

...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, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA	DECISIONS	ACTION
1. Minutes To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2025 (CC1) and to receive information arising from them.	The minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2025 were approved.	DLG (C Ó Caomhánai gh)
2. Apologies for Absence	Apologies were received from Councillors Baines, Brant, Cotter, Edosomwan and Hingley. Councillor Gordon was on parental leave.	DLG (C Ó Caomhánai gh)
3. Declarations of Interest - see guidance note	None	
4. Official Communications	Council noted the announcements published in the Schedule of Business. In addition the Chair announced that the Council's adult social services had been rated 'good' by the Care Quality Commission.	
5. Appointments To make any changes to the membership of scrutiny and other committees on the nomination of political groups and to note any changes to the Cabinet made by the Leader of the Council.	The following change of committee membership was agreed: On the Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee Councillor Fletcher to replace Councillor Shiri.	DLG (R Doney)
6. Petitions and Public Address	The Chair accepted the following requests to present a petition or speak on an item on the agenda: Petitions Siobhan Lancaster: "Make the crossing by Abingdon Road	

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	(Oxford) Tesco safe.” Public Address <u>Item 16 Motion from Councillor Hanna Vicki Power</u> Barbara Shaw Graham Shelton	
7. Questions with Notice from Members of the Public	Thirty eight questions were asked. The questions, responses and supplementary questions are recorded in an Annex below.	
8. Questions with Notice from Members of the Council	Fifty two questions were asked. The questions, responses and supplementary questions are recorded in an Annex below.	
9. Report of the Cabinet Report from the Leader of the Council. The report summarises the decisions from the Cabinet meeting on 15 July 2025.	Council received the report of the Cabinet.	
10. Treasury Management Annual Performance Report 2024/25 Report by the Executive Director of Resources & Section 151 Officer Council is RECOMMENDED to note the council's treasury management activity and outcomes in 2024/25.	Recommendation approved.	
11. Review of Outside Bodies Report by the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer The Council is RECOMMENDED to: a) agree that appointments to Category B non-strategic Outside Bodies, useful to the Council's work, as they relate to Council functions, be made by the Audit and	Recommendations approved with one correction to Annex 3 Category A Outside Bodies: On the Corporate Parenting Panel, Councillor Gaul replaced Councillor Higgins.	DLG (J Nicholson)

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<p>Governance Committee;</p> <p>b) agree that appointments to Category C Outside Bodies that request Council representation or are of primary value to local councillors/the local community, as they relate to Council functions, be delegated to the Monitoring Officer;</p> <p>c) approve the Constitutional Amendments in Annex 1 to reflect these changes;</p> <p>d) approve the definition of a Strategic Outside Bodies in paragraph 14 of this report;</p> <p>e) note the Guidance for Members who are appointed to Outside Bodies adopted by the Audit & Governance Committee on 16 July 2025 (attached at Annex 2);</p> <p>f) endorse the list of 'Strategic' Category A Outside Bodies in Annex 3;</p> <p>g) confirm the appointments to Category B Outside Bodies in Annex 4;</p> <p>h) note the list of Category C Outside Bodies in Annex 5.</p>		
<p>12.Members' Allowances - Opposition Groups and Parental Leave</p> <p>Report by the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>The Council is RECOMMENDED to consider the Interim Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel, and in so doing to consider the following options, either:</p>	<p>Recommendations a) and d) approved with 56 votes in favour, none against and 3 abstentions.</p>	<p>DLG (A Newman)</p>

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<p>a) To adopt the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel on the Special Responsibility Allowances for the recognised Opposition Group(s) as set out in Annex A to this report; OR</p> <p>b) To agree alternative values for any of the allowances, as the Council may determine; OR</p> <p>c) If the Council does not wish to accept the Panel's recommendations at this time, in whole or in part, or to substitute alternative amounts, to agree a status quo Scheme of Allowances for 2025/26 for any unchanged aspect;</p> <p>d) To agree the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendation that basic and any Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) should continue to be paid to any councillor taking parental leave in accordance with the Parental Leave Policy approved by Council on 8 July 2025.</p>		
<p>13.Motion from Councillor Izzy Creed</p> <p>This Council welcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Government's announcement of a programme of new Best Start Family Hubs. 2. The adoption of a national target of 75% of five-year-olds having a good level of development by 2028. <p>Council notes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The preceding Sure Start programme was developed under the last Labour Government to 	<p>The motion was carried unanimously.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánai gh)</p>

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<p>provide holistic support to families with children under the age of 5. By 2010 a network of over 3,000 centres had been established.</p> <p>2. A recent report by the Institute of Fiscal Studies has found that Sure Start had significant positive impacts on children's educational attainment as well as physical and mental health.</p> <p>Council further notes:</p> <p>1. That cuts by the Coalition Government to Local Government funding resulted in the closure of 1,168 of these valuable council-run children's centres.</p> <p>2. In Oxfordshire, many children's centres were saved by being taken over by local charities and community groups. These centres continue to pay rent to the County Council and face significant financial pressures.</p> <p>This Council requests:</p> <p>1. The Cabinet considers how it may support existing community-operated children's centres in Oxfordshire to continue to operate, providing specialist and financial support where possible.</p> <p>2. The Cabinet considers the development of a strategy to increase the range of services offered by existing children's centres in line with Government plans for new Best Start Family Hubs – prioritising those areas of greatest need.</p> <p>3. The Cabinet considers if existing children's centres can help extend the reach of the County's re-established youth service.</p>		
14.Motion from Councillor James Plumb	The motion was lost with 29 votes in favour, 31 against and no abstentions.	

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<p>Council notes the increasing pressures on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services across Oxfordshire, with rising demand, complex needs, and a need for stronger local support.</p> <p>Previously, Oxfordshire County Council had a dedicated Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement, reflecting the importance of this area.</p> <p>This role was recently removed, diluting specific leadership and focus on one of the most challenging areas of Council responsibility.</p> <p>Council believes that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children and young people with SEND deserve a dedicated champion at the highest political level within the Council. 2. A single Cabinet Member with clear and focused responsibility for SEND would enhance decision-making, oversight, and transparency. 3. Reinstating this post would demonstrate a renewed commitment to improving outcomes for families who rely on these vital services. <p>Council therefore resolves to ask the Leader of the Council to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) reinstate the Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement as a standalone portfolio within the Cabinet. b) ensure this role has clear responsibility for SEND policy, provision, and engagement with parents, carers, and stakeholders. c) provide a written response to this motion, setting out the steps being taken to strengthen leadership and accountability within SEND services. 		
15. Motion from Councillor Ian	The motion was lost with 19 votes in	

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<p>Middleton</p> <p>Oxfordshire hosts military air bases and training facilities, some of which are used by international forces.</p> <p>Media reports have suggested that Oxfordshire air bases have been used to support Israeli Air Force actions in Gaza and that Israeli military personnel may have received training at the Defence Academy in Shrivenham.</p> <p>Oxfordshire residents, faith groups and humanitarian organisations have expressed concern about the UK's potential complicity in war crimes in Gaza and the West Bank and this has already attracted demonstrations by protest groups around some Oxfordshire military bases.</p> <p>Residents deserve transparency about the use of such facilities within the County and the local resources required to protect and police them given the likelihood of further protests in response to increasing evidence of war crimes and potential genocide in Gaza.</p> <p>We therefore ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner requesting information on any increased costs and resource requirements for protecting facilities in Oxfordshire that are being accessed by the Israeli military.</p>	<p>favour, 34 against and 2 abstentions.</p>	
<p>16. Motion from Councillor Jane Hanna</p> <p>Council notes with concern that Oxfordshire Healthwatch and local Councils of Governors of Oxfordshire hospitals are to be abolished within a new Health and Social Care Act, and integrated into existing local departments, with queries diverted to the NHS App.</p>	<p>The motion was carried unanimously.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánai gh)</p>

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<p>The Council endorses the work of Healthwatch Oxfordshire for listening and helping thousands of patients each year, recognising that many vulnerable residents do not use the NHS App. Their team shared patient and carer experiences in thirty eight reports influencing local improvements through the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Place Based Partnership and contributions to the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>As part of the ten year NHS plan, Health and Wellbeing Boards are required to develop neighbourhood plans with NHS partners to shift more resource to prevention and from hospitals to a neighbourhood health service model. The financial, workforce and integration challenges are significant. Patients and the public will need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A trusted and credible local body, to speak for patients, offering constructive challenge and supporting communities' engagement • their elected members and lower tier councils with relevant local knowledge engaged • Safe public spaces, including scrutiny, to speak up <p>Council calls on the Leader and Cabinet to urgently consider how the Council working with NHS partners can safeguard and develop the Healthwatch function and engage and meaningfully consult with all local stakeholders to ensure the local delivery of national reforms at neighbourhood level best meet patient and community need.</p>		

QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

<p>1. SALEH ELMASRI</p> <p>How will the congestion charge be communicated to hospital staff and patients across multiple counties, who, between them, generated a significant percentage of Oxford's ring road and other traffic?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>We will work with NHS trusts in the city to ensure staff and patients are aware of the congestion charge, if approved. Council officers have regular meetings with local NHS trusts and Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) communications teams to plan staff and patient communications on council transport schemes. In addition to our broader communications campaigns targeting residents, visitors and businesses, internal communications teams within the NHS will use various channels to raise awareness with staff and patients. This could include intranet articles, emails to staff and information included in patient appointment letters, as seen appropriate with NHS communications professionals.</p> <p>Consultation events over the summer were attended by more than 1400 NHS staff. We also liaise with the private sector, e.g. Manor Hospital.</p>
<p>2. CITY COUNCILLOR ANNE STARES</p> <p>How much are average bus speeds / road speeds modelled to increase on Iffley Road / Rose Hill in Oxford, close to where I live, following the introduction of the congestion charge? Please be as specific as possible in your reply: Mph change, % improvement, various times of the day.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p>

<p>3. MEHMET KARAKUS</p> <p>How much are average bus speeds / road speeds modelled to increase on The Slade in Oxford, close to where I live, following the introduction of the congestion charge? Please be as specific as possible in your reply: Mph change, % improvement, various times of the day.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p>
<p>4. RICHARD PARNHAM</p> <p>If the congestion charge scheme is mainly intended to reduce traffic and improve bus services in Oxford, can Councillor Gant please explain on what basis the six specific congestion charge roads were selected, given that there are many other roads in Oxford that experience far higher levels of traffic and congestion, and are also more significant bus routes?</p> <p>Supplementary question</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>We have repeatedly said, including in Q&A responses published on our website since 2022, that the locations of the traffic filters and congestion charging points have been chosen strategically to reduce traffic across the city. Quoting from our long-standing online Q&A:</p> <p>"The locations of the traffic filters have been informed by transport modelling, traffic data analysis and highway design considerations. Traffic filter locations are designed to reduce traffic across the city and not just at the point where the traffic filter is located. The locations have been strategically chosen, so that a traffic filter in one location may also lead to greater traffic reduction in other areas across the city.</p> <p>For example, the traffic filter on Thames Street is not primarily aimed at reducing traffic on Thames Street (which has no buses); it is designed to reduce traffic on Abingdon Road and Botley Road."</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>I am happy to take that away for a written response.</p>

<p>What does the Oxford Mobility Model say would happen if you introduced the congestion charge?</p>	
<p>5. LINDA ELMS</p> <p>How much are average bus speeds / road speeds modelled to increase on Abingdon Road in Oxford, a road I drive along every day for work, following the introduction of the congestion charge? Please be as specific as possible in your reply: Mph change, % improvement, various times of the day.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p>
<p>6. SHEENA PREW</p> <p>Can Councillor Gant explain what new and improved bus routes we are getting, which can only be introduced following the introduction of the congestion charge (or traffic filters scheme)? Where are they, and when we will be getting them?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The bus operators have indicated that, due to a reduction in traffic expected through the congestion charge scheme, they can reduce the number of buses and drivers on some routes and redeploy them at no additional cost, in order to improve existing routes and to add in new routes. Whilst further information is commercially sensitive at present, the bus operators have confirmed the principle and are actively looking at which routes could be improved if the congestion charge is implemented. It is expected that this will benefit a range of city bus services and significantly enhance the network.</p> <p>Improvements have already been made to the bus network in anticipation of reduced congestion resulting from the approved traffic filter trial. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3A - improvement of frequency to every 15 mins Mon-Fri between Kassam Stadium and Oxford city centre via Littlemore and Iffley Road, plus improvement to every 20 mins Sat and 30 mins Sun on whole route to/from Cowley Centre

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 600 - introduction of a new route between Redbridge Park & Ride and Thornhill Park & Ride via Oxford Science Park, Cowley Centre and Headington Hospitals (30 mins Mon-Sat, 60 mins eve & Sun) • 700 - extended to Cowley Centre and Blackbird Leys Mon-Fri • H2 - improvement to every 30 mins Witney - JR Hospital, extended to Thornhill Mon-Fri • X40 - improvement to every 20 mins Oxford to Reading on Mon-Fri, 30 mins Sat & Sun, re-routed onto Abingdon Road and 10 brand-new tri-axle deckers supplied
<p>7. NASREEN MAJEED</p> <p>How much are average bus speeds / road speeds modelled to increase on Marston Road in Oxford, close to where I live, following the introduction of the congestion charge? Please be as specific as possible in your reply: MpH change, % improvement, various times of the day.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p>
<p>8. DR KIKI ISIDOROS</p> <p>Can Councillor Gant confirm whether the six roads selected for the congestion charge are busier (in terms of average daily traffic counts) or quieter than before the pandemic, and – if so – by how much (per cent or numerical counts are fine)?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Traffic flows at the automatic traffic counters nearest the congestion charging locations were on average approximately 10% lower in 2024 than in 2019.</p> <p>This excludes St Clement's, for which no recent pre-pandemic data is available.</p>
<p>9. PETER WHITE</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p>

<p>How much are average bus speeds / road speeds modelled to increase on Between Towns Road in Cowley, close to where I live, following the introduction of the congestion charge? Please be as specific as possible in your reply: MpH change, % improvement, various times of the day.</p>	<p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p>
<p>10. SHIREEN CHILCOTT</p> <p>How much are average bus speeds / road speeds modelled to increase on Marston Ferry Road in Oxford, close to where I live, following the introduction of the congestion charge?</p> <p>Please be as specific as possible in your reply, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miles per hour (MpH) change • Percentage improvement • Variations across different times of the day 	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p>
<p>11. KAJSA WILHELMSSON</p> <p>Can Councillor Gant confirm whether</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The traffic modelling published for the recent public consultation and scrutiny review shows</p>

<p>OCC has any insights into whether traffic displacement, caused by the congestion charge, is likely to disrupt any bus services in Oxford – and if so, where the main area of bus service disruption are likely to occur?</p>	<p>where traffic flows are forecast to increase and decrease in the city. Maps showing this can be seen on Figures 4-4, 4-5 and 4-6 of the report. These follow the same broad pattern as for the approved traffic filters trial.</p> <p>Delays to buses <i>may</i> increase (depending on network capacity and the scope to adjust signal timings) where traffic flows increase. However, traffic flows are forecast to reduce in places where bus flows are highest, so the overall effect on bus speeds and reliability is expected to be strongly positive, with a 5.4% improvement in bus productivity expected across the Oxford SmartZone area across the day.</p> <p>Where there are negative impacts on sections of bus route, we will consider mitigations such as bus priority measures. An example of this is the reversal of the Woodstock Road bus lane, designed to mitigate the impact of northbound traffic increases at the northern end of Woodstock Road.</p>
<p>12. PETER WEST</p> <p>Please could Cllr Gant advise on the predicted bus speeds for the London Road following the introduction of the congestion charge compared with the bus speeds in 2019.</p> <p>In your response, I would also be grateful if you give the answer as actual speeds (kph or mph) and whether speed varies much between rush hour and non-rush hour in both instances.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p>
<p>13. R A PHIPPS</p> <p>How much are average bus speeds /</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus</p>

<p>road speeds modelled to increase on London Road/Windmill Road Headington, Oxford where I live, following the introduction of the congestion charge?</p> <p>I should be grateful if you would be as specific as possible in your reply: MPH change, % improvement, various times of the day.</p>	<p>speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p>
<p>14. DAVID MAHON</p> <p>Can Councillor Gant tell me how many "class B" cars are modelled to use Oxford's Eastern bypass near Oliver Road each day, close to where I live, if the congestion charge comes in - and how that compares to "now", as modelled?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Class B cars are a disaggregated sub-class of cars incorporated in the structure of our transport model and were visible in raw modelling output data supplied following a Freedom of Information request. These sub-classes are not relevant to the modelling of the temporary congestion charge and the disaggregated figures were therefore not published.</p> <p>The figures 4-4, 4-5 and 4-6 in the modelling and income forecasting report show the forecast traffic flow changes on major roads in the city, including the Eastern Bypass.</p>
<p>15. RONA MARSDEN</p> <p>How much are average bus speeds / road speeds modelled to increase on St Cross Road/ South Parks Road, following the introduction of the congestion charge? Please be as specific as possible in your reply: Mph change, % improvement, various times of the day.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p>

	<p>Bus speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p>
<p>16. NICHOLAS HARDYMAN</p> <p>How much are average bus speeds/road speeds modelled to increase on the Banbury Road in Oxford, close to where I live, following the introduction of the congestion charge? Please be as specific as possible in your reply: MpH change, % improvement, various times of the day.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus or traffic speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus and traffic speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p>
<p>17. MATTHEW BROADWAY</p> <p>How much are average bus speeds / road speeds modelled to increase on Woodstock Road in Oxford, close to where I live, following the introduction of the congestion charge? Please be as specific as possible in your reply: MPH change, % improvement, various times of the day (AM peak southbound/interpeak both directions/PM peak northbound) bus lanes and general traffic lanes. (Please</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus or traffic speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus and traffic speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location</p>

<p>include bus speed statistics for all bus routes into/out of Oxford operated by both bus operators via the Woodstock Road).</p>	<p>and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p>
<p>18. SALMAN NAQVI</p> <p>How much are average bus speeds/road speeds modelled to increase on Morrell Avenue in Oxford, close to where I live, following the introduction of the congestion charge?</p> <p>Please be as specific as possible in your reply: Mph change, % improvement, various times of the day.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus or traffic speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus and traffic speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p>
<p>19. BERNADETTE EVANS</p> <p>Which officers (or councillors) authorised work to start on the congestion charge proposals, when (a date please) and under whose direct authority was work commenced?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The delay to the traffic filter trial and what, if anything, could be done to bring forward the traffic filter trial or identify other interim mitigation measures started to be considered after the Network Rail announcement on 24th January confirming delays to the scheme and that the Botley road was not expected to be reopened until August 2026. The need to do something was emphasised by the call to action from the City Council and the Oxford Bus company statement on the 3rd March and 20th March, respectively.</p> <p>Exploring the feasibility of potential ideas and assessing them were carried out by officers during March and April at the request of the Director for Highways and Environment. Options assessed by officers were presented to Cabinet members elect on 13th May 2025 and then developed further in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport following the Cabinet appointments notified at Council on 20th May.</p>

	<p>The congestion charge scheme business case was approved at the Major Infrastructure Board on 16th June 2025 (chaired by the Head of Transport and Property Infrastructure Delivery) and noted at Strategic Capital and Commercial Board 10th July). Approval to commence consultation on the proposal and entry into the capital programme as part of the Traffic Congestion Improvement Fund programme was given at Cabinet on 17th June 2025.</p>
<p>20. TIM SPANNER</p> <p>Is Councillor Gant entirely confident in the reliability of congestion charge modelling, given that it appears to conflate the John Radcliffe and Barns Road as being the same location (in the published Ricardo report), and seems to think that just 72 “class B” cars and 1,095 “class 2 vans” currently use this road on average each day (according to unpublished modelling)?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Yes, I am entirely confident that the congestion charge modelling is reliable for its intended purpose, which as we have said before is to forecast the broad impacts of transport interventions. The model used for the congestion charge has been validated to industry standards.</p> <p>Class B cars and Class 2 vans are disaggregated sub-classes of cars and vans incorporated in the structure of our transport model and were visible in raw modelling output data supplied following a Freedom of Information request. These sub-classes are not relevant to the modelling of the temporary congestion charge and the disaggregated figures were therefore not published. No conclusions about the model’s overall reliability can be drawn by interrogating these highly disaggregated figures on individual road links.</p> <p>The JR Hospital monitoring site (TF23) was applying data from an incorrect road link due to a processing error, which has now been corrected. Ricardo have updated the report. The conclusions remain unchanged.</p>
<p>21. JOHN SKINNER</p> <p>Can Councillor Gant tell me how many “class B” cars are modelled to use Oxford’s St Clement’s each day, close to where I live, if the congestion charge comes in - and how that compares to “now”, as modelled? If more than one part of St Clements is modelled, please provide answers for all parts of the road.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Class B cars are a disaggregated sub-class of cars incorporated in the structure of our transport model and were visible in raw modelling output data supplied following a Freedom of Information request. These sub-classes are not relevant to the modelling of the temporary congestion charge and the disaggregated figures were therefore not published.</p> <p>The figures 4-4, 4-5 and 4-6 in the modelling and income forecasting report show the forecast traffic flow changes on major roads in the city, including St Clements.</p>

<p>22. MARK BEER OBE</p> <p>Can Councillor Gant please tell me how many “class B” cars are modelled to use Banbury Road on a daily basis, not far from where I live, if the congestion charge comes in - and how that compares to “now”, as modelled? If more than one part of Banbury Road is modelled, please provide answers for all parts of the road.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Class B cars are a disaggregated sub-class of cars incorporated in the structure of our transport model and were visible in raw modelling output data supplied following a Freedom of Information request. These sub-classes are not relevant to the modelling of the temporary congestion charge and the disaggregated figures were therefore not published.</p> <p>The figures 4-4, 4-5 and 4-6 in the modelling and income forecasting report show the forecast traffic flow changes on major roads in the city, including Banbury Road.</p>
<p>23. LEI CLIFTON</p> <p>Why should local residents pay the proposed congestion charge?</p> <p>The scheme is being introduced on the basis of a fundamental misunderstanding by the council on such causes. There is strong evidence showing that most traffic is caused by people outside the city to access essential services within Oxford, rather than local residents food shopping on the Botley Road and in Summertown, or attending various schools around the city.</p> <p>The trust running the JR, for example, believes they are solely responsible for about 14% of all traffic on the ring road and likely far more inside it. That is why Marsh Lane and London Road are always heaving at 7am, as is Old Road.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>All residential properties will be accessible without paying the charge. Residents would be able to avoid the charge by changing route, changing their mode of transport, using a free permit or travelling at times when there is no charge.</p> <p>Our transport model suggests 41% of trips made by car in Oxford between 7am and 7pm on a weekday are internal trips, with an origin and destination within the city.</p> <p>Clearly car trips into the city from outside it are a major contributor to traffic in the city and our proposals address this directly. The proposed temporary congestion charge has the same broad objectives as the approved traffic filters scheme on which it is based – i.e. to reduce traffic on the city’s main roads to make buses faster and more reliable, increase bus service frequencies and coverage, and improve conditions for walking and cycling. Public transport and active travel infrastructure must be improved if we are to encourage more people to use those modes. This includes improving bus and park and ride services to major employment sites such as the Headington hospitals.</p>

<p>Botley Road is still at 75% usage, despite being shut at one end, because people from outlying villages are using it to do food shopping.</p> <p>None of this is likely to change regardless of the proposed congestion charge.</p>	
<p>24. CITY COUNCILLOR AJAZ REHMAN</p> <p>Is Councillor Gant entirely confident in the reliability of congestion charge modelling, given that it appears to conflate the John Radcliffe and Barns Road as being the same location (in the published Ricardo report), and seems to think that just 72 “class B” cars and 1,095 “class 2 vans” currently use this road on average each day (according to unpublished modelling)?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Yes, I am entirely confident that the congestion charge modelling is reliable for its intended purpose, which as we have said before is to forecast the broad impacts of transport interventions. The model used for the congestion charge has been validated to industry standards.</p> <p>Class B cars and Class 2 vans are disaggregated sub-classes of cars and vans incorporated in the structure of our transport model and were visible in raw modelling output data supplied following a Freedom of Information request. These sub-classes are not relevant to the modelling of the temporary congestion charge and the disaggregated figures were therefore not published. No conclusions about the model’s overall reliability can be drawn by interrogating these highly disaggregated figures on individual road links.</p> <p>The JR Hospital monitoring site (TF23) was applying data from an incorrect road link due to a processing error, which has now been corrected. Ricardo have updated the report. The conclusions remain unchanged.</p>
<p>25. JENNY WELLS</p> <p>Can Councillor Gant tell me how many ‘class B’ cars are modelled to use Marston Rd. near St Michael’s Primary school on a daily basis if the congestion charge comes in and how that compares to ‘now’, as modelled?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Class B cars are a disaggregated sub-class of cars incorporated in the structure of our transport model and were visible in raw modelling output data supplied following a Freedom of Information request. These sub-classes are not relevant to the modelling of the temporary congestion charge and the disaggregated figures were therefore not published.</p> <p>The figures 4-4, 4-5 and 4-6 in the modelling and income forecasting report show the forecast</p>

	traffic flow changes on major roads in the city, including Marston Road.
<p>26. DAVID STARES</p> <p>Please tell me how many “class B” cars are modelled to use Eastern Bypass near Brasenose Farm, close to where I live, on a daily basis, if the congestion charge comes in - and how that compares to “now”, as modelled?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Class B cars are a disaggregated sub-class of cars incorporated in the structure of our transport model and were visible in raw modelling output data supplied following a Freedom of Information request. These sub-classes are not relevant to the modelling of the temporary congestion charge and the disaggregated figures were therefore not published.</p> <p>The figures 4-4, 4-5 and 4-6 in the modelling and income forecasting report show the forecast traffic flow changes on major roads in the city, including the Eastern Bypass.</p>
<p>27. SAM HARDAKER</p> <p>How much are average bus speeds / road speeds modelled to increase on Garsington Road in Oxford, close to where I work, following the introduction of the congestion charge? Please answer with % increase and mph.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus or traffic speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus and traffic speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers’ experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p>
<p>28. GEOFFREY SUTTON</p> <p>As roughly 25% of patients treated at the Headington Hospitals come from outside the County and many are protected by the Equality Act 2010, will Councillor Gant please confirm what</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>All of Oxford’s hospitals will be accessible without paying the congestion charge.</p> <p>In addition, frequent hospital patients will be eligible (regardless of where they live) for a permit, allowing them free access through the congestion charge locations. However, this may be less relevant to patients coming from outside the county, as their quickest route to the hospitals is</p>

<p>legally sound mitigation actions the Council is considering in order to avoid unlawful discrimination against these out-of-county NHS patients, given the Council is not proposing an equivalent to Transport for London's Congestion Charge NHS patient refund scheme?</p> <p>Supplementary question Can Councillor Gant confirm that none of the out of county patients visiting the Headington hospitals have been redirected to other healthcare facilities when their journeys are processed through the destination choice component of the variable demand model in the Oxfordshire strategic model as part of the congestion charge or traffic filter modelling?</p>	<p>unlikely to take them through a congestion charge location.</p> <p>The scheme will improve access to the hospitals by park and ride, which some of those coming from further afield may choose to try.</p> <p>Answer I will defer that to get a detailed written response.</p>
<p>29. CITY COUNCILLOR IAN YEATMAN</p> <p>How much are average bus speeds / road speeds modelled to increase on Cowley Road / Oxford Road (i.e the B480)?</p> <p>As a city councillor whose constituents are significantly impacted by traffic flows on this route, I want to properly understand the impact of this scheme. Please be as specific as possible in your reply: MPH change, % improvement, various times of the day.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus or traffic speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus and traffic speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve</p>

	bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.
<p>30. EMILY SCAYSBROOK</p> <p>Officers are recommending that the congestion charge scheme be implemented in November 2025 — just as the critical Christmas trading period begins for local businesses. Bearing in mind council officers have recognised in previous meetings that the disruption period this scheme will cause will last between three to six months, do you all think two months concession - regardless of its design - is sufficient?</p> <p>Supplementary question Can you answer Yes or No, do you think two months concession is sufficient?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>We expect the scheme to enhance access for most city centre visitors (90% of whom arrive by non-car modes). Coupled with proposals to make park and ride cheaper, this will mean that access to the city centre will be enhanced which will aid pre-Christmas shopping trade. With no daily time limits of parking at the P&R sites, shoppers and visitors will be able to spend more time in the city without incurring significant parking charges – money that could be spent in shops instead.</p> <p>New transport schemes often take some time to bed in, meaning their full benefits may not be realised immediately. Even if the full benefits of the congestion charge aren't immediately realised, we expect the net effect to be significantly less disruption than the congestion the city has had to endure in previous pre-Christmas periods, when routes into the city centre can be clogged for hours, particularly at weekends, by drivers queuing for limited parking spaces.</p> <p>The county council funded a scheme to cap bus fares throughout Oxfordshire to just £1 on Sundays during December 2024, building on the success of a similar offer in December 2023 which boosted bus use by 7.4% on Sundays. We're also continuing to fund the highly successful £4 and £5 combined park and ride tickets and the increasingly popular Oxfordshire MyBus tickets.</p> <p>Answer I think this scheme is entirely appropriate as designed.</p>
<p>31. PAUL MAJOR</p> <p>In light of the thousands of responses submitted to the congestion charge scheme consultation, the fact that key officers were on leave immediately afterwards, and the reality that only three weeks elapsed between the consultation closing on 3 August and</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>All responses to the consultation have been read and carefully considered by officers, both during the consultation and after it. Officers had access to consultation responses from day one: 3500 responses were received in the first week. Officers also attended numerous consultation meetings and events throughout the six-week consultation period.</p> <p>Officers were therefore listening to and considering consultation feedback for at least nine weeks. Considered responses to feedback themes are included in the papers presented for</p>

<p>officers publishing their lengthy response and recommendation on August 19th, do councillors seriously believe that the Gunning Principle of conscientious consideration of responses to the consultation can possibly have been met?</p> <p>Supplementary question Why was this proposal not included in the Liberal election materials?</p>	<p>consideration by decision makers.</p> <p>The temporary congestion charge is based closely on a mature scheme (the traffic filters) developed over many years through several consultations. At each stage, major changes were made to the scheme in response to consultation feedback. The council has therefore 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>Answer This has been addressed elsewhere in the papers for the Cabinet meeting on this decision.</p>
<p>32. AMIR STEVE ALI</p> <p>Can Councillor Gant tell me how many “class B” cars are modelled to use Morrell Avenue on a daily basis, close to where I work, if the congestion charge comes in - and how that compares to “now”, as modelled?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Class B cars are a disaggregated sub-class of cars incorporated in the structure of our transport model and were visible in raw modelling output data supplied following a Freedom of Information request. These sub-classes are not relevant to the modelling of the temporary congestion charge and the disaggregated figures were therefore not published.</p> <p>The figures 4-4, 4-5 and 4-6 in the modelling and income forecasting report show the forecast traffic flow changes on major roads in the city, including Morrell Avenue.</p>
<p>33. ALBERTO BRUNELLI</p> <p>How many “locations” will be used to evaluate Mastercard spend if the congestion charge is deployed - and what does a “location” amount to – a single shop, a street, a postcode, neighbourhood etc? For example, would it include every small business with a shop front on St Clement’s (all 60 of them) which takes Mastercard, where I have my business.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>If approved, locations across Oxford will be used to evaluate spend and footfall. This could potentially include a single street as long as there are sufficient transactions/footfall to make the data statistically reliable. Officers are investigating what the latest data providers offer and will confirm what is possible.</p>

<p>34. KAY MAJOR</p> <p>Why is the council recommending the approval of the implementation of the Congestion Charge Scheme despite responses to their 'consultation' survey showing 74% of respondents thought the proposal would have a negative or very negative impact overall and 73.2% responded that the charge was too high or there should be no charge at all.</p> <p>Whilst I appreciate this was not a referendum; the law being used to implement the scheme is the Transport Act 2000 which states an obligation to consult but what is the point of any consultation when a huge majority of opinion is ignored. Especially when the overall response figures were considered higher than average despite the unusually short time and lack of publicity for the consultation.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>In a representative democracy, elected decision-makers must make decisions that deliver the policies they were elected to deliver.</p> <p>The temporary congestion charge is based closely on a mature scheme (the traffic filters) developed over many years through several consultations. At each stage, major changes were made to the scheme in response to consultation feedback. The council has therefore 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>Making a decision that does not align with the balance of opinion amongst those responding to a consultation is not 'ignoring' that opinion. The council has repeatedly demonstrated its willingness to listen to consultation feedback and adjust its proposals accordingly.</p> <p>The congestion charge is temporary and is expected to be in place for less than a year; the traffic filters have been approved as a trial which entails a further six-month consultation to allow the council to make further adjustments to the scheme.</p>
<p>35. MARK BOULLÉ</p> <p>In OCC's report on the Congestion Charge consultation responses, in your reply to Landsec's submission on behalf of the Westgate Centre, you state that if a decision is made to go ahead with the congestion charge on 10th September, at that point OCC will instigate a</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Authorisation for scheme signage was sought because, without DfT's agreement to the signage, a congestion charge would not have been a viable option and there would have been no point in officers asking the newly elected cabinet to consider it.</p> <p>Over 63,000 people viewed the consultation landing page on the council's website. Over 7000 people completed the consultation survey.</p>

<p>significant publicity campaign about the charge, how to pay, where to obtain permits or exemptions etc.</p> <p>Evidence exists, in the form of a redacted email of 23 April 2025, that OCC had already sought DfT authorisation for scheme signage - and notably had requested suppression on the DfT website of news of any such authorisation until after the local elections. With Oxford City having a population of c.165,000 and Oxfordshire c.750,000, the fact that just 7,165 people completed the consultation indicates a manifest lack of awareness of the process.</p> <p>Since post-facto congestion charge signage was already in contemplation, will OCC please explain why it did not conduct a similar, and essential, publicity campaign prior to and during the consultation period, for example by creating, acquiring and placing informative signs at the proposed charging points?</p>	<p>For comparison:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2003 the London mayor's transport strategy, which included a proposed congestion charge for central London, received 8,163 responses. A subsequent consultation on the congestion charge itself yielded 2,274 responses. The population of Greater London in 2003 was 7.4 million. • 10,389 responses were received in response to the Birmingham Clean Air Zone consultation in 2018. The population of the city of Birmingham was 1.14 million in 2018; the population of the wider West Midlands metropolitan area was 2.9 million. <p>The following steps were taken to promote the consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A press release was issued and media engagement took place with key local media. • Extensive media coverage included local broadcast TV, radio and print/online publications. • Social media posts were published on the council's channels and on Next Door throughout the consultation period. • Paid content on social media and other digital ads ensured a wide reach and encouraged engagement with the survey page as well as publicising events. • News items were included in the county council's digital resident newsletter, digital travel bulletin, and consultation newsletter (with a combined reach of over 47,000). • A toolkit of images, posters and explanatory text was sent to councillors, community partner organisations, stakeholders and large employers to use to cascade information through their local channels and to their audiences, who may be non-digital • Stakeholders and local councillors were also updated by email when the consultation opened.
<p>36. ANNE GWINNETT</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p>

<p>Anyone who travels around Oxford knows that congestion is worse at certain times of the year, at certain times of day (particularly on Monday to Friday), and in particular locations (congestion ‘hotspots’). The Council itself has acknowledged that both the hospitals and private schools are key contributors to congestion (par 108, Annex 3 of Report by Director of Environment and Highways on Oxford Temporary Congestion Charging Points, to Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 August 2025). Yet, the modelling undertaken does not explore these factors in detail or explore related congestion patterns with a view to identifying more targeted or nuanced solutions. Can the Council please explain:</p> <p>(i) how a congestion charge scheme that is not targeted at two of the main causal factors is expected to effectively reduce congestion?</p> <p>(ii) why the solution being proposed to a problem that is much worse at certain times of year (and, even then, only at certain times of day/week) is a congestion charge scheme that applies throughout the year, on all days of the week, and between 7am and 7pm?</p> <p>(iii) why the public were not given more</p>	<p>i) The proposed temporary congestion charge has the same broad objectives as the approved traffic filters scheme on which it is based – i.e. to reduce traffic on the city’s main roads to make buses faster and more reliable, increase bus service frequencies and coverage, and improve conditions for walking and cycling. Public transport and active travel infrastructure must be improved if we are to encourage more people to use those modes; this includes those who currently drive to the hospitals and private schools. Hospital bus services and private school buses have already started to improve in anticipation of the traffic filters starting; we continue to work with the schools and hospitals to build on this. A significant proportion of the traffic currently passing the traffic filter/congestion charge locations is destined for private schools or hospitals so we do expect the scheme to address this ‘causal factor’.</p> <p>ii) The temporary congestion charge is an interim arrangement pending the implementation of the delayed traffic filters trial approved in November 2022. The congestion charge has been aligned as much as possible with the traffic filters scheme, to ensure as smooth a transition as possible from one scheme to the next.</p> <p>The two outer filters/charging points will only operate at peak times Monday to Saturday (although for the traffic filters this will be kept under review and the hours extended if necessary)</p> <p>For the four central filters/charging points, the proposed timings cover the most congested hours (7am to 7pm) across the course of the week. The “peak” varies by day (for example, it starts earlier on a Friday and is around midday on Saturday and Sunday).</p> <p>Peak-time only charging points or filters in the central area would likely lead to some drivers changing their time of travel, leading to increased traffic flows and congestion during the “interpeak” period in the middle of the day.</p> <p>The traffic filters are designed to allow reallocation of road space in future, if made permanent, and for this to be achievable without creating congestion the “interpeak” period traffic reduction is needed throughout the day. Road space cannot be allocated to cyclists and pedestrians for part of a day, or part of a year.</p> <p>Unlike other schemes, the congestion charge and traffic filters include a wide range of permits –</p>
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<p>information about root causes and patterns of congestion, in order to be able to evaluate in a more well-informed way the proposed congestion charge scheme?</p> <p>Supplementary question The number of car-person trips in 2025 is predicted to be just under 231,000. This is more than 30,000 fewer car-person trips than the target you set for the traffic filter scheme. So why are you now claiming that we have an emergency that demands immediate action and why do we need to do anything at all?</p>	<p>including day passes for residents – allowing permit holders to make journeys at any time of day. Unlike other zone-based schemes, nearly all parts of Oxford would be accessible without passing a congestion charging point (and all parts of Oxford will be accessible without passing a traffic filter).</p> <p>Reducing the hours of operation would reduce the revenue generated by the scheme, providing less funding for complementary transport improvements such as cheaper park and ride.</p> <p>iii) Sufficient information was provided for people to respond to the consultation. People who travel in Oxford know congestion varies by time of day and time of year; they also know the city's schools and hospitals contribute to the problem.</p> <p>Answer There is still a problem which has been set out for us by, among others, our bus company partners. It's a curious argument that we shouldn't want to do better. The Bus Service Improvement Plan includes a commitment to achieve a 10% improvement in bus productivity and that was a key part of the investment that we attracted from bus companies and central government, with contributions from us, that has delivered 159 all-electric battery buses, making life safer, cleaner, healthier and quieter for our citizens. The traffic filters or congestion charge will not deliver that 10%. We need to go further.</p>
<p>37. JEREMY MOGFORD</p> <p>The Oxford High Street Association, Oxford Business Action Group and the overwhelming majority of businesses we represent are wholly opposed to the introduction of the congestion charge scheme, which we believe is fundamentally flawed and will decimate trade in Oxford if it is introduced at all,</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The 2022 surveys carried out in Oxford city centre asked people how they travelled to the city centre, how frequently they visit, and how much they spent on the day of the survey. 90% of city centre visitors arrived in the city centre by modes other than private car. Based on this, together with data on spend per visit and frequency of visit from the same surveys, it is estimated that non-car modes account for around 90% of city centre spending.</p> <p>For the proposed congestion charge to cause a 10% drop in trade as result of fewer visitors coming by car, 100% of existing car-borne trade would need to disappear, which is implausible.</p>

<p>regardless of timing. With that said, we of course want to make sure that if it goes ahead, it does so at a time that will have the least impact on trade. With that in mind:</p> <p>Officers continue to rely on the flawed assumption that because 90% of visitors to Oxford do not arrive by car, only 10% of trade is at risk - as though spend is evenly distributed across modes of travel. Yet businesses have repeatedly explained that visitors travelling to Oxford by car often spend disproportionately more, particularly on larger purchases and family outings. Even a 10% fall in turnover - which OCC itself acknowledges as possible - could be terminal for many small businesses already trading on a knife edge. Against this backdrop, how can it be rational or responsible for the Council to proceed with implementation immediately before the crucial Christmas trading period, and with no funded mitigation plan in place to support businesses through the disruption the Council itself predicts?</p>	<p>This would mean no current drivers are prepared to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a free permit to drive to the city centre • Change their route (if necessary) to avoid the charge • Pay the charge <p>It also assumes zero growth in visitors arriving by other modes, which again seems implausible.</p> <p>Even if it deters some of the 10% of visitors who arrive by car, the city centre should be more attractive for 90% of visitors – so we expect the net effect to be positive.</p> <p>After the pedestrianisation of parts of the city centre, including the implementation of the High Street bus gate, traffic reduced by just under 20% on the edge of the city centre but footfall increased by around 10% in the city centre.</p>
<p>38. REBECCA MOFFORD</p> <p>It is important to make clear from the outset that we stand in categorical opposition to this scheme, given the harm it poses to businesses, residents, and the wider community. If it does go ahead though, we of course want to</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The 2022 surveys carried out in Oxford city centre asked people how they travelled to the city centre, how frequently they visit, and how much they spent on the day of the survey. 90% of city centre visitors arrived in the city centre by modes other than private car. Based on this, together with data on spend per visit and frequency of visit from the same surveys, it is estimated that non-car modes account for around 90% of city centre spending.</p>

<p>make sure that local trade is protected as far as possible.</p> <p>The Council's dangerously overly simplistic position on the congestion charge scheme appears to be that because its data suggest around 90% of visitors to Oxford do not travel by car, it follows that at most 10% of trade will be affected by this scheme. Assuming this to be true, it still follows therefore that up to a 10% fall in turnover is possible. In today's fragile trading environment, such a loss could be terminal for many independents, particularly in the vital Christmas period. Why, then, has no business support fund been proposed, nor any early revenue from the scheme ring-fenced to mitigate that foreseeable risk - and how does the Council justify this omission in light of its duty of care to Oxford's local economy?</p>	<p>For the proposed congestion charge to cause a 10% drop in trade as result of fewer visitors coming by car, 100% of existing car-borne trade would need to disappear, which is implausible. This would mean no current drivers are prepared to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a free permit to drive to the city centre • Change their route (if necessary) to avoid the charge • Pay the charge <p>It also assumes zero growth in visitors arriving by other modes, which again seems implausible.</p> <p>Even if it deters some of the 10% of visitors who arrive by car, the city centre should be more attractive for 90% of visitors – so we expect the net effect to be positive.</p> <p>After the 1999 pedestrianisation of parts of the city centre, including the implementation of the High Street bus gate, traffic reduced by just under 20% on the edge of the city centre but footfall increased by around 10% in the city centre.</p>
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QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

<p>1. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY</p> <p>Banbury Ruscote has quite a few hedges and flower borders. Some of this maintenance comes under sanctuary housing, Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>As you have noted, the responsibility for maintaining and looking after hedges and planters/flowerbeds is varied. Within Cherwell, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) doesn't directly maintain any planters/flowerbeds on the public highway. Grass and vegetation that is on the highway is currently cut by Cherwell District Council on our behalf through agreement. Any planters or flowerbeds within areas of public access are likely to be the</p>
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<p>County Council.</p> <p>These have unfortunately suffered neglect and it's difficult to get hedges cut back, let alone flower beds replanted and maintained.</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action look to work with other owners and other Councils to work towards improving the situation and helping the environment for residents, and Oxfordshire County Council's land that has flower borders if funding is available?</p> <p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Can it be noted that the Cherwell District Council stepped in a number of years ago to cut the grass in Banbury. If there was one council and budget cuts how would the grass be maintained, would it be cut twice a year?</p>	<p>direct responsibility of the district or town council.</p> <p>The only publicly accessible properties where OCC have responsibility for flowerbeds and hedges are the fire station, the car park at Orchard Fields and New Futures. Our records indicate that the planting and hedge maintenance is being well managed. Responsibility for school sites has been passed to the Academies running the schools.</p> <p>Where we are designing and delivering new transport or property schemes, I have asked officers to ensure they consider whether, if, and how, hedges and planting could be improved, particularly in collaboration with local groups such as the Community Action Group.</p> <p>With the challenges and competing priorities, it is unlikely funding will become available, but I can confirm we are happy to work with and give permission to local community groups to help maintain or create new areas of hedging and planting.</p> <p>ANSWER</p> <p>Since no-one knows what Local Government Reorganisation will do in the next few months I don't think I can actually answer that question but we are always happy to work with our partners at Cherwell District Council and see what we can do.</p>
<p>2. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY</p> <p>Over the past few years, Oxfordshire County Council, in coordination with Thames Water, have been looking at the issue of</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Thank you for your Question relating to Mascord Road.</p> <p>As you have mentioned, our officers have been working with Thames Water Officers on this issue. They have concluded that the source of the water wasn't a spring but water from a</p>

<p>spring water. This has been coming out the ground, across the road from 8 Mascord Road and as a consequence, running down Mascord Road into a nearby storm gully.</p> <p>The last few weeks of water coming up through the stormwater system and flowing down the road shows that there must be root ingress allowing spring water to bubble up into the county owned storms water system.</p> <p>Whilst I appreciate this is a complex issue, can I be assured as local member for Banbury Ruscote by the Cabinet Member that funding will be moved forward to excavate and fix the problem, as you will appreciate during autumn and winter, water flowing down the road could pose a health and safety issue on the road if there is ice on the road.</p> <p>All of these issues have been reported via FixMyStreet and to highways officers</p>	<p>Thames Water surface water drain travelling through a broken Thames Water asset pipe then entering BT ducting and finally leaking from the ground further downstream. This is not an uncommon event as a very similar case took place recently on Launton Road, Bicester</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council officers will continue to liaise with Thames Water to pursue a resolution to this.</p>
<p>3. COUNCILLOR LEE EVANS</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>Although there are plans to make a variety of changes to Household Waste Recycling</p>

<p>The experience of someone using a local tip, or household waste recycling centre, is set to get worse. Later on this year, the County Council will introduce a new system that requires residents to book in before they can dispose of their household waste at a tip. On top of that, the Council has undertaken a consultation on reducing the availability of tips, with no option for residents to say they would like to continue with the current opening hours. What assessment has the Council made of the impact of the booking system, and of reduced opening hours, on fly-tipping – including in rural areas like the Kingston & Stanford division? Thank you.</p>	<p>Centres (HWRCs), the expectation is that overall, this will improve the service for the majority of Oxfordshire's residents. In respect to the booking system, these are now commonplace across the country. Many were brought in with the advent of Covid but have been kept due to the positive feedback and advantages they have brought. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certainty of access and, in particular, far less queueing for residents. • Use of sites is more evenly spread throughout the day resulting in improved user experience on sites • Better control and monitoring of trade misuse of the sites. A known national problem which can cost ratepayers hundreds of thousands of pounds per annum. • Where required, better control and management of the sites to stop non-resident users. <p>Regarding flytipping, although this is often referenced with any change to waste management practices, it is invariably not the case. Other councils with booking systems or other steps such as reduced hours have not reported any discernible increase in flytipping. Flytipping is of course an illegal act for which significant fines and prosecutions can occur, and it is fully recognised that it is a scourge in our countryside, towns and villages. There can never be an excuse for flytipping and it goes without saying that the vast majority of our residents are not and never will be flytippers, regardless of whether a booking system is introduced. You will no doubt be aware from the many reports on the topic that a significant proportion of the flytipping incidents are perpetrated by organised crime and fraudulent traders who are not permitted to use the HWRC sites anyway. We will of course continue to work with District Council enforcement teams and, where appropriate, the police and Environment Agency to address and tackle flytipping and seek to prosecute those that break the law. It is worth noting in this context that we have, since January 2024, operated a booking system across all of sites for visits with DIY waste. This was introduced at short notice following a change in law by the then Government and has operated very well thus far with very few complaints and no reported increases in flytipping.</p> <p>At present our HWRC sites are open 362 days per year. Regrettably, waste management is a very expensive service and through our consultation, for which recommendations are yet to be made, and approvals given, we are exploring steps to address escalating costs and to help safeguard the service for the future, whilst seeking to have minimum impact on the overall service. Our current operating hours are generous compared to many other local authorities, many of whom have already taken difficult decisions as they seek to address the</p>
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<p>Supplementary Question Will the Cabinet Member agree that the tip in Stanford in the Vale provides an essential local service and will she therefore guarantee that it will remain open for at least the same times and hours as every other tip in Oxfordshire?</p>	<p>ongoing financial challenges for local government. It is important to stress that final recommendations are yet to be made and will only be made through a decision approved by the Council's Cabinet in due course. The options that are laid out in the public consultation are prudent and pragmatic options to address the financial issues mentioned earlier. This consultation has attracted close to 6000 responses, which is very high number for a consultation and as such will form a good basis to help inform our decision making. Regrettably though, the option of doing nothing is probably not one we can take.</p> <p>Please be assured that if changes are made they will be accompanied with a full communication plan and guidance to assist our residents. One measure of particular note is that this will include a meet and greet service on all sites, which will not only explain the changes, but also help support residents to maximise recycling from the materials/resources they bring in.</p> <p>Answer I will take that away and get you an answer.</p>
<p>4. COUNCILLOR GARETH EPPS</p> <p>Local Area Energy Plans have the potential to transform the way we plan our energy use, to deliver savings on energy bills and to make our communities more sustainable for future generations. Please could you update on progress?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council are leading the Local Area Energy Planning (OxLAEP) project on behalf of all Oxfordshire Councils. Arup have been contracted to develop Local Area Energy Plans for each of the District Councils and a strategic overview for the County Council. The primary aim of the OxLAEP project is to define the most effective way that each council can reach its net zero target whilst also recognising the current constrained electricity network in Oxfordshire.</p>

<p>Supplementary Question Can the lead Member ensure that we give our communities the opportunity to engage with the proposals as they go out for consultation?</p>	<p>During Phase 1 Arup has been working with all councils and key energy system stakeholders to gather information used to produce an accurate baseline assessment of the current energy system. Modelling of the future energy system has been done at a county scale, taking into account previous studies such as Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire 2021 and the more recent Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan 2023.</p> <p><u>Investment and delivery planning</u></p> <p>The OxLAEP programme is breaking new ground by including delivery and investment planning as integral to the LAEP development process. Finance and investment teams from all councils have been involved in discussions about the investment strategy required to deliver the LAEPs once they are completed in early 2026.</p> <p>The next phase of the project will involve Arup working closely with all councils to produce the LAEPs based on the modelling undertaken in Phase 1 and the priority areas each council wants the LAEPs to focus on.</p> <p>The project has already delivered benefits such as, supporting councils to engage with the energy companies' long term investment planning processes, improving local authority capability in energy planning and supporting ongoing engagement with the Oxfordshire Growth Commission.</p> <p>Answer Yes, we're very keen to have a consultation and it is a really good plan. We are in the early stages at the moment, but we wish to involve the public and stakeholders as we go forward.</p>
<p>5. COUNCILLOR JAMES ROBERTSHAW</p> <p>Regarding the Witney High Street Closure, the grant was for £1.98 million excluding the traffic camera and the consultancy</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Proposals for enhancements to the High Street and Market Square in Witney have been developed through consultation with local residents, businesses, and key stakeholders, to determine which improvements are most important to the community. Currently £2,528,400 is included in the project budget for scheme development, design, and construction, which</p>

<p>spend is currently over £500K. The projection of the final cost is over £3.4 million, excluding the camera. Could I ask where the funding is coming from, or can the project get cancelled?</p>	<p>consists of an external grant from the Active Travel Fund (£1,988,545), funding from the council's approved capital budget (£500,000), with the remaining funding from Section 106 contributions.</p> <p>A contractor has been appointed and latest estimates for construction are being reviewed alongside the development of detailed design. The current forecast for the scheme (which has been developed following community engagement exercises and increased in scope slightly) is £3.408m excluding any costs for cameras to enforce the existing traffic restriction. To support delivery of the scheme, in accordance with the current scope, a bid has also been submitted for a further £880,461 from central government grants. The project team will consider any suitable additional value engineering measures that can be identified and, if applicable, will discuss these opportunities with local stakeholders</p>
<p>6. COUNCILLOR JAMES ROBERTSHAW</p> <p>Regarding riparian river owners, we are having massive problems in Witney with dead trees in the River Windrush and the Environment Agency (EA) not ensuring the riverbanks are kept in good order, which may cause real problems with flooding, unless regular maintenance is carried out. The EA is not co-operating with requests to enforce maintenance. Would OCC support County Councillors getting a list of all the riparian owners along each division riverbanks and allowing county councillors to take responsibility for talking to riparian owners and reminding them of their legal</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>The Environment Agency is the lead authority for flood risk management on designated main rivers including the River Windrush through Witney. As such they hold the legal powers to enforce maintenance where necessary on such watercourses. The county council as Lead Local Flood Authority do not hold powers or duties in relation to main river. However, the Lead Local Flood Authority team have selected an expression of interest from Witney Flood Group proposing additional capital maintenance on the Windrush for support with Priority Action flood funding this year, as they are aware it is a long running concern and they believe it will have flood risk benefits for the residents and businesses of Witney. We are in the initial stages of progressing this Priority Action project.</p> <p>The team have also raised this concern over the lack of maintenance enforcement by the Environment Agency on main rivers in the county with them, and I have asked them to escalate the issues in Witney specifically.</p>

<p>obligations. The current system simply does not work and certainly in Witney residents want to see that maintenance is carried out on an ongoing basis.</p>	
<p>7. COUNCILLOR NICK FIELD-JOHNSON</p> <p>Why is the Councillor Priority Fund still not up and running. I was told in June that it would be live in a matter of a few weeks. Still at the end of August it is not up and running. Kindly advise and explain why this has taken so long.</p> <p>Supplementary Question</p> <p>It is very frustrating that it has dragged on for month after month and I know that it has gone live and have spoken to the officers concerned, but I have two very worthy causes of a school and a food bank and I am wondering why it has dragged on for so long. It seems so unnecessary.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NEIL FAWCETT, CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES AND DEPUTY LEADER</p> <p>I can confirm that the Councillor Priority Fund is now live, and I believe you are meeting with officers to make sure that you are set up properly to review any applications to your fund.</p> <p>We have acted on feedback from councillors and applicants to improve the transparency of the grant process – giving applicants greater oversight of where their application is and when it will be paid and giving councillors the ability to see the status of their own funds, how much they have awarded and how much they have left. This has involved using an existing IT programme in an entirely new way. To make sure that we have fully acted on the feedback we have had about the fund administration, we have undertaken a rigorous testing process to make sure that the process works for both councillors and the local organisations they support. Now that this testing has been completed, all councillors will need to activate their accounts so that organisations can apply to their funds. Officers will contact councillors to explain how to do this.</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>It is taking longer than we'd hoped as it is a new system. The previous system cost quite a lot of money to administer compared to the amount of money we were giving out. The aim was to have a streamlined self-service system but there have been more challenges than expected through the pilot. It is now up and running. We share the same frustration but we're there now. I'd encourage all councillors to follow instructions in the email and there is support available to help councillors get set up.</p>

<p>8. COUNCILLOR NICK FIELD-JOHNSON</p> <p>Several residents of Carterton have written to me to express serious concerns about OCC's recent decision to introduce 20mph limits across Carterton and Brize Norton. Why are we adopting this blanket approach rather than choosing specific streets and areas for these signs. The blanket roll-out of these signs is a waste of residents' and taxpayers' money and needs to be more carefully thought out. Can we not consider a more sensible approach?</p> <p>Supplementary Question</p> <p>There seems to be a blanket 20mph speed limit policy particularly in Carterton. The consultation ends on the 12th of September, and we have a town council meeting on the 16th. I'd like to ask for an extension for a week so Carterton can give a measured reply to this.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The council's policy and approach is not a blanket one, each road along with its start and end point is assessed and considered against the approved 20mph policy framework. In addition to this, the formal consultation allows the opportunity for all interested parties to express their views for consideration by both officers and then, ultimately, by Cabinet Member when making the decision. The consultation ends on 12 September, and the Cabinet Member for Transport Management Delegated Decisions meeting is scheduled for 9 October.</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>That decision will come forward in the proper way and there will be an entirely open opportunity for the councillors and town councils to have an input into that both beforehand, while the consultation is open and at the meeting itself. There are no proposals for 20mph zones in Brize Norton. There are proposals to reduce some speed limits from 40 to 30mph directly linked to a request from the primary school. It is not a blanket approach, we work in detail and I look forward to engaging with the Councillor before and after the meeting alongside town councils.</p>
<p>9. COUNCILLOR SAJ MALIK</p> <p>Given that the council already knows that average bus speeds are broadly unchanged in Oxford</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme includes a target to deliver a 10% improvement in bus <u>productivity</u> in the Oxford SmartZone, against a 2019 baseline, by the end of 2025.</p>

<p>in 2025 compared with 2019 (at around 11mph), can councillor Gant indicate what the average predicted bus speeds in Oxford will be after the congestion charge is introduced, according to any modelling undertaken by OCC or its consultants?</p> <p>Supplementary Question When did Councillor Gant first become aware that the road by road projection for the average bus speed has been produced and can he explain why they want it to be published later?</p>	<p>The approved traffic filters were forecast to deliver an improvement of around 6.5% (in other words, about two-thirds of the target).</p> <p>As stated in the published draft cabinet report considered by the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 August 2025, the proposed temporary congestion charge is expected to improve bus <u>productivity</u> by around 5.4% on average across the Oxford SmartZone area as a result of the scheme (i.e. just over half of the Enhanced Partnership target).</p> <p>This productivity improvement comes primarily from improved bus speeds but also partly from improved reliability, which reduces the requirement for schedule recovery time.</p> <p>We would therefore expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p> <p>Bus speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p> <p>Answer There's been a very large number of documents and modelling forecasts associated with the original traffic filters decision and the congestion charge. You can check when these documents were made public. Officers have made clear that the model cannot show road by road information on bus speeds. What it does is produce the 3.8% average and of course this will vary. The scheme is to address the problem where the problem is worst, in order to deliver the most benefit.</p>
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<p>10.COUNCILLOR SAJ MALIK</p> <p>Can Councillor Gant please specify how much, on average, the congestion charge is modelled to reduce NO2 pollution level in Oxford? Please be as specific as possible i.e. from what to what, and by when?</p> <p>SUPPLEMENTARY</p> <p>Why should residents in my division and Cllr Brighthouse's division be forced to suffer increased pollution if the congestion charge is brought in</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>An air quality assessment was published as part of the report to the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 August 2025.</p> <p>This shows the forecast impact of the scheme at a sample of air quality monitoring sites across the city.</p> <p>The average modelled NO2 concentrations at the sites included in the assessment are below.</p> <p>Current situation (Botley Road closed, no congestion charge): 20.2 ugm3</p> <p>With Botley Road closed and the congestion charge in place: 19.2 ugm3.</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>This scheme doesn't solve everything, and I think that the scheme needs to go further. The scheme targets where the problem is worst to deliver the most benefit and that's what it does particularly on congestion but also on air quality. There is still too much congestion and traffic, if we can deliver more bus services we can begin to deliver on that issue. A key reason why buses have not been a more popular choice is the rise in the national bus cap to £3 by the Labour government.</p>
<p>11.COUNCILLOR SAJ MALIK</p> <p>How much are average bus speeds / road speeds modelled to increase on Hollow Way in Oxford, in my division, following the introduction of the congestion charge? Please be as specific as possible in your reply: MpH change, % improvement, various times of the day.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is not possible using the transport modelling available to reliably estimate changes in bus speeds on specific roads. We use a strategic transport model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport schemes. We have said before that traffic flow forecasts for individual roads must be treated with caution.</p> <p>We expect average bus speeds to increase by around 3.8%. This average includes all bus routes across the Oxford SmartZone, throughout the day. It therefore includes areas that are not directly affected by the scheme and off-peak journeys which are less affected by congestion.</p>

<p>Supplementary Question</p> <p>Can Cllr Gant confirm that modelling does exist showing that the road speeds are predicted to decrease on Hollow Way road in my division if the congestion charges go on?</p>	<p>Bus speeds within Oxford will change by varying amounts depending on the location and time of day. Overall, we expect the speed and reliability improvements to significantly enhance passengers' experience when using buses in the city. The scheme will also improve bus operating efficiency, allowing service frequencies and/or coverage to be improved.</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>No I can't confirm that because I would have to look through all the modelling, but we need to go further.</p>
<p>12. COUNCILLOR WILL BOUCHER-GILES</p> <p>Following the Place Scrutiny Committee meeting (27.08.25), I would like to ask the Cabinet Member the question:</p> <p>When discussing issues as contentions as the proposed temporary / pilot scheme for a congestion charge in Oxford City centre, affecting as many people as it does, whether this is not perhaps a situation in which the council ought to act as a democratic body and vote in open council rather than rely only on the judgement of an individual cabinet member. With particular reference to the case of the congestion charging as public</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The decision on the temporary congestion charge, like the November 2022 decision on the trial traffic filters on which the congestion charge is closely based, is due to be made by the council's cabinet. The decision will not be made by an individual cabinet member, but by the whole cabinet.</p> <p>Under the council's constitution:</p> <p><i>The Cabinet is the part of the County Council which is responsible for most of the day-to-day main decisions about the Council's functions and services. The Cabinet comprises the Leader of the Council and up to nine other Councillors, each of whom has a special area of responsibility or 'portfolio'.</i></p> <p><i>Major decisions are normally made at the Cabinet's regular monthly meetings; others are made by individual Cabinet Members or a committee of two or more Cabinet Members.</i></p> <p>Input from members outside of cabinet is of course a vital part of the decision-making process and this is achieved through consultations, scrutiny processes and debates in council.</p>

<p>consultation has been extremely short and largely negative in its response. With this in mind we have the opportunity as elected representatives of our divisions to show that these decisions are made over any personal interests or the interests of simply generating revenue (as was suggested in one public comment) and are in fact undertaken in their interests. If we leave these decisions up to an individual our residents cannot be assure that their interests have been fully taken into account, whereas an open vote allows each division to be counted.</p>	<p>As far as the consultation process is concerned, the temporary congestion charge is based closely on a mature scheme (the trial traffic filters) which was developed over a number of years from its policy inception in 2015 until its approval in November 2022. Two major public consultations took place during that period, which have heavily influenced the proposals.</p> <p>The recent consultation on the temporary congestion charge was therefore not introducing a completely new idea but rather testing a proposal to implement on a temporary basis a variant of a mature, approved scheme which had already been shaped by previous consultations.</p> <p>Officers advise that the necessary consultation requirements have been met. The consultation yielded over 7000 responses, which is exceptionally high for a council consultation and significantly more than previous consultations on the traffic filters, so it cannot be said there has been poor engagement with the proposals.</p>
<p>13. COUNCILLOR JAMES PLUMB</p> <p>I was delighted to hear from officers that a review of the A415 through Frilford and Marcham will form part of the County Council's "Vision Zero" work programme. Can the Cabinet Member provide any additional details on the timeframes associated with this review, as well as the scope of the work, specifically whether it would be possible to consider implementing a weight limit for vehicles travelling along the A415 through both of these areas.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>It is planned to complete the A and B road speed limit review – including the implementation of any approved changes – by the end of the 2026/27 financial year. Whilst it is anticipated proposals for the A415 will be developed and consulted on in the latter part of this year / early 2026, these are indicative timescales.</p> <p>At present, Oxfordshire County Council are not considering any weight limit restrictions in this area. To consider them would require a substantial study which would require funding and, should this be available locally, a study could be progressed to investigate the possibility of restricting vehicle movements, where those movements would be offset to, and the wider context of development in the area.</p>

<p>Supplementary Question</p> <p>Would the councillor be able to find a time to meet with me to discuss the feasibility of conducting a study into a weight limit on the A415 alongside other interim measures?</p>	<p>Answer</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>14. COUNCILLOR JAMES PLUMB</p> <p>At the July meeting of this County Council, the Cabinet Member agreed to provide me with additional information regarding the A338/A415 Frilford Lights Scheme, specifically on the three options that are being considered for the scheme, alongside details on how the preferred option will be selected. I am still yet to receive this information. Can the Cabinet Member now provide an update?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The drafts of the Frilford and Marcham Option Assessment Report and the study's supporting documents are currently being finalised, and it is expected that these will be completed this month (September). Once these documents are finalised, a preferred option (or options) will be identified. Officers in the Place Shaping team will be happy to share the findings of this study, and to meet to discuss this, with Cllr Plumb and other relevant members later this month or early next month.</p>
<p>15. COUNCILLOR DAVID HENWOOD</p> <p>How many additional collisions, serious injuries and fatalities (KSI and fatal) does Oxfordshire County Council forecast on the ring road from traffic displaced by the temporary congestion scheme? Please provide the</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The 2022 road safety impact assessment of the trial traffic filters forecasts the change in road casualties as a result of the traffic filters.</p> <p>Assuming the same relationships between traffic flows and collisions as in the 2022 analysis, the change in the annual number of casualties resulting from the temporary congestion charge would be as follows (note that the total is different from the sum of the categories, due to rounding):</p>

<p>figures by severity and year, the modelling method used (e.g., STATS19 baseline, growth factors, collision-prediction model), and the confidence ranges. Given those forecasts, how does the Council reconcile any increase in road harm with its Vision Zero commitment and Safe System approach?</p> <p>Supplementary Question</p> <p>Why does Cllr Gant cite nearly decade old crash data from 2015-2019? Does he believe it is appropriate to use data that is nearly a decade old given that there have been significant improvements in road safety since then?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyclists -18 • Motorised traffic -7 • Pedestrians -4 • Total -28 <p>The total reduction of 28 casualties includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction of 29 casualties inside the ring road • An increase of 2 casualties on the ring road • A decrease of 1 casualty on other roads. <p>The methodology for the road collision assessment is set out in Steer's November 2022 report "Traffic Filters – Assessment of Road Safety Impacts". This has been available online since November 2022.</p> <p>It is not possible to provide these figures by severity or year since they are a forecast of annual casualties.</p> <p>A reduction of 28 casualties per year is of course quite straightforward to reconcile with our Vision Zero commitment: the scheme will make our roads safer.</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>I'm confident that officers have analysed the data available to them with the thoroughness and professionalism that they always do. This scheme is predicted to deliver a reduction of 28 casualties on our roads.</p>
<p>16.COUNCILLOR DAVID HENWOOD</p> <p>The Place Scrutiny report shows that average Oxford bus speeds are just 11.6 mph, and the stated</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The 2022 road safety impact assessment of the trial traffic filters forecasts the change in road casualties as a result of the traffic filters.</p>

aim of the congestion scheme is to increase this by around 10% to 12.1 mph. That clearly implies a redistribution of traffic, with relatively more vans and buses permitted to continue through the city centre while private cars are deterred. Changes in vehicle mix and speed are known risk factors for pedestrians and cyclists. My research indicates that the original application was resourced from the Labour-amended budget of February 2024, allocating £496,906 for congestion mitigation within the city. Given this, does the administration accept that the Labour-funded scheme could increase risk to vulnerable groups — including children, older people, disabled residents, cyclists and pedestrians — during peak hours, and if not, can it publish the safety modelling to prove otherwise?

Supplementary question

Can Cllr Gant explain why a predicted modal shift from cars to vans was modelled but not published given that any shift on cars to vans would likely have implications for achieving vision zero, why has the information been withheld from public

Assuming the same relationships between traffic flows and collisions as in the 2022 analysis, the change in the annual number of casualties resulting from the temporary congestion charge would be as follows (note that the total is different from the sum of the categories, due to rounding):

- | | |
|---------------------|------------|
| • Cyclists | -18 |
| • Motorised traffic | -7 |
| • Pedestrians | -4 |
| • Total | -28 |

So no, the administration does not accept the scheme will increase risks to anyone – quite the reverse.

Answer

I don't accept that it has been. The documents contain a huge amount of detail. I don't know what his claim of redistribution of traffic is based on but I'm happy to tease that out with officers. I certainly do not accept that any modelling has been withheld.

scrutiny?	
<p>17.COUNCILLOR DAVID HENWOOD</p> <p>Can Councillor Gant explain why Oxfordshire County Council officers have repeatedly overruled the professional advice of the Council's own retained consultants, who recommended relocating the Marston Ferry Road congestion charge filter on safety grounds? Why has no mitigation been implemented to reduce the risk of crashes directly outside the entrance to the Swan School?</p> <p>Supplementary Question Can Cllr Gant confirm that two separate road safety reports produced by different consultants explicitly recommended relocating the Marston Ferry Road filter despite being overridden by OTC officers, is Cllr Gant confident with officers making those decisions in light of the consultations?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The Road Safety Audit for the scheme has been published.</p> <p>The purpose of safety audits is to identify potential safety risks arising from new road layouts. It is normal for safety audits to raise a wide range of safety concerns to ensure all risks are properly considered and mitigated wherever possible.</p> <p>In the case of the Marston Ferry Road congestion charging point/traffic filter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative locations were considered but rejected as they would either not meet the project's objectives or would simply create safety issues somewhere else <p>The design has been altered after careful consideration by the design team to mitigate the safety risks as much as possible. These mitigations are outlined in the road safety audit report.</p> <p>Answer Yes, I am confident and the reasons were given in the response.</p>
<p>18.COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>If we want to reduce congestion and pollution in Oxfordshire, we</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The income forecasting is uncertain currently. If the scheme goes ahead, officers will report the available income so it can be prioritised effectively.</p>

<p>need to work out who is using a car when buses are available and why they are using a car. One obvious category is families who don't have much money and for whom the buses are more expensive than using a car. To help this group switch to using buses, please make sure some of the money arising out of the congestion charge (if it goes ahead) is used to subsidise bus fares in areas of deprivation.</p> <p>Supplementary question Can Cllr Gant get together with officers and draw up a list in order of priority?</p>	<p>I am happy that measures to support cheaper/and or improved bus services in areas of deprivation should be considered as a potential use of the funding, if sufficient funds are available.</p> <p>Answer The recommendation that's coming to Cabinet tomorrow hasn't been agreed yet and does recommend that officers begin work on proposals for reinvesting any income from this scheme. It also allows a good deal of flexibility about how to do that so it does open the door to the kind of proposal that the councillor is making.</p>
<p>19. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>I was in St Giles, Oxford, on a recent Saturday at about 4pm. I counted 35 <i>visitor coaches</i> parked in that one street. This is not unusual. Very few of the coaches were actually loading or unloading. Some had their engines running, many were blocking the cycle lane. They made it dangerous for pedestrians to cross the street and for cars to manoeuvre. They also destroyed the appearance of</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Council officers are currently drafting a Coach Management Strategy to assess the best way to address a number of issues linked to unscheduled coaches, including pick-up/drop-off locations, short-term and longer-term parking, and engagement with the coach and tourism industry. A first survey of coach activity has taken place at the end of August, including observations on number of coaches, distribution throughout the day, and others, and this will also be repeated at a later date in term time - acting as an evidence base for this work to complement anecdotal observations like the one provided by yourself and many other residents. A set of proposals will be produced aimed at improving the situation and a plan of action, which we aim to complete by the end of the year. Funding has been made available to fund the initiatives from this project, and we expect that an improved arrangement will be in place ahead of next summer's tourist season.</p>

<p>one of our most beautiful streets. Why is it taking so long to solve this problem?</p>	
<p>20. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>My heart sank when I heard that the congestion charge (if it goes ahead) will use part of the same back-office system as the appalling new system for the virtual parking permits. People still complain bitterly to me about problems with applying for visitor permits. Will I get even more complaints, even from people who are highly digitally literate, if the congestion charge is brought in? And how will people cope if they do not have internet access?</p> <p>Supplementary Question When will the council drop the contracts with Unity 5?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Officers have listened to feedback from customers and improvements are being made to the system to improve its usability. If the scheme proceeds, residents will need to apply for a permit. However once registered for free permits, residents will not need to log in again unless they are changing their details or applying to for a renewed or additional permit etc. The ANPR cameras will automatically deduct day passes from their allocation. Emails will be sent to let residents know when they are running out of day passes.</p> <p>Those without internet access will be able to apply for permits by phone or by coming into a council office and asking for assistance.</p> <p>Answer I share your frustration, we are working on it with Unity 5 and the changes that need to be made have not yet been made but I am determined to drive them through.</p>
<p>21. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION</p> <p>There were plans shared by yourself to resurface Fairspear Road which runs from Leafield towards Shipton-under-Wychwood but this work has yet to take place. Please can he</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Fairspear Road is currently still being worked on, and as such, we are unable to confirm a delivery date at this time. The proposed treatment for this section of road was originally planned as a patching scheme, targeting the worst-affected areas. However, the scope has since evolved to focus on a full resurfacing scheme. As a result, there has been a slight delay in progressing the work. We will ensure that officers share a plan of the scheme, along with a proposed start date, once this is confirmed.</p>

<p>update if this work is still scheduled and when it will likely to start?</p>	
<p>22. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION</p> <p>Residents in West Oxfordshire continue to complain about the poor state of footpaths across the district despite many not knowing that the sweeping of paths and roadside edge is the responsibility of district councils. Can he please outline what work is being done to ensure we are putting pressure on the councils to carry out this work and does he think this is one of many examples as to why we need one single council for Oxfordshire?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The County Council Highway Maintenance teams liaise with the District Councils regarding street cleansing, particularly in relation to grass cutting and gully emptying. This collaboration is especially important on high-speed roads, where joint working helps manage the costs associated with traffic management. However, District Councils operate their own programmes and schedules for street cleansing and may not always have the resources available to co-ordinate with ours due to their own priorities.</p> <p>Highway Maintenance teams have, on occasion, undertaken similar footway clearance work under a 'Route Treatment' programme. However, funding for this programme specifically due to investments in other activities such as annual gully emptying.</p> <p>A single council for Oxfordshire will allow for the streamlining of processes and generate efficiencies from joining up services.</p>
<p>23. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION</p> <p>Land near to Hanborough station has long been left for the expansion of the parking facility for the station. This land has sat unused for many years and it's unclear when it's likely a car park</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>Hanborough station will feature in the new OxRail 2040: Plan for Rail strategy with proposals for double-tracking and the creation of a major West Oxfordshire Mobility Hub. Although the focus will be on sustainable access to the station, including cycling and bus connections, it is likely that some parking expansion may be required if the station's role is to expand. This would need careful consideration as part of the station masterplan work.</p>

<p>project would start. Can the Cabinet Member update as to who now owns this land and what work the transport team are doing to boost parking capacity at this popular station in West Oxfordshire?</p> <p>Supplementary Question Would you agree to meet with me so we can meet with Network Rail and Great Western Rail to talk about the Cotswold line at Hanborough?</p>	<p>In terms of landownership, there has been some limited work around this previously, but it would need confirmation before responding.</p> <p>Answer Things are moving with West Oxfordshire District Council and we're working on this, I'm not sure if this point is the right point to have the opposition involved but certainly the two councils are working closely together to try solve the problem going forward. We are planning to have that as a very strong mobility hub, so we want to improve all options.</p>
<p>24. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON</p> <p>It's good to see that we have started a programme of gully clearances across the county which we all know is urgently needed. However in my division in Kidlington that urgency doesn't seem apparent to the residents I represent.</p> <p>Even though areas such as Garden City suffered devastating floods nearly a year ago, leading to a Section 19 report, they are being told that full gully clearances won't take place there until February or March next year. This is putting immense strain on residents in the most vulnerable</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>As a result of the previous two years being some of the wettest on record, there were many areas across the county that suffered for property flooding, much of this was as due in part to very high water tables and full ditches and water courses, this is important to note as effectively the highway surface water had nowhere to flow to and as such the highway drainage systems quickly became overwhelmed. Following on from that period we have now experienced one of the driest years so far on record. With the new approach and the additional £1.5m investment into gully clearance the current programme has been pulled together by the highways teams working with our contractor, to achieve the best programme efficiency. It is understandable that all flood affected areas would want their gullies cleaned at the earliest opportunity however, this is physically not possible with the resources that are available.</p> <p>In addition to the on-going routine gully emptying programme our highway teams have additional resource to undertake reactive cleansing and jetting. As part of that, in this case relating to 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.</p>

<p>areas, many of whom have only recently been able to return to their homes.</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member explain how areas have been prioritised and review the programme to enable emergency clearances to be completed in Kidlington, preferably within the next 2 months?</p> <p>Supplementary Question Could I be provided with details of how areas were prioritised as Kidlington is so far down the list?</p>	<p>Answer I'm sure that Kidlington is not any different in terms of its evaluation for prioritisation from anywhere else but happy to have that conversation with the councillor and officers.</p>
<p>25. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON</p> <p>The Cabinet recently approved a cost-cutting plan to reduce the number of beds available for young people leaving the care system.</p> <p>As a relatively wealthy council, this would seem to be an unnecessary and counter-productive move which increases the risk of young people becoming homeless and then requiring support from other agencies, including the District and City Councils. On the face of it, this would therefore seem to be</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR SEAN GAUL, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE</p> <p>Thank you for raising this important issue.</p> <p>I made a decision about extensions on commissioned contracts for supported accommodation in August 2025 through Delegated Decisions. The reduction and changes in contracts as outlined in the published papers demonstrate that reductions were made on contracts where there was no use or little use. This is for properties where there is low occupancy and low or no waiting lists. The work on the review of the young people's supported accommodation arrangements began in the Autumn 2024.</p> <p>It is appropriate to end contracts and therefore end continued payments where there was no demand or utilisation because of location or type of provision. With the contracts due for renewal in September 2025 it was the right time to review whether these arrangements should continue.</p> <p>The work undertaken has included mitigations for young adults who are receiving a service or would be impacted by changes to the service. This involved a case-by-case review. The</p>

<p>shifting the financial impact within local government rather than reducing it.</p> <p>I understand that the Cabinet Member responsible has confirmed measures are in place to ensure no one will be made homeless as a result of these changes. Could he provide details of any impact analyses that were carried out prior to this decision being taken along with details of how those impacts will be mitigated?</p> <p>Supplementary Question</p> <p>Was an impact analysis in terms of the effect on young people and the district council resources</p>	<p>extension of contracts for a further 18 months has been made to ensure a transition period in which to develop new arrangements and to ensure that no young person currently in the service is disadvantaged. Mitigations have been put in place for 20 young people to consider their individual housing and support needs. This involves the offer of another supported housing scheme if required; or prioritising them to move on into general needs accommodation through the relevant District/City Housing registers; or by supporting them to access the private rented sector. On a case-by-case basis there could be one off discretionary use of assistance with rent guarantee, deposits and liaising with landlords/lettings agencies (provided by both Children's Services for Care Leavers and the relevant District/City for those without care leaver status).</p> <p>For many years the Children's Services directorate have taken on this responsibility for leading this arrangement, although the primary responsibility for housing and homelessness needs lies with the Housing authorities, in this case the City and District Councils who also have a corporate parenting responsibility for children cared for by the state. For assurance, Children's Services has its own full range of statutory services for Children in Care and Care Leavers aged 17-19 who are well supported and cared for by the Council's own Ofsted regulated provision and 'staying put' arrangements, working towards independence. Our own provision is separate</p> <p>The young people's supported accommodation provision is not solely used for care leavers, but the arrangements have allowed for adults up to the age of 25 to be placed too. This has resulted in adults who do not have support needs and do not need a service from either children's or adult's social care, remaining in accommodation originally designed for those immediately leaving care at 18 years.</p> <p>By adjusting these arrangements, we are working towards developing a housing and care leavers pathway that is effective in supporting those who have assessed need. Within the respective legal and statutory frameworks Children's services duties will align with our responsibilities and at the same time ensure that any financial contracts or payments are based upon need and demand.</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>The most important impact analysis that I felt needed to be carried out were for those that were currently inside the YPSA scheme and it was that that we spent an awful lot of our time on, making sure that those within the scheme were properly supported and not either made</p>
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<p>carried out and if so, what was the outcome?</p>	<p>to be homeless or not either made to be moved on. The ultimate decision that was made was to correct the age profile of those that can enter the scheme under Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, not Adults. We are statutorily obliged to look after those up to the age of 21 entering the scheme which is the correction that we made. Those up to the age of 25 are not able to enter young persons supported accommodation. We spent a lot of time on this. I deferred the decision during delegated decisions. I'm very happy to arrange a separate discussion one on one or with other interested councillors to discuss this further. This is something I feel quite strongly about and something I'm not prepared to take quick decisions on.</p>
<p>26. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON</p> <p>The planning application for a football stadium in my division was recently passed, subject to conditions and referral to the Secretary of State. This included acceptance of a transport plan that has been criticised by myself and the Cabinet Member for Transport. It was also described by members of the planning committee as likely to cause "chaos" as well as potentially disrupting emergency services, whilst acknowledging that they had no choice but to vote in favour in light of a no objection response from OCC Highways.</p> <p>Whilst there is reference in OCC's response to some initial S106 contributions for transport mitigation and a CPZ radiating 2-3Km from the stadium, there</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>I would like to clarify that my responses to the recent planning application were in my capacity as Divisional Member for Wolvercote and Cutteslowe.</p> <p>The transport related financial S106 contributions required by OCC as Highway Authority to mitigate impact of proposed OUFC stadium are set out as draft heads of terms and are included in appendix 3 of the CDC Planning Committee Report. For clarity and in relation to the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) proposals the following contributions are requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £102160 (Establishment and set up of CPZ – Lining, signing, back office etc) • £51080 (Establishment and set up of expanded CPZ if required and following monitoring) • £184120 (Additional enforcement officers (to amplify enforcement across initial operational period – timeframe to be agreed, but anticipated to be between 1 & 3 years). <p>It is confirmed that existing, funded, enforcement officers can patrol and enforce proposed new CPZ at no additional cost burden to OCC. Receipts from all CPZ permitting and enforcement ticketing is recycled into funding CPZ enforcement, which are therefore self funded. Match day resident parking permits are expected to attract a cost of circa £20/year.</p>

<p>appears to be no requirement or agreement for ongoing funding for operating, maintaining and enforcing those measures for decades to come.</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member please clarify who will actually be paying for all of this beyond those initial contributions? Will it be the football club, OCC, or local residents, either directly through purchasing parking permits for spaces outside their own houses or through their council tax bills?</p> <p>Supplementary Question</p> <p>Given that our current enforcement teams are already stretched, is it really plausible that enforcement of a 3km radius CPZ could be financed with only £20 annual permit from local residents or is it more likely that the cost will rise exponentially once the true costs of the scheme are realised?</p>	<p>Answer</p> <p>That is a fair challenge and I'm happy to take that away and discuss with officers. I absolutely share the councillor's concern with the impact of parking and its determination that this council will use its powers to mitigate that.</p>
<p>27. COUNCILLOR GAVIN MCLAUCHLAN</p> <p>The inhabitants of Millars Close in Benson (who are all elderly) have recently been instructed to manage the bushes on the other side of their fences, which are</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The hedge in question was originally a boundary hedge to Benson Primary School and as such a boundary hedge under Highway Law remains a boundary hedge. Hence, the original request letters were sent to the residents. When the Millar Close properties were constructed, fences delineating the gardens were erected on the inside of the boundary hedge, thus giving the impression that the fence was now indeed the boundary and the</p>

<p>next to the Watlington Road (with no pathway access). The bushes are on the inside of an almost right-angled bend. In order to do this they would need to apply for a road closure, and hire in a team to get this work done - even though OCC specified that this had to be done in a very short timeframe. However, that piece of land is not in their deeds, nor is there any instruction within to maintain them. This has caused a lot of angst, and the demand has now thankfully been rescinded. OCC has previously managed these bushes. Please can someone explain how the Council intends to ensure that other inhabitants aren't tasked with the same (mistaken) demands in the future, and what the rules are governing land maintenance when outside the defined property footprint of any dwelling. I really do not want others to be put through the concern that the inhabitants of Millars Close have been - unnecessarily.</p>	<p>hedge remains outside their formal ownership. Given the hazardous nature of the location - on a bend of a busy road - the Council has agreed to undertake future maintenance of the hedge "without prejudice" hence the letters rescinding the original notification were sent out. This decision reflects both safety considerations and the practical challenges faced by residents, some of whom are elderly and lack safe access to the hedge from their properties.</p>
<p>28. COUNCILLOR GAVIN MCLAUCHLAN</p> <p>Hazell & Jeffries - Ewelme. There is a Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development (CLEUD) in</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DIANA LUGOVA, CHAIR OF PLANNING AND REGULATION COMMITTEE</p> <p>Thank you for bringing this to my attention. I do have to point out that limitations on a CLEUD do not operate like conditions on a planning permission, so that operations outside the terms of a CLEUD can only be subject to enforcement if they have resulted in a material change to</p>

<p>place which limits the hours that Hazell & Jeffries can act. I have had many emails from the inhabitants of Eyres Lane in Ewelme and have shared an extract from one of them with the Councillor. Concerns are being raised about activities being undertaken late at night and the impact of this on residents.</p> <p>There are concerns that HJ or their agent will, if not challenged; at some time in the future apply for a retrospective alteration of the CLEUD. What can be done to ensure that H&J adhere to the terms of the CLEUD, and how can it be monitored on-going?</p>	<p>the character of the use of the site. I have passed the concerns on to the County Council's Planning Development Management team who will investigate the allegations, which helpfully give specific dates and times of night time disturbance. I understand that an initial step in their investigation will likely be the service of a formal planning contravention notice with targeted questions pertaining to the allegations upon the site operator.</p> <p>It is considered that the use of targeted planning contravention notices augmented by other evidence collected is the most robust way of ensuring that any intensification is monitored, and therefore that any material change of use that may be identified is capable of formal enforcement action.</p> <p>Given the concerns about noise, I will also raise these with South Oxfordshire District Council for investigation in their capacity as Environmental Health Authority.</p>
<p>29. COUNCILLOR GAVIN MCLAUCHLAN</p> <p>Many of my inhabitants are concerned about speeding, especially along the A4074. In the past they have been encouraged to call 999 or 101 to report incidents for what are increasingly becoming race meetings. I have now had two inhabitants reach out to me about speeding because the TVP operator has pointed them in my direction (well to their county</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Thames Valley Police remain the enforcing authority for speeding vehicles, but we continue to work closely with them to promote road safety across the county. Oxfordshire County Council are proposing works along the A4074 to promote road safety and reduce vehicle speeds.</p> <p>A consultation on revised speed limits on the A4074 between Oxford and Kidmore End as part of a general review of limits on the A and B road network is due to be reported to the Cabinet Member for Transport Management decisions meeting on 9 October. This includes a proposed 50mph speed limit on the A4074 Dorchester bypass.</p> <p>In addition to the above, the Dorchester by-pass is due to be surfaced dressed during September and we are taking the opportunity to provide a new road layout which will remove</p>

<p>councillor). Are we now those responsible for cracking down on speeding, when I thought that this was a police matter?</p>	<p>the wide central hatched area and will hopefully deter overtaking and reduce vehicle speeds.</p>
<p>30. COUNCILLOR BEN HIGGINS</p> <p>Many residents of Watlington were very disappointed to learn of further delay to the planning process for the much-needed relief road, despite assurances given to the parish council of its timely progression. Could you please reassure residents that the council remains committed to the relief road and outline what efforts are being made to progress this vital scheme, as well as confirming that any lessons that can be learned from the delay in this scheme relating to either national or local factors will be investigated to avoid similar delays for future schemes?</p> <p>Supplementary Question</p> <p>Does Cllr Roberts agree that along with diverting existing traffic from the congested town centre and improving air quality, the scheme would open up many options for making Watlington an easier place to walk and cycle</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>I understand that the project team met with yourself and representatives from Watlington Parish Council on the morning of Thursday 28 August 2025 to provide an update in relation to the Watlington Relief Road (WRR) scheme.</p> <p>I can confirm that the County Council's Senior Management Team, the project team for the WRR scheme, and other County Council officers are working hard to ensure that the WRR scheme can be taken to planning committee as soon as possible. Please be assured that the experiences and all lessons learned from the WRR scheme are already being, and will continue to be, applied to current and future infrastructure delivery projects.</p> <p>I hope that this demonstrates the County Council's commitment to securing planning consent and delivering the WRR scheme as soon as possible.</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>Yes, I'm happy to confirm that it is subject to planning permission and we are looking at trying to improve the marketplace and the general feel of Watlington, so I'm happy to agree.</p>

<p>and therefore such criticism is misguided?</p>	
<p>31. COUNCILLOR THOMAS ASHBY</p> <p>For over a decade, Buttercross Lane has been plagued by a persistent flooding issue. The permeable paving, which was adopted by Oxfordshire County Council 11 years ago, fails to drain even after the slightest rainfall. The floodwater often takes up to three days to recede, leaving the road and pavements submerged.</p> <p>This situation poses a significant and ongoing risk to local residents. The constant flow of traffic on this single-access road creates large waves that repeatedly flood vehicles and private property. Furthermore, the footpath becomes impassable, particularly for residents of the neighboring supported living accommodation. In the winter months, this standing water freezes over, creating a dangerous and unavoidable slip hazard.</p> <p>Although this issue has been brought to the attention of council</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>We are investigating the issue and, checking our records, can confirm that the permeable area has been investigated and found to be insufficient as noted. Officers are currently reviewing potential remedies and have put this site forward for funding of a drainage improvement scheme which will be prioritised along with other similar scheme requests in the County. Officers will, when known, inform you of the extent and detail of any improvement works planned.</p>

<p>officers for many years, with a previous County Councillor also attempting to find a resolution, it remains unresolved. I have been in regular contact with officers since the election, but there has been no visible progress. Will you support me and residents in resolving this issue to ensure that this issue is resolved before this winter?</p> <p>Supplementary Question Can you see that officers get in touch with me for a site visit so that we can go and look at the flood site as we cannot go through another winter of flooding?</p>	<p>Answer I'm sure officers would be delighted to do that, and I thank the councillor for bringing this to my attention. That paving was installed by this council 11 years ago and it has failed to meet standards.</p>
<p>32. COUNCILLOR THOMAS ASHBY</p> <p>Residents and I have an urgent concern about the project for two pedestrian crossings on Deer Park Road. Despite the council having held the S106 funding for these two crossings for several years, the project has yet to take a positive step forwards.</p> <p>As the new school year begins, the lack of safe crossings puts families, students, and the elderly at significant risk. This is a critical</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>Consultants engaged by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) have recently completed design work for the two signalised crossings proposed on Deer Park Road. OCC is progressing procurement for the contractor that will finalise detailed design and deliver the scheme. Engagement with local stakeholders for feedback on proposals has been undertaken over the summer and following the appointment of the contractor a public consultation exercise will be undertaken prior to proceeding to construction. Officers will provide a briefing for local members and stakeholders including an update on stakeholder engagement; the recently completed design work and the scheduled start date for works can be confirmed following the appointment of the contractor. OCC remain committed to delivering the path improvements in Witney as soon as practically possible with works anticipated to commence this financial year subject to appointment of the contractor.</p>

<p>public safety issue that needs immediate action.</p> <p>Please can you provide a comprehensive update on the project's status and ensure that all necessary steps are taken to complete these crossings before the end of the year.</p> <p>Supplementary Question Can you make sure the council prioritises this scheme? As the section 106 money is there, it should be quite simple.</p>	<p>Answer I will take this away and ask the officers why it's not in the current pipeline scheme.</p>
<p>33. COUNCILLOR THOMAS ASHBY</p> <p>Well Lane in Curbridge, which was once a quiet residential street, has seen a notable increase in traffic volume and speed. This change is due to drivers using it as a cut-through to avoid the main road in the village, with a number of vehicles now using this route as they come off of the A40 at the new roundabout, near Downs Road.</p> <p>The increase in speeding vehicles is a concern because Well Lane is also the location of the village's only play area. We need to address this to ensure</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Thank you for your Question. I believe officers of the Traffic & Road Safety Team have been in discussion with yourself and the Parish Council and have explained the process behind progressing such a scheme.</p> <p>The team have indicated they are happy to continue to work with the Parish and indeed have looked at the feasibility of providing speed cushions. Further engagement will be required and site meetings can be arranged in due course.</p> <p>Regarding funding, the County do currently have a budget titled "Accessibility and Road Safety" for funding such schemes, but this year's budget has already been allocated. In the meantime, officers will be looking to develop schemes for consideration for inclusion in next year's programme.</p> <p>I do have to say there will be many schemes competing for inclusion and future funding. Priority will be given to those schemes which are assessed as providing enhancements including projected casualty reduction benefits and improvements to accessibility. I must however mention that having asked officers to check our injury collision database, I am</p>

<p>the safety of our children and other residents.</p> <p>I have been working with residents and highways officers to find a solution, and the installation of speed humps has been identified as a strong option. However, this project needs a dedicated budget to move forward. I urge you to work with highways officers to allocate the necessary funds so these traffic calming measures can be put in place during the next financial year.</p>	<p>pleased to report that we have no records of any such collisions in the last 5 years. I'm sure you will appreciate that we must focus our resources on those sites with the poorest collision history however, I'm happy to ensure officers continue to work with the Parish to develop a scheme in the meantime.</p>
<p>34. COUNCILLOR JAMES BARLOW</p> <p>As this summer of drought (e.g. Wallingford division has had less than 35% of its 'normal' rainfall this year) and 4 'heat waves' has shown, our ability to adapt to climate change is fundamental to the effective work of this and successor councils (and increasingly so). How are the voices of future generations being represented, in particular with reference to climate adaption, to shape our strategic approach to Local Government Reorganisation, and thus fulfil our responsibility to both current and</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>Climate adaptation is a core aspect of the Councils climate action priority. This includes monitoring climate change risk on the council's Strategic Risk Register (with associated risk control measures identified) and leading the development of a countywide Climate Adaptation Route Map for Oxfordshire agreed by Oxfordshire Joint Leaders Committee earlier this year.</p> <p>These actions will particularly benefit future generations, who will experience the worst impacts of climate change during their lifetime.</p> <p>Workstreams related directly to young people and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Route Map was co-developed with a wide range of stakeholders, including community groups and educational institutions in an effort to incorporate diverse perspectives. It identifies a workstream to engage young people in Oxfordshire, through actions such as including young people on working group in future, establishing a climate ambassador programme to support educating young people on

many are actively involved?	that; it is important to hear the voices of young people when we come forward with new policies and make sure policies are fit for future generations.
<p>35. COUNCILLOR JAMES BARLOW</p> <p>As this summer of drought (e.g. Wallingford division has had less than 35% of its 'normal' rainfall this year) and 4 'heat waves' has shown, our ability to adapt to climate change is fundamental to our effective work as a council. I understand that Climate Adaptation has now been included in the Carbon Literacy Training that the council is offering to all staff and Cabinet Members. How many of the Cabinet have taken this training to date, and what impact has it had on the decisions they have made? A specific example would be helpful.</p> <p>Supplementary Question Can you provide some examples of decisions made by current cabinet members that have been influenced by their carbon literacy training?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>A number of members of Cabinet completed Carbon Literacy training in 2023 and this includes two members of the current cabinet. This was prior to the addition of materials related to adaptation. I have expressed an interest to Officers in offering to the new Cabinet to attend a version of the course oriented towards councillors. Officers will be working to find appropriate dates and timings. A local authority officer-oriented version of the course is offered on the Learning Zone and delivered mainly by internal colleagues. It has been completed by 570 colleagues and has significantly increased the ability of those colleagues to identify actions their own teams can take to reduce emissions (from 40 to 89%).</p> <p>Answer I'm not clear if you are talking about all the officers within the whole council or whether you're just talking about cabinet members but I am looking forward to being able to take part in the training which I have not done yet.</p>
<p>36. COUNCILLOR JAMES BARLOW</p> <p>When will members have the</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>We would welcome engagement from a range of councillors into the development of the</p>

<p>chance to feed into the Climate Action Framework refresh, which I understand is due given much has changed since 2021?</p> <p>('One of the key focuses for 2025/26 is the refresh of the Climate Action Framework. This follows 5 years of full delivery against the framework and allows the council to respond to local and national policy priorities.' from (link below)</p> <p>https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s77069/CA150725R11%20Climate%20Action%20Programme%20Update.pdf</p>	<p>climate strategy. Officers will work with democratic services to find a suitable date for an all-Member briefing.</p>
<p>37. COUNCILLOR LEE EVANS</p> <p>I want to record my thanks to Council staff who have worked with me on foot bridges in my division, including Ten Foot Bridge. Recently, the Environment Agency confirmed that funding was available to repair Ten Foot Bridge, an historic crossing point over the River Thames which has been closed since 2024. However, no date has yet been given for the work to be undertaken. Will the Cabinet Member join me in</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Following recent structural surveys of Environment Agency-owned bridges, the Agency has applied to Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) to close several of these bridges which carry public rights of way in Oxfordshire and other counties along the course of the River Thames. These closures have been implemented using Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs) due to safety concerns.</p> <p>It is understood that resources to progress on repairs is being prioritised based on need/risk of other Thames-side assets needing attention. OCC continues to challenge this prioritisation and advocate for timely action on affected public rights of way.</p> <p>Officers are in contact with the Agency and were informed recently that funding is in place to refurbish Ten Foot Bridge. They have indicated an intention to complete the repairs and reopen the bridge before the onset of wet weather, as access to the site is via farmland and flood meadows, which become problematic in adverse conditions. However, there is a</p>

<p>calling on the Environment Agency to repair and re-open Ten Foot Bridge at the earliest possible opportunity, and use whatever powers the County Council has to secure this outcome? Thank you.</p> <p>Supplementary Question</p> <p>Will the council again reconsider all possible options for the County Council to challenge the environment agencies in action, including possible legal challenges?</p>	<p>likelihood this work will be delayed until spring/summer of next year, therefore the current TTRO could be extended until September 2026.</p> <p>Under Section 14 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, a traffic authority may issue a TTRO to restrict or suspend highway use due to ongoing or proposed works, or where there is a potential danger to the public or risk of serious damage to the highway. For footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways, byways open to all traffic, or cycle tracks, a TTRO may not exceed six months unless extended by the Secretary of State for Transport.</p> <p>If a closure is not made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act, it is considered unlawful and constitutes an obstruction of the public's right to use the highway. In this case, however, the closure is lawful and intended to protect the public from a hazardous structure. Each TTRO application incurs a cost, and OCC consistently challenges the EA's reasoning and justification for such closures.</p> <p>As the highway authority, OCC is under a statutory duty to "assert and protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any highway for which they are the highway authority" (Section 130(1) of the Highways Act 1980). However, this duty must be balanced against the risk posed by unsafe infrastructure. In this instance, the closure is deemed necessary for public safety while the EA undertakes repairs.</p> <p>It is unlikely that a legal challenge to force the EA to reopen the bridge would succeed. Courts generally recognise that public bodies must prioritise repairs based on available resources and would not compel the EA to expedite this work over other commitments. This is consistent with how OCC itself would approach similar repair obligations.</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>Yes, very happy to call on the Environment Agency to remove themselves from Ten Foot Bridge. I cannot comment on legal action.</p>
<p>38. COUNCILLOR LEE</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p>

<p>EVANS</p> <p>Different types of roads require different levels of attention and repair, as the Council's existing policies recognise. One of my concerns is that road defects which may be tolerable on some roads can have intolerable consequences on others. For example, on residential roads with high volumes of bus or HGV traffic, relatively small defects in the road can lead to noise and vibrations being experienced in people's homes. What assessment has the Council made of whether bus routes and HGV routes through residential areas (for example Faringdon Road in Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor, or the A417 through Stanford in the Vale) should have a lower threshold for repairing road defects to ensure that the road's use by heavy vehicles does not have a detrimental impact on local residents and their properties? Thank you.</p>	<p>Oxfordshire County Council's highway inspection policy is grounded in a risk-based methodology, aligning with national guidance to ensure inspections are proportionate to the classification, usage, location, and condition of the highway network. Safety inspections are conducted both cyclically and reactively, with defects categorised and prioritised for repair based on severity and potential risk to users. The current safety inspection policy is currently being updated to ensure it is in line with the current guidance.</p> <p>The council has to take a prudent view in the way it maintains its highway and to this end, the County Council has an Highway Asset Management Plan that seeks to balance the costly repair of roads that are already in the poorest condition with cheaper resurfacing schemes on roads that are about to fall into disrepair to prevent more costly repairs at a later date. A link to our Asset Management policy can be found here 2022-2027 Highway Infrastructure Asset Maintenance Approach Oxfordshire County Council. This does take into account condition as well as things such as the local hierarchy of roads (ones likely to take more traffic) when looking at prioritisation.</p>
<p>39. COUNCILLOR JAMES FRY</p> <p>What is being done to stop coaches clogging up the streets</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Along with asking our parking contractors, Trellint, to patrol St Giles we have asked them to patrol the side streets in North Oxford also. When a Civil Enforcement Officer observes a</p>

<p>of North Oxford, often with their engines running? Are parking attendants able to ticket them and instruct them to stop running engines? In the same vein, please will the County start the process of removing the dedicated coach parking spaces in Charlbury Road? The spaces lie on a major national cycle route serving several schools.</p>	<p>coach with no apparent boarding or alighting of passengers taking place, they do try to speak to the drivers in the first instance. If the driver does not move, they can then issue a Penalty Charge Notice.</p> <p>Oxford City Council can take on powers to enforce engine idling. However, the enforcement officer (not a parking Civil Enforcement Officer at Oxfordshire County Council) has to ask them to switch off first and they if they refuse then a penalty can be issued. The penalty is then pursued through the courts.</p> <p>More strategically, and as you may already know, we have started drafting a Coach Management Strategy for the city, which will identify and agree better arrangements for both pick-up/drop-off (linked to issues at St Giles', etc) and lay-over (North Oxford streets and others) of coaches - including, crucially, an understanding of which mechanisms we may have to ensure compliance by coach drivers. This strategy will consider the amendment of traffic regulation orders and parking bays if necessary.</p>
<p>40. COUNCILLOR JAMES FRY</p> <p>The Cabinet has shown that it is willing to make concessions on congestion charging in response to the consultation. There is solid evidence that some schools in the city are seriously worried about losing staff who cannot afford to live in the city, and the same is true of the hospitals. If that is true when the congestion charge is only £5, how much truer will it be when the traffic filter penalty is £70, reduced to £35 if paid promptly. We surely don't have to wait for the full congestion charge experiment to run its course before making</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>School and hospital staff won't need to pay the congestion charge or pass through a traffic filter to get to work.</p> <p>Some of those who commute by car may need to change their route but many won't.</p> <p>The scheme will also make it easier for staff to get to work by other means.</p> <p>We will continue to work with schools and hospitals to communicate the scheme and the availability of alternatives to driving for those able to use them.</p>

<p>changes, which will come too late, many fear.</p>	
<p>41. COUNCILLOR TED FENTON, VICE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>Given the recent announcement that the Carterton branch surgery of Bampton Medical Practice will be closing, what steps is the County Council taking to work with local NHS partners to ensure that residents in Carterton and the surrounding villages continue to have timely and accessible access to primary care services, and what assurances can you provide that local health provision will be protected in the long term?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR KATE GREGORY, CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND INEQUALITIES</p> <p>The Integrated Care Board (ICB) has a responsibility to ensure that primary care services are available to its population.</p> <p>There are three GP practices serving the Carterton population – Broadshires Surgery and two satellite practices from Bampton Surgery and Burford Surgery which operate out of Carterton Health Centre. People living in Carterton have the choice of registering with any practices as long as they live within the practice boundary and the practice has an ‘open list’.</p> <p>Unfortunately the lease for Bampton Surgery to operate out of Carterton Health Centre will not be renewed and from February next year Bampton Surgery will no longer be able to operate out of Carterton Health Centre.</p> <p>The ICB is working hard with the Town Council and others to see if we can identify another suitable premises. However, patients will still be able to access primary care services at Bampton if the branch surgery closes.</p> <p>The ICB is asking patients not to move practices at the moment until they know what options are available for Bampton Surgery to continue to provide services in Carterton.</p> <p>Whilst this is the responsibility of the ICB, the county council will work with the NHS partners through our Health & Wellbeing Board and place-based partnerships as well as the neighbourhood health plans to influence the overall agenda, where appropriate.</p>
<p>42. COUNCILLOR REBEKAH FLETCHER</p> <p>The recent situation at Woodeaton Manor School has highlighted wider systemic issues</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LIZ BRIGHOUSE OBE, CHAIR OF EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</p> <p>The Committee’s work plan is for members of the Committee to decide rather than for the Chair alone and that is done as a matter of course during the work-planning item on the agenda. Cllr Fletcher is welcome to suggest such a working group at the next meeting of the</p>

<p>in how we support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) across Oxfordshire. Families affected continue to experience significant disruption, uncertainty, and a breakdown in trust.</p> <p>In light of this, will the Chair consider establishing a Task and Finish Group to examine the Council's role in the circumstances surrounding Woodeaton Manor School, with the aim of identifying lessons learned, best practice, and clear recommendations to prevent similar situations in future? Such a group could engage directly with parents, staff, and sector experts, and produce a transparent report that reflects our shared commitment to accountability and improvement in SEND provision.</p> <p>Supplementary Question</p> <p>I am very happy to take her advice, and can I trust that when I do, I will have her support?</p>	<p>Committee.</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>We need to look at the whole issue about whether scrutinising scrutiny committee chairs is appropriate at the same time as questioning members of the cabinet. It's important that when scrutinising we listen to the young people that are on our committee. I will consider your supplementary question when we're looking at all the other matters with other members of the committee.</p>
<p>43. COUNCILLOR REBEKAH FLETCHER</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR SEAN GAUL, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE</p>

Following the critical Ofsted and CQC inspection report into Oxfordshire's SEND provision in 2023, the council has rightly prioritised improvement, and the SEND Strategic Improvement and Assurance Board has overseen a range of actions that have led to measurable progress. However, while quantitative indicators may show improvement, many parents continue to report that they are not being meaningfully included in the process of change, and that their voices are not being treated with the respect and seriousness they deserve.

Given the volume and consistency of concerns raised by families - through both the Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee and this council - would the Cabinet Member support a review that not only assesses the distance travelled since the 2023 inspection, but also centres the voices of parents and carers, ensuring that their lived experiences and concerns are fully reflected in how we evaluate and shape the future of SEND provision in Oxfordshire?

Thank you for acknowledging the progress made in the SEND improvement journey since the inspection in July 2023. It has been encouraging to see the incremental progress made and the partners and staff have worked hard to implement change.

There are a range of checks and balances in place on our SEND improvement journey and these include an independent and experienced chair of the SEND Improvement and Assurance Board (SIAB), Steve Crocker. I have met with Steve myself for an independent assessment of our progress and I attend the SIAB to hear for myself the activity and progress on improvement.

Steve Crocker has been invited to EYPS where he gave an overview of changes and also provided opportunity for councillors to raise questions on the improvement journey.

As part of the SEND inspection framework there are several touch points of assurance, including annual conversations which occurred in Autumn and spring. We are expecting a monitoring inspection visit which has been delayed by Ofsted for around 8 months. This will formally look at the progress in priority actions since July 2023. A full Ofsted inspection should take place before July 2026.

The Department for Education and NHS England undertake 8 full reviews per year, (deep dives and stocktakes) to assess progress. They also attend the SIAB every month to review reporting and have a full range of 1:1 meetings with key partners to triangulate evidence.

This evaluation system does centre parents and carers. Our Parent carer forum is a key member of the Local Area Partnership and they have a seat and voice at all major boards and meetings. They provide extensive feedback on parent voice and lived experience. They are fully involved in the workstreams and have been given support by both the Council and the ICB to enable them to reach out even further to parent and carers.

Councillors meet with parents every month to hear their views. I acknowledge, as does the service that there is more to do and not all parents are feeling the changes from our improvement journey, but progress has been made.

I appreciate the call for a review but the system of independent review already in place, can provide this for the Council.

<p>Supplementary Question</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member consider establishing a transparent public facing mechanism to track and communicate how parental voices are informing policy and guidance, to ensure their contributions are respected and that the principle of production is meaningfully upheld?</p>	<p>Answer</p> <p>We've had many discussions on this and I'm happy to arrange a meeting between us and the Director of Children's Services to discuss this further.</p>
<p>44. COUNCILLOR HAO DU</p> <p>I have seen evidence (supplied) suggesting that OCC officers sought to suppress public awareness of the planned congestion charge proposals in April 2025, explicitly in light of the County Council elections at the beginning of May. Can the Council confirm whether this is accurate? If so, what possible justification can there be for deliberately withholding such information from the public ahead of an important election? Which officers were involved?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>As part of their consideration of options to mitigate the extended delay to the reopening of Botley Road announced by Network Rail in January 2025, officers approached the Department for Transport (DfT) during spring 2025 to establish whether the department would be willing to authorise a non-standard form of congestion charge signage. Without such authorisation, a temporary congestion charge using the six approved (and part-implemented) traffic filter locations would be unfeasible and officers would not have been able to propose it as an option to the newly formed administration after the May 2025 election.</p> <p>DfT normally publishes all non-standard sign authorisations on its website as soon as the authorisation is given.</p> <p>As the emails show, officers were corresponding with DfT during the pre-election period. They asked DfT to delay publishing information relating to any authorisation because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This could have contravened restrictions on pre-election publicity (if it had appeared before the election) 2. They did not know whether the new administration would support the idea of a temporary congestion charge. It would have been highly inappropriate and premature for DfT to publish information about it before the new administration had even had a chance to consider the idea.

<p>Supplementary Question How can you hide information about the congestion charge in the run up to the election, and which officers were involved?</p>	<p>It is standard practice for officers to explore options in some detail before presenting them to councillors for consideration.</p> <p>This ensures councillors receive good advice and are able to make well-informed decisions.</p> <p>Answer I have nothing to add from my initial response.</p>
<p>45. COUNCILLOR ROBIN JONES</p> <p>Given the return to school, could I ask the Cabinet Member what provision they have made to ensure the children of Berinsfield, with no designated local secondary school, are all able to attend their schools from day one? Lack of adequate transport is the most cited reason for children beginning a history of persistent non-attendance with life-limiting consequences.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council currently maintains a shared transport arrangement with Thames Travel (TT), involving the public 45 bus service and the council-operated AB84 school bus service. This agreement ensures continuity of transport for non-entitled students travelling from Berinsfield to Abingdon schools.</p> <p>Due to concerns regarding seat availability on the 45 service, the Oxfordshire County Council has agreed to allocate spare seats on the AB84 bus to accommodate overflow passengers. This arrangement is governed by a cost-sharing agreement with TT and is designed to ensure that no child is left without transport due to capacity constraints.</p> <p>Passenger numbers on both services are monitored via ticket machines, including on the AB84, to verify seat availability and to support accurate reimbursement calculations.</p> <p>In the previous academic year, several complaints were received regarding students being unable to board the 45 service. However, data analysis indicated that capacity was available—particularly on the upper deck—and that some seating issues may have been due to personal belongings occupying seats. Notably, no complaints were recorded after November 2024.</p>

	<p>Oxfordshire County Council remains in regular contact with TT and will jointly review passenger data in the coming weeks to ensure that no unexpected capacity issues arise. Early indicators suggest that TT has sold fewer seats this year, which would imply reduced pressure on capacity.</p>
<p>46. COUNCILLOR ROBIN JONES</p> <p>With advice to Council that 80% of future mineral extraction should take place at sites in South Oxfordshire, could the member please provide an update on how, when and where these sites are being chosen?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>Thank you for your question regarding the proportion of future mineral extraction in South Oxfordshire and the process by which sites are being chosen.</p> <p>Firstly, I would like to clarify that there is currently no policy or proposal, adopted by Oxfordshire County Council, stating that 80% of future mineral extraction should take place in South Oxfordshire, nor has any advice been received to this effect. In addition, there are no sites currently being considered for inclusion within a Minerals and Waste Local Plan.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy, adopted by the County Council in 2017, forms part of the statutory Development Plan for the County, alongside the District Local Plans. This strategy sets out a spatial vision and policies for mineral extraction across Oxfordshire and is used in the determination of all planning applications.</p> <p>Policy M2 of the Core Strategy sets out the mineral requirements for Oxfordshire up to 2031, whilst Policy M3 sets out the strategic spatial distribution for future sand and gravel extraction. Policy M3 states that sites allocated for sharp sand and gravel working to meet mineral requirements over the Plan period will be located such that 25% of the additional tonnage requirements is in northern Oxfordshire and 75% of the additional tonnage requirements is within South Oxfordshire.</p> <p>Following the adoption of the Core Strategy, it was intended that Part 2: The Site Allocations Plan, would be prepared to identify specific sites for mineral extraction. However, in December 2022 the Cabinet resolved to cease work on the Site Allocations Plan and instead begin preparation of a new Minerals and Waste Local Plan.</p> <p>Since then, and as outlined in the Cabinet Paper dated 15 July 2025, the Council have ceased work on the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan in light of the forthcoming changes</p>

<p>Supplementary Question How many officers, counsellors, social workers, whether within OCC or in partner or external organisations, were in post during the grooming gang scandal and remain enrolled today and in what capacities? Further, what measures will be taken to ensure accountability if any such individuals are found to be obstructive?</p>	<p>introduced by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. This legislation will bring in a new plan-making framework and the Council has decided to await the enactment of the secondary legislation before proceeding.</p> <p>Once the relevant secondary legislation of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 is enacted, the County Council will prepare a new Minerals and Waste Local Plan under this updated system. A timetable for this work will be published, providing clarity on how, when, and where site selection for inclusion within the new plan will take place.</p> <p>At present, therefore, no new sites are being considered or chosen for inclusion in a new Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The process of identifying suitable locations for future mineral extraction will be established under the new plan-making system and will be based on robust evidence and public engagement.</p> <p>In the meantime the Core Strategy (2017) remains in force as part of the Development Plan for Oxfordshire and continues to guide the determination of planning applications across Oxfordshire.</p> <p>I hope this provides clarity. We remain committed to transparency and community engagement throughout the new plan-making process.</p> <p>Answer I can't confirm how many people are still in post, I will come back to you in that. If we were asked to participate in any kind of review we would do so and would expect all of our officers to do so. There should be no question of compulsion.</p>
<p>47. COUNCILLOR ROBIN</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND</p>

<p>JONES</p> <p>With regard to the HIF1 road project, could residents in Berinsfield adjacent to the proposed terminus at the Golden Balls roundabout, receive an update on the consequent road planning and mitigations for the inevitable induced traffic demand created?</p>	<p>CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>A study looking at ways of improving movement and connectivity along the A4074 corridor is currently being undertaken. Engagement with members is planned for this autumn.</p>
<p>48. COUNCILLOR HAO DU</p> <p>On 14th June, the Prime Minister finally accepted the need for a full statutory public enquiry into grooming gangs across the country. Can the Council confirm whether Oxfordshire County Council has fully cooperated with the inquiry to date?</p> <p>To this day, nobody in authority has ever been held accountable for the Grooming Gang Scandal in Oxfordshire. A number of councillors, officers, and other civil servants in partner organisations who were in post at the time remain in position across our county.</p> <p>Will this Council therefore pledge to ensure that those individuals are strongly compelled to</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>I can confirm that Oxfordshire County Council has always cooperated fully with reviews and enquiries into child sexual exploitation and any request to be involved with the Public Inquiry will be no different. As of August 2025, we have not been directly approached but will of course fully cooperate as and when required. There is no evidence or basis to the suggestion that individuals will need to be compelled. There is no indication that any individual is unwilling to cooperate and as we have stated on a number of occasions we will fully cooperate with any enquiry.</p>

<p>cooperate fully with the enquiry, and that every effort is made to bring lasting accountability and to permanently end the scourge of grooming gangs in Oxfordshire?</p>	
<p>49. COUNCILLOR NICK FIELD-JOHNSON</p> <p>Residents living on a new build road called Linden Gardens in Carterton currently have no paths surfaced and the road not surfaced properly with drains protruding causing a hazard. This is because of the developer going bust and now leaving residents with poor access to their homes and some unable to sell due to the legal status of the road not being resolved. Can I ask what the county council can do to help assist these residents who are desperately trying to get this resolved?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>Our Highway Agreements and Legal Teams are aware of this case, where the housing developer has gone into liquidation. It is unfortunately the case that there is limited action that the County Council can take. The County Council has powers under the Private Street Works Code to carry out works on a private street but only where the residents request the Council carry out those works. However, this requires all residents to be included and for the costs of any works carried out by the Council to be met by the residents.</p> <p>The residents might want to consider taking legal advice as to whether they have recourse against the builder or liquidator.</p>
<p>50. COUNCILLOR BETHIA THOMAS</p> <p>Since the beginning of the year there has been much speculation about the proposal for the future Strategic Authority (SA) in which Oxfordshire would sit, and its wider geography.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>Thank you for your question and I welcome your endorsement of our position to continue discussions for a new Mayoral Strategic Authority. There are indeed many similarities between the economies of Oxfordshire and Berkshire and your support for a future strategic authority is helpful as I lead these discussions on behalf of the County Council.</p> <p>I am sure you appreciate that my intention is to agree the best possible outcome for citizens of Oxfordshire. All the Leaders I work with are conscious that this decision affects not only</p>

For many of us the assumption was that this would probably take the form of an existing footprint, similar to the geography of the current Integrated Care Board of Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, though since then, I believe discussions are now focussed on a smaller area of Berkshire and Oxfordshire.

I am heartened to hear that these discussions are continuing as I believe these two counties share many economic similarities and links, that both are engines of economic growth, and that there seems to be a coherent argument to put a case forward for a Berkshire-Oxfordshire Strategic Authority.

There are other interested parties though, and discussions have also included Swindon as an addition to a 'Reimagined Thames Valley'. As my division has borders with Swindon, I have a significant interest in their future. Unlike Berkshire and Oxfordshire, Swindon does not share similar demographics, economies or a similar 'identity', and they are not linked by common services; it has been argued that they are therefore not

our current population, but generations to come. We feel the responsibility of ensuring the very best long-term future for our residents, other public sector partners and the many innovative and thriving businesses that we are fortunate to have in this region.

You are right to say that we do not share public sector boundaries, such a Police authority, Integrated Care Board or ambulance service with Swindon. Swindon's economy is closely integrated with that of Wiltshire, as a partner in the recently formed Swindon and Wiltshire Business and Growth Unit, successor to the Swindon and Wiltshire LEP. Swindon is not therefore an obvious fit with Berkshire and Oxfordshire. I can confirm that while we will continue to hold conversations with Swindon and Buckinghamshire, taking account of rational, evidence-based arguments, my commitment is to progressing the partnership between Oxfordshire and Berkshire as a preferred future MSA.

<p>a good match.</p> <p>As Leader of the Council, you have a say in how the geography of our proposal will be determined. Therefore, could you confirm that while you will continue conversations with areas like Swindon, or Buckinghamshire, you are committed to a partnership between Berkshire and Oxfordshire as a preferred future SA, and that you agree that Swindon is not a good match for this proposal?</p>	
<p>51. COUNCILLOR BETHIA THOMAS</p> <p>Recently the bus lane in Faringdon Town Centre has been repaired. This has been an area that has been repeatedly patched and repaired, only to find that the damage reappears within weeks – it is an area of significant use by buses, which stop there for a long period of time, often with engines running, and the tarmac simply seems to melt under their weight.</p> <p>After a recent accident where a pedestrian tripped on the uneven surface, a significant response</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The deteriorated state of the bus lane area of Faringdon High Street had been identified for repair by routine inspection. The road was closed as a precaution to ensure public safety. We managed to undertake patching works within 2 weeks after the closure was put in place.</p> <p>It should be noted that more substantial safety defect patching works were undertaken using mechanical planer and vibrating roller and this is considered to be a good quality permanent repair, removing any previous inferior repairs in the process. It is not considered necessary to include this area on a future work programme.</p> <p>We place a strong emphasis on the quality of works carried out by our contractors. Contractors are required to follow strict quality management protocols, including sampling, inspections, and adherence to agreed specifications. Works are guaranteed for two years, and any failures due to poor workmanship or incorrect materials are rectified at no additional cost to the council.</p>

<p>was made, and I had a chance to discuss the area with one of our highway's inspectors. He has suggested that the repairs made previously were not sufficient, using a fine grade aggregate which would not hold up under the pressure of the buses travelling over it.</p> <p>Since then, repairs have been made, more extensive than have been done previously, however I am concerned that they are still not sufficient to prevent further damage recurring in the near future. I would not like to see a week's road closure, the resources of the council, and significant disruption to my community all be for nothing.</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member reassure me that our contractors take the advice of our inspectors, and that if this work is not sufficient it be rectified as soon as possible, ensuring that the correct methods and materials are used?</p>	
<p>52. COUNCILLOR BETHIA THOMAS</p> <p>We are all concerned about the economic viability of our market towns. Faringdon has long been</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council does not license markets, this is a function that sits with District Councils – see: Street trading licence (England and Wales): Vale of White Horse District Council - GOV.UK .</p>

considered a 'dormitory town' and suffers from a lack of vibrancy in its town centre.

It is a beautiful area, and has a lot of space on which businesses, including pubs and coffee shops could put out tables, for a European style cafe culture, as well as an area for occasional market stalls.

In the past, the area around the Old Town Hall, known as the apron, has had market stalls on it; I believe this was arranged with the county council, and I would like to revive this, making it a formal arrangement, so that businesses are able to use it with the correct licencing.

Could you confirm that this area is the domain of the County Council, and give me any advice on how we best utilise this area to bring some life back into Faringdon's beautiful historic town centre?

Some markets have charter status like Fairs, and it appears Faringdon has this:

<https://www.faringdon.org/markets-in-faringdon.html>

I would suggest the Councillor liaises with the District Council and if they wish to revisit the market it will also be necessary to engage with the parking team if they want to use the car parking area as before.