme. The Scrutiny report clearly recommended that “the Cabinet does not extend the IT system used for parking permits to the resident pass system and finds a more user-friendly alternative instead.” Their report described extending use of an already-unpopular system as “unwise”.

And yet that same system HAS been extended for the congestion charge scheme and unsurprisingly is leading to the same kinds of complaints. People are finding it difficult and confusing to use and describing the experience as very stressful.

Given the level of concern and the potential for confusion and mistakes:

Will the Cabinet consider delaying the start of the Temporary Congestion Charge scheme until these system issues have been adequately resolved?

Improvements were made to the permit system and OCC’s own website before it launched for the congestion charge.

Users are already using the current permit system for their parking permits. In many cases, these users have been able to apply for a congestion charge permit in a few clicks, because their vehicle documents and proofs of address were already within the system.

<p>8. COUNCILLOR DAVID HENWOOD</p> <p>Many roads in Oxford, including those within the city centre, are subject to Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) that impose 7.5-tonne weight limits across axles. Given that electric buses typically weigh around 16 tonnes, how will these vehicles be able to operate within the congestion charge zone while complying with the existing TRO restrictions?</p> <p>Supplementary New Cross Street has a weight limit of 7.5 tonnes. How can the congestion charge warrant buses with a rear axle limit of 16 tonnes travelling through this area?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>For amenity weight limits (e.g. 7.5t) on bus routes there are exemptions written into the traffic orders for Public Service Vehicles (i.e. buses).</p> <p>Response Well, because as the answer states clearly, there is an exemption to the weight limit for buses, which is a professional judgement balancing the condition of the highway against the needs of public transport. That seems entirely sensible to me.</p>
<p>9. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY</p> <p>After the fatal accident on Horse Fair Road on Friday 24th March 2023, Oxfordshire County Council infrastructure officers have had site visits this year with divisional councillors to look at how to spend Vision Zero funding to improve safety and infrastructure for the public.</p> <p>As the member for Banbury Ruscote, would the Cabinet Member for Transport Management, Cllr Andrew Gant, agree with me that the roads surface on North Bar Street and Horse Fair Road, in Banbury, continues to deteriorate, even after FixMyStreet reports that I have submitted.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>This section of road is not currently included in the resurfacing programme; however, we will look into the possibility to include this area, from a resurfacing perspective, subject to available budget and priorities.</p>

<p>Will we see pothole repairs on these roads and could the Cabinet Member look to interlink Vision Zero funding with a possible schedule of full resurfacing of North Bar Street and Horse Fair Road close to St Mary's Church?</p> <p>This would improve commuter safety for the most prevalent cyclists in the locality.</p> <p>Supplementary Given that North Park streets have 10 potholes repaired last week and we're not even into winter and Oxfordshire County Council has had substantial funds for road resurfacing would it not be possible to guarantee some kind of reserves still in 26/27?</p>	<p>Response I fully accept that every member in this chamber have roads in their division that they want to be resurfaced more quickly and better including me. I won't bore everybody by going over the fundamental issues facing us. The Councillor is quite right that the current government has increased significantly the funding available for that and that's extremely welcome. Of course, these are operational decisions based on need and protocols in the highways asset management plan, but I'm certainly happy to bring that to the attention of officers.</p>
<p>10. COUNCILLOR LESLEY MCLEAN</p> <p>In light of reports that Network Rail is proposing the temporary or permanent closure of Roundham Crossing, will the Cabinet Member confirm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> whether the Cabinet Member (or officers in the Transport team) are aware of any current or planned proposals from Network Rail affecting Roundham Crossing; 	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Officers and Cabinet Portfolio Holders are aware that Network Rail have requested a planning condition be applied to the planning application for development at allocated site PR8 which would require the developer to apply to have the Public Right of Way diverted from Roundham Level crossing, which would effectively close the level crossing to current users. This condition has been requested due to significant concerns that Network Rail have over the continued safety of the level crossing, given the likely increase in crossing movements that would result from development in the area as well as rail proposals on the line</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the Cabinet Member will commit to a meeting (to be arranged within a mutually reasonable timeframe) involving County Council officers, the local parish council(s), ward councillor(s), and representatives of Network Rail to discuss the rationale, impacts, and potential alternatives to any closure; and • that should Network Rail require any closure (temporary or permanent) of Roundham Crossing, the County Council will ensure that the matter proceeds through the normal statutory and procedural routes for rail crossing changes (including appropriate consultation with affected communities and compliance with any relevant legal requirements), and will report back to Full Council with the planned timetable and decision points? <p>I would be grateful for a written response prior to the meeting and an indication of when the proposed meeting could be held.</p>	<p>The Cabinet will commit to such a meeting and will discuss this with Network Rail colleagues. The latter will be able to explain their plans around higher frequency services north of Oxford, including freight services, and what part that plays in the closure of the crossings and mitigation measures.</p> <p>The proposed planning condition requires the applicant to make an application to divert the Public Right of Way at a specified point in the development. Any such application to divert the Public Right of Way must go through the standard statutory process, which is separate to planning, and may be determined by the Secretary of State having considered the merits of the application.</p>
<p>11. COUNCILLOR LESLEY MCLEAN</p> <p>In respect of the Yarnton Section 19 Flood Investigation Report (2025), and Oxfordshire County Council’s responsibilities as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) will the Cabinet</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>Yes, we will publish timelines for the delivery of the recommendations. We are currently liaising with the partner organisations to confirm the dates and will update you once this has been finalised.</p>

member confirm whether the County Council has formally accepted and endorsed all of the report's recommendations where Oxfordshire County Council is identified as the lead or partner organisation?

Will the Cabinet member commit to publishing a clear timetable—with milestones—for delivery of those recommendations for which the County Council has responsibility, including but not limited to:

- highway drainage maintenance and cleansing schedules,
- inspection and remediation of culverts,
- assessment of pumping-station capacity and resilience, and
- coordination of vegetation and channel maintenance with partner authorities?

Given the repeated flooding events affecting Yarnton in September and November 2024, will the Cabinet commit to arranging a meeting within a reasonable timeframe involving OCC Flood Risk officers, the local parish council, ward councillors, the community flood action group, Thames Water, Cherwell District Council and the Environment Agency to review progress, identify obstacles and agree priority actions?

Will the Cabinet also confirm that, where actions depend on other statutory or riparian bodies, the County Council will:

<p>(a) liaise proactively with and, where appropriate, support or enforce those parties to deliver their responsibilities; and</p> <p>(b) report to the next Full Council a summary of actions completed, outstanding tasks, obstacles encountered, and the indicative funding required to complete the remaining recommendations?</p>	
<p>12. COUNCILLOR LESLEY MCLEAN</p> <p>In light of recent difficulties reported by local families regarding Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) home-to-school transport at the start of the academic year will the Cabinet Member confirm that all eligible parents and carers in the affected areas have now been contacted by Oxfordshire County Council, and that their children’s transport arrangements for the current school term have been confirmed and are in place?</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member provide assurance that, for future terms, all SEND home-to-school transport arrangements will be finalised, communicated, and confirmed to parents well in advance of the start of term — ideally no later than four weeks before — to avoid uncertainty and disruption for families?</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member also outline what</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR SEAN GAUL, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council is in contact with parents and carers about their children’s home-to-school travel arrangements and is processing applications as they are received. Travel arrangements for applications submitted for the start of the 2025/26 academic year have been made, except in instances where additional information or assessment is needed to determine suitability based on the available evidence.</p> <p>The start of the academic year presents operational challenges due to the high volume of travel assistance applications received. This is reflected in the number of applications for SEND travel assistance, classed as ‘late applications’ (School travel application deadlines Oxfordshire County Council): 249 in July, 121 in August, and 157 in September 2025. These figures demonstrate the scale of demand and the complexity of coordinating travel arrangements across the county. While we aim to confirm arrangements ahead of term start, for applications received within our set deadlines, we acknowledge that there is still more we can do to enhance our delivery and responsiveness. These enhancements are already being implemented as part of our improvement programme – The Integrated Travel Improvement Programme.</p> <p>Providing confirmation 4 weeks prior to the start of term is not feasible for every child, unless their case is with the CEF Eligibility team for processing by April or May, to then</p>

steps are being taken to improve communication between the Council's SEND Transport Team, schools, and families to ensure that no child eligible for funded transport is left without an appropriate service at the start of term?

be with Supported Travel by May/June to process travel arrangements. As EHCPs are processed year-round, eligibility assessments also occur throughout the year, which is why not all children can be accommodated within this 4-week timeframe before the start of term.

We absolutely recognise the importance of providing families with certainty and clarity in advance of the start of term. As such and to support this our website was updated in May this year to clearly outline our commitment to arranging travel assistance within:

- 15 working days for applications received by Supported Travel during the academic year.
- 20 working days for applications received by Supported Travel between Easter and October half-term.

In addition to this, we have published clear application deadlines and embedded them into our communications with families and schools. We are actively working to ensure that, wherever possible, travel assistance is provided within these timeframes. However, we also acknowledge that a surge in late or incomplete submissions may result in unavoidable delays.

We are dedicated to enhancing communication among all stakeholders. As part of our ongoing service enhancement program, we have implemented a comprehensive communications strategy that includes:

- Issuing letters of acknowledgment to ensure parents and carers receive timely and relevant updates at each stage of the process, from application through to confirmation and reminders. This initiative underscores our commitment to transparency and high-quality service.
- Assigning the Customer Experience Team to handle incoming calls from January, providing dedicated customer support.
- Distributing Mailchimp communications throughout the year, sharing key information, important dates, and guidance for parents regarding necessary actions.
- In the process of forming a Parent Carer Advisory Group with the Oxfordshire Parent Carer Forum to engage, discuss new ideas and receive feedback
- Conducting internal training to clarify expectations and timelines across service areas, complemented by the introduction of a new Hive page for Supported Travel.
- Upgrading existing systems and processes to improve overall efficiency.

These measures aim to foster clear, consistent, and effective communication while continually improving the experience for all involved.

We recognise the importance of timely and clear communication, particularly for families of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and remain committed to ensuring that all eligible children have access to appropriate travel assistance.

Our Home to School Travel and Transport Policy sets out the scope of our responsibilities and the offer of travel assistance available to eligible children and young people. This includes a range of travel modes designed to meet individual needs while ensuring best value for public resources.

To support this, we have developed a hierarchy of travel assistance options, which guides our decision-making and ensures that the most appropriate form of support is considered based on assessed need. We will also be ensuring our communication to our parents and carers reflects this to manage expectations around the travel support options their children may be allocated. The hierarchy includes:

1. Walking, wheeling, cycling, or scooting – encouraged wherever safe and appropriate.
2. Public transport – supported via bus or train passes.
3. Independent Travel Training – supporting children and young people to travel independently.
4. Direct Travel Payments / Personal Travel Budgets (PTB) – enabling families to make their own arrangements.
5. Internal Fleet Services – utilising existing transport routes, including those operated by our internal fleet.
6. Council-arranged shared transport – contracted shared taxi services.
7. Council-arranged solo taxi – provided only where an evidenced need supports this level of provision.

<p>13. COUNCILLOR SAJ MALIK</p> <p>May I thank Cllr Gant for visiting the Church Cowley St James School on Bartholomew Road and for meeting on site with the local councillors and Headteacher of the school and residents.</p> <p>Can I request this school to be added to the School Streets programme with St Christopher School at Temple Road?</p> <p>Supplementary</p> <p>Would you please also answer on the Saint Christopher School request, and can you please arrange the meeting with the school so we can meet on site and discuss further?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Church Cowley St James Primary School is located within an LTN and therefore we do not think that this school is suitable for a school street as there are already traffic restrictions in place.</p> <p>There are planters located on Bartholomew Road outside the school and on Littlemore Road that restrict the flow of traffic in the road the school is located and on a nearby road.</p> <p>The School Engagement Officer has contacted the headteacher at Church Cowley St James in the past regarding support we can offer the school to promote and enable sustainable and active travel to school but did not receive a response back. We would be very happy to meet with the school should this be of interest.</p> <p>Response</p> <p>Your question is in two parts and you're quite right. It was a great pleasure to join the councillor outside the school recently and talk to the head and to parents and, just to restate the commitment of this Council to safety around the school gate, I think nobody could doubt that.</p>
<p>14. COUNCILLOR JAMES ROBERTSHAW</p> <p>West Oxfordshire District Council is soon to consult on its new Local Plan, which sets out proposals for around 18,000 new homes across the district. Could the Cabinet Member please confirm whether Oxfordshire County Council has been involved in feeding into this plan, and where residents can see the County Council's plans for the vital infrastructure upgrades — such as roads, schools, and public transport — that will be needed to support this level of development?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>I can confirm that Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) has worked proactively with West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) during the ongoing preparation of their Local Plan to 2043. As well as providing formal written responses to the Plan at each stage (available here), OCC and WODC officers meet at least monthly to liaise on strategic planning matters. Securing the necessary infrastructure to mitigate local plan development is a key priority for both authorities.</p> <p>The planned supply proposed in the new West Oxfordshire Local Plan is around 18,000 homes. Of this figure, 8,000 homes are expected to come from new allocation sites; the majority of homes are already committed in the adopted Local Plan 2031 and these sites will be carried forward into the new Plan. As with the adopted Local Plan, the new Local</p>

	<p>Plan will be supported by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which will provide a framework for co-ordinating the infrastructure necessary to support development and communities in West Oxfordshire (the new baseline IDP report is available here, the adopted Local Plan IDP is available here). The new IDP will be fully progressed once West Oxfordshire have finalised their preferred site allocations. The IDP will be informed by transport modelling work and other assessments to identify the necessary infrastructure such as highway improvements, schools, public transport, digital infrastructure, libraries and waste. The IDP will set out an indication of infrastructure costs, delivery timescales, and delivery partners to ensure delivery in the right place and at the right time to support growth. The IDP is underpinned by other policy and strategy documents including Oxfordshire’s Local Transport & Connectivity Plan its supporting strategies such as Active Travel Strategy, Bus Service Improvement Plan, and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans for Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton and Woodstock. With regard to transport impacts of the plan proposals, work is underway to provide a dedicated evidence paper to support the Local Plan production through an Evaluation of Transport Impacts report. This study will be available next year to support the Proposed Submission Document (Regulation 19) consultation.</p> <p>Significant infrastructure schemes are already being delivered in West Oxfordshire including improvements to the A40, Access to Witney, and Eynsham Park and Ride. Further schemes are under development as part of the Movement and Place Strategies and Corridor Plan and Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs).</p> <p>Consultation on the Local Plan 2043 Spatial Options is expected to take place in November 2025 (draft documents are available here). Consultation on the Proposed Submission Document (Regulation 19) is then expected in Spring 2026.</p>
<p>15. COUNCILLOR JAMES ROBERTSHAW</p> <p>To avoid further traffic issues in Witney (especially in Bridge Street) when will the Council address a new bridge over the Windrush River and an up-stream flood alleviation scheme?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>We have been working with the Witney flood group and the parish council to undertake recommendations from the Section 19 report including river maintenance on parts of the network. Flood Alleviation schemes on main rivers are often developed by the Environment Agency. There are no current plans for a separate new bridge</p>

<p>16. COUNCILLOR EMMA GARNETT</p> <p>Innovation and technology can improve our standards of living – but these should benefit the wider public rather than a tiny elite subset.</p> <p>Given that, can I ask how much money, time and any other resources Oxfordshire County Council has put in total towards the trial of private electric taxi jets between Oxford/Bicester and Cambridge? Aviation - electric or not - is incredibly resource and energy intensive.</p> <p>So many parts of our county would benefit from more electric buses, electric trains and safer cycling routes – yet we are told there is not enough money.</p> <p>Supplementary You say there is no financial contribution required from the County Council for the electric private jet trial between Oxford and Cambridge, but I did also ask if there were any other resources going, such as officer time or will there be any non-required but optional financial contributions?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>I can confirm that the OxCam Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) project is fully funded by Innovate UK. This includes all associated staffing costs, which will also be covered under the Innovate UK funding agreement.</p> <p>This means there is no financial contribution required from Oxfordshire County Council for the delivery of this project.</p> <p>Response I know of no other funding but can certainly go to officers and check that.</p>
<p>17. COUNCILLOR EMMA GARNETT</p> <p>Some of my residents are requesting secure bike parking that they can store cargo bikes in. They live on terraced streets and note that getting a second car and parking it would be straightforward but there is currently nowhere</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council is working collaboratively with Oxford City Council to deliver cycle parking infrastructure across the city of Oxford. This includes key destinations and high-density residential areas, with the aim of supporting community benefit and encouraging modal shift away from car dependency. The programme is funded by Oxford City Council through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions.</p>

<p>they can safely store a cargo bike. What plans does the county council have to a) roll out greater numbers of Sheffield cycle stands (or similar) - particularly in high density residential areas and b) ensure that these are compatible for cargo bikes (both "long tail" and "bucket").</p>	<p>The project team actively assesses requests from residents, councillors, local businesses, and organisations. Installations to date have consisted of standard Sheffield stands, with a minimum spacing of 1 metre between stands, and 1.1 metres where possible, to improve accessibility and manoeuvrability.</p> <p>The council fully recognises the need to further increase secure, publicly accessible cycle parking to reduce reliance on private cars for everyday trips. This includes providing for non-standard cycles, including cargo bikes. If the councillor or residents would like to propose a specific street for consideration, officers can add it to the list of requests and commit to a site visit to assess suitability and feasibility for installing cycle parking.</p> <p>Outside of this specific project focussed on cycle parking, as part of the council's healthy place shaping approach, whenever infrastructure projects are undertaken in the city, officers assess opportunities to incorporate additional features into the design to support active travel, such as cycle parking.</p>
<p>18. COUNCILLOR TONY WORGAN</p> <p>Didcot will very soon be 3rd largest centre of population in Oxfordshire as it continues to grow. However, for any student not getting GCSE results at Grade 7 or above, there is zero provision within Didcot for ongoing education. Students are forced to travel. Clearly not every subject can be provided locally, but Didcot residents are not being served by the current set up.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member arrange for this lack of provision to be considered by the education team, and report back regarding future options to close the gap, including possible dates for</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR SEAN GAUL, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE</p> <p>Thank you for this important question. Arrangements for provision in Post 16 education in further education colleges sits directly between the Department for Education and further education colleges and not directly with the education branch of Children's Services in the Council. We can commit to work with colleagues in Economy and Place and Enterprise Oxfordshire to ensure future consideration of learning and skills opportunities in areas of Oxfordshire including Didcot by encouraging Further Education providers to consider expansion where needs are assessed. The recent white paper on post 16 learning and skills has opened up opportunities for Further Education providers. The development of a wider sufficiency of learning and skills opportunities is a key focus of a proposed strategic authority. In the interim period should students need advice and guidance then we have a dedicated team for education and employment and training for 16-19 year olds which can be contacted on EETreferrals@Oxfordshire.gov.uk</p>

<p>delivery.</p> <p>Supplementary What specific measures can OCC officers take to ensure that the gap for GCSE students who get grades less than grade 7 is addressed because there is no provision in the third largest community in Oxfordshire?</p>	<p>Response</p> <p>The most direct answer I can give is let's arrange a meeting with you, me and the officers, and let's get this discussed. Let's get this fed back to the rest of this Council because not only will you and I be interested in this, I think everybody else will be too. Can you just reach out to me, and we'll make that happen?</p>
<p>19. COUNCILLOR TONY WORGAN</p> <p>The B4016 Abingdon Road in Didcot has a 40mph speed limit on it adjacent to Nobel Park in Didcot. Some drivers routinely ignore this, and there have been a number of accidents on this stretch of road, particularly at the turning into Nobel Park. Last December, a vehicle travelling at probably 70mph ended up crashing into the front room of a Ladygrove resident's house. Had this happened at five in the afternoon rather than five in the morning, then the outcome would have meant serious injuries or worse as furniture was shunted across the room. Despite ongoing correspondence on this matter involving my predecessor as County Councillor, myself as District Councillor, and the resident, it is approaching the first anniversary of this particular incident, and no work has taken place on site. Will the Cabinet member please advise when the proposed works will take place on site? Will the Cabinet member review the works proposed to confirm that they are sufficient, as there is nothing proposed which will act as a</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The road safety audit recommendation measures have recently been agreed upon, and we are now in the process of coordinating with the contractor to secure road space bookings. We anticipate that these measures will be implemented before Christmas, though some may be delayed until the New Year.</p> <p>Our officers are diligently working to ensure these safety measures are put in place as promptly as possible. They are in continuous communication with the developer to finalise the exact date for the completion of the works.</p> <p>Once the measures are implemented, the safety of the junction will be monitored to determine their effectiveness. This will likely be followed by an additional independent road safety audit to ensure everything is in order.</p>

<p>physical deterrent to those drivers who put the safety of others at risk?</p> <p>Supplementary Has a cabinet member, actually reviewed the proposed measures on the road in Didcot, as many residents I've spoken to are not happy with what is proposed. They do not believe it is going to create a situation where accidents are prevented and there are regular accidents, as per the evidence provided.</p>	<p>Response The answer is no, I haven't reviewed them in person, but I'll happily take that away and do so with officers. I'm quite certain that they will have made their recommendations on the basis of their professional judgement, but if the local councillor and residents have concerns about them, that's entirely proper and I'm very happy to do that.</p>
<p>20. COUNCILLOR THOMAS ASHBY</p> <p>Residents of Windrush Place and I have been significantly let down by the consortium of developers responsible for building the estate. The developers have consistently prioritised the construction of more housing over essential community amenities, most notably the shops which are now over four years late. This continued failure, and the lack of decisive action from West Oxfordshire District Council to enforce the original agreements, has caused considerable frustration within the community.</p> <p>This summer has seen the completion of most of the final road surfacing. As Centenary Way (the main spine road) approaches formal adoption by Oxfordshire County Council, a critical safety concern has been highlighted: the proposed 30mph speed limit.</p> <p>Centenary Way is fundamentally a residential street. It provides direct front access to the</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The developer is in agreement that a 20mph speed limit will be implemented throughout the spine road. We are currently negotiating with them regarding the funding for the consultation and installation of signage. We can confirm that the spine road design includes a raised uncontrolled section where the bridleway crosses Centenary Way.</p>

estate's children's play area and runs along the rear boundary of Windrush CofE Primary School. Implementing a 30mph limit in this environment is inconsistent with vision zero and poses an unacceptable risk to pedestrians and children.

In light of the developers' severe delays and prioritisation failures, and to ensure the immediate safety of residents, I urge the Cabinet Member to work with Officers and instruct the Windrush Place consortium of developers to complete the following work before adoption:

1. **Implement a 20mph Zone for Centenary Way:** Ensure Centenary Way is formally designated as a 20mph road. This speed restriction is essential for pedestrian and child safety and is consistent with the limits applied to virtually all other modern residential housing estates across Witney.
2. **Install a Pedestrian Crossing at the Bridleway:** Install a formal, raised, or uncontrolled pedestrian crossing at the bridleway on Windrush Place. This location is the primary walking route through the estate and is the site of the highest pedestrian and vehicular interaction.

Implementing a 20mph zone and a formal crossing at this crucial location, directly supports the principles of Vision Zero by

<p>proactively reducing risk in a high-traffic walking zone, thereby rectifying a key safety oversight before the road is formally handed over.</p> <p>Supplementary It's really good news that the whole of Windrush Place will now be 20 miles an hour. Please can you arrange a meeting between yourself, me and officers to discuss that scheme and other white lining schemes on the estate because at the minute there's no white lines at all. You do have some sensible drivers but some people would like a white line as well?</p>	<p>Response Although you know it doesn't require me to organise a meeting between the councillor and officers, but I'm very happy to take part in that if that's helpful. Like you, I'm glad that the undertaking has been made to deliver safe speeds there.</p> <p>I don't know if this is an example of an issue that we come across quite a lot, which is, the speed at which development passes and gets adopted. On a development, you know it gets adopted and there are often delays in that process, but very happy to take that up.</p>
<p>21. COUNCILLOR THOMAS ASHBY</p> <p>The A4095 through Curbridge is an essential, high-volume route connecting Witney with Faringdon and Swindon, and is used extensively by motorists and cyclists.</p> <p>Its current, long-standing poor state of repair presents a safety concern for residents.</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member please instruct Officers to arrange an on-site meeting with me to review the road condition, as well as prioritising the resurfacing of this road and add it to the programme for the 26/27 financial year?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Parts of this road are currently included in our provisional programme for next year for surface dressing treatment. Areas requiring additional structural intervention will first be treated with patching. This is a route that has a monthly inspection carried out to ensure it is safe, along with any other enquires being picked up outside of this time.</p> <p>Officers will be in touch to schedule a site visit, where safe to do so, to review the site in more detail.</p>

<p>22. COUNCILLOR THOMAS ASHBY</p> <p>Since being built in the 1980's, Thorney Leys has had very little attention in regard to road maintenance. As a FixMyStreet Super-User, in the summer I highlighted some key areas to the Highways Department that needed addressing.</p> <p>These have been addressed, but really only on a temporary basis. Please can a meeting between me and Highways Officers be arranged to walk Thorney Leys and ensure that the resurfacing of the main road through the estate is programmed into the 26/27 financial year?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Thorney Leys has previously been considered for preventative treatment, and this still remains the case. This is also followed up with safety inspections and enquires to ensure any safety defects are actions.</p> <p>As this is a large estate, it may not be possible to treat the entire area. Therefore, a site visit will be arranged to review the situation in detail.</p>
<p>23. COUNCILLOR GAVIN MCLAUHLAN</p> <p>FixMyStreet/Councillor Enquiries platforms: In my experience and those of my residents FixMyStreet queries are often closed without any actual resolution. This also applies to queries raised on the Councillor Enquiries platform. Therefore, I would like to know what actually counts as a closure of a query and how are so many deemed closed when there is no evidence that they have been acted on. How does this also play into the stats that are quoted on fixes?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NEIL FAWCETT, CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>Thank you for your message and for raising concerns about the closure of queries on the FixMyStreet and Councillor Enquiries platforms. I appreciate the opportunity to clarify how and why reports are marked as "closed," and what that status may represent in practice.</p> <p>A query is marked as closed when it has reached a defined point in the operational workflow. However, closure does not always mean the issue has been physically resolved. Below are the main reasons a report may be closed:</p> <p>Issue Resolved In many cases, closure means the reported defect or concern has been inspected and addressed, either through a completed repair or another appropriate action. Internal documentation such as photographs or inspection notes may be recorded to confirm the resolution, although these are not always visible to the public. Sometimes, a temporary fix (such as cold lay material) is applied to ensure safety while a permanent solution is</p>

scheduled.

No Further Action Required

A query may also be closed when the issue does not meet the intervention criteria set by the council under policy. This could relate to factors such as the depth, severity, or location of the defect. In such cases, the issue may be monitored over time or added to a future programme of works if appropriate.

Referred to Another Authority

Some issues fall outside the county council's remit and are the responsibility of another organisation, such as a utility company, district council, or private landowner. These reports are passed on to the relevant body, reflected on FixMyStreet and closed within our system. Unfortunately, follow-up visibility is often limited unless the receiving organisation provides updates, which can understandably lead to frustration for the original reporter.

Duplicate or Already Logged

If a report matches an existing issue already recorded in the system, it is linked to the original and closed to avoid duplication. This helps streamline operational response and ensures resources are focused efficiently. However, to the person who submitted the report, this may appear as if no action has been taken.

Scheduled for Future Works

In some cases, the issue is acknowledged and added to a planned maintenance programme. Closure in this context means that no immediate action will be taken, but the issue is not being ignored. These types of closures may not be reflected in short-term statistics or updates, but they remain active within the system for future delivery.

We understand that the term "closed" can be misleading when no visible action has occurred, and we acknowledge that further information needs to be provided with responses to queries so that people understand the steps that have been taken. The highways team is committed to improving transparency and communication around these decisions. This will include clearer status updates, better integration of photographic evidence, and more consistent messaging to residents and councillors.

If you have specific examples where closure appears premature or unclear, I'd be happy

	to investigate further.
<p>24. COUNCILLOR GAVIN MCLAUHLAN</p> <p>Complexity of papers for Committees: What can be done to make the papers clearer? In several of the committees I have sat on comments have been made as to the difficulties councillors have in sifting through all the information provided and extracting relevant questions. Should a “management summary” be provided with the materials so that everyone can start at the same level, and can delve deeper if a particular subject or area is of interest (ideally provided in the addenda)? For example, the Place Scrutiny committee had 1008 pages of information for the Congestion Charge meeting - much of which was repetitious (and provided very late)...but you had to trawl through everything to discover the repetitions. Having a provided summary would quickly get everyone to the same stage. This would also benefit those who are slower to read / digest the materials and given the timings of papers for committees would enable a quick determination of likely pertinent questions?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NEIL FAWCETT, CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>As a Cabinet Member, I fully understand that the quantity of paperwork we have to deal with as councillors can be massive. I will be more than happy to identify whether there are ways in which papers can be made to be more user friendly and whether there is any way of reducing any duplication of content. However, we do need to ensure that councillors are provided with the information they need to make proper decisions.</p> <p>The content of reports to the decision taking bodies of the Council reflect the need to take lawful decisions. To take a lawful decision public authorities including the Council are under a duty to take all relevant considerations into account (and no irrelevant ones). This does not mean that a decision-maker must consider all material, but it should have as much information as possible that is relevant to the decision. Even where there is no obligation in legislation to consider something, it may still be "obviously material to a decision" meaning that failure to consider it would be unlawful or irrational and leave the Council open to a legal challenge. Deciding what is relevant depends on the subject matter of the decision, but may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal. • Consultation responses • Relevant policy or guidance • Advice from officers • Cost • The effect of the decision on others. • Equality impacts. Due regard must be had to the public sector equality duty • Human rights impacts • Other available evidence relevant to the question at hand <p>As a result of the legal requirements of lawful decision making the amount of material that is put before a decision taking body can differ depending on the matter under consideration.</p>

	<p>Whilst many reports have an Executive Summary within the body of the report (e.g. Cabinet) there is still the requirement for decision takers to read all of the material provided to them. It is not recommended legally that the Council produces summaries of reports as if members based their decision making solely on the summary they would not be taking into account all the essential information before taking a decision.</p> <p>On the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 27 August 2025 it was important for the Committee to consider all of the material that was going to be considered by the Cabinet. The papers were extensive as they contained a significant number of appendices and public consultation responses. The papers were published within the legal time limits on Monday 18 August 2025 for the meeting which took place on Wednesday 27 August 2025 which was five clear working days taking into account the Bank Holiday on Monday 25 August 2025.</p> <p>Having recorded this response I will of course encourage officers to prepare reports that are as concise as possible whilst meeting the legal requirements.</p>
<p>25. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON</p> <p>Cabinet is due to meet on the 13th November to approve a final submission to the government on the council's preferred option for local government re-organisation. The proposal will presumably be to support the 'One Oxfordshire' option which would see the whole of the county administrated by one huge unitary council. By taking such an important decision in isolation, the Cabinet is denying the vast majority of the council membership the chance to debate and vote on the options or at the very least to provide public feedback to the cabinet. Given that other local councils are allowing their full membership to have such a debate and a vote, why is this Council not</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>The Council has been invited to submit a proposal for local government reorganisation in accordance with Section 7 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and has been asked to submit a finalised plan by 28 November 2025. The approval of the Council's final proposal is an executive function in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 Section 9D(2) which sets out that unless a function is by law reserved to another decision-making part of the Council then it is an executive function.</p> <p>As the decision regarding which proposal for LGR to submit to government is an executive function, the Council could not legally take a decision, and the view was taken that to take a decision at Council which was not binding on the Cabinet and could only provide a view to Cabinet would be confusing to the public.</p> <p>Rather than a formalised debate at Council, the Cabinet has chosen to engage with all Members on several occasions so that they can ask questions and contribute their views. LGR was included as part of the Member Induction process on 14 June 2025, was</p>

<p>being afforded the same opportunity?</p> <p>Supplementary Question I understand that the final decision on LGR proposals is an executive proposal, but that hasn't stopped every other Council offering a debate and an indicative vote to full membership. How would the Leader respond to the widely-held suspicion that the reason a vote is not being offered here is the lack of majority support within her own group, and that she, and her Cabinet, are simply nervous of asking the question they won't like the answer to?</p>	<p>discussed in public at the Audit and Governance Committee on 16 July 2025 and at Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee as a single item meeting on 24 September 2025. It is due to return to the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 12 November 2025 before Cabinet takes its decision on 13 November 2025. In addition, I have been engaging at all stages with all Political Group Leaders at their regular meetings and have taken into consideration their views relating to key aspects of the proposal such as community engagement and Councillor numbers.</p> <p>Unlike other Councils in Oxfordshire all members have been provided with early sight of the proposal document being worked up and were able to attend an all-member briefing held on 29 October 2025, before the document was published.</p> <p>Response I would caution people to sort of not make guesses at the views in groups to which they're not Members. I will ask Councillor Leffman to write to Councillor Middleton to answer his supplementary question.</p>
<p>26. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON</p> <p>As part of my question to Cllr Gant during the last full council meeting on the 9th September, I made request that drains and roadside gullies in the Garden City area in my division in Kidlington East should be prioritised for clearance, ahead of the planned routine maintenance in Kidlington which is not scheduled until Early next year. Cllr Gant gave</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Progress has been made in the Garden City area of Kidlington in respect of the flood response, I am confident that Cllr Middleton will be aware the drainage in that area consists of many components some of which are linked to assets that OCC has no jurisdiction over, these were highlighted in the Section 19 report. I can confirm that full cleansing and surveys of Lock Crescent have been completed, which has highlighted some defects. However, due to other areas of concern across the county both Beech Crescent and Hazel Crescent are still to be completed and unfortunately, it is unlikely that these will be completed by 9th November as initially anticipated. These areas do still</p>

me the following undertaking in his answer:

“The Garden City area of Kidlington, following the finding of the Section 19 flood report, arrangements are in hand for not just the gullies to be cleaned, but also the OCC owned carrier drains to be jetted. This work is being scheduled in to be completed within the next 2 months.”

At the time of writing that work has still not been started, especially in key areas like Beech Crescent, Lock Crescent and the surrounding areas which were seriously inundated during the floods of September last year.

As the 2-month deadline committed to by Cllr Gant is fast approaching, could he reassure me that these works will be fully completed by 9th November as promised?

Supplementary

With great respect to Councillor Gant, if he doesn't have the authority to ensure his promises are kept, could he direct me to someone who does? He gave me a categorical undertaking in September that these works to council assets that were under a foot of water last year would be completed within two months. Now it's as soon as possible that simply isn't good enough.

remain as priority locations along with many other areas across the county which have also suffered from property flooding and also have requirements from Section 19 reports.

Officers have been requested to ensure that these location are programmed in as soon as possible when the limited investigation resources are available.

Response

I can't give you a categorical guarantee that any particular scheme, especially when it involves the effects of extreme weather events, can be made. And I'm sure no councillor would expect me to be able to do that, I'm not the water engineer.

I regret that that date that was given was not met. You know everybody will be aware of the challenges that infrastructure in this county have been under. Again, I say I regret that the date hasn't been met, and our officers will work hard to complete the work as soon as possible.

27. COUNCILLOR JAMES PLUMB

The Parish of Cumnor comprises four ward areas: Dean Court, Cumnor Hill, Cumnor Village and Farmoor. However, under the new Congestion Charge scheme, the first two wards fall into the 'Oxford Permit Area' whilst the latter two fall into the 'Oxfordshire Permit Area'. Will the Cabinet Member reconsider this arrangement to ensure the whole of Cumnor is treated equally, or is he happy creating a two-tier society within the parish?

Supplementary

While I accept that lines have to be drawn somewhere, local residents don't see the A420 as a meaningful dividing line. They see one parish community being split in two, so will you be able to share with me the data or criteria that was used to decide these boundaries so residents can understand what evidence, if any, supports dividing communities like Cumnor in half?

COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

The permit area boundaries must be drawn somewhere and whilst we have sought to minimise instances where properties are close to the Oxford permit area boundary, we have not been able to avoid it entirely. The same is true of those living just outside Oxfordshire, who don't qualify for a permit at all.

Drawing a boundary for a scheme like this is not a straightforward task since there are inevitably shades of grey when it comes to people's transport requirements, and a boundary line is by definition a binary division – you are either one side of it or the other.

In the case of the Cumnor parish, the A420 was used as a significant land feature to define the boundary of the permit area. In other cases, we used administrative boundaries such as district or parish council areas, but in this case this would not be appropriate because the Cumnor parish extends some distance outside the city to the River Thames.

We're offering free park and ride bus travel to coincide with the start of the congestion charge, which should make park and ride more attractive for those coming from outside the city.

Response

I mean this is all in the original design of the traffic filter scheme, which was of course designed on a cross party basis under the previous administration, I mean the coalition administration.

28. COUNCILLOR JAMES PLUMB

Residents in Frilford have raised repeated concerns about a pronounced dip in the road on the A415. When heavy goods vehicles travel over this dip, often at speed, the resulting noise and vibrations cause significant disturbance, particularly during the night and early morning hours. Although officers have inspected the site, they have advised that the dip does not meet the current criteria for repair.

In light of this, would the Cabinet Member consider reviewing the Council's policy to ensure that the impact of noise and vibration on nearby residents is explicitly included as a factor in future inspections and risk assessments?

Supplementary

Officers may factor in noise and vibration at their discretion. Could the Cabinet Member clarify what guidance or criteria is provided to officers to ensure consistency in how these concerns are weighted out across the county? And would he consider developing a framework to better capture resident impact, like Frilford, where safety may not be the primary issue, but quality of life clearly is.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

Highways inspections follow an approach which is in alignment with current national guidance. The council's approach is risk-based and prioritises maintenance based upon, condition, safety, and use, rather than for noise mitigation or other secondary factors.

The inclusion of an assessment of noise and vibration within highway inspections is not considered appropriate, for three main reasons:

- 1.Noise and vibration measurement, without using specialist equipment over time, is a subjective measure, the impact of which often fluctuates dependant of time of day, or weather.
- 2.To include this factor into an assessment criteria, applied across the county, and weigh alongside the primary factor of safety, would not only be difficult to implement, from a practical standpoint, but also in terms of justification, due the subjectivity of the measure.
- 3.A large proportion of road safety inspections are driven from a conspicuous moving vehicle and therefore limits any sensory awareness of noise and vibrations concerns.

When brought to the attention of a highways officer, noise and vibration due to deteriorated, or poor road surface/profile, may factor in their decision-making when determining maintenance priorities and treatment. However, any intervention would be at the discretion of the assessing officer, who would balance the impact of noise vibration alongside maintenance for safety and serviceability. That said, I have officers commitment that they will investigate the concerns about a pronounced dip in the road on the A415 and add any potential works required to the programme.

Response

Happy to take that away.

<p>29. COUNCILLOR IAN SNOWDON</p> <p>Could you please provide clarification on the financial and logistical rationale for constructing the Northern Perimeter Road 3 (NPR3) in Didcot as a phased project, with the southern section contingent upon developer delivery after 500 homes, and could you please explain why an agreement was not reached to forward-fund the southern section of NPR3, thereby ensuring that the full road is completed in advance (or at least during) the first 500 new houses that will place additional pressure on the already congested A4130?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>The Didcot NPR3 scheme comprises two sections; the northern section (to be delivered by the County Council) and the southern section (to be delivered by Bloor Homes). Originally, the County Council's northern section of the NPR3 scheme was not fully funded and a decision was made at a senior level within OCC that this was a viable way to cover the shortfall and ensure that the scheme could be progressed and delivered. The 500th occupation 'trigger' was requested by OCC officers in the formal response to the planning application for the Ladygrove East development site. This was the result of discussions between OCC officers, Bloor Homes and the District Planning Authority and was based on transport modelling data. Notwithstanding this, the County Council's project team for the northern section of the Didcot NPR3 scheme shall seek to explore potential opportunities to accelerate delivery of the southern section through upcoming discussions with Bloor Homes.</p> <p>During the discussions with Bloor Homes regarding the mechanism for delivering NPR3, it became apparent that the cost for Bloor Homes to deliver the southern section of the new road had increased significantly and, therefore, the funding shortfall was understood to be notable. With monies held by SODC and other s106 contributions, there was still a gap to be bridged in respect of the County Council's northern section and, therefore, the decision not to forward fund the southern section was made by former Directors due to the financial risks to OCC. The trigger of 500 units was based upon transport modelling, which showed the highway network would still operate safely. Another trigger of 300 units is also secured in the S106, which obliges Bloor Homes to construct a right turn facility at the Fulscote Road junction – a known point of obstruction, from cars turning right – which will further mitigate congestion and was evidenced through transport modelling. The Bloor Homes site also has an occupation trigger of no more than 250 dwellings prior to the opening of the HIF1 scheme, which will alleviate congestion on the A4130.</p>

<p>Supplementary Can you confirm that the millions being spent building the northern section by OCC, which is basically a dead end until the developers in however many years do or don't build a southern section, this will help congestion not one bit in Didcot?</p> <p>We will be building the northern section, spending millions, it won't help any congestion because it's a dead end, isn't it?</p>	<p>Response Well, within the answer, you actually have two other points where congestion will be helped because it's not just the 500 homes trigger as in your question. There are other points where congestion will be eased and that's part of the modelling of the HIF1 road and Bloor homes will build 500 homes eventually because it's in their commercial interest.</p>
<p>30. COUNCILLOR IAN SNOWDON</p> <p>Can you provide information on the current waiting time for the road repainting list for safety, and confirm if this waiting time is consistent across all of Oxfordshire?</p> <p>Supplementary Miraculously, the roundabout I was going to ask about has been painted since I put the question in, but can the Cabinet Member please commit to responding to an email about why it took so long? In August 2024, I was first told it would be on the repainting list</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Please be advised that we currently have a typical lead time of 6 weeks, which is consistent throughout the county. This is reviewed on a weekly basis to ensure sites are prioritised and managed for weather delays.</p> <p>Response Happy to do so (Take it away) with the usual proviso that operational decisions are not for me</p>
<p>31. COUNCILLOR IAN SNOWDON</p> <p>Can you explain the lack of effective communication with residents of Didcot, specifically those in Great Western Park, regarding the closure of a major junction (Didcot Rd/Greenwood Way/Miles East) from</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The scheme was brought forward into the school holidays to reduce impact as well as to prevent deterioration before the winter weather and salting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The date alternative bus routes and shuttle services were officially confirmed - Monday 20th October

October 24th to November 2nd which handles over 15,000 daily vehicles; and why measures were not taken earlier to address the reported lack of information that left residents without clarity on transport options, including pedestrian footpaths, personal car use and bus services. Furthermore, could the Cabinet Member confirm:

- The date alternative bus routes and shuttle services were officially confirmed.
- The date the decision was made to open the bus gate to all traffic.
- The date the letter drop to inform Great Western Park residents was officially confirmed.
- The date this scheme was approved to go Ahead

Supplementary

I think it was very poorly managed. It's one entrance, one exit to a huge area in the state.

In the week that they were closed, residents had no idea about the bus timetables, the bus gate being open. Businesses, schools didn't know how to get any access. Can you accept that this was poor planning and in future more than a couple of days should be given to residents when they're closing their entrance to their estate?

- The date the decision was made to open the bus gate to all traffic -Monday 20th October
- The date the letter drop to inform Great Western Park residents was officially confirmed -Two weeks ago when the AWS went up
- The date this scheme was approved to go ahead - 3rd September a meeting took place to agree way forward and progress to final plans

On the 25th September an email was shared with the councillors advising that these works would be taking place and detailed the traffic management and working hours.

Response

I certainly accept that, there were, you know, failures. Let's use that word in the way this was communicated to residents, and I'm grateful to local councillors. Councillor Fletcher certainly kept me very fully informed of progress of the scheme, and I'm very grateful to officers in this Council who took hold of it and sorted it out. But yes, there were clearly issues around the way it was communicated, and I regret that.

32. COUNCILLOR LEE EVANS

Stanford in the Vale is in the catchment area for King Alfred's School in Wantage and more than two dozen children from the village attend the school. However, Oxfordshire County Council does not provide transport for children to get there. Instead, children are dependent upon an infrequent public bus, which has been known to be late and/or crowded. Some parents feel they have no choice but to drive their child to school. Will the Cabinet Member commit to considering the case of Stanford in the Vale, a rural village with inadequate transport links, as part of a review to the Home to School Transport Policy?

COUNCILLOR SEAN GAUL, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Oxfordshire County Council's Home to School Travel and Transport Policy is aligned with the Department for Education's statutory guidance. Under this policy, transport assistance is provided to children of statutory school age who attend their nearest suitable school, provided they meet the required distance and/or other eligibility criteria.

For the majority of families in Stanford in the Vale, the nearest suitable school is Faringdon Community College (FCC). Currently, four times as many students from the village attend FCC compared to King Alfred's School in Wantage, and the majority of those attending FCC receive transport assistance from the Council. Students attending King Alfred's School who meet the eligibility criteria under the policy also receive support.

It is important to clarify that catchment areas are not a factor in determining eligibility for transport assistance. While King Alfred's School may include Stanford in the Vale within its catchment, this does not confer a statutory entitlement to transport support.

Parents are free to apply for places at any school, but the Council's responsibility to provide transport is limited to those schools that fall within the scope of the Home to School Travel and Transport Policy. We provide clear advice and guidance to families during the school admissions process, encouraging them to consider how their child will travel to and from school when making their preferences. We advise parents to consult the Home to School Travel and Transport Policy to understand eligibility for transport assistance and to factor this into their decision-making when selecting schools.

We understand that some families have experienced challenges with the public bus service between Stanford in the Vale and King Alfred's School, including concerns about frequency, punctuality, and capacity. While this route is not contracted or managed by Oxfordshire County Council, we previously reviewed the service and worked with the public bus operator, who subsequently adjusted the timetable to provide a collection time five minutes earlier to better support school travel. As this remains a commercially operated route, any ongoing issues should be raised directly with the bus operator. We appreciate the impact that transport reliability has on families and will continue to monitor feedback as part of our wider commitment to improving access to education across Oxfordshire.

<p>Supplementary</p> <p>The cabinet member is setting out the homeschool transport policy as it is. But for many families in my division, the current policy simply does not work. Will the Cabinet member therefore promise to consider the particular challenges in the Kingston and Stanford Division, and to meet with families in that division before the home to school transport policy is next reviewed?</p>	<p>Response</p> <p>We've got a really, really big service that spends more than £40 million a year and we have to absolutely get it right. We need to do what we need to do which is a lot and the cost is considerable and it's rising every single year. But I love the fact that you're advocating for your residents. You request a meeting, let's do it. Reach out to me and let's make it happen</p>
<p>33. COUNCILLOR LEE EVANS</p> <p>Many of my residents are concerned that developers and utilities companies get overly generous timescales to undertake roadworks. Recently, an A-road in my division had temporary traffic lights for over six months whilst works were undertaken. I'm sure the Cabinet Member will appreciate that this had a significant, negative impact on residents and their journeys. Can the Cabinet Member explain what the Council is doing to ensure that the agreed timescale for roadworks is no longer than is strictly necessary?</p> <p>Supplementary</p> <p>Will he therefore reconsider everything that the Council can do to reduce excessive time scales for road works? We'd see many residents in my division and across the country experiencing inconvenience for months on end.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Managing and planning ahead is a significant part of the Network Coordination's daily task. When a utility company notifies us of a major scheme through a Provisional Advance Application (PAA), we immediately engage in discussions to understand their plans.</p> <p>However, it's important to note that while we can coordinate and monitor these activities, we do not have the authority to prevent utilities from carrying out their work. We ensure that road space is available and consider the timing, such as school holidays.</p> <p>Response</p> <p>I'm sure every member in this Chamber would echo those sentiments. I think the keywords that the councillor has used there is consider what the Council can do and it is a frustration that what we can do is frankly pretty limited.</p> <p>Statutory undertakers as they're called, like utilities, have the authority to dig up our roads and we have limited powers to control that. But we will certainly use them as we can.</p>

34. COUNCILLOR LEE EVANS

I want to record my thanks to everyone involved in the Home Library Service, helping people who cannot get to their local library to access books. This service is especially important for rural divisions like mine where there is no local library. The 2024-5 Libraries Service Plan set out the Council's ambition to 'identify ways in which we can develop the [Home Library] service, widen participation, celebrate and support our volunteers, and secure future funding.' Can the Cabinet Member please provide an update on how this is going, including the progress that has been made in helping people in the Kingston & Stanford division access the Home Library Service?

COUNCILLOR NEIL FAWCETT, CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

As of 27 October, the Home Library Service (HLS) supports 860 residents of Oxfordshire who are housebound, have limited mobility, or face other challenges in accessing their local library. This includes 164 new customers signed up so far in 2025. These customers are supported by the small HLS team, and by 187 volunteers across the county. Staff or volunteers visit HLS customers every 3 weeks, bringing fresh library materials, including books, audiobooks and even DVDs - all tailored to the customer's personal needs and preferences.

Many HLS customers are indeed located in rural areas, but also in care homes, in towns, and even within the city of Oxford itself. In the Kingston & Stanford division, there are 6 customers in the SN7 postcode, and another 20 in the OX13 postcode area, and we have recently delivered posters/leaflets to various points in Stanford-in-the-Vale.

For 2025/26, additional budget was secured for the HLS, which has been allocated to staffing, vehicle costs, and providing replacement resources.

Promoting the HLS is an ongoing task, with publicity such as posters and leaflets being deployed at community focal points (including all 44 public libraries in the county), and advertisements being placed in various local publications, including a forthcoming winter campaign in the free *Round and About* magazine. We also work very closely with partner organisations, such as Age UK. Local social prescriber teams are exceptionally well-placed to promote the HLS and make referrals to our service. However, as with all services, word-of-mouth is the most effective means of promotion, so we are grateful to any Councillors who are able to share information about this and other services with their residents.

More information about the HLS is available via:
HomeLibraryService@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

As with the wider library service offer, the Home Library Service is about more than just books...

- It brings together volunteers and customers, building relationships and stronger communities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It supports older and vulnerable people to live in their own homes for longer, remaining independent and enriching their cultural experience. • For a significant number of vulnerable residents, the regular HLS visit is one of their main/sole interactions with another person and helps combat social isolation and loneliness. • In extreme cases, the HLS team have made wellbeing and safeguarding referrals to Age UK and to the Adult Services team, ensuring that the safety and health of our residents is always our top priority.
<p>35. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION</p> <p>I welcome the news from government about the Cowley Branch Line finally receiving government funding and support to reopen. This is testament to years of hard work from council officers and cross-party support to keep this scheme on track. Can I ask what work she and the county council are doing to secure similar funding for much needed improvements to the Cotswold Line?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council continue to work with other local authorities, the rail industry and regional partners along the North Cotswold Line to make the case for investment through the North Cotswold Line Taskforce. Our new OxRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail specifically references the need for capacity and station improvements in Oxfordshire, including developing Hanborough as a key mobility hub for onward bus and active travel connections and delivering enhancements at Charlbury and Kingham railway stations. The introduction of additional and new decarbonised rolling stock will improve frequencies, enhance connectivity and provide an improved, higher quality service offer for passengers. We will continue to work closely with all partners to ensure for delivery of these improvements</p>
<p>36. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION</p> <p>Roadworks and temporary traffic lights are always a frustration for many drivers. In particular some utility companies leave traffic lights in place when no work is taking place, or they don't stick to the permit conditions set by the council. How many fines have been issued this year to utility companies and how much income has that generated for the County Council?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Total number of FPNs issued for breaches of conditions since April 2025 – 965 (122 have since been withdrawn) – adjusted total 842. Of this 842, 701 have been paid, totalling £56,520.</p> <p>Unfortunately, it is not currently feasible to break down the FPNs further to identify which ones were specifically related to traffic signal infringements. The offence descriptions are inputted by the inspector, and they vary each time. To filter out the traffic signal-related offences would require manually going through each one.</p>

<p>Supplementary</p> <p>I'm just wondering if that £56,000 is reinvested or is there more scope to reinvest that into more staff to check on utility companies even more?</p>	<p>Response</p> <p>A very fair question, which I do not have the answer to, so am happy to take that away</p>
<p>37. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION</p> <p>How much has the council spent on the recruitment of on-call firefighters in the years 2023, 2024 and 2025?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JENNY HANNABY, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND SAFETY</p> <p>Cllr Walker, thank you for your question and comments surrounding the impact of the proposals within our Fire and Rescue Cover model.</p> <p>Recruitment for on-call firefighters is a key element of a variety of managers roles across the organisation. On-call Watch managers, Station Support officers, Station commanders and Community Risk and Response Managers all work hard to prioritise recruitment into the on-call system, a duty which has become far more challenging as society itself changes. These managers' report that recruitment is now more difficult with traditional routes of entry, such as support from local businesses and individuals working in suitable roles within rural areas, now not providing the levels of recruitment they previously had.</p> <p>Recruitment also forms an integral part of station annual plans: as a result of recruitment efforts there are 4 On-call initial training courses provided each year (the costs of which are captured below) which allow recruits to attend on a range of dates that suit. Further training for these recruits is planned around these courses in order to make recruitment and training as flexible as possible for new, on-call starters.</p> <p>As such Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue service have provided a number of methods to improve recruitment, including the re-allocation of a Station Manager position to a role with specific focus on this task. With a core salary of approximately £55,000 and an estimated 75% of their role allocated to this, it could be suggested that approximately £40,000 of their salary is now focussed on recruitment through this position. Additionally, various ongoing activities are now provided to try and help boost recruitment: through the use of "Have a Go" days, specific recruitment events that provide bespoke training opportunities for less-represented groups and a significant use of Social Media. The</p>

<p>Supplementary I meant in terms of what is spent on recruitment in terms of social media advertising/newspaper articles etc, if you are able to provide a written response?</p>	<p>introduction of these, combined with the existing cost of recruitment and initial training results in a financial cost of approximately £55,000 per year.</p> <p>As such, it is reasonable to suggest that OFRS has spent approximately £95,000 per year on recruitment, not including the salary costs, time and effort of the wide range of managers involved in direct recruitment to the on-call duty system.</p> <p>Response Yes - I will take that away</p>
<p>38. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Many of us were alarmed to hear about the proposal to close Rewley Road Fire Station and Eynsham Fire Station, among others. If this goes ahead, it is sure to be an enormously unpopular decision. City centre businesses and many local residents will be horrified. This is perhaps especially true of the residents I represent in the Botley Road area, who regularly suffer severe flooding and some of whom may well need to be rescued by the fire service in an emergency. Please will the Cabinet reconsider these proposals, if a majority of the public oppose them?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JENNY HANNABY, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND SAFETY</p> <p>Cllr Pressel, thank you for your question and comments surrounding the impact of the proposals within our Fire and Rescue Cover model.</p> <p>The overriding aim of the proposals is to ensure that the residents and businesses across all of Oxfordshire are protected by a Fire and Rescue service that can attend incidents in the fastest possible times and with sufficient crews to assist those in need. Whilst some of the proposals do suggest closures, the core proposal aims to ensure that a spread of wholetime resources is always available in the daytime across both the city and rural areas, when we know that the majority of our incidents occur.</p> <p>In terms of the city itself, whilst the second proposal (a new station in the north of Oxford) could result in a slightly lower average response time within the city boundaries, this response time would still be the lowest across the county and ensure that fire crews were always available to assist for incidents such as flooding. This new station, in place of Rewley Road, would still ensure that rapid, dedicated fire cover is provided to those living in the city limits.</p> <p>We are aware that the proposals will naturally cause concern, and that residents in some areas may not realise that their local station does not provide 24/7 availability at present. Through the consultation process we want to listen to those concerns and provide reassurance that whilst some of the proposals do suggest the removal of a fire engine the primary aim is to ensure that all residents across the county receive the benefits of</p>

<p>Supplementary</p> <p>This is about Rewley Road fire station, which is at the heart of the area I've represented for 30 years, and my question is why has the Oxford Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters not done much more to help the station to recruit more on-call firefighters which would have solved a lot of the problems.</p>	<p>having more wholetime resources available in the daytime and a stable provision of on-call and wholetime cover at night.</p> <p>Response</p> <p>I believe if you look at the answer to Councillor Walker, you will see that we have done considerable recruitment and the cost</p>
<p>39. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>If a resident is already registered for residents' parking permits, the Council has all the details of their car ownership. However, when they apply for congestion charge permits, they often need to download all the same documents again! Why is the system for applying for congestion charge permits still not at all user-friendly?</p> <p>Supplementary</p> <p>Blue badge holders should be automatically exempt from the congestion charge since we hold all their information about why they're eligible for a blue badge. Why are they not automatically exempt? Why do they have to struggle with this disastrous system?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>If someone has already used the necessary documents for a parking permit, they will be able to use the same documents again for any new permit they apply for. Every time they are requested to provide documents, there is an option to "Select from existing files" which will open a dropdown to select any document that is already associated with the account. We do not require residents to re-upload documentation if it is already on the system, but if they are conversing with an advisor over the phone, they may need to make the advisor aware that they already have provided documents before, as that may not be immediately visible to us.</p> <p>Response</p> <p>Well, I don't accept that it's disastrous, the evidence is that 67,000 people have successfully been issued permits. The answer to the question is that you know clearly if you're applying for something that requires you to demonstrate eligibility, then there has to be some evidence for that.</p> <p>The question was about whether details that are already stored on the Council's website can be used, and the answer is yes, they can.</p>

<p>40. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Many residents in my division have tried to phone the Council helpline, in despair at the impossibility of applying for congestion charge permits. Some of them have been told that they face a wait of <i>more than an hour</i> for their call to be answered. This is appalling! Why are we not training and employing more people to answer the phones?</p> <p>Supplementary</p> <p>This is also about the congestion charge. Why was it introduced with such a ridiculously short lead in period? It's chaos out there for thousands of people.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>We are currently receiving an unprecedented volume of callers and also have very frequent unscheduled walk-ins from members of the public that also need to be attended to by multiple members of the team. We would like to ensure that all calls will be answered, provided that the caller stays in the queue.</p> <p>We are also continually bringing in new staff to be trained on the service and to provide additional support to all residents, but this is not a process with an immediate resolution as recruitment and training take time to ensure that residents are provided with an appropriate standard of customer service.</p> <p>Response</p> <p>I would say that when people phone the helpline, the message that says you are so and so in the queue, the waiting time is about this. This is clearly an automated message and I'm aware of lots of people who've been told there's a wait and the wait has ended up being a lot less than that. You know that that is the case.</p> <p>Our staff in customer services performed absolutely superbly on this. They really have, the care and attention that they give to individual callers in person and on the phone has been absolutely faultless and I'm hugely grateful to them for that and the evidence is in the number of people who have successfully registered for the scheme.</p>
<p>41. COUNCILLOR JAMES BARLOW</p> <p>The revised bus service between Benson, Wallingford and Cholsey Station now has significant gaps in service during peak commuter hours. Until recently, the 136-bus timetable offered a reliable connection for commuters who depend on public transport to reach Cholsey Station and catch early morning trains to London. However, recent timetable changes have introduced a gap of 1 hour and</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Service 136 has recently been improved from its previous hourly frequency to a half-hourly frequency throughout the day, providing many more journey opportunities between Wallingford and Cholsey in line with our policy to improve public transport services – however the frustration of the gap in the morning peak period is noted. As such, Officers have been in touch with Thames Travel to discuss what possibilities exist for the morning peak period on service 136, but no response has yet been received. Until recently the service was funded by Section 106 contributions, but these have now expired with the service remaining non-commercial; the County Council is now funding this service from a time-limited funding source and it is unlikely further funds would be</p>

<p>20 minutes between services (from 6:25 am to 7:45 am), making it extremely difficult to connect with key trains departing at 7:22 am and 7:50 am. These changes have significantly disrupted some residents' daily commute – they rely on these connections to reach work and essential services. The lack of viable public transport options during peak hours is forcing commuters to consider driving, as well as exacerbating parking challenges at Cholsey station I understand too. One commuting resident contacted Thames Travel who operate the service, but the response they received was not helpful. Accordingly, I asked OCC about this on 26th September but am yet to receive a response. Please, when can a sensible connecting morning peak time service be re-instated from Wallingford to Cholsey in line with our active travel and climate aims?</p> <p>Supplementary What changes to processes will be put in place to prevent further bus timetables being rescheduled in a way that makes joined up peak time public transport community harder, especially given our shared desire to improving and increasing public transport use.</p>	<p>available if this is required.</p> <p>Service X40 between Wallingford and Reading has recently been improved to a frequency of every 20 minutes, which offers numerous journey opportunities for onward travel to London. This may potentially offer an alternative journey possibility for your constituents.</p> <p>Response Timetabling and services are a matter for the operator and this service in particular has been a matter of considerable discussion. Our role as the County Council is to put the conditions in place to deliver the kind of services that we want to see and that is done in all sorts of ways. It's done through support. It's done through S106, it's done through direct subsidy, and it's done very specifically through reducing congestion, which the bus companies have made unambiguously clear to us over and over again is the single biggest issue militating against better buses, more reliable buses, faster buses, more connectivity throughout the entire county, and by the way, these services that the Council has mentioned are a very good example of why you can't think of transport on narrow artificial small boundaries, because transport moves.</p>
<p>42. COUNCILLOR JAMES BARLOW</p> <p>What is OCC doing to expediate the</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR SEAN GAUL, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE</p> <p>We are aware that the pupils at Bishopswood have outgrown the facilities at Maiden</p>

construction of new Bishopswood School which provides specialist education for children with complex needs across South Oxfordshire?

Context: Currently the education and wellbeing of some of the county's most vulnerable children are being compromised due to the lack of adequate facilities and outdoor space at the secondary site which is reported to be directly affecting pupils' ability to learn, self-regulate, and move safely around the environment. Staff are being forced to mitigate by providing increased one-to-one support, which is overcrowding classrooms, reducing pupils' independence, and creating an unsustainable staffing model. Accordingly pupils in Bishopswood Primary are now being assessed as unable to transition to the secondary site due to the situation there. Parents are therefore being directed to seek alternative placements in an already overstretched special-school system. This is worsening pressure across Oxfordshire's SEND provision and runs counter to both local and national commitments to inclusion and suitable specialist education.

Supplementary

Could you provide me with a comprehensive answer in January 2026?

Erleigh Secondary School, making it essential to find a suitable alternative for Key Stage 3 and 4 provisions. As you may know, both Bishopswood and Maiden Erleigh are academies operating under separate trusts: Bishopswood is managed by the Propeller Academy Trust, while Maiden Erleigh falls under the Maiden Erleigh Trust.

There have been preliminary discussions between the two trusts about the possibility of Bishopswood utilizing an unused teaching block at Maiden Erleigh. However, these talks have not yet reached a conclusion due to some challenges related to Maiden Erleigh Trust's plans for the overall site development. We have scheduled a joint meeting with the Chief Executives of both trusts in early November to delve deeper into the site development plans and explore the feasibility of using the vacant teaching block further. If this proposal proceeds, it will necessitate a comprehensive feasibility study to assess its suitability, costs, and timeline, and will be subject to relevant approvals.

Additionally, we are in the very early stages of evaluating an alternative site for the KS3 and KS4 provisions. This involves assessing its distance, capacity, and overall suitability. However, we cannot share specific details about this site yet, as discussions with the current occupants and the Department for Education are still in their infancy.

In the interim, we have planned further capital works to enhance the facilities and outdoor access at the current Maiden Erleigh site. These enhancements, aimed for completion by summer 2026 or earlier, if possible, include:

- Upgrading the WC/Hygiene areas.
- Creating intervention spaces.
- Revising the fence line to increase outdoor access.
- Re-decorating and upgrading classrooms occupied by Bishops Wood.

We understand the urgency and significance of this matter and remain committed to moving forward as swiftly as possible.

Response

Yes, in January 2026

43. COUNCILLOR TED FENTON, VICE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL

Would you please confirm how much Oxfordshire County Council has spent on marketing for the Oxford Congestion Charge scheme and provide a breakdown of spend?

COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

The council has so far (as of 22 October) spent a total of £52,642.32 on information and communications for the Oxford temporary congestion charge. This is broken down in the table below:

Item	Spend
Out of home - bus rears (Global)	£11,488.58
Out of home - poster sites along key routes (Bauer)	£10,240.00
Out of home - Westgate poster sites (JC Decaux)	£5,000.00
Google search ads	£2,921.73
Pull up banners	£102.00
Leaflets and posters for libraries, councillors, stakeholders	£1,191.00
Digital (Meta and Snapchat) ads	£2,728.25
Google display ads for people living in or regularly in Oxford	£781.87
Door to door drop Oxford + 10-15 mile radius for residents leaflet	£13,610.89
Printing DL residents leaflet for door to door drop	£4,578.00
TOTAL	£52,642.32

44. COUNCILLOR BETHIA THOMAS

The B4019 from Faringdon to Coleshill has long been in a bad state of repair, particularly around Badbury Hill. Continual flooding is causing damage to the road surface, and it is

COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

Officers met with the adjacent landowner (National Trust) back in July about the ditch that our highway drainage system outfalls into - it's heavily blocked, which is causing our drainage system to back-up and surcharge out onto the road causing damage.

<p>considered extremely hazardous to road users, particularly cyclists.</p> <p>There have been some investigations into this area, but I would like a full update as well as a timeline to any works planned in the future. Would the cabinet member be able to report on this?</p> <p>Supplementary It seems as if the timescales have slipped somewhat. Could you give me a revised timetable as soon as possible?</p>	<p>They (National Trust) agreed that it was their responsibility and provided assurance that they would clear the ditch to get our system working again. However, they stated that as they were doing some tree works in October, which would need traffic lights, and requested the ditch clearance works waited until then so they could utilise the traffic lights at the same time and save on disruption and costs. Officers agreed this on the premise that it's completed by the end of October.</p> <p>I can confirm that to complement the National Trust's ditch clearance work, the county council has a scheme (next financial year) to make some improvements to the drainage coming down the hill. Following that, once all of that is completed and we have a drainage system that doesn't block and flood the road, the road has been scheduled in for surface dressing. However, the surface dressing can only be carried out once all the drainage is sorted out.</p> <p>Slightly further down the hill travelling towards Coleshill, it's been advised that some 'grips' might be beneficial as water sits in the flatter areas and there's ample opportunity to take waters into narrow wooded area.</p> <p>Response Yes, happy to do that. I find myself saying more than once today that I regret that advertised time scales have slipped. The answer does in fact draw attention to an important point here, which is that often you know where water goes. Water doesn't really care who owns the ditch, or the culvert it's flowing down and often it's complicated working with other land owners</p>
<p>45. COUNCILLOR ANDREW CRICHTON</p> <p>I was out on Horsham Close in my division in Banbury a few weeks ago and spoke to a resident who claimed that their road has never been resurfaced. They moved into their property in 1983, and 42 years later, the road has had nothing but remedial works when it has been dug up for utilities. The road is in a parlous state and desperately needs</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The funding received by local authorities unfortunately means that not all roads can be resurfaced within the timescales we would prefer. As such, our policy is to take a risk-based approach. This considers the need for safety through inspections and repairs, alongside preventative measures such as large-scale resurfacing and surface treatments. This is not just an issue for Oxfordshire, but a national one, the latest ALARM survey shows that the average resurfacing cycle for all types of roads in England is every 103 years.</p>

<p>resurfacing. Does the Cabinet Member agree with me that 42 years is too long, and please can Horsham Close be added to the schedule for resurfacing?</p>	<p>This area is inspected, and the information gathered helps inform the works required. The next inspection is scheduled to take place during November, at which point all safety defects will be identified, along with any other future work that may be necessary.</p>
<p>46. COUNCILLOR ANDREW CRICHTON</p> <p>Missing buses are a frequent problem for public transport users in my division. The B9 bus runs every 20 minutes, and sometimes these buses are cancelled altogether and there are gaps. But Stagecoach does nothing to notify residents that their bus is cancelled, and in fact the bus will stay on the Stagecoach App. Please can the Cabinet Member for Transport Management raise this with Stagecoach, if he has not already done so? This is a significant problem and causes lots of issues for people who rely on public transport.</p> <p>Supplementary There's only one live screen and three usable shelters out of the 11 B9 bus stops in my division. Can officers please look at making this, the busiest bus route in North Oxfordshire (the B9) more accessible</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Officers will raise this matter with Stagecoach. The B9 bus in fact operates every 15 minutes between Hardwick and Banbury town centre. Alternative sources of real time information are available, such as bustimes.org where passengers can track their bus – and the Council has invested a significant amount of Government funding into new bus stop screens in Banbury which show arrival times of the next bus.</p> <p>Response I think that's a very, very fair point indeed and it you know, this is exactly the kind of thing that our very successful Bus Service Improvement Plan and enhanced partnership with the bus companies and with central government is there to deliver. So, I'm very happy to take that away.</p>
<p>47. COUNCILLOR IMADE EDOSOMWAN</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member for Adults outline what steps are being taken to improve access to adult mental health and wellbeing services across Oxfordshire, particularly considering increasing demand and the ongoing strain on</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR TIM BEARDER, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULTS</p> <p>Thank you for your enquiry regarding the steps being taken to improve access to adult mental health and wellbeing services across Oxfordshire.</p> <p>You have flagged the <i>increased demand</i> for mental health services and the <i>impact on community services</i>. Broadly, there is an increase in the number of referrals to mental</p>

<p>community-based support?</p>	<p>health services across children’s, adult, and older adult services in 2025/26. This is consistent with the national situation.</p> <p>In response, the Council is collaborating with the ICB, Oxford Health and voluntary and community sector partners on the <i>Mental Health Transformation Programme</i>, focusing on improving timely access to community-based support, particularly for those in crisis. The programme has delivered a 30% rise in the use of our mental health assessment service helpline and text services, enhancing access to advice and support for residents. The partnership with Voluntary Sector organisations remains key, and we are committed to expanding and strengthening their role delivering both community support and within our accommodation pathway.</p> <p>Working with Oxford Health we have developed several <i>Keystone Hubs</i> across Oxfordshire to increase access. Keystone Hubs form part of a broader strategy to improve timely access and support for our communities. The hubs are linked to GP surgeries and Oxford Health services and offer early intervention for people at risk of mental health problems in the High Street-see Keystone - Mental Health & Wellbeing hubs.</p> <p>The Mental Health Transformation is supporting improvements in the transition between Children and Young People’s services and supporting discharges from forensic services and inpatient units into adult community services. Initial data shows that Oxfordshire is 38% above the national average for improved access for adults and older people into community mental health services.</p> <p>If you have any further questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Ian Bottomley, Deputy Director for Integrated Commissioning.</p>
<p>48. COUNCILLOR IMADE EDOSOMWAN</p> <p>Since the Greater Leys bus route was changed, many elderly and disabled residents now must cross a busy, speeding road to reach the bus stop, making them feel unsafe and reducing their independence. As a result,</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The changes to service 3A were made by Oxford Bus Company on a commercial basis following sustained pressure from Greater Leys residents who did not want bus services operating on their roads, and there is no requirement to conduct any assessment of safety risks or impact on accessibility as a result.</p>

<p>some no longer use the bus, leading to greater isolation and difficulty accessing essential services. I would therefore like to ask the Cabinet Member for Transport Management: What assessment was made of the safety risks and impact on accessibility before the bus route change was implemented?</p>	<p>Alternative, very frequent, bus services to a range of destinations are available in Field Avenue and Pegasus Road.</p> <p>The Council would be happy to consider utilising some of the £2m annual Pride in Place funding recently awarded by the Government for Greater Leys on a trial minibus scheme for the area, should that be what residents decide.</p>
<p>49. COUNCILLOR GAVIN MCLAUCHLAN</p> <p>Please can the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation and/or our S151 Officer write to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Secretary of State at MHCLG to request a review of the way in which local government Treasury Management decisions are made, highlighting the need to materially prioritise the climate and ecological emergency with the regard to the CIPFA code of practice and statutory guidance. 2. CIPFA to request that they offer guidance as soon as possible to local government financial officers about how to take the climate and ecological emergency into account - at a level appropriate to the materiality and deadly seriousness of the situation - when making investment decisions, rather than the current necessary but insufficient security, liquidity and yield mandatory considerations which 	<p>COUNCILLOR DAN LEVY, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PROPERTY & TRANSFORMATION</p> <p>From time to time the treasury management portfolio may have de minimus/immaterial indirect exposure to the counterparties you set out below, either through externally managed funds or the AAA rated money market funds.</p> <p>The AAA rated money market funds are highly diversified, highly liquid, investment instruments which are an essential tool that the treasury team utilise for liquidity purposes. All of these funds have signed up to the UN charter on responsible investment. The only alternative to using these funds is to use direct bank deposit “call accounts”, which would significantly increase the credit exposure of the council, which is an unacceptable risk.</p> <p>The externally managed funds we invest in are a key contributor to our revenue budget. These investments are made from our long-term cash balances, and as such are able to be slightly riskier than our normally treasury investments, in order to deliver higher returns. It would not be in the best financial interests of the council to divest from these funds to avoid the possibility of immaterial exposure to holdings such as the ones you set out in the question.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt we would not directly invest in funds or companies which did not comply with our objectives and standards.</p> <p>I am not minded to write to the Secretary of State to request more central government restrictions on how we conduct our affairs. The law dictates that local authorities are required to “have regard” to the CIPFA Codes of Practice on Treasury Management and the Prudential Code. Any changes or additions to that requirement has to potential to cause conflict, or at worst, imprudent practices.</p>

inadequately account for the reality that a healthy physical environment is the bedrock of a stable society and functioning economy.

Context:

We have declared a climate and ecological emergency. We are investing considerably in line with this – e.g. our extensive decarbonisation efforts.

However, despite (and I emphasise this) officers' best efforts, due to tight MHCLG / CIPFA statutory guidelines, we invest material amounts in institutions whose activities undermine the very same decarbonisation efforts. Examples include those highlighted at County Council on 9th September; Citibank which is the second worst bank in terms of having the largest absolute increase in fossil fuel financing between 2023 and 2024. Indeed since 2021, Citibank has contributed to the \$1.6 trillion in financing for companies expanding fossil fuel operation, as well as HSBC, JP Morgan, Shell and BP.

In 2015 the ex-Governor of the Bank of England talked about the 'tragedy of the horizon' when it comes to short term financial investment decisions not being made in the (then) medium- and long-term context of climate change. We might argue the climate change context is now a short-term horizon too. And Lord Stern was ringing the alarm bells in 2006.

The current CIPFA codes have been written, and latterly tightened, to ensure that local authorities do not jeopardise access to their cash, from a security and liquidity point of view. The basic tenets of all treasury management is that an entity should have access to its cash when it is needed. The CIPFA codes emphasise these requirements well and already encourages councils to consider "green" investments when security and liquidity requirements have been met first and foremost.

Whilst we may have immaterial indirect exposure to banks, the treasury team purposefully avoids direct bank exposure. To compare, other councils (based on Arlingclose benchmarking as at 30 September 2025) have an average exposure of 8% of their treasury portfolio directly with banks.

The Treasury team have also been one of the first to issue a green bond to fund green objectives. The income generated by Treasury activity supports our spending, including on "green initiatives", and in line with our objective to make Oxfordshire Greener.

<p>Supplementary Please can you share with Council how much we indirectly or directly invest in the following organisations that work counter to our climate emergency efforts - Citibank, HSBC, JP Morgan, Shell and BP?</p>	<p>Response Happy to get back to you and very happy to meet you with officers to discuss the issues.</p>
<p>50. COUNCILLOR LEIGH RAWLINS</p> <p>A huge “unitarisation” change is being proposed to make the first major change to Local Government in 50 years. This is a large constitutional change with great governance issues for our residents.</p> <p>So why, by exception, are the County Council’s proposals not scheduled to come to Full Council?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>The Council has been invited to submit a proposal for local government reorganisation in accordance with Section 7 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and has been asked to submit a finalised plan by 28 November 2025. The approval of the Council’s final proposal is an executive function in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 Section 9D(2) which sets out that unless a function is by law reserved to another decision-making part of the Council then it is an executive function.</p> <p>As the decision regarding which proposal for LGR to submit to government is an executive function, the Council could not legally take a decision, and the view was taken that to take a decision at Council which was not binding on the Cabinet and could only provide a view to Cabinet would be confusing to the public.</p> <p>Rather than a formalised debate at Council, the Cabinet has chosen to engage with all Members on several occasions so that they can ask questions and contribute their views. LGR was included as part of the Member Induction process on 14 June 2025, was discussed in public at the Audit and Governance Committee on 16 July 2025 and at Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee as a single item meeting on 24 September 2025. It is due to return to the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 12 November 2025 before Cabinet takes its decision on 13 November 2025. In addition, I have been engaging at all stages with all Political Group Leaders at their regular meetings and have taken into consideration their views relating to key aspects of the proposal such as community engagement and Councillor numbers.</p> <p>Unlike other Councils in Oxfordshire all members have been provided with early sight of the proposal document being worked up and were able to attend an all-member briefing held on 29 October 2025, before the document was published.</p>

<p>Supplementary What on earth should central government make of a proposal without the support of its own Council, one that you dare not ask. Surely that is an indefensible travesty of governance and scrutiny?</p>	<p>Response I will ask the Leader to respond in writing as quickly as possible</p>
<p>51. COUNCILLOR JAMES BARLOW</p> <p>Please can the Cabinet Member reassure the parents, carers and staff of St Nicholas' Primary School Wallingford that from opening in 1st September 2026 there will be both a suitably-surfaced direct walking and wheeling route to the school's new site along PRow 390/16/30 from Fir Tree Avenue to the new Highcroft estate, and a safe crossing provided across Fir Tree Avenue adjacent to PRow 390/16/30.</p> <p>Ideally, the Head Teacher notes, the path and crossing would both actually be ready from end June 2026 to allow for the children and carers to use it for the transition days in July.</p> <p>Context Despite officers' best efforts, there is very slow progress on providing a workable solution to this, despite the issue first being raised by parents in October 2024. Working on this collaboratively since then, the developers and diocese that controls the school have agreed and planned in the change to allow their legs of this route to school – it is just OCC holding</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>We are exhausting options for solutions ahead of the school opening in September and are continuing to engage with the group, consisting of the County Cllr and the headteachers of the schools, so they are aware of updates. Options include a short-term solution of resurfacing it with aggregate and rolling it flat. Additionally, a request for CIL has been made towards the crossing over Fir Tree Avenue has been made with a decision made on that later this year.</p>

<p>things up. The current inadequate OCC planned route's implications are for increased road traffic, congestion, carbon emissions and decreased physical and mental health of the school community. The new site is very impressive, and it would be a shame for many more children than necessary to be driven to it. It is also now logged as follows on OCC systems: FixMyStreet Ref 8331023 & Countryside Access web Ref 251024422</p> <p>Supplementary Please can you share with us how lessons learned from this occurrence will be applied in the future to ensure something similar is much less likely to happen to impact further schools and hundreds of families?</p>	<p>Response Yes, no two circumstances are directly comparable of course, but yes</p>
<p>52. COUNCILLOR BRAD BAINES</p> <p>The Chief Executive has advised Councillors that we shall have to vacate County Hall by the end of 2026 and that Speedwell House will be available by April 2028. Can the Cabinet Member outline the accommodation options currently under consideration for a Council Chamber, Coroner's Court and our displaced staff?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAN LEVY, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PROPERTY & TRANSFORMATION</p> <p>Thank you for your question regarding the accommodation options following the planned vacation of County Hall by the end of 2026.</p> <p>We are currently exploring multiple viable options to ensure a smooth transition for all our services. In the coming weeks we have planned to engage with all service areas and Democratic/Coroner service to establish what needs must be met for a successful transition.</p> <p><i>1. Council Chamber</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Solution: Full Council meetings (approximately 7 per year) will be held in an alternative, procured venue during the interim period. The strategy is to identify and secure suitable space to ensure continuity of democratic functions. This may include using underutilised OCC buildings or partnering with external venues.

2. Coroner's Court

- Interim Solution: Identifying suitable temporary accommodation for the Coroner's Service is a priority. The strategy includes utilising existing OCC properties and, where necessary, to identify and secure suitable space to ensure service continuity. This may include using underutilised OCC buildings or partnering with external venues.
- Potential Sites: Options include repurposing spaces within the current estate, such as Westgate Collaboration Space and Kingsgate, which are being evaluated for their suitability to host the Coroner's Court and associated administrative functions.

3. Staff Placement:

- Interim Solution: Staff placement by the sale of County Hall will be accommodated across OCC's existing network of buildings. The strategy is to minimise unnecessary cost exposure by maximising use of underutilised assets. There are currently 850 bookable desks outside County Hall, spread across 15 operational buildings, with an average occupancy of 25%. By increasing this to 75% across 5 working days this would bring 425 desks back into regular use. Note: To put the 425 desk into perspective, Currently, the activity in County Hall has an occupancy of fewer than 100 desks on a low day and approximately 300 desks on a peak day during a working week.
- Agile Working: The council is implementing agile working practices, including hot desking (using the Kadence booking system), hybrid work options, and flexible scheduling. Staff will be able to work from various OCC sites across Oxfordshire or remotely, depending on their role and needs. Collaboration spaces and digital tools will support face-to-face teamwork and remote service delivery.
- Asset Redistribution: There is an ongoing audit and redistribution of furniture and assets to support the transition, with plans to re-distribute good quality items across the property portfolio.

4. Key Buildings Under Consideration

- Union Street: 60 workstations, currently 7% occupancy
- Samuelson House: 218 workstations, 15% occupancy

<p>Supplementary Can the cabinet member outline the distance each reallocated member of staff's new workstation will be from their current set up at County Hall? And what the impact will be on the ability of service teams to be based at the same location?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ron Groves House: 107 workstations, 18% occupancy • Bicester Courtyard: 65 workstations, 4% occupancy • Mount House: 56 workstations, 33% occupancy • Kingsgate: 40 workstations, 15% occupancy • Westgate Collaboration Space: 60 workstations • Rewley Road Fire Station: 30 workstations, currently not in use • Other sites: The Abbey Centre, The Forum, and various Children & Family Centres are also part of the wider estate being considered for interim use. <p><i>5. Program Board Actions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Programme Board is leading the identification and agreement of interim accommodation solutions, working closely with directors, heads of service, and partner organisations. • Staff well-being and opportunities for collaborative working and engagement will remain a focus and are central to the interim strategy. • The council is committed to supporting displaced staff and maintaining service delivery throughout the transition period <p>We are diligently working to develop a comprehensive plan which will be shared with councillors within in the next 3 months. This plan aims to ensure a seamless transition while addressing the needs of all involved services. There will be opportunities to revisit and realign our portfolio in light of the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The program team has already scheduled appointments to meet with directors and heads of service over the next four weeks to discuss and refine our approach.</p> <p>Response All I can say is that the property team is working very closely with officers and with unions and with team leaders to make sure that what the interim arrangements and the full-time arrangements for this Council are to deliver the services to residents that we all want.</p>
<p>53. COUNCILLOR BRAD BAINES</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p>

Council commissioned modelling estimates that in order for the Administration's congestion charge to secure its desired reduction in car traffic they require 10,053 additional journeys by Oxford City residents to be by bike, rather than by car as currently. This is far greater than the predicted 367 increase in daily users of Park & Rides by those coming in from outside Oxford. Given this, what steps is the Cabinet Member taking to understand the lived experience of those, largely in the South of the City, who currently rely on their cars to get around? Similarly, given these ambitious modal shift targets why was revenue spending on subsidising the journeys of those already coming into Oxford via the Park & Rides prioritised over capital investment in new cycling infrastructure?

The council's Active Travel Strategy includes the following targets for cycling:

- Countywide: increase the number of cycle trips per week from 600,000 (current baseline) to 1 million by 2031.
- Oxford: increase to 450,000 cycle trips a week by 2031 (from baseline of 300,000 – 50% increase)

Achieving these targets will require major investment in the city's cycling infrastructure. However, scope for infrastructure improvements is limited in many parts of Oxford because there is too much traffic and not enough space. We won't achieve our ambitious cycling targets unless we reduce traffic, which is exactly what the congestion charge aims to do.

Traffic reductions from the congestion charge are forecast to materialise on the roads with the highest numbers of cyclists. Existing and potential future cyclists will benefit from this, even without infrastructure changes.

Park and ride has been prioritised for the initial period because:

- It is immediately deliverable, with no lengthy design, consultation, procurement and approval processes
- It does not involve disruptive roadworks (which can themselves create congestion)
- It is scalable from an initial three-month scheme, which can be reviewed once income is more certain
- There is no need to understand the impacts of the congestion charge on traffic flows before implementing it
- There are benefits for Oxford and Oxfordshire residents:
- People living outside Oxford, regardless of where they live, will benefit from cheaper park and ride travel
- The traffic reduction benefits will be within Oxford It directly supports access to the city centre, the hospitals and other employment sites

<p>Supplementary How can the Cabinet Member have any confidence that the administration's congestion charge will deliver the required 10,000 additional cycle journeys per day within the city when he has failed to answer two questions at two subsequent Council meetings about how they have undertaken research into the lived experience of people who are currently struggling to change how they move around the city?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The top priority from the citizens' assembly, originally set in motion by Labour's budget amendments in 2024/25, was enhanced P&R, with 97% of assembly members voting for improved and cheaper P&R services. • Active travel infrastructure is also critically important for the wider strategy and targets, but: • It takes a long time (often years) to design, consult on, procure and implement infrastructure schemes • In many cases, we need to understand the effects of the congestion charge and subsequent traffic filters before designs can be fixed and major infrastructure changes implemented. In many cases, the congestion charge/traffic filters will change what's possible (the Weirs Lane/Abingdon Road junction being a good example) so designing schemes for the current traffic conditions risks abortive work and missed opportunities • Infrastructure changes are disruptive and once committed, cannot be scaled up or down easily – meaning certainty about income is essential • For the cost of the free P&R bus scheme, we could only deliver modest active travel improvements, probably only on a single road. The benefits would be localised and felt by a relatively low number of people. <p>The council has listened to consultation feedback from across the city and county to understand the experience of all road users. The council has conscientiously considered a total of over 15,000 responses to the traffic filters and congestion charge consultations combined over the last six years and made major changes to its proposals in response.</p> <p>Response I'm not sure I have failed to answer that. I mean the way these projections and targets are arrived at and in the way they are monitored is all part of the monitoring data for the scheme.</p>
<p>54. COUNCILLOR BRAD BAINES</p> <p>The Regulation 28 Report of 4th April by</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The National Trails team, hosted by Oxfordshire County Council, will continue using</p>

Coroner Darren Salter into the death of Iffley Fields resident Polly Friedhoff, following injuries sustained near Iffley Lock on 20 November 2022, cited that whilst "the speed of the cyclist was not excessive in this case" he possessed serious concerns about the width and use of the shared use towpath. Whilst the steps being taken by the County Council around improved signage, including pedestrian priority markings, are welcome, the limited one-off £10,000 project budget prevents any further action being taken. Will the Cabinet Member consider funding regular contracted maintenance of the hedges and undergrowth bordering the path, widening the path where possible to improve safety and using tactile surfaces to remind cyclists of their speed on this popular shared route?

Supplementary

Can the Cabinet Member explain why he's unwilling to consider contracted maintenance of the vegetation south of Saint Catherine's College Boathouse, which is omitted from his answer, especially when the collision happened South of this location at Iffley Lock and the impact of overgrown vegetation was specifically cited within the coroner's report.

contractors to clear approximately 950 meters between Folly Bridge and St Catherine's Boathouse once during the summer. Additionally, the section between Folly Bridge and Hinksey Stream will be managed by volunteers as part of a heavy winter cut program, which includes cutting back vegetation to improve sight lines.

We appreciate the request for widening the Thames Towpath in certain sections and adding markings to improve awareness for both pedestrians and cyclists using this popular route. As the Councillor is aware, the county council is currently developing design proposals for markings that would be painted at regular intervals along the path to remind users of Pedestrian Priority.

Significant work to widen the path to 3 meters, extend, and improve the surface quality of the route between Folly Bridge was undertaken in 2018. While we understand the desire to further widen the path, along certain sections, it is not practicable possible and would also require co-operation from landowners.

Capital works to repair existing eroded sections of riverbank have just been completed from Folly Bridge to the Isis Farmhouse, with an estimated cost of approximately £650,000. Following these works, two newly eroded sections have been identified, with anticipated repairs expected in spring/summer 2026, outside of the flooding/high river flow season.

Improving cycle provision on alternative routes across the city is also relevant to establishing a more sustainable balance of use on the towpath. A fundamental first step to achieving this is reducing traffic congestion across the city. Measures like the temporary congestion charge and planned trial traffic filters aim to address this issue.

Response

The original question is will the cabinet member consider funding, you know it's not my job to allocate funding from within a budget. Certainly, hedge and verge maintenance is a significant consideration in every budget round and will be again.

<p>55. COUNCILLOR GARETH EPPS</p> <p>In September the Leader stated that it is not the position of the County Council to form a Combined Authority with Swindon, saying 'Swindon is not therefore an obvious fit with Berkshire and Oxfordshire..... my commitment is to progressing the partnership between Oxfordshire and Berkshire as a preferred future MSA'.</p> <p>This is the correct position as Swindon shares none of the services that would fall under a CMA with Oxfordshire, requiring wasteful and costly reorganisation. It is understood that only the two Labour majority authorities in the Thames Valley favour this.</p> <p>With this in mind, why is it now being reported that the authority is still discussing and spending resources on an inefficient proposal to bring Oxfordshire and Swindon together?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>My statement in September remains the formal position of the Council: our future Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA) is one that strengthens the partnership between Oxfordshire and Berkshire.</p> <p>The region's leaders have agreed to prioritise governance and the practical implementation of an MSA, setting aside the question of geography for now. This approach aims to secure influence and open discussions with government until we can have a more in-depth conversation on geography. Leaders are aware that the government is intending to publish spatial planning maps in the next few months. Until those boundaries are confirmed, the Leaders want to continue to explore all options, ensuring we are ready for any scenario. Recent articles may have given a different impression, implying that a decision has already been made regarding the inclusion of Swindon.</p> <p>I would not agree that we have been spending resources in inefficient discussions to date. The work we have undertaken has objectively assessed the economic, demographic, and governance implications of various configurations of an MSA. These are not commitments but preparatory steps to ensure any future proposal is robust and defensible and it is important we have sufficient evidence to make appropriate decisions. So, while Oxfordshire County Council's position has not changed, I believe Leaders have together taken a responsible position on governance: preparing for multiple scenarios, engaging constructively with neighbouring authorities, and ensuring Oxfordshire's interests are protected in any future devolution arrangement.</p>
<p>56. COUNCILLOR GARETH EPPS</p> <p>In two months, we have seen proposals come forward for between 9,000 and 13,500 new homes at Heyford Park, OxSRFI with 20,000 additional daily vehicle movements - many of them HGVs - and Puy du Fou with its fanciful claims that visitors will arrive by public</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>The Cabinet have provisionally allocated up to £10 million from EZ funding to progress OxRAIL 2040 Plan for Rail priorities. These priorities include the potential development of new stations such as the one in Ardley. Once the Cabinet endorses/adopts the rail plan at the November Cabinet meeting, we will then develop a more detailed programme of work considering available funding. We are committed to undertake work to progress work on a potential Ardley Station as soon as we are able, and we will work with our</p>

<p>transport. Should any of these go ahead, the reopening of a station at Ardley will become essential to prevent gridlock on a rural road network in what would all otherwise be car-led developments of the type favoured by the current Government. Further work is urgently needed to develop plans for any station, in particular in light of the potential for OxSRFI to jeopardise station delivery. Will the Cabinet Member assure me that funding is in place to progress the outline business case without further delay?</p> <p>Supplementary We are in a race against time here. Will the lead member agree to set up a meeting between senior officers and myself to ensure that we don't allow developers to wheedle out of their obligations to fund public transport given the scale of what's happening in the Cherwell Valley area?</p> <p>Make sure that we don't miss the opportunity to secure meaningful developer obligations on the various live planning applications that we can get, that they are delivered and avoid gridlock.</p>	<p>partners and stakeholders (including developers and the rail industry) to understand the best way forward.</p> <p>Response I can assure him it's much on the agenda of the police officers and we will do all we can to get a decent S106 provision across the various applications if S106 is correct because I think some of them are in the Bus Service Improvement Plan, so we'll see what we come up with.</p>
<p>57. COUNCILLOR EMMA GARNETT</p> <p>Many of my residents do not have a direct bus to the train station, due to limited space at the site. This is a huge hindrance for joined-up public transport in Oxford and is particularly hostile to disabled people.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>As is set out in the forthcoming OxRAIL 2040: Plan for Rail, which will be considered by Cabinet late this month, our vision is for Oxford Station to act as the primary hub of the Oxfordshire Metro concept, setting the standard for connected, low-carbon travel. A new station is an identified priority and will be essential for the additional services and connections that will revolutionise transport across the county.</p>

<p>Will the Cabinet Member join me in agreeing that we should be pushing National Rail to deliver a bus hub rather than a multi-storey car park by the train station, and support the Oxon4Buses campaign?</p> <p>Supplementary Does the Cabinet Member support the Oxfordshire for Buses campaign for a bus station on Becket Street car park?</p>	<p>Our policy position is that active travel and bus connections must be prioritised at the station, and car parking must be minimised. This is in the best interests of all users, as well as other local residents, and by maximising train use is also in the interests of the rail industry. Through the development of the plans for Oxford Station, our officers will be working closely with Network Rail and its partners, to ensure that all options are considered in line with that policy position. To that end, officers will be seeking an early meeting with the appointed architects and engineers.</p> <p>Our officers will continue to collaborate with Network Rail, colleagues at Oxford City Council and other parties including bus companies and user groups, to ensure that Oxford Station becomes a landmark civic space, providing the gateway which the city deserves while ensuring the council's user hierarchy is reflected in the station design. Finally, once concluded, plans will be fully tested through the formal planning process.</p> <p>Response I think you heard my response to the petition. We're very, very keen to get as much bus provision at Oxford station and as little parking provision as possible. That will have to be a negotiation through all the stakeholders involved in this quite complex project. But that is our aim. We will have to see how the future pans out.</p>
<p>58. COUNCILLOR ROBIN JONES</p> <p>Given the Council's statutory duty to coordinate roadworks with the explicit objective of minimising disruption to residents and other road users as established by Section 59 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) and Section 16(1) of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA), could the Cabinet member please examine the situation of the residents of Garsington where they are currently experiencing the three key roads, being closed for repairs, opened and then</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The current roadworks on Garsington Road are indeed extensive and phased as part of larger projects aimed at upgrading the gas main and enhancing the electrical supply for both the city and nearby villages. These upgrades are crucial, with supplies being drawn from the main station at Blackberry Lane and the Cowley sub-station.</p> <p>Extensive coordination efforts have been made for the phases on the B480 extending into Grenoble Road, with traffic management being overseen by Oxford United Football Club (OUFC) to ensure necessary adjustments on match days. We also offer incentives to utilities to collaborate on their work, though this depends on the location of their services. The continual growth and reliability of these services are vital for our communities, making this work essential. The current Thames Water works are a full</p>

<p>closed again, at a frequency greater than once a month over the past year. This is causing unbearable stress on a large parish with a high-level of baseline transport connectivity challenges due to its geography. As the Code of Practice, especially Part 3 of the TMA, dealing with Permit Schemes, allows highway authorities to require all utility companies and others to apply for a permit to work on the street, would the Cabinet member's team please initiate some forward planning and much needed coordination of road closures by communication with the main utilities?</p>	<p>mains replacement which will ensure continuous supply and prevention of leaks on old infrastructure. Whilst we realise this is inconvenient the work is much needed to ensure supplies through the coming months.</p>
<p>59. COUNCILLOR ROBIN JONES</p> <p>As the assessment of the proposed cycle route into the South of Oxford via the Roman Road route from Berinsfield appears positive and possible, would the Cabinet Member please now share the outline route and plan with residents, or at the earliest feasible opportunity, in order to facilitate maximum community support and engagement with this hugely positive active travel proposition?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Feasibility work on the off-road cycle route between Berinsfield and Oxford (which mainly follows existing bridleways and the Roman road), has been completed and OCC is in the process of commissioning the next design stage. Stakeholder engagement has taken place, including discussions with user groups and relevant landowners, and further engagement is expected in the next stage with the aim of producing practical, effective and fully costed designs. The design work is funded by Active Travel England but there is no funding currently allocated for construction. Wider public consultation will be undertaken when suitable funding streams for construction work are identified and in the meantime the scheme can be added to OCC's website to maintain community awareness.</p>
<p>60. COUNCILLOR ROBIN JONES</p> <p>As the juggernaut of HIF1 and its associated mass housing heaves into view, we note the fact that, 'The project will facilitate new and enhanced bus services and will also feature 19km of new walking and cycleways.' The</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>The walking, wheeling, and cycling infrastructure in the HIF1 scheme is an essential element of the project and designed to a very high quality using modern design guidance, and is integral to the addressing the walking, wheeling and cycling severance currently experienced in the area, enabling many more trips to be taken by sustainable modes for all journey purposes. The design of the walking, wheeling and cycling</p>

<p>artists' impression displayed at the current public information roadshow demonstrates a thin metal barrier between the major road with vehicles of all sizes travelling at speeds of 40 mph plus, and families on bikes. Will the Cabinet Member make assurances that the active travel provision for cycling is absolutely fit for purpose from the start and also permits future expansion?</p> <p>Supplementary Please ensure that the safety audits that you refer to in your answer are totally fit for purpose and that the 19 kilometres of cycling and walkways that are accompanying the HIF1 Road are properly fit for purpose and safe and separated from the main carriageways, because the buffers shown in the current artist's impressions are seriously terrifying.</p>	<p>infrastructure differs along the scheme depending on current and future anticipated needs, including the location of known future housing and employment developments. The designs have undergone safety audits and will continue to be audited at different stages of the project, including the consideration of buffers between the vehicles and the walking, wheeling, cycling infrastructure. The scheme is a key part of the Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which also shows potential additional walking, wheeling and cycling routes that could connect with the scheme, which are being investigated in other projects.</p> <p>Response I think it became clear in the answer that clearly there is a balance to be found here. We want really safe provision as the road opens, but we also want to keep it flexible for future plans as well. All the plans that have currently gone through a huge amount of legislation have been approved as safe, so that is what will be built, but there will be a requirement for flexibility to be able to change the road layout as we roll into the future.</p>
<p>61. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON</p> <p>In July I brought a question to full council asking about support for local parish councils for the installation of speed indicator devices. Cllr Gant indicated that we could look at that and that he would contact me with his thoughts. I have yet to hear anything on that, so I'd appreciate a response as soon as possible. In the meantime, I've been looking at the TVP Joint Operations Unit statistics on speeding enforcement across the county and it appears that, by an order of magnitude, Cherwell and West Oxfordshire had the highest level of fixed and mobile camera</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The current 20mph policy sets out that any additional supporting measures for 20mph would be expected to be funded by the local councils participating in the project. We are funding from the OCC 20 project changing existing VAS signs made redundant on the change from 30mph to 20mph and this is being progressed.</p>

<p>offences recorded in April to May. Yet the number of mobile enforcement actions were actually REDUCED in June, leading to a consequential reduction in recorded offences. This flies in the face of common sense and suggests a lack of joined up thinking by TVP and the JOU. I also know that none of the areas I have previously identified in Kidlington have seen any additional enforcement actions. These include Cromwell Avenue, Hampden Drive, Bicester Road, Yarnton Road/Sandy Lane, Morton Avenue, Almond Avenue, Hazel Avenue and The Broadway. Could the Cabinet member please write to the PCC and suggest he responds more appropriately to the JOU statistics which show a clear need for further enforcement in Cherwell, particularly in these areas?</p> <p>Supplementary Unfortunately, it completely misses the point of the question. I asked. If the Cabinet Member could contact TVP and ask them to take appropriate speed enforcement action based on their own statistics, will he do that?</p>	<p>Response Yes. And I'm on record as asking TVP for more assistance and more public support for speed enforcement, as indeed do other Members of this Council.</p>
<p>62. COUNCILLOR IZZY CREED</p> <p>What is Oxfordshire County Council doing to fix the issue of the dangerous junction by Longford Park Community Centre?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>To confirm that Longford Park Road is still within the ownership of the developer consortium. I can confirm that following recommendations in the Road Safety Audit Stage 3 the developer consortium has installed give-way markings and signage on the two minor approach arms and warning signs in advance of the junction on Longford Park Road that direct the main routing of traffic. Officers will continue to monitor the junction with the developer consortium as we endeavour to progress to adoption.</p>

<p>Supplementary I still don't really think it's satisfactory, given the fact that the developers will refuse to do anything further on the junction because the county deemed the current junction to be safe. The crossing where the pedestrian crossing is, was only made because of the head teacher at the school intervening. Will Councillor Gant meet me to discuss this? As the current situation is unacceptable.</p>	<p>Response Yes, always happy to meet members in their own divisions and look at issues of this kind. There's no substitute for seeing things for yourself. Of course, as the answer says road safety audit stages have been followed but if the councillor and particular members of the school community have concerns about that, then I'm extremely happy to discuss that with our officers.</p>
<p>63. COUNCILLOR IZZY CREED</p> <p>What action is Oxfordshire County Council taking to stop motorists driving through the pedestrian area in Banbury Town centre?</p> <p>Supplementary OK, I think that the ANPR really needs to be addressed and what steps are they actually looking to see how many cars are going into the pedestrian area without driving into the non-pedestrianised zone.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Currently the enforcement of entry into the pedestrian area is the responsibility of the police. This location is on our list for potential enforcement by ANPR and we will be investigating whether there is a need for it.</p> <p>Response Do I agree? And the answer is yes, I do. It's not the only place in the county where that is the case.</p>