

CABINET – 21 JANUARY 2020

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Questions	Answers
<p>1. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY</p> <p>As local member for Ruscote, could I ask the Cabinet Member for Environment (including transport) to work with road agreements officers including safety officers, the local member for Ruscote and Bloor Homes Planning Management to make sure that the puffin crossing by North Oxfordshire Academy School is operational by early 2020 and look at a future strengthened road agreements process to make sure the scenario we now have in Banbury Ruscote doesn't happen in the future on safety grounds'</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Road Agreements expect the remedial works at the pedestrian crossing to be completed as soon as possible and for the crossing to be commissioned by our Traffic Signals team and switched-on at the earliest opportunity in the new year. We will continue to update the local councillor and other interested parties on progress.</p> <p>We will look at the issues caused with this puffin crossing installation and check our procedures to ensure this will not happen again. There were delays in the implementation of this scheme which led to confusion over the consultation and gaining the Cabinet approval required for the pedestrian crossing. Fortunately, the consultation and approval have not delayed completion of the works at the pedestrian crossing. The delays which we continue to experience are a result of a stretched contractor, struggling to gain sufficient road space on a busy A-road in the lead up to Christmas.</p> <p>The pedestrian crossing is only a small part of a sizable S278 scheme, with all the works originally programmed for school summer holidays. Unfortunately, the crossing was the final element of the programme. Road Agreements are always cautious when our highway schemes involve carrying out works to existing pedestrian crossing points, (particularly around schools). But in this case, we should not have bowed to pressure and allowed any works to be completed at the crossing outside of school holidays. We should have isolated the crossing from the rest of the scheme and insisted that it was installed, commissioned and switched on within a strict time frame at a later date (i.e. during the Christmas holiday).</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>2. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member for Environment (including transport) inform me, as local member for Banbury Ruscote, of the current timeframe for consideration of lowering the speed limit outside North Oxfordshire Academy School, A422, Stratford Road, Banbury from 30 MPH to 20 MPH. ‘</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>While I’m supportive of 20mph speed limits, these are only progressed where the proposal is judged to comply with the Department for Transport (DfT) guidelines on setting speed limits. A speed survey will be required as part of the assessment, which will also identify if supporting traffic calming measures may be required. For proposals which are judged to be compliant and supported by local funding being available for the project, the statutory consultation on the speed limit reduction will then be carried out. A lower cost alternative to a 20mph speed limit is the provision of advisory signs that indicate to drivers that they should not exceed 20mph when school flashing amber lights are displayed at the start and end of the school day; no consultation is required for such signs.</p>
<p>3. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member for Environment (including transport) agree with other road resurfacing priorities in Banbury Ruscote like the Fairway Road, Edmonds road, Warwick Road and cul-de-sacs Glanville Gardens that need resurfacing treatment? That in essence if Fairfax Close and Braithwaite Close, were resurfaced correctly by OCC contractors the first time around, other roads from the schedule may have been resurfaced in 2020/2021 in Ruscote. Consequently, having to resurface Fairfax Close and Braithwaite Close twice has cost Oxfordshire</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>A decision was taken by Skanska and their sub-contractor to carry out the work of resurfacing of Fairfax Close and Braithwaite Close off Bretch Hill as planned, as the materials had arrived and the forecast was for light rain. However, the rain came in earlier and heavier than expected leading to some of the work having to be redone. I can confirm this will be done at no cost to the council and understand this work is due to be carried out in March 2020.</p> <p>Once the 2020/21 budgets have been finalised and approved, there are plans to structurally patch The Fairway and minor patch Edmonds Road. I understand that Warwick Road is on the list of schemes that officers will be investigating for inclusion on future years programme and I will ask officers to also investigate and consider works on Glanville Gardens.</p>

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County Council money that could have gone on other resurfacing projects in Banbury Ruscote.																											
<p>4. COUNCILLOR TIM BEARDER</p> <p>What steps are being taken by the County council to improve secondary education in East Oxford now that two academies have been declared 'inadequate' by Ofsted?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURAL SERVICES</p> <p>There are 4 Secondary schools in East Oxford all of whom are Academies.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="936 592 2047 762"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">School</th> <th rowspan="2">Type</th> <th colspan="2">Ofsted</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Current NOR</th> <th>Date of last inspection</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="4">Secondary schools</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cheney School</td> <td>Academy converter</td> <td>1480</td> <td>21/03/18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>St Gregory the Great Catholic</td> <td>Academy converter</td> <td>1099</td> <td>16/10/19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Oxford Academy</td> <td>Academy sponsor led</td> <td>1013</td> <td>27/11/19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oxford Spires Academy</td> <td>Academy sponsor led</td> <td>1209</td> <td>28/11/17</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>St Gregory The Great Catholic School (All through school - i.e. a primary and secondary combined) was judged Inadequate in October 2019 prior to this it had been judged Inadequate two years previously.</p> <p>16th March 2017 – Inadequate 25th March 2015 – Requires improvement 4th April 2013 (converted to an Academy) 15th September 2011 – GOOD 15th Jan 2009 - satisfactory 9th February 2006 Satisfactory</p>	School	Type	Ofsted		Current NOR	Date of last inspection	Secondary schools				Cheney School	Academy converter	1480	21/03/18	St Gregory the Great Catholic	Academy converter	1099	16/10/19	The Oxford Academy	Academy sponsor led	1013	27/11/19	Oxford Spires Academy	Academy sponsor led	1209	28/11/17
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	<p data-bbox="931 221 2036 437">The Oxford Academy was inspected on 26th and 27th November 2019. The report is to be published on Friday 17th January 2020. The Council and other key partners have produced a single action plan, which represents an offer to David Terry (Acting Headteacher) and for the Interim Academy Board (IAB) to consider. David joined the Academy on 1 January 2020. A copy of the action plan is attached:</p> <ul data-bbox="981 477 2036 1299" style="list-style-type: none"> • a meeting was held on Tuesday 14th January 2020 with David Terry (Acting Headteacher), Tony Wilson (Diocesan Director of Education), Maria Godfrey (Head of Early Help, MASH and Assessment), Kim James (Head of Service Learning and School Improvement) and Chris Hilliard (Consultant Deputy Director Children’s Services – Education). That meeting agreed in principle the offer and it is now for the Academy to reflect on how this can help it discharge its safeguarding responsibilities. • the Directorate Leadership Team will discuss the latest position on Thursday 23rd January 2020. • Council officers will meet with the Regional Schools Commissioner on Thursday 23rd January 2020. This is a routine meeting with discussion in relation to Oxfordshire schools and reference will be made to The Oxford Academy and rebrokering. • Officers have offered to meet monthly with senior leaders and Interim Academy Board (IAB) member(s) to discuss progress in relation to the offer document and hopefully seeing improving outcomes. • The Regional Schools Commissioner may agree the rebrokering of the Oxford Academy to a different Trust by 1st April 2020 or 1st September 2020. • It is likely that an Ofsted monitoring visit will take place within three months of the publication of the original report on 17th January 2020. <p data-bbox="931 1339 2036 1410">The LA is meeting with the RSC regarding St Gregory The Great Catholic School. That meeting is expected to take place later this month.</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>The LA has also offered in East Oxford free training on mathematics, English, disadvantaged pupils, early years, service pupils, looked after pupils, Special Educational Needs and Ofsted inspection readiness.</p> <p>Since June 2019, the LA has been running half termly 'East Oxford Headteacher meetings' to share good practice; approximately 25 Headteachers attend each session. These are for both maintained and academy Headteachers.</p> <p>Role of the Regional school commissioner</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/regional-schools-commissioners/about</p> <p><i>Regional schools commissioners (RSCs) act on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education and are accountable to the National Schools Commissioner.</i></p> <p><i>RSCs work with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to provide oversight and scrutiny of academy trusts' performance, in line with the established framework for academy trusts.</i></p> <p><i>RSCs also work closely with a number of partners.</i></p> <p><i>RSCs' main responsibilities include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>intervening in academies that Ofsted has judged inadequate</i> • <i>intervening in academies where governance is inadequate</i> • <i>deciding on applications from local-authority-maintained schools to convert to academy status</i> • <i>intervening in maintained schools judged to be inadequate by</i>

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	<p><i>Ofsted by providing them with support from a strong sponsor</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>encouraging and deciding on applications from sponsors to operate in a region</i> • <i>taking action to improve poorly performing sponsors</i> • <i>advising on proposals for new free schools</i> • <i>advising on whether to cancel, defer or enter into funding agreements with free school projects</i> • <i>deciding on applications to make significant changes to academies and free schools</i> • <i>taking decisions on the creation and growth of multi-academy trusts</i> • <i>offering support to maintained schools and academies judged to require improvement by Ofsted</i> • <i>deciding on the transfer of an academy from one trust to another.</i>
<p>5. COUNCILLOR TIM BEARDER</p> <p>How long have any schools in Oxfordshire been in special measures with the ESFA?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURAL SERVICES</p> <p>RSCs work with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to provide oversight and scrutiny of academy trusts' performance, in line with the established framework for academy trusts.</p> <p>When a maintained school (LA) is judged Inadequate it is subject to an Academy Order from the RSC, once it joins an Academy Trust the 'Inadequate' label 'disappears'. The process of academisation usually takes 9 months.</p> <p>Northfield Special school (maintained) has taken 14 months and joins The Gallery Trust on 1st February 2020.</p>

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	<p>St Gregory the Great Catholic School was first judged Inadequate on 16th March 2017 thus it has been adequate for almost three years.</p> <p>16th March 2017 – Inadequate 25th March 2015 – Requires improvement 4th April 2013 (converted to an Academy) 15th September 2011 – GOOD 15th Jan 2009 - Satisfactory 9th February 2006 - Satisfactory</p>
<p>6. COUNCILLOR TIM BEARDER</p> <p>Carterton School has one of the largest deficits of any maintained school in England. What steps are being taken to reduce this deficit without impairing the education received by the pupils at the school?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURAL SERVICES</p> <p>The Local Authority (LA) finance directorate is working closely with the Carterton Community College Governors. The school and LA have been offered the service of a Department for Education SRMA (School Resource Management Adviser). This work should start in the Spring Term 2020. Both LA finance & education teams are working with the school.</p> <p>https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/school-revenue-balances/</p> <p>School revenue balances (LA schools)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost one in three (30.3 per cent) of local authority (LA) maintained secondary schools were in deficit in 2017-18 – almost four times that of 2014 (8.1 per cent). • The average secondary school deficit was nearly half a million pounds (£483,569). • Significantly, there is a marked contrast between the proportion of secondary schools and primary schools in deficit – only 8 per cent

Questions	Answers
	<p>of primaries were in 2017-18.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some schools have very large deficits: 1 in every 10 LA secondary school has a deficit of over 10 per cent of their total income. • The proportion of special schools in deficit has nearly doubled since 2014 (to 10.1%), with an average deficit of nearly a quarter of a million pounds (£225,298).
<p>7. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Last summer Oxfordshire County Council announced that Kennington Bridge would need to be replaced. This is delaying the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme. As I write this question, the Environment Agency has declared a flood alert in my division and many residents are now facing an anxious time. Why are we <i>still waiting</i> to be told when work on the bridge will begin?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>This is a complex scheme that has a number of high-level constraints such as: overhead power lines, impacts on the A34, Network Rail assets, a Thames Water main and two water courses.</p> <p>Now the bridge needs replacing there is an opportunity to ensure it is designed in the best way possible to incorporate it into the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme. We will be working with the Environment Agency together to build the flood scheme and the replacement bridge at the same time. This will ensure the best use of public money, as efficiencies will be made wherever possible and it will minimise any disruption to the road network and local communities.</p> <p>Enabling works for the bridge replacement will start in 2020, to ensure that we can maintain traffic flow whilst the bridge is demolished and then reconstructed. The first part of the work will be to demolish the bridge, which will be done in two halves, starting with the northern side. As soon as the timescales for the bridge replacement are confirmed, we will let you know and announce this publicly.</p> <p>The unforeseen replacement of the bridge provides an opportunity to improve</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>this stretch of the road network and to improve and increase the infrastructure for more public transport into the city. We will also be using this as an opportunity to encourage commuters to utilise alternative methods of transport during the works to help minimise the impact on the network.</p>
<p>8. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>How are we proposing to use the new powers in the Bus Services Act (2017) and have we applied for money from the £220m bus strategy fund announced by the government in September 2019?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>We do not yet have any proposals to use particular Bus Service Act powers, or yet applied for funding (although we are in discussion with the DfT about what the best funding opportunities would be).</p> <p>The main reason for this is we are continuing discussions with operators about the way forward for buses in Oxfordshire, which includes a joint workshop on vision, strategy and priorities being held this month. This will help determine our strategy for buses to be taken forward as part of the new Local Transport & Connectivity Plan.</p>
<p>9. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>The Pick-me-up bus service has been a godsend for many people in the City. It removes a lot of cars from our congested streets and reduces air pollution. If the service is to continue, it will need some help. Is there anything we can do?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>The County Council have previously given support financial Pick Me Up service through some s106 money and reduction in concessionary fares. However, Pick Me Up is has not demonstrated that it can be commercially viable and therefore not seen as a sustainable service in the long term without significant subsidy. The main issues are that a city demand responsive service is sensitive to congestion and a varying passenger level. We have seen rising ticket prices for passengers to try and increase revenue levels but there are concerns this isn't enough to keep the service running.</p> <p>The County Council has identified that there is a wider public transport</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>strategy needed to support the Eastern Arc of Oxford, which is being looked at in more detail through the Connecting Oxford proposal. It has been identified that rapid transit bus routes connecting the Oxford Arc will be provided with or without Connecting Oxford in place and the County Council have already been securing s106 contributions to support this service. The new connectivity through the Eastern Arc rapid transit bus route will give passengers both the reliability and certainty of travel times and allow the bus service capacity to grow with demand and increase frequency on the eastern arc routes.</p> <p>If the Connecting Oxford proposals proceed to the business case stage and beyond, we will see a significant decrease in congestion and improvement in air quality in the city. There may still be a role for Pick Me Up service in providing travel choices for people. The reduction in traffic in Oxford may allow the Pick Me Up service to run more effectively. However, all public transport measures (including Cowley Branch line) need to be assessed to ensure that we can maintain a sustainable bus & rail service provision for the future, and it is essential that one service doesn't undermine the other.</p>
<p>10. COUNCILLOR PAUL BUCKLEY</p> <p>Major planning application 18/02065/OUTFUL (Oxford North) was approved by Oxford City Council in December 2019, leaving local residents very worried about its potential for causing even more extreme traffic congestion on adjacent roads (A40, A44 etc). Now comes 'Connecting Oxford', proposing bus gates that will cause yet more traffic on the ring road, including Wolvercote roundabout etc. What hard evidence</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Connecting Oxford, which includes proposals for a Workplace Parking Levy in the Eastern Arc of Oxford as well as additional 'bus gates', will help break the current vicious cycle of congestion and poor alternatives to the car. The lack of bus service between the north of the city and the employment areas in the south / south-east will be remedied by Connecting Oxford, with the provision of such a service being one of the key benefits proposed to be funded by the Workplace Parking Levy.</p> <p>The next stage of work on Connecting Oxford will include traffic modelling to</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>does the County Council have, to reassure residents that the combination of these two new developments will not cause catastrophic road congestion in Wolvercote ward?".</p>	<p>understand in more detail the implications of the additional bus gates and the Workplace Parking Levy. Importantly, this will also consider approved and planned developments across the area to ensure the network continues to function. These findings will form part of the business case which subject to Cabinet endorsement to proceed, will presented back to members for approval in due course.</p> <p>We also need to recall the impact that changes of this nature had in Oxford in the 1990's. People do find alternative ways to travel and traffic levels do reduce as a result of this type of change. In the two years following the implementation of the city centre changes in 1990 traffic levels reduced by around 20% in the city centre overall and continued to reduce so that they are now 25% lower than they were in the 1990's.</p> <p>The sustainable transport measures, including bus lanes, P&R and cycleways, planned on the A40 and A44 will also provide alternatives to the car for commuters travelling into the City centre. Currently bus services along the A40 mix with general traffic on the single carriageway road and suffer the same congested journey times in peak periods. The provision of dedicated bus lanes along the A40 will offer much improved journey times for public transport users and the planned service improvements will provide greatly increased direct bus connectivity across the city. Currently 2000 private vehicles per hour at an average occupancy of 1.5 persons per vehicle takes up the vast majority of the A40 capacity. With the bus lanes and public transport improvements the volume of passengers that can be moved along the corridor will increase dramatically. Keeping Oxford moving depends on a continued progressive shift away from private vehicle to public transport and cycling. The major schemes being implemented will put in place the high quality infrastructure and expanded service provision to make these shifts possible.</p> <p>Whist the improvement and changes to the network will cause disruption in the short term, once the measures are in place we should see that there will</p>

Questions	Answers
	be further attractive sustainable travel options.
<p>11. COUNCILLOR LIZ BRIGHOUSE</p> <p>Will the Leader agree to write to the Secretary of State for Education who is responsible for all schools other than those which have remained County Schools.</p> <p>Such a letter should remind him of this fact, sympathise with him for the enormous task he has in overseeing over 10,000 schools, the problem this creates for Local Authorities in relation to their responsibility for basic need and safeguarding, and ask for reimbursement of the cost of putting in a team to deal with Safeguarding Alerts which had been building up.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>Yes, I am happy to do that.</p>