

CABINET – 15 MARCH 2016
ITEM 4 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Question received from the following Members:

1. From Councillor Hards to Councillor Tilley

“The Family and Childcare Trust has recently reported that more than 41,000 three-year-olds are being denied the free childcare to which they are entitled, because more and more of local authorities are struggling to provide funded places. Please would the Cabinet Member for Children Education and Families tell us whether sufficient places are available across Oxfordshire and, if not, what is the geographical distribution of the areas of shortage? “

Response from Councillor Tilley

“Local Authorities have a statutory duty to secure sufficient early years provision so that families can access their funded early education entitlement. Some children are eligible to access a funded place from the term after their second birthday. All children are entitled to a funded early education place from the term after their third birthday. This means that numbers each term will fluctuate.

Across the county over the last three terms the sufficiency for three and four year olds has been:

Term	Three and four year old population	Published places available in schools	Actual places taken up in private and voluntary sector	Sufficiency of places
Spring 2015	11071	4712	7964	114%
Summer 2015	13155	4712	9515	108%
Autumn 2015	8254	4712	6113	131%

There are some wards in the county which suffer shortfalls. This could be due to provider closures, quality issues or movements of children across the county. These changes are monitored and capacity building takes place where shortfalls are likely to be ongoing.”

Places needed have been calculated from the projected population data for 2015. This is an update, produced in May 2015 to the January 2014 ward forecasts, obtained from housing led population forecasts available at <http://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/population-0>.

In order to reflect when children become eligible for places (the term after a child turns 3) a calculation has been made from the projected population figures to arrive at an estimate of the number of eligible children each term. In the absence of other readily available data the calculation has assumed that monthly birth rates are consistent across the year.

2. From Councillor Hards to Councillor Nimmo Smith

"Would the Cabinet Member please confirm when the temporary patching work on the A4130 Northern Perimeter Road Didcot at Hopkins Bridge will be completed and explain what steps are being taken to find a permanent solution to the problem which I understand has arisen because of unexplained movement in the bridge abutment ?"

Response from Councillor Nimmo Smith

"The patching is required as the fill behind the piled abutment bank-seat appears to be settling due to slope stability and/or scour issues. It is programmed to be complete by the end of March but clearly programmes at this time of year are weather dependent.

The nature of this sort of failure means that movement is likely to be relatively gradual. The temporary patching will take out the worst of the unevenness and some uneven road signs will be out on site to warning drivers of the deformation. We will continue to monitor the site and consider and prioritise any permanent solution based on that information and as part of our ongoing asset management strategy."

3. From Councillor Tanner to Councillor Nimmo Smith

"Many residents in my division feel that NSL are no longer bothering to issue penalty charge notices to people who park on double yellow lines or park incorrectly in the Grandpont controlled parking zone. Could you tell me how many PCNs have been issued in my Isis division in the last year and how that number compares with the previous year?"

Response from Councillor Nimmo Smith

"Please find below the information requested for the last 2 years for visits to South Oxford Controlled Parking Zone and an average over the period.

It should also be noted that unless a complaint is received we do not enter the zone after 17.00 hrs to 09.00 hrs and at weekends due to an agreement made when we first set up Decriminalised parking (now known as Civil Enforcement). If we receive a complaint we will issue to any vehicle parked not in compliance with the regulations.

VDA = vehicle driven away
PCN = Penalty charge Notice

1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015:	
Visits	7873
Vehicles logged	3264
PCN's issued	664
VDA's	269

1 April 2015 to 10 March 16:

Visits	7611
Vehicles logged	3078
PCN's issued	475
VDA's	233

These figures are 3 weeks short compared to the previous year if you add the average over the 49 weeks they are as follows.

Visits	8076
Vehicles logged	3266
PCN's issued	504
VDA's	247"