

QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Questions	Answers
<p>1. COUNCILLOR LARRY SANDERS</p> <p>The Green Party's proposed amendment to the Cabinet budget in February called for a £2 charge per car in the Park and Ride car parks. The Cabinet's proposal based on a £1 charge was carried. Could the portfolio-holder provide me with an up-to-date estimate as to how much profit the County will derive from this charge; that is, the income minus the associated costs?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</p> <p>The Council's approved budget includes additional income from the Park and Ride service in Oxford of £1m per annum from 2012/13. Given there is no provision for additional expenditure, this is the 'income minus associated costs'.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Councillor Rose, I am reluctant to instruct the Conservative councillors on the meaning of profit but I think I have to here. The profit is the difference between what you get given and what you spend I know that. The information I would like to have is the difference between the income from the park and ride and the cost of providing the park and ride. I would appreciate it if you could let me have that information.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Basically the aim is just to generate what is shown in the medium term financial plan which I think you have been given. So I don't think I need to ????????</p> <p>Cllr Sanders – I am interested in the estimated receipt from the Park & Ride charges and the associated costs of charging for Park & Ride parkin. I would like to know what the difference is between those two figures.</p> <p>Cllr Rose – Are you asking what the cost is to implement the charging?</p> <p>Cllr Sanders – The Park & Ride cost planning to provide charging - I would like to know the difference between that cost and the income which is generally known as the profit.</p> <p>Cllr Rose – Can I suggest that we meet outside this meeting because I am not sure we are talking the same language at the moment.</p>
<p>2. COUNCILLOR LARRY SANDERS</p> <p>Following the most recent cuts to public transport subsidies in Oxfordshire, have the buses which are still remaining on routes where the service has been reduced been more highly used, or has the use of public transport on those routes dropped? Is there information as to whether any such reduction in bus</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</p> <p>No.</p>

<p>use has led to increased car use?</p> <p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>The supplementary to the first question is what is the answer? – because there is no answer. The supplementary to the second part is – is there information as to whether there has been a reduction in bus use – he says no and my supplementary is would it be a good idea to acquire that information?</p> <p>3. COUNCILLOR LARRY SANDERS</p> <p>The crisis in the Southern Cross Care Home Company affects over 30,000 elderly people across the country, including some 250 people in Oxfordshire. The company is on the verge of bankruptcy as a result of financial arrangements made by Blackstones, an American Private Equity corporation, when it created Southern Cross as a very fragile entity and sold it in 2006 at a profit of about £400,000,000.</p> <p>a) Can the portfolio-holder assure us that all the residents in the Southern Cross Care homes in Oxfordshire will be protected no matter what happens to the company and explain how this will be done?</p> <p>b) There is a continuing movement of public services from being provided by Oxfordshire County Council to being provided by private companies. This, of course, is the background to the Southern Cross crisis. What measures is the County Council taking to prevent profiteering and/or organisational weakness from endangering those services, which continue to be of great importance to vulnerable residents of Oxfordshire?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I think we are still having a language problem perhaps we could meet outside this meeting.</p> <p>COUNCILLOR ARASH FATEMIAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SERVICES</p> <p>Thank you for your question. I recognise that this is an anxious time for many people connected with Southern Cross as does the Director for Social & Community Services. We both have the interests of service users as our first priority and I welcome to opportunity to comment on the current situation.</p> <p>There are six Southern Cross homes in Oxfordshire with a total of nearly 230 beds. This council supports 136 residents in these homes with there being a further 38 private residents; a total of 174.</p> <p>I know that the Director has for many weeks been following this story on a number of fronts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • firstly at a national level through the Association of Directors for Adult Social Services, • and secondly at a local level through contact with Southern Cross' Area Manager for Oxfordshire. • There has also been the usual media speculation that naturally follows a situation such as this. <p>John Dixon, Deputy Director for Adult Social Care last met Southern Cross' Area Manager for Oxfordshire on 20th May and will again meet him on 28th June. I also spoke to their Area Manager at the Directorate's Annual Commissioning Conference on 20th May.</p> <p>Both NHS Oxfordshire and AgeUK are aware of the situation and the County</p>
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Council's Media & Communications Team has liaised on press enquiries.

My understanding is that all parties are working on the basis of continuity of care for the vulnerable adults being cared for.

At this moment there is no indication that homes may close and Southern Cross continue to work on their business restructuring. I can assure Members that we will both continue to monitor the situation during the coming months and will update you should there be any changes.

Despite the above we are looking at Contingency Plans for the 'what if' scenario that include:

- Looking at vacancies within other care homes in Oxfordshire. There does appear to be a number of available beds in the system to help meet demand.
- We are aware of a number of new beds that will come onto the market in the coming months.
- The Director is looking at the dependency of those people in Southern Cross homes to see how they might match up to the vacant beds.

We will continue to put the needs of residents and their families as our first priority and if changes are needed going forward, the Director will use the information he has access to nationally, regionally and locally to plan in the best possible way.

Should any home close, and I would like to reiterate that on the information currently available to us that we do not expect this to happen, then the Director would have a duty to assist ALL clients who needed support in obtaining alternative sources of care that best meets their needs.

I will continue to monitor the situation with the Director and will update you in due course.

b) There is a continuing movement of public services from being provided by Oxfordshire County Council to being provided by private companies. This, of course, is the background to the Southern Cross crisis. What measures is the County Council taking to prevent profiteering and/or organisational weakness from endangering those services, which continue to be of great importance to vulnerable residents of Oxfordshire?

I have to disagree with you when you suggest that the reason for the Southern

Cross crisis is the movement of provision of care to private companies. The communications that are coming from Southern Cross are suggesting that it is more to do with the business decisions that they have made rather than the sector of the market that they operate in.

I also feel that our ability to influence the market through our purchasing is limited.

Firstly we estimate that just over a half of all bed places in Oxfordshire are purchased by people placing themselves. The Council accounts for just over one third of bed places with the remainder being attributed to purchasing by the Primary Care Trust or other local authorities.

Furthermore in the case of care homes there has been provision for resident choice of home since the early 1990s. If a potential resident wishes to be placed in a particular care home then the Director will as far as possible respect an individual's choice and provide them with the necessary information to ensure that they are making an informed decision.

The final point I would like to make about our influence is that it is important to recognise that the provider view of the market would appear to be positive one. There remains significant interest in developing new care home services and extra-care housing in Oxfordshire and this trend is also mirrored nationally, no doubt reflecting our ageing population. This is likely to generate an increased number of bed places in the county.

In view of this the Council has clear safeguards and risk management arrangements in place to identify organisational weakness and respond to them accordingly.

These are generally achieved through:

- The vetting of provider organisations at a time of entering into a contract.
- Provisions that allow the Council to consider whether a contract should continue at a time of change experienced through either acquisition of the provider by another organisation or change of control of the provider
- The monitoring of the financial health of the care sector which has been undertaken at regular intervals over the last 18 months in direct response to the current financial environment.

The ongoing monitoring of services at a contractual level and at the time of review for individual placements including consideration of Care Quality Commission

	reports, responding to Safeguarding incidents and complaints, and whistleblowing.
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I do have a supplementary I asked the question (a) and (b) because of this question. I asked question (a) very deliberately to allow Councillor Fatemian to assure us and more importantly the residents and their families in the Southern Cross homes that they will be safeguarded no matter what happens. I have to say that there is an element in the answer which worries me in that it says that you aren't looking at contingency plans but it says that the Director is looking at the dependency of the people at Southern Cross homes to see how it might match up to the vacant beds. So the follow up question has to be if he finds that they don't match up to vacant beds how then is he going to safeguard their future.</p> <p>(b) Cllr Fatemian seems to think that transferring from public to private profit making organisations is not problematic?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>(a) What I will say to that and I will give the county some reassurances and I am sorry I wasn't implicit in the answer that I gave to Councillor Sanders, is that this Council will not shirk away from its duties in the responsibility of care. We have had quite a lengthy discussion of this at Adult Services Scrutiny Committee yesterday and he is aware of the actions that are in place to ensure that we continue to cater for all the residents in the Southern Cross Care Homes. I would add that there is the Southern Cross announced yesterday that any home were to close they are not expecting anything to happen before October at the very earliest, that was a statement the Chief Executive made yesterday, so this is not an immediate and pressing issue.</p> <p>(b) Chairman there are many care providers in the private sector, the vast majority of whom do a good job and it is unfair to label them all on the issues facing this one particular provider.</p>
<p>4. COUNCILLOR LARRY SANDERS</p> <p>How has the reduction in Oxfordshire County Council posts which is around 600 and rising contributed to the economic and social prosperity and well-being of the people County for whom we bear some responsibility?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR KEITH MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>Very simply.</p> <p>The reduction in the number of posts in the County Council (excluding schools) during the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011 was 522. This equates to 377 actual people in post. Both numbers are Full Time Equivalents.</p> <p>In the Business Strategy launched last June, we made it clear that to continue to maintain essential services to our communities we would need to think radically about the shape and size of the council and how we work if we were to deliver the required budget cuts. We have started this journey from the top and have significantly reduced our management numbers over the past year. We have also focused on filling vacancies in the council from within the existing workforce wherever possible. These actions are reflected in the numbers above. There is more to do of course but we are committed to ensuring that we become an even</p>

	<p>more flexible, effective customer focused organisation through these changes. In doing, we will remain an effective provider, partner or commissioner for services which contribute to the well being of the people of the County.</p> <p>Moving from the micro to the macro, the coalition government inherited a structural imbalance in the national finances in which government spending exceeds government income hugely and has done so since 2001. The coalition has rightly recognised that this structural imbalance is unsustainable if the country is not to continue adding to its debt mountain until international financial institutions down rate the UK to the status accorded to Greece, Ireland or Italy and make it impossible for the country to continue adding to the national credit card.</p> <p>The coalition government has identified health spending and international aid as needing to be protected by ring-fencing. The coalition government has similarly chosen to protect, in part, defence spending and school budgets. Other public services are having to pay the price for the financial mismanagement of the previous government and local government shares that burden.</p> <p>If you are a deficit denier who believes the country should add a continuing budgetary deficit to the national credit card, you might like to consider the advice of the IMF after their recent health check on the UK economy in which they advised George Osborne to continue his austerity programme and further suggested that, if the economic recover continues to be fragile, he might consider tax cuts to stimulate growth as well as further quantitative easing.</p> <p>To conclude and to answer specifically your question about the well being of the people of Oxfordshire, I have no doubt that the county's contribution to reducing the budgetary structural imbalance can only lead to the long term economic, social and environmental well being of Oxfordshire citizens.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>It is unfortunate that the answer that I expected is in the final paragraph. Cllr Mitchell says he has no doubt that the Council's contribution by sacking staff is good for Oxfordshire. The question is has he ever had any doubt about his goodness?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Rarely Chairman.</p>

<p>5. COUNCILLOR LARRY SANDERS</p> <p>Given that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a Council we believe that members of the public should have choice about which transport modes they use to get about; • That there is a problem in the city, the county and the entire south-east of this country with traffic-related air pollution; • That we promote healthy living initiatives which include exercise and fresh air; • That cycling combines healthy regular exercise with breathing deeply which is known to be health-promoting; • That we as a Council support and encourage such initiatives as cycling to school/work/etc.; and • That it is known that habits formed in childhood and youth form the basis for adult behaviour: <p>What is the official advice to children and young people about where to cycle in the very many places in Oxford city, and throughout Oxfordshire, where there is no provision made for cyclists. Should they cycle with the traffic on the roads, endangering themselves, or on the pavements, inconveniencing pedestrians?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</p> <p>All cyclists should cycle where they are competently able to do so without endangering the safety of themselves or others and whilst complying with the law and the Highway Code.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I do – the answer, there are real problems with cyclists and the pedestrians and cars on our roads and I think – the question really is “wouldn’t it be useful to be giving some real advice to the cyclists?”– the answer given is really vague and I think legally not correct because in fact they are not</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Chairman through you, the only way that we can do anything in this realm is to perhaps suggest that they should all read the highway code.</p>

<p>allowed legally to travel on pavements. Would it be useful to have a county consultation and work out some guidelines for how we can work together and live together on very crowded roads?</p>	
<p>6. COUNCILLOR LARRY SANDERS</p> <p>In the latest proposals to develop Oxford city centre's Westgate area, in addition to the major retail units, it is being proposed that there should be a new Cinema. The proposals, before the addition of the Cinema, predicted (and indeed rely on) levels of traffic that have been compared by the previous would-be developer of the scheme (Capital Shopping) to 'like just before Christmas, but every day'. Given that the routes to and from the Westgate area are the residential and already congested streets of Botley Road and Abingdon Road (and the streets between, eg. Thames St), what is the Highway Department's assessment of the total traffic impact of the revised project?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</p> <p>Whilst some design principles for a possible redevelopment have been shared with us by the new owners of the Westgate centre, the details of any schemes have not been. It is therefore impossible for us to comment on the transport impact of a remodelled Westgate Centre. It goes without saying, however, that we will scrutinise very carefully the transport impact of any plans that do emerge.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Since the very serious discussion of placing a cinema in the Westgate development which would have on the face of it have a very major impact on transport, wouldn't it be useful for our transport department to be discussing these matters at an early stage rather than waiting until it is slightly too late?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Chairman – I think it is a bit naive to suggest that our planners are not at all times talking with all the people in the city. But on this specific consultation, until they confront us to be consulted, there is very little we can say about it.</p>

<p>7. COUNCILLOR JEAN FOOKS</p> <p>There used to be an electronic board in the Reception Area which told people which meetings were happening and when and where they were being held. The board has been out of action for many months now and this has meant that people are having to ask the receptionist rather than being able just to go to the meeting room. Our staff are always very helpful and welcoming but for those in a hurry to find where to go, it saves bothering staff if all that is wanted is the time and place of a meeting. For those simply curious about what is going on in County Hall, having a board with the information meets their need very conveniently.</p> <p>What is the cost involved in replacing the previous board or providing a different kind of display?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID ROBERTSON, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>The bookings system which sends meeting room data to the screen in the reception area has been out of action for some time due to the age of the Madaxe system. We are exploring a new booking room system but unfortunately a replacement would come at a huge cost and so far we have not identified a cost effective alternative.</p> <p>The current estimated cost of a replacement is £60K.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>As I say the cost of replacing the previous board is £60K. He has not answered providing a different kind of display. Would it be possible to have a really old fashioned sort of board on which information could be placed by hand?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Thank you Mr Chairman, I am not about to go back into Victorian times to provide a board that has bits of paper that staff would have to continually update. We are looking into trying to get something for the 21st century and we will continue to do that and to try to find something that is cost effective and not costing that amount of money.</p>
<p>8. COUNCILLOR JEAN FOOKS</p> <p>There are now new meeting rooms numbered 4, 5 and 6, which are unable to be used in the evenings. This means that sometimes there is no room that can be booked for meetings by political groups or anyone else. When will these rooms be made available, as it makes sense to get the rooms into full use after the investment in them?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID ROBERTSON, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>New meeting rooms 4,5 and 6 Ground floor C/H</p> <p>As these meeting rooms are on the ground floor it is a requirement of our insurance cover that they be alarmed and consequently, if required in the evenings, the cost of a hall keeper would have to be incurred.</p> <p>There has been little interest in booking these rooms for out of hours use as the main meeting rooms 1, 2 and 3 are always available, and even when the 3 meeting rooms are in use, small groups can use the Grand Jury Room.</p>

<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I just wonder, you say it is a requirement of insurance that rooms 4, 5 and 6 are alarmed – is this a new requirement – why doesn't it apply to rooms 1, 2 and 3?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>The rooms 4, 5 and 6 are to the internal offices and access to the internal offices can be achieved. Where as rooms 1, 2 and 3 are quite separate and as I mentioned in my response, there are other rooms on that floor that are not facing the outside world and rooms 4, 5 and 6 have got windows that could easily be accessed and therefore it is a requirement to have insurance. If any group or liberal democrat group want to use them, they can indeed use them but there would be a cost incurred for a hallkeeper to be on duty.</p>
<p>9. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member for Transport tell me why it has taken so long for the County Council to invest in the much-needed changes at Didcot Rail Station? What bus and cycle improvements does he plan for Didcot, and for the 'Science Vale' area, to link into the very welcome enhancements to the train station forecourt?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</p> <p>Whilst Didcot has been a high priority for the Council for some time, limited funding has meant that budgets have been directed to other areas which have had a higher priority (i.e. High Street, Queens Lane, Ruscott Avenue etc) to ensure that key routes in the County remain fit for purpose, free flowing and safe for visitors and commuters. The investments in the rail network and more broadly in the Science Vale make this the appropriate time to invest in Didcot rail station to ensure that it remains fit for the anticipated growth in demand.</p> <p>Access by bus and bike from Didcot Station to the employment areas and town centre is a key part of the Science Vale UK (SVUK) transport strategy.</p> <p>Work is currently ongoing with the main employment sites around SVUK to develop the main cycling corridors and identify potential improvements. To enable this work to progress the County Council has initially allocated £200K to be spent over the next couple of years.</p> <p>With regard to bus improvements, in the immediate future we are proposing to enhance the layout and improve the facilities at various bus stops in the SVUK area to make them more attractive to passengers; £125K has initially been allocated in 2011-2012 to achieve this. There is a strong aspiration to deliver improved bus services in response to increased residential development and higher employment in the area. These improvements will evolve as development in the area unfolds.</p>

<p>10. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure tell the Council when the contract with Viridor for a rubbish incinerator at Ardley will be published? Will she review the decision of her predecessor to encourage waste from outside Oxfordshire to be transported to Ardley for incineration?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE, CABINET MEMBER FOR GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE</p> <p>It is my intention that the residual waste treatment contract with Viridor Oxfordshire Ltd will be made available as soon as is reasonably practical. Members will appreciate that the contract is long and complex and that throughout the contract there is information that is commercially sensitive. As such there is a significant amount of careful and thorough work required to check that genuinely commercially sensitive information is not published. This work is underway and will be completed during the summer.</p> <p>Planning permission for the Ardley energy from waste facility has been granted by the Secretary of State. Although OCC as planning authority put forward a case for a condition controlling where waste could be brought to the facility from, this was not accepted by the Secretary of State.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Yes Mr Chairman, would Councillor Mrs Gale accept my congratulations on her appointment to the Cabinet. Could she shed any more light on her wonderful phrase of 'as soon as is reasonably practicable' – does she mean this year, next decade, in the next 10 minutes.? Could she sort of narrow it down a little bit for me, and would she try and answer the second part of my question about reviewing the decision of her predecessor on the Ardley incinerator?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Thank you Chairman, yes you must be aware that there is a legal challenge to this planning application which is being heard in the high court between the 7th and 8th July and a decision is expected to be announced within the following two weeks. So there is absolutely no point and no possibility of being able to publish the contract before that decision has been made. So it might be possible sort of by the end of July depending on whether all the contractual work has been completed and I hope that qualifies as Summer. On the other question, this is a situation where I am not able to act in any way because there is no hinterland condition attached to the first planning application which was granted by the Secretary of State. The extra condition, which I think Councillor Tanner was involved in, on hinterland, was attached to second planning application and that was not accepted by the Secretary of State. So I can't review either situation regarding waste being transported outside Oxfordshire, it is just not possible in either case.</p>
<p>11. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member for Safer & Stronger Communities accept the heartfelt thanks of the Oxford Academy and the people of Littlemore for her u-turn over the Littlemore Library at the School? Will she agree with me that the new</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MRS J. HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES</p> <p>Thank you for your question Councillor Tanner. I agree that the new accommodation for the public library is excellent at the Oxford Academy. I have NOT undertaken a u-turn with regard to the libraries issue but have reflected and listened to peoples concerns. At all public meetings I attended I have always</p>

<p>accommodation for the public Library is excellent and will add greatly to the community aspect of Oxford Academy?</p>	<p>advised that I was there to listen. The initial library proposals and they were always proposals have been amended to reflect this "listening" process.</p> <p>I am aware that libraries play an important part in all our communities, drawing in all age groups and all types of peoples. The library is for many the hub of the community and helps to support learning, combats loneliness for those living on their own and draws in the really young and the mums for story and rhyme times.</p> <p>The consultation process which is currently underway is a further development for the people to have their say on these new proposals and I look forward to the outcome of the consultation later this year at Cabinet.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I am delighted that the Cabinet Member has reflected and listened and long may it continue – does she agree.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>What I would like to say is something I read in a horoscope which I found quite interesting and thought could apply to Councillor Tanner today and others in this chamber who are talking about libraries. Pessimist find good news worrying. If something encouraging happens they figure it can only mean one thing, something discouraging soon to occur. However, I am the optimist and that is why I have listened and I believe that the proposals on the libraries that we now have in place are probably the best that we could have.</p>
<p>12. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member for Schools Improvement accept my congratulations on her appointment to the County Cabinet? Will she say when she expects John Henry Newman primary school in Littlemore to be removed from ‘special measures’; and what steps is she taking to achieve this?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS IMPROVEMENT</p> <p>Thank for your good wishes on my appointment as Lead Member for School Improvement.</p> <p>The John Henry Newman C.E (A) Primary School was placed in Special Measures following inspection on 27 and 28 April 2010. The Local Authority placed an experienced Leading Practitioner Headteacher as Acting Headteacher who quickly identified many significant deficiencies in structure and practice at the school. The Local Authority approached the governing body to suggest that the LA apply to the Secretary of State for an Interim Executive Board (IEB) to take over functions from the governors. The governing body supported this and the IEB was established in the September 2010.</p> <p>The school has also had significant support from the LA in terms of Leading Practitioners working as class teachers and consultants from the Improving Schools Programme (ISP). A local Authority Task Group has been monitoring the effectiveness of LA support and the IEB has been effective in calling the school to</p>

	<p>account. This support is continuing and progress is being seen in all areas of the school's work.</p> <p>The Acting Headteacher and his deputy, appointed when the school had been given notice to improve, have been successfully addressing the most urgent of needs; and the outcome is increasing progress and improved pupil performance, but standards are still below where they should be.</p> <p>The IEB has appointed a substantive, experienced headteacher who will take up post in September 2011.</p> <p>When John Henry Newman went into Special Measures it was the LA's view that because of the significant problems the school faced it would take two years for it to address all the issues to enable it to come out of special measures. It is still expected that John Henry Newman will not receive its next 'Section 5' inspection before the spring/summer of 2012 and, at this point, it is hoped that it will come out of Special Measures.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>What comfort can Councillor Tilley give to the parents, teachers and children of John Henry Newman Primary School about the quality of education until the new Head is appointed in September 2011?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>There is to be a HMI inspection of John Henry Newman and I think it is 15th and 16th June. So we are hoping that that will be a good inspection and there is also to be an OfSTED inspection next year and so we are keeping a very close eye on it. The department is very well away of what is happening in John Henry Newman School and is doing everything it can to make sure the children are properly educated.</p>
<p>13. COUNCILLOR JOHN SANDERS</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member for Transport explain why people who live, visit or attend church in Littlemore should still have to pay for parking permits on Sundays during Car Boot sales at the Kassam Stadium? They live a long way from the Stadium and there is not now nor has there ever been a Sunday parking problem in Littlemore. Perhaps he will explain just what the criteria are for reconsidering this unfair imposition. People in Littlemore have been asking for years for this inappropriate imposition to be lifted and his</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</p> <p>As Councillor Sanders will be aware, parking controls in these parts of Littlemore were introduced a number of years ago as part of the transfer of Oxford United to the Kassam Stadium. Subsequently, and in response to specific requests received during the consultation on the proposed introduction of permit charges, the match-day only restrictions were extended to include Sundays when it was said that visitors to the Car Boot sales were causing difficulties for residents.</p> <p>I don't believe that officers have ignored the points Cllr Sanders has raised. Last year they carried out a survey of permit holders and one of the questions that was asked was whether the restrictions on Sundays should continue but I'm told that the responses we received from residents within the Minchery Farm Zone was rather mixed, with an almost 50/50 split between those who wanted the Sunday</p>

<p>department have ignored their demands.</p>	<p>restrictions to be removed and those who wanted them retained.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I pointed out to the officers at the time of the survey to which Councillor Rose refers, was pointless. His reply says that the responses we received were from Minchery Farm residents and confuses existing permit holders as being the same as all residents. It was after all carried out among people who were already paying to park in their own streets and were already able to park there on weekends. Many of them would not even had been aware that Sunday parking restrictions was an issue. The survey should have been carried out among all residents. It was all of them that were affected, especially elderly and other residents who expect visitors on a Sunday and people who attended several churches. I have an email here, and I will just read a small bit of it, it is from a Council officer dated 4 August 2009 it is regarding this survey. “The Survey only went out to those households where there was a permit on issue, we also want to seek the views of others households which don’t have any permits and we will be writing to a significant sample of them.” There is’nt as far as I know any follow up on that. The restrictions are necessary. I have to ask what is the point of local councillors raising issues with this Council when they are deliberately ignored because it is inconvenient to do so.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Chairman at the moment I have no funds at all to do any reviews on any CPZ’s in the City or anywhere else come to that matter. If I did manage to find funding for reviewing the Controlled Parking Zone, I regret that it would probably go up from its £11 to a £40 to match the rest of the City, so perhaps they ought not to be wishing for things they don’t want.</p>
<p>14. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>What will the Cabinet Member for Transport do to deal with the traffic jams that clog the roads in and out of Oxford in the morning and evening rush hours? Will he follow the do-nothing approach of the former Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</p> <p>The Gordon Brown Legacy has not left this Country with a financial “Plan B” [qv Rt Hon W Hague on Andrew Marr]. Unfortunately, this is also true of the implementation of our Local Transport Plan. The former Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure had a “do-nothing” approach by spending £63 million on a project called “Access to Oxford”, funded by agreed Government Grant. It is</p>

<p>or will he bring forward some new plans to ease access to Oxford?</p>	<p>regrettable that this money is now being used for a more important function of helping to pay back the Gordon Brown Legacy.</p> <p>Across the city, the most significant schemes currently being developed, as outlined in the Council strategy in LTP3, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Redesign of Frideswide Square and its approaches including Botley Rd ▪ Improvements at Hinksey Hill and Kennington Roundabout ▪ Expansion of Thornhill Park & Ride site <p>Officers are looking into any possible funding options which may allow one or more of these schemes to be implemented.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Will Councillor Rose agree with me that when the questions get difficult there are frequent references to the last Government completely ignoring the view of the fact that David Cameron and his friends in the City are the people responsible for bringing this country nearer to bankruptcy and will he agree with me that in these straightened economic times and financial times we need innovative and cost effective ideas to deal with the real burden of traffic jams in the morning and evening for people coming in and out of Oxford and the constraints that plays upon our economy.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Chairman, the reason the questions are difficult is because of the last Labour Government I regret, and I will reinstate what is in my answer here. We would have had £63m in our account by now to improve transport around the City of Oxford. Roads going through Oxfordshire outside that had the regional transport funds which have now been taken away from us to actually help David Cameron save this country from the mire that the Gordon Brown government left us in.</p>
<p>15. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>The Leader's defence when challenged about the severity of the local spending cuts (frequently repeated by some other cabinet members) is to blame the previous Government. Would Cllr Mitchell agree that he and his Party supported most of the Labour Government's spending plans and to now justify these cuts by blaming Labour is disingenuous?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR KEITH MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>No. It is not for an Opposition to support a government; it is for Opposition to challenge and to question.</p> <p>However, David Cameron halted our Party Conference in 2008 to support the Labour Government in the financial crisis that then unfolded. George Osborne was the first senior politician to talk about recapitalisation and the Chancellor thanked him for his support: 'I welcome the shadow Chancellor's offer of co-operation and help' (Hansard, 6 October 2008).</p> <p>While the Labour Government dithered for six months, we proposed a better alternative for the resolution of Northern Rock which Labour later put into statute to</p>

	<p>deal with future bank crises.</p> <p>Labour didn't fix the roof while the sun was shining, running a structural deficit even before the crisis.</p> <p>Conservatives were the first Party publicly to acknowledge the need to cut public spending to deal with the deficit and now have a credible plan to restore stability that has been backed by the IMF, the EU, the CBI, the FSB and the IFS and that's just in the last few days. I rest my case.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Councillor Mitchell does seem to agree that his party did support most of the Labour Government spending plans – would he therefore not agree that it is absurd to try and blame Labour for what is clearly a global recession and if you would agree, then why not?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I am sorry if we have to have an economics lesson here Chairman, when we should be debating Oxfordshire's issues but I just remind Councillor Pressel that the Gordon Brown and Tony Blair Government ran a structural budget deficit since 2001 and empowered money onto the national credit card, so when there was a global recession and when there was a financial crisis, this Country was ill prepared to meet it. Thank goodness we now have a coalition government that is willing to stop piling deficits onto the national credit card and to start, although it will take a long time, to reduce the debt that the Brown Government created.</p>
<p>16. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Please could Councillor Mitchell tell us how Oxfordshire has been affected by David Cameron's promise that this will be "the greenest Government ever"?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR KEITH MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>To see evidence of the delivery of its pledge to be "the greenest government ever" the member for the West Central Division needs to look no further than the Energy Bill which started its committee stage in the House of Commons on 7 June 2011 and will herald the biggest home improvement programme since the Second World War. "The Green Deal", the centre piece of this pioneering bill, will go even further than the Conservative manifesto. At the general election, Conservatives promised that every household would be entitled to up to £6,500 of energy efficiency improvements, available without any upfront payment, to help drive down bills and improve the fabric of every home. The energy Bill is raising the limit to £10,000 for measures that can be paid for against future savings. Even more could be available from the new Energy Company Obligation to help further with older, hard to treat homes and also, crucially, to do more to tackle fuel poverty which rocketed during the last years of Labour.</p> <p>Nationally and, I have no doubt, in Oxfordshire, this will herald a rush of new entrants into the energy services market. Trusted firms like B & Q, John Lewis and Marks & Spencer are set to challenge the dominance of the big six energy</p>

companies. However, the Green Deal will also create a huge opportunity for thousands of entrepreneurial, small local businesses to get a piece of this new, multi billion pound market.

To see the way in which this administration is responding to David Cameron's commitment to green government, the member for West Central Division need only look at:

- ❖ Our continued high performance in encouraging high quality public transport through our Quality Bus Partnership with joint ticketing and environmentally friendly buses;
- ❖ Our continued commitment to encouraging walking and cycling and investment in infrastructure that supports it;
- ❖ Our participation in the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership with high and increasing levels of recycling and the development of an energy-from-waste facility that will significantly reduce the use of landfill;
- ❖ Our close working partnership with the rail industry in supporting the Chiltern Evergreen project and continuing to promote the East-West Rail project, both of which will support increased rail travel and the potential transfer of freight from road to rail;
- ❖ Our partnership with Cherwell District Council and Bicester Town Council in supporting the development of the Bicester eco-town. I visited the demonstrator eco-home at the Garth on Sunday and would encourage the member for West Central Division to do the same if she wishes to see evidence of the county's green credentials;
- ❖ The County Council's Future First programme was established to help Oxfordshire County Council reduce its 'environmental footprint'. Future First is all about helping all Oxfordshire County Council staff, wherever they work in the council or its schools, to reduce their environmental footprint. This project, established in April 2005, aims to make it easier for each of us to reduce our own footprints while making changes at a wider level to corporate activities, buildings and schools. At the centre of Future First is the Action Plan. This outlines all the activities and projects that the council will be working on over the next year to reduce our environmental footprint. The Action Plan is designed by and delivered through the Future First Programme Board with support from the Future First Project Team.

	<p>❖ The County Council’s Carbon Action Plan outlines the case for addressing the council’s carbon emissions, quantifies the county’s current carbon footprint, sets out the strategic direction for carbon management and details how the plan will be implemented. It has been developed by the Future First environment team in partnership with the Carbon Trust, an organisation that exists to help businesses and local authorities to address their own carbon emissions. It outlines what the County Council will be doing over the next few years to reduce its carbon emissions. Action will focus on four main areas: energy use in property, energy use for street lighting, travel at work and waste.</p> <p>I could cite many more examples of how the County Council welcomes David Cameron’s commitment to lead “the greenest government ever” and the part this council is playing in supporting this aim but space and modesty precludes me from mentioning any more.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I need to plead for your help please Mr Chairman. Poor Hilary tried very hard to get Councillor Mitchell to answer the questions that are put to him and I am afraid she has failed – this is the most spectacular example, at the risk of being quite hyperbolic of failure to answer the question. What I asked was “how has Oxfordshire been affected by this promise so far, and it is about the Government?” – what we are getting in this very long answer is first of all things about the past and secondly things about what the County Council has done – which is very good and sadly things about the future, what the Conservative Government is going to do. That doesn’t answer my question what so ever. Please could I have an answer to it now?</p> <p>Chairman – you have to relate to County Council business Councillor Pressel and Councillor Mitchell do you want to respond to that question.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I fail to see what I can do – but what I have said here, but to refer to the Cameron Government’s living up to its pledge to be green and the response to this County Council’s has made to it. I don’t think I have anything further to add.</p>

<p>17. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Most doctors and nurses in Oxfordshire are deeply concerned about the coalition government proposals in relation to the NHS. As the PCT is one of this Council's key partners, will Cllr Mitchell write to the Prime Minister on behalf of Oxfordshire's residents to ask him to address the chaos that currently reigns?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR KEITH MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>No. I have not seen the evidential base on which you base your claim about doctors and nurses in Oxfordshire and I do not believe it. I do believe that the NHS continues to under-perform and that the huge investment made by Labour over the last 13 years has not resulted in anything like a proportionate increase in health outcomes for the population. The NHS remains a sickness service and not a health service and I welcome David Cameron's pledges about the NHS and I believe reform is necessary to secure value for taxpayers' money and to move the NHS from a sickness service to a health service. I strongly believe this would resonate with Aneurin Bevan's original vision of a national health service.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>It seems that Councillor Mitchell is living in a different world to the rest of us. The whole country is aware of the chaos that this ridiculous bill has caused and it has now got to be substantially rewritten as everybody agrees. Would Councillor Mitchell agree that the media are right to call the Prime Minister Calamity Cameron and would he also agree that Andrew Langsley's future is now in doubt after his bill has been torn apart by everyone and if not why not?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>No Chairman, I don't think I read the same newspapers as Councillor Pressel so I haven't seen that expression. I have been talking with health professionals in this County we are very keen to work together with them here to make the new system work. And I think there are fewer people who disagree with the need to reform a health services that is still essentially Stalinist, that has failed to deliver improved health care despite a doubling of its budget and there is serious concerns that we need to improve the offer and reform is the only way to deliver that, so I am afraid we are living in different worlds as well as reading different newspapers.</p>
<p>18. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>What is the County Council doing to ensure that everyone who needs it has access to advice on benefits and debts?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MRS J. HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council does not have any legal duty to provide a general debt and money advice service nor to ensure there is adequate provision of these services in the County.</p> <p>The Trading Standards Service operates a Consumer Advice Team and a Community Engagement Team. As a result of consumer complaints made to the service Trading Standards are aware of problems relating to the provision of financial services such as loans and credit cards and ancillary services such as debt collection. Trading Standards has an enforcement role in respect of legal duties under the Consumer Credit Act 1974.</p> <p>The provision of money and debt advice is a specialised area in which advisors</p>

need specific training, qualifications and support. The advisors in Trading Standards have never, themselves, been so trained. However, there are a number of other organisations which do have this capacity that Oxfordshire residents can access. These include:

- Local Citizen's Advice Bureaux
- Local independent advice centres such as Wantage Independent Advice Centre
- The Consumer Credit Counselling Service
- The National Debtline
- Oxford Brookes Student Union Advice Centre
- Age UK

Trading Standards does not operate any kind of quality control or oversight of the advice provided by these organisations since they have no authority to do so.

The help provided by these organisations varies from online self-help tools to qualified debt advisors capable of negotiating formal arrangements with creditors.

Trading Standard's normal procedure where an enquirer appears to have debt problems is to signpost the enquirer to an appropriate service. This is usually the individual's local Citizens Advice Bureaux or local independent advice centre or may be a specific advice body (e.g. the Student's Union Advice Centre for students). If the enquirer is vulnerable and seems likely to have difficulty communicating with or contacting another advice agency, Trading Standards will make the initial contact on their behalf and facilitate the transfer.

Trading Standards also has formal links with the Stop Loan Sharks Team, a national enforcement and victim support team which deals solely with illegal money lending (loan sharking). Where it seems appropriate, a referral will be arranged for a consumer to this team.

The Trading Standards Community Engagement team has also provided some education campaigns around money advice, credit and debt. However, where an approach is made for debt advice at one of these events, the person will again be signposted to a competent advice body.

The Council does not provide grant funding to any organisations for the sole purpose of providing debt advice. However, the Social & Community Services

	<p>Directorate does provide grant funding to a number of information and advice centres who provide benefits advice. The purpose of this Service is to enable Social and Community Services (S&CS) to implement its responsibilities under the charging policies for Local Authority non-residential Social Services issued by the Department of Health in 'Guidance for Councils with Social Services Responsibilities' (Benefits Advice).</p> <p>This guidance states that</p> <p>“53. It is for councils to decide exactly how any welfare rights service they provide is organised to ensure that advice on benefits is provided to users at the time of a charge assessment. In many cases, it may be both convenient for users and cost-effective to provide combined charge assessments and benefits advice, training staff to fulfil both roles.</p> <p>54. Some users may prefer to obtain welfare rights advice from an independent source and users should be offered this choice, where possible.</p> <p>These services help to meet the S&CS' need to have information made widely available and accessible so that that an individual does not need to approach the Social & Community Services Directorate or is deflected from needing services supported by this council until a later date. Where appropriate these services will refer Clients on to additional services. Information is likely to be given to any person from the general public.</p> <p>In addition, a Money Management Service is provided by Oxfordshire Customer Services as a support service to clients of Social & Community Services who are unable to manage their own financial affairs due to incapacity, vulnerability, or because they are subject to financial abuse.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Are we confident that people can get adequate independent advice as in 54 and that adequate advice is available and might deflect them from using our services or should we be doing more to promote provide that by grants for instance?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Chairman, I feel I have given a very detailed reply to the question that was asked by Councillor Pressel. Could I just say that our role here is to ensure that there is adequate signposting and profile for existing debt and money advice services and I believe that my answer actually does answer the question that she has raised more than adequately.</p>

<p>19. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>How can we ensure that developers (e.g. gravel extractors) conserve any paleontological remains they may have on their sites?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE, CABINET MEMBER FOR GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE</p> <p>There are policies at national, regional and local level (government Planning Policy Statements, South East Plan and District Local Development Frameworks) that seek to protect important geological interests, including paleontological remains of confirmed importance; this protection applies in particular to sites designated as being of national (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and local (Regionally Important Geological Sites); such designation and protection would need to be taken into account in considering any planning application for mineral extraction which would affect such a designated and protected geological interest.</p> <p>However, unlike archaeology, there are not policies in place which could be applied to require exploration for and protection of unknown (i.e. not yet found) paleontological remains of importance (though archaeological excavation might also reveal such). But, where there is good evidence that important paleontological remains exist within an area of mineral working, it may be possible to require their investigation and protection; this has been done in the case of the planning permission for limestone extraction at Dewars Farm, Middleton Stoney, where it is likely that the dinosaur footprints discovered at Ardley Quarry extend across this site.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>I wonder if we could try and strengthen our powers, perhaps by voluntary protocol, you say towards the end that it may be possible to require the investigation and protection of paleontological remains, but that is not really good enough is it – we need to make sure that it happens. For instance by perhaps asking our Countryside section to meet with the developers who are extracting the gravel pits and join up, as I said some kind of voluntary protocol which might help to preserve these really important and exciting remains – do you think that is a possibility?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>We have a problem here in as much as all the statutory bodies involved don't recognise paleontological remains in the same way that the recognise archaeology. Archaeology is the study of human intervention in the landscape. We can't protect animal remains unless they have been proved to be affected by humans. Our best opportunity is to look to the geological profession and to the University Natural History Museum for advice and guidance when these kinds of remains are found. They are rare and they are from very deeply buried in the stratigraphy because of their age. I can only say that I will look into the matter for you and see what we can do, but I mean, you know, there is no process at the moment to deal with this kind of situation.</p>

<p>20. COUNCILLOR DAVID TURNER</p> <p>The last paragraph of the "Highway Maintenance Funding Formulae and Works Prioritisation" looks like a bureaucratic nightmare: who defines what a pothole is, for example, does it also include crumbling edges of roads in villages and the countryside where there are no pavements? Also does it include holes in designated cycle routes and bus lanes?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</p> <p>Winter damage funding that the government have recently allocated to authorities is to be used to target work to areas of the network that have suffered adversely during the harsh winter period, and to effect large scale repairs that will reduce the susceptibility of those areas to further winter damage in future years. Areas where any form of deterioration has been seen to have arisen from the exceptional weather would be considered to be eligible including those identified by Councillor Turner.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>The reason, Chairman that road edges in the countryside crumble so often and produces potholes, is that there is no curb there to prevent them from just breaking off. I wondered if Councillor Rose could examine investing in small areas of curbs – not to curbside all the countryside, but small areas of curbs in the worst case points on the highways which constantly need repairing and this might just reduce the ongoing maintenance cost in the future?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Thank you Chairman, through you, I would love to put curbs in all appropriate places but I regret at the moment something I seem to be short on is the cash we need to put the highway services into where they should be, so I am afraid that curbing will have to wait for a little longer.</p>

<p>21. COUNCILLOR DAVID TURNER</p> <p>What has happened to the Bus Quality Partnership which was announced with such a fanfare two years ago? Why is the County Council not pushing harder for this to be resolved? Does the Cabinet Member agree that in the meantime, users are inconvenienced, roads are more congested than they need to be, and carbon emissions are not reducing from buses, which is known to be a major source?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</p> <p>There are regular Quality Bus Partnership meetings held with the major bus operators.</p> <p>The Qualifying Agreement will be introduced this summer and will see integrated bus services running on four key corridors within Oxford city with a consequent reduction in the number of buses. Additionally return tickets and Smartcards will be inter-available on all Stagecoach and Oxford Bus Company services in the city.</p> <p>The new buses introduced in the last two years by both bus companies conform to the latest EU emission standards and of course both companies have introduced electric hybrid buses with significant environmental benefits.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Firstly, thank you for your comprehensive answer to my question. I wonder if you could confirm that all the rural bus stops in the City Centre have now been or will be returned to their previous places where there are bus shelters for people to wait under during inclement weather and also given the amount of time that the Quality Bus Partnership has taken to put together, are there any lessons we can learn from what has happened to expedite future projects in Quality Bus Partnership?</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I need to get back to you on the bus shelter issue. As for the Quality Bus Partnership it is a ground breaking arrangement, it has actually been a real problem for the two major bus companies involved to make sure they get there combine ticketing working in the way that they are both satisfied that they had both got the cash they deserved from the number of passengers that they carried. To a bus company the most important thing is that that cash finishes up in their bank accounts which is what they are there for. So although we have been helping them every way that we can to facilitate that it was up to them to be happy with their system before they could move forward. Anywhere else in the country will be able to come to Oxford and find out how to do it very quickly and be able to run straight off with it.</p>
<p>22. COUNCILLOR ALAN ARMITAGE</p> <p>What is the loss of revenue to the County Council caused by the delay in authorising reintroduction of parking charges in central Oxford? (the delegated decisions meeting having been postponed without good reason from 21 April to 2 June).</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</p> <p>At the Budget Meeting on 15 February, it was agreed to bring in these proposals. Work then started to bring the charges into being. This included wide consultation, which brought in a large number of responses, which were not able to be collated in time for the aspirational Decision date of 21st April, while allowing due deference to this consultation. It must be said that this consultation did result in a later time of start to charges on Sunday mornings.</p> <p>I apologise for needing time off to progress my cancer treatment.</p>