



# **County Council**

**10 September 2013**

## **Schedule of Business**

County Hall, New Road, Oxford, OX1 1ND

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**-OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – 10 SEPTEMBER 2013**

**SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS**

<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>	<b>PAGE NO.</b>	<b>MAXIMUM DURATION</b>	<b>APPROX START TIME TIME LIMIT PER DEBATE</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>PROPOSALS (M = Motion; SEC = Seconder; Am = Amendment S = Statement; Q = Question; REC = Recommendation to be determined)</b>
1.	1	30 mins	10:00	<b>Minutes</b>  Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 July 2013 (CC1).	
2.	1			<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	Cllr Phillips Cllr Godden Cllr Hannaby
3.	2			<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
4.	2			<b>Appointments</b>	

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5.	2			<p><b>Official Communications</b></p> <p>The Chairman reports as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Former County Councillor Rob Evans;</li> </ul>	<p>Cllr Brighthouse Cllr Patrick Cllr Hibbert-Biles</p>
6.	2			<p><b>Petitions and Public Address</b></p>	<p><u>Petition</u></p> <p>Mr Peter Emery, on behalf of Eynsham Parish Council regarding the collapse of the wall in Conduit Lane.</p> <p><u>Public Address</u></p> <p>Mr Ian Leggett, Chairman of Bike Safe in support of the Motion From Councillor Jean Fooks (Agenda Item 15).</p> <p>Ms Sue Moon on behalf of the School Bus Action Group regarding Home to School Transport (Agenda Item 18, Motion from councillor Charles Mathew).</p>

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7.	2			<b>Questions with Notice from Members of the Public</b>	None.
8.	2	20 mins	10.30	<b>Treasury Management 2012/13 Outturn</b>	(M) Fatemian (SEC) Hudspeth S J Sanders S Beale S Hards S R Smith
9.	2	40 mins	10.50	<b>Partnership Update Report</b>  <b>Addendum</b>  Members are asked to note that the author printed on the face of the Agenda should be <b>Chief Executive</b> and not Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer.	(M) Hudspeth (SEC) Rose S Brighthouse S Pressel S Tanner S Lygo S Hards S Dhesi S Patrick S Purse S Fooks

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10.	2	5 mins	11.30	<b>County Council Meeting Dates 2014/15</b>	(M) Hudspeth (SEC) Rose
11.	3	5 mins	11.35	<b>Criminal Record Checks for Councillors</b>	(M) Hudspeth (SEC) Purse (AM) Brighthouse (SEC) V Smith S Patrick

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12.	3	20 mins	11.40	<b>Report of the Cabinet</b>  <b>Deputy Leader</b>  <b>Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care</b>  <b>Cabinet Member: Children, Education &amp; Families</b>  <b>Cabinet Member: Environment</b>  <b>Cabinet Member: Finance</b>	Christie, Pressel, Dhesi (1,2), Patrick  Dhesi, Price  G Sanders, Hards (11), Howson  Cherry, Dhesi, J Sanders(12), Greene  Hards(14), R Smith
13.	3	30 mins	12.00	<b>Questions with Notice from Members of the Council</b>  (1) Howson to Tilley (2) Tanner to Chapman (3) Tanner to Chapman (4) Tanner to Chapman (5) Pressel to Hudspeth (6) Pressel to Nimmo-Smith (7) Pressel to Carter (8) Williams to Tilley	- See Annex 2

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				<p>(9) Williams to Tilley            (10)Williams to Tilley            (11)Williams to Tilley            (12)Williams to Tilley            (13)Williams to Hudspeth            (14)Williams to Hudspeth            (15)Williams to Hudspeth            (16)Williams to Hudspeth            (17)Williams to Hudspeth            (18)Williams to Tilley            (19)Williams to Tilley            (20)Williams to Tilley            (21)Williams to Tilley            (22)Coates to Rose            (23)Coates to Heathcoat            (24)Coates to Nimmo-Smith            (25)Williams to Hudspeth            (26)Williams to Rose</p>	



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14.	4	25 mins	12.30	<b>Motion From Councillor Kieron Mallon</b>	(M) Mallon (SEC) Atkins S Brighthouse S Dhesi S Pressel S Christie S Patrick
<b>Lunch 1.00 pm</b>					
15.	4	35 mins	2.00	<b>Motion From Councillor Jean Fooks</b>  <i>Members of the public are reminded of the public address at Agenda Item 6.</i>	(M) Fooks (SEC) Pressel (AM) Nimmo-Smith (SEC) Rose S Lygo S Price S J Sanders S Patrick S Webber S Howson S Harris S Williams

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16.	4	30 mins	2.35	<b>Motion From Councillor John Christie</b>	(M) Christie (SEC) Price (AM) Patrick (SEC) Fawcett S Harris S Tilley S Hibbert-Biles S Brighthouse S G Sanders S Pressel S Howson S Atkins
17.	5	20 mins	3.05	<b>Motion From Councillor David Williams</b>	(M) Williams (SEC) S Howson S Harris S Tilley S Constance S Cherry S Tanner

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18.	5	30 mins		<p><b>Motion From Councillor Charles Mathew</b></p> <p><i>Members of the public are reminded of the public address at Agenda Item 6.</i></p>	<p>(M) Mathew (SEC) Stratford S Patrick S Howson S Harris S G Sanders S Christie S Brighthouse S Pressel S Dhesi S Williams</p>
19.	5	10 mins		<p><b>Motion From Councillor Stewart Lilly</b></p>	<p>(M) Lilly (SEC) Greene S Patrick S R Smith S Pressel</p>
20.	5	10 mins		<p><b>Motion From Councillor Stewart Lilly</b></p>	<p>(M) Lilly (SEC) Howson (AM) Howson (SEC) S Webber S Pressel S Williams</p>

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## AMENDMENTS TO MOTIONS ON NOTICE

### Agenda Item 11 – Criminal Record Checks for Councillors - Amendment to be moved by Councillor Liz Brighthouse

Council is RECOMMENDED to:

- (a) note that criminal records checks ~~should~~ **will** continue to be made ~~in any case~~ for members of Fostering and Adoption Panels;
- ~~(b) agree the approach for criminal record checking and for all Councillors. having regard both to the options at paragraph 13 and the Monitoring Officer's comments at paragraph 16 to the report.~~

### Agenda Item 15 – Motion From Councillor Jean Fooks - Amendment to be moved by Councillor David Nimmo-Smith

“Council notes that many Oxfordshire roads suffer from congestion, which causes serious delays and inflicts pollution on residents. As one of the best and simplest ways to reduce congestion would be to encourage more cycling to replace car journeys where possible, also bringing health benefits to the cyclists, ~~Council calls upon the Cabinet to consider the following:~~ ***Council calls upon the Cabinet to support this aim of encouraging cycling and to consider the following (subject to sufficient finances or funding streams being available or identified):***

- (a) that a high quality bid is submitted every time the government, the EU or other organisations make money available for cycling measures;
- (b) whether to require cycle-friendly measures to be incorporated into all new road schemes and new housing developments;
- (c) whether to draw up and consult on a new Cycling Strategy, to be appended to the LTP, which will work closely with partners (district councils, hospitals, the universities and others) and will have ambitious targets and timescales.”

### Agenda Item 16 – Motion From Councillor John Christie - Amendment to be moved by Councillor Zoe Patrick

"This Council, in demonstrating its commitment to fulfilling its legal duty to advance Equality of Opportunity under the Equality Act 2010, will respect the use by Councillors of gender neutral and inclusive titles in addressing and referring to those who chair meetings of the Council and its Committees.

Council therefore requests the Monitoring Officer to bring a report back to the next meeting of the Council outlining proposals to amend the Constitution accordingly.”, ***bearing in mind this should be a matter of personal choice***”.

**Agenda Item 20 – Motion From Councillor Stewart Lilly - Amendment to be moved by Councillor John Howson**

“That the Director for Environment and Economy carries out a full evaluation as to the economic advantages, or otherwise, of installing solar panels ***appropriate forms of renewable energy generation such as solar and photo-voltaic panels, heat pumps, ground source heating, and other types of micro-generation schemes as appropriate in order to reduce energy bills and*** to create electricity on Council owned/leased properties in an demonstration not only of its green credentials, but in its continuing drive to economise on its electrical consumption and thus drive down costs to the Council wherever possible. A full cost evaluation is then presented to the Cabinet for full debate and decision.”

## QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

## ANNEX 2

Questions are listed in the order in which they were received. The time allowed for this agenda item will not exceed 30 minutes. Should any questioner not have received an answer in that time, a written answer will be provided.

Questions	Answers
<p><b>1. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</b></p> <p>In view of the current guidance from the Secretary of State at paragraph 115 of Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance that:</p> <p><i>“115. The Secretary of State expects that local authorities may wish to exercise this discretionary power to ensure that pupils whose parents had expressed a preference for a vocational education at a 14-19 vocational academy were not denied the opportunity to do so by the lack of, or the cost of transport arrangements to such a school. Local authorities should use this power to facilitate</i></p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>The Council's position is to support all types of academies and it would wish to treat equally all schools in the county irrespective of their status. At present the Home to School transport policy does not do this. Schools which have catchment areas confer entitlements to free transport to those living within them irrespective of how far children live from the school (provided, of course, they are over the statutory walking distance away). The Europa Free school uses distances from a number of defined points to determine admissions but, since it doesn't have a defined catchment area, only those children for whom it is the nearest school receive free transport. The University Technical College planned for Didcot plans to use groups of post codes to prioritise admissions; again only those children for whom it is the nearest school would receive free transport from the Council. A policy of providing free transport to only the nearest school would remove this inequality and would obviate the need for the home to school transport policy to treat particular types of academy differently. Of course, if the Secretary of State chooses to issue new statutory guidance which <i>requires</i> the Council to actively discriminate in favour of UTCs and Studio Schools (but not Free Schools, converter and sponsored academies), then the Council would, of course, have due regard to it.</p> <p>The national policy of extending the free transport entitlement to children from low income families so that they can attend any one of the three nearest secondary schools between 2 and 6 miles from home (up to 15 miles in the case of faith schools attended for religious reasons) will continue to apply.</p>

<p><i>attendance at a vocational academy where the school's catchment area included all, or part of the local authority's area. Where such pupils were from low income backgrounds, then such arrangements should be free of charge."</i></p> <p>Will the new consultation on school transport include a section on transport arrangements to the UTC in Didcot and the Studio School in Banbury?</p>	<p>Likewise, where there is no entitlement to free transport, but there are spare seats, the charge for these is waived for children from low income families. A 'nearest school only' policy would also safeguard the Council against incurring additional expenditure through the creation of new academies, including UTCs and studio schools, or through existing academies expanding their catchment areas and conferring increased entitlements to free transport.</p>
<p><b>2. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</b></p> <p>Does the Cabinet member agree with me that it is unreasonable to expect Oxfordshire fire fighters to work until they are 60, to sharply increase their pension contributions and to threaten them with no job and no pension if they become unfit?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR LOUISE CHAPMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR POLICY CO-ORDINATION</b></p> <p>a) We have firefighters within the Service who have worked until they are 60 and only last month an individual retired from Wheatley Fire Station aged 63. The current new firefighters pension scheme already has a normal pension age of 60, but there is no restriction on how long an individual can remain in employment as long as they are capable of undertaking the role safely.</p> <p>b) Pension contributions have been raised in line with the Government Actuary Department report which identified the need to increase contributions to ensure that the scheme remained on a sustainable footing. There has been a phased implementation of these rises to reduce the impact on individuals at all levels of the service.</p> <p>c) All employees have a responsibility to maintain their ability to carry out their role to ensure the safety of the public and their colleagues. If a firefighter fails a fitness test then he/she is given the full support of our occupational health and service fitness advisor. They are given a</p>



	<p>development programme and advice to assist in them regaining their fitness. If they are unable to maintain their fitness due to a medical issue then the pension scheme still enables them to be awarded an ill health retirement. If however they do not reach an acceptable level due to personal choice then the organisation will progress them through the performance management framework. This is designed to give an individual every opportunity to improve to a level which is acceptable for the safety of themselves, their colleagues and the public. There is a significant loss in both financial terms and experience if a competent firefighter has to leave the job, and the FRS seeks to keep people in their role for as long possible. Whilst the FBU would have you believe this is a new issue due to the pension reforms, we currently have the ability to performance manage an individual if they fail to meet the required standards and we will continue to do so.</p>
<p><b>3. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</b></p> <p>Does the Cabinet member agree that the Fire Brigades Union should never have been forced into calling a ballot of its members, in Oxfordshire and elsewhere, for industrial action and that a negotiated settlement is the best way forward?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR LOUISE CHAPMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR POLICY CO-ORDINATION</b></p> <p>I fully agree that a negotiated settlement is the best way forward and this is reflected in the announcement from the Fire Minister in making the offer of a working group to the FBU to help to address their concerns over the Pension Reforms. However, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority does not agree with the FBU balloting its members to undertake any form of industrial action that has the potential to put both the lives and property of the people of Oxfordshire – as well as the lives of any non-striking firefighters – at a heightened risk because of strike action that might ultimately result in a degradation of normal emergency cover arrangements.</p>

<p><b>4. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet member write to Her Majesty's Government expressing this County Council's dismay at this unfair attempt by the Coalition to worsen the pensions of our fire fighters and urging a sensible negotiated settlement?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR LOUISE CHAPMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR POLICY CO-ORDINATION</b></p> <p>The current pension scheme is unsustainable and the Hutton report on Public Service Pensions has identified the need to modernise pensions. The existing benefits earned under the two current schemes are protected for all employees with further protection offered to a majority of employees within the 1992 scheme. The pension reform proposals do offer a new set of benefits but this is still an exceptionally good scheme for our staff. It will result in a pension scheme which will be able to be funded into the future as well as delivering a good level of remuneration when an individual retires from the Service. I refer to my previous answer in that the DCLG have offered a working group to help provide a negotiated solution.</p>
<p><b>5. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>Thanks to the government's failed policy of austerity and benefit cuts, even many people lucky enough to have a job are struggling to cope with increasing poverty. Please can you update us on progress towards firstly paying a living wage to all our staff, and secondly ensuring that all our contractors will pay a living wage to all their staff by the time any new contracts are signed? Can we also please write to school governing bodies to explain our policy and to suggest that they may like to adopt a similar policy?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>Councillor Presell seems to have forgotten the reason for the austerity programme is due to 13 years of a failed Labour economic policy racking up £1,000,000,000,000 of debt for the country. The policies include making work pay. The benefit system should be there as a safety net for those that need it. Surely Councillor Presell does not believe it's correct that somebody earns more on benefits than the average wage?</p> <p>The Council's Remuneration Committee considered the issue of the payment of the Living Wage in November 2012 and received a further report in February 2013. The Committee agreed that further information was needed and asked for research to be carried out around the feasibility and implications of any proposals relating to implementing the Living Wage. This research is continuing and a further report will be presented to the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee consulted Schools Forum, which is the accepted consultative route, and received a verbal report of their views. The majority of costs of implementing the Living Wage would fall to schools' budgets and this was a cause of serious concern to them.</p>

	<p>The Committee also received information on requiring contractors to implement the Living Wage which showed that most councils who have adopted the Living Wage for their own employees do not require contractors to pay the Living Wage to staff delivering council services under contract, this is the case with Oxford City Council. Legal advice received indicates that the Council could not require contractors to pay the Living Wage to their employees, but could ask them to do so. If a contractor agreed to pay the Living Wage in an offer to us, but submitted a higher priced bid than another contractor, and quality standards did not prove to be a differentiating factor in their favour, the Council would probably not be able to justify awarding the contract solely on the basis that the contractor paid the Living Wage. Clearly, this severely limits the effectiveness of asking contractors to pay the wage.</p>
<p><b>6. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>The Flood Management Strategy was supposed to come to Cabinet in July. Why has it been put back to October?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>The Strategy has been developed in close consultation with the City, Districts, Environment Agency and Thames Water and a draft was circulated for comment and a meeting arranged with all parties to discuss feedback to finalise the document in May 2013. Whilst there was broad agreement with the proposed strategy the feedback from the Environment Agency was that, having simultaneously been involved with several other strategies across the region, there were opportunities for sharing some of the good practice they had identified elsewhere, which would improve the County's strategy. The working group therefore agreed that this opportunity should be taken to ensure that the document was as finalised as possible prior to consultation. <b>Feedback from the consultation will be taken into account when finalising the Strategy.</b></p> <p>It should be noted that this is a new responsibility for Lead Flood Authorities and therefore no set template of what should and shouldn't be included within such a strategy. Whilst Oxfordshire was ahead of many other authorities in developing their strategy the opportunity to share information and ideas to ensure that the strategy was effective as possible was welcomed.</p>

<p><b>7. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>The government promised to introduce superfast broadband to 90% of people in rural areas by May 2015. Will we meet this target in Oxfordshire, and if not, why not?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR NICK CARTER, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS &amp; CUSTOMER SERVICES</b></p> <p>The target is (a) premises, not people, and (b) 90% coverage, not specifically rural.</p> <p>In Oxfordshire, our contract with BT is expected to deliver superfast broadband to *at least* 90% of premises by the end of 2015. As the most rural county in the South-East, this is a considerable achievement given that many counties will not complete until May 2016.</p>
<p><b>8. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>The County Council Cabinet recently agreed to defer the decision regarding home to school transport for further consultation but would it not be better by way of response to this question to announce that the proposed cuts will not take place and that Oxfordshire will be following the example of the Staffordshire County Council who recently decided to withdraw a similar proposal as it was not cost effective, had a severe impact on rural schools and legal issues related to parental choice.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>The original consultation consisted of a number of proposals not all of which were intended to reduce the net amount (currently c.£14.5 million) on home to school transport e.g. a two stage appeals process and using the GB Road Safety guidelines as a consistent framework for assessing the safety of walking routes. Others were explicitly to deliver savings e.g. increased charges for 'concessionary seats' and providing free transport only to the nearest school.</p> <p>Officers are doing further work to identify who/which areas/schools would be affected by the original proposals and more extensive modelling of the potential savings/increases in income which they could deliver.</p> <p>As an area of controllable expenditure it would be wrong to simply ring fence the home to school transport budget when other important Council services are having to identify ways of making savings which could see severe reductions. The Council also needs to ensure that as more schools become academies, and so set their own admissions rules including defining their catchment areas, that it is not exposed to the potential of uncontrolled growth in entitlements to free Home to School Transport.</p> <p>Any changes to the Home to School Transport policy will only be made after a</p>

	<p>thorough and extensive consultation; the impact on families and communities will be given due consideration when Cabinet considers policy changes.</p>
<p><b>9. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member agree that the decision to limit the access to free transport only to the nearest school will mean that effectively this will change the catchment of particular schools especially those in more rural areas?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>No. Catchment areas are used to determine which children will be prioritised for admission to schools when there are more applications than places available. As most secondary schools in Oxfordshire are academies the Council has little and declining say over these as they are set by the relevant academy trusts. One important reason for considering whether to cease to provide free transport to 'catchment' schools when they are not the nearest school is that academies can extend their catchment areas and thereby confer an increased entitlement to free Home to School Transport. Some academies already provide transport to out of catchment children at their/parents' expense; under the current Home to School Transport policy they could pass the financial liability onto the Council by extending their catchment areas.</p>
<p><b>10. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Is the Cabinet Member concerned that this move will put a further financial pressure on families at a time of austerity especially considering that Oxfordshire does have pockets of rural deprivation least able to cope with the withdrawal of these services?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>At present most parents who are provided with free Home to School transport only receive this when the school their children attend is their nearest school; a minority of parents are in the advantaged position of receiving free transport to their catchment school as well. The proposal to phase out free transport to catchment schools which are not also the nearest school would not affect any children currently benefiting but would affect some currently in primary schools.</p> <p>Children from low income families are entitled to free transport to any of the</p>

	<p>three nearest secondary schools between two and six miles from their home; this is a statutory entitlement which would not be affected. In addition, where a child is not entitled to free transport but there are spare seats, these are offered on a concessionary basis upon the payment of a subsidised fare. This fare is waived for children from low incomes and this would continue.</p>
<p><b>11. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member also agree that this is being done with a without a full consultation with all school governors, staff and parents?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>No. In the previous consultation all schools received an e-mail which drew attention to the consultation which was accessible on the Council's public website. Those schools where the 'nearest school' policy would have the potentially greatest impact were also furnished with a letter to circulate to their parents. The fact that hundreds of responses were received from parents and large numbers of governors and staff, some of whom also addressed Cabinet, demonstrates that the consultation was known about by all who had an interest in the proposed policy changes.</p>
<p><b>12. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Is the Cabinet Member aware that reducing the number of school buses will, without doubt, mean more cars on the road and more parents involved in a 'school run' something that can only lead to more congestion, air pollution and parental pressure?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>No. In the previous consultation all schools received an e-mail which drew attention to the consultation which was accessible on the Council's public website. Those schools where the 'nearest school' policy would have the potentially greatest impact were also furnished with a letter to circulate to their parents. The fact that hundreds of responses were received from parents and large numbers of governors and staff, some of whom also addressed Cabinet, demonstrates that the consultation was known about by all who had an interest in the proposed policy changes.</p>

<p><b>13. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Would the Leader of the Council give an explanation as to how we get into the ludicrous situation of Atkins Ltd selling their contract to undertake work for the authority and what is the legal liability of their actions for Atkins the sub-contractor and the County Council?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>In February 2013 Atkins PLC announced to the Stock Exchange its' intention to focus its' business on consultancy work and move away from blue collar work such as the highways contract they have with Oxfordshire. The decision whether to allow our contract to be carried out by a different organisation lies solely with the County Council and Cabinet considered that decision on 16 July and decided that in principle this was the best course of action for the authority to protect the quality of highway services to the residents of Oxfordshire. To mitigate any risks associated with this action the County Council have been working with colleagues from other councils' who have contracts with Atkins to ensure appropriate indemnity and legal arrangements are in place both with Atkins Ltd and Skanska. In this way we are ensuring that Oxfordshire County Council and its residents are not impacted on by this change in strategic direction from Atkins PLC. The County Council's legal liability in relation to all this is to ensure that, should the move take place, it is not in breach of any procurement or contract legislation and we have sought legal advice and are taking appropriate actions to ensure that this is the case.</p>
<p><b>14. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Would he confirm that the transfer to another provider will in fact increase the costs?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>I can confirm that the transfer to Skanska will not have any increase in costs to the Council.</p>

<p><b>15. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Clearly with Conservative control there is a strict ideological commitment to privatise and contractualisation of everything but would he agree that in the real world outsourcing of services holds a great deal of risk in terms of continuity of service, maintaining the quality of provision and reducing final costs?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>Conservatives are committed to finding the solution that best delivers services; we examine all options.</p>
<p><b>16. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>In view of this fiasco would the Leader consider keeping the Road Maintenance contract in house and for once forgoing the urge to contractualise and instead have a real analysis of the pros and cons of outsourcing in this area?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>The decision by Atkins PLC has not changed the service delivery position for the County Council, of course, when the contract has run its course we will seek to use the most appropriate delivery mechanism for the service bearing in mind the conditions prevailing at the time.</p>
<p><b>17. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Would he at least give a commitment that he will have deeper analysis of the consequences and risks of giving the contract to Skanska than clearly took place when Atkins were the provider.</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>A detailed analysis of the contractual offer was undertaken as part of the award of the initial contract to Atkins and similar due diligence is being undertaken as part of the current process. It was not possible for us to foresee either change in Chief Executive for Atkins PLC two years after the contract was awarded or that he would wish to change the strategic direction of the company that would have such direct relationship with out contract.</p>



<p><b>18. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Would the Cabinet member for Education agree with me that 'School Crossing staff both men and woman provide a vital contribution to children's safety whilst walking to school especially in the primary sector?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>School crossing staff provide a valuable, and highly valued, service which contributes to the safety of children when crossing roads, particularly when they are not accompanied by their parents.</p>
<p><b>19. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Research conducted by Living Streets shows that in 66% of local authority areas the numbers of school crossing staff helping children safely across the road has been reduced and that this may be a contributory factor in the 63% increase over a year in the number of children killed and seriously injured whilst walking to or from school in the UK.</p> <p>Would the Portfolio holder join with worried parents and give a pledge that the number of Crossing attendants will not be reduced in Oxfordshire and that our children will be safe on the roads?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>Although from the cited research we can also deduce that Authorities around the Country are facing similar to ours budgetary pressures we mustn't forget that it is parents who are predominantly responsible for the safety of their children travelling to and from school when they are not entitled to free Home to School Transport. Even where a School Crossing Patrol is provided, parents remain accountable for ensuring their children's safety, just as they do when a zebra crossing or pelican crossing is provided. While I can't guarantee that no school crossing patrols will ever be withdrawn, I can however confirm that the implications of so doing will be thoroughly considered before any such decision is made.</p>
<p><b>20. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Could the Cabinet member assure parents that if school crossing staffing is withdrawn from a school a full risk assessment will have been carried out to confirm that it would be safe to do so?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>The current procedure adapted by the Council is for a Road Safety Needs Assessment to be carried out for new school crossing site requests or for reappointment of posts that becomes vacant. The assessment follows the Road Safety GB School Crossing Patrol Guidelines as revised in June 2011. These guidelines provide a mechanism of assessing the risk based on the traffic conditions (volume and speed) and the site (width of the road,</p>

	<p>presence of junctions, parking, and obstructions to visibility), together with the number of school children crossing. This information along with any other relevant factors forms the basis for any decisions regarding future deployment of a school crossing patrol officer.</p>
<p><b>21. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Lastly, if cuts are to be introduced has the Cabinet member thought of accepting sponsorship to underpin the financing of school crossing personnel, a process that other authorities have considered?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>I am open to considering any and all creative approaches which could enhance the safety of children and encourage more of them to walk, cycle or use public transport to travel from home to school. 'Walking buses' are an excellent example of schools and parents taking collective responsibility for the home to school journey which also has significant health benefits for the participating children (and their parents!) A recent study has revealed how few children, particularly girls, participate in the recommended level of physical activity each day so I'd like to see more of them walking and cycling.</p>
<p><b>22. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</b></p> <p>What stance has the County Council taken with regard to the proposed HS2 High Speed rail link that that will pass through Oxfordshire and has the Cabinet Member made any representations to the Government as a result?</p>	<p>The Council's general approach to HS2 is set out in the Local Transport Plan 2011-2030, Policy PT6: 'Oxfordshire County Council is opposed to the High Speed 2 rail proposals on the grounds of the scheme's business case viability and impact on local communities', and paragraph 11.52: 'With no intermediate stations proposed, the line offers few direct benefits to the county. Oxfordshire County Council is unconvinced about the overall business case for HS2. Therefore we are opposed to HS2. Oxfordshire County Council is particularly concerned about the impacts of the current HS2 proposals on the villages of Newton Purcell and Finmere and will keep under review the potential environmental effect on these areas as the design progresses'.</p> <p>Our on-going position is expressed through our membership of 51m, the group of councils opposed to HS2, although I should point out that Oxfordshire County Council has made no financial contribution towards this</p>

	<p>group or the legal challenge to the project.</p>
<p><b>23. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</b></p> <p>The massive increases at County Council Day Care Centres charges will mean that many of the poorest pensioners will no longer be able to afford to attend. Could the Cabinet member give an indication if the numbers attending have started to decline and how she intends to ensure that the least well off pensioners who generally are in the most need of the services can continue to enjoy the community spirit, activities and life support networks that the Day Centres bring.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</b></p> <p>The revised charges are being introduced during September. Managers facilitated meetings in each centre with users and family carers throughout July to explain the revised charges and answer questions. Each user received a letter confirming this at the end of July and local managers are able to answer queries and concerns from people on an individual, personal basis.</p> <p>At present there are no indications that people will stop using the centres although a few people did say they may use them for fewer days as the prices increase over the next two years but would review this as and when. So far we have not seen any decrease in use and local managers will be monitoring this closely so that we can respond quickly to anyone who feels they can no longer afford to use the centres. People on the lowest incomes are most likely to already be in receipt of financial assistance through a personal budget and this will continue.</p> <p>There are options whereby if a person who currently pays the charges is assessed as needing the service but the charges are cost prohibitive, and not attending would be particularly detrimental to them, this could be taken into consideration and potentially result in a reduced or waived charge and this would be determined through a financial assessment. Local managers are making sure that anyone who wants to consider a financial assessment is given the information to do so.</p> <p>As local managers are monitoring the situation and know their customers well</p>

<p>What is the Cabinet Member doing to ensure charges don't continue to spiral 0in the near future?</p>	<p>it is envisaged that they can support continued attendance and refer people for assistance as necessary.</p> <p>The increase in charges reflect the decision made by the Cabinet t in January 2013. This was as follows:</p> <p><u>Tier 3 Health &amp; Wellbeing Centres</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As of September 2013 introduce increased transport charge of £5 per return journey.</li> <li>2. Phase the implementation of increased attendance charges commencing September 2013.</li> <li>3. As of September 2013 increase charge to £7.50 per person for 5 hours and £4.50 per person for 3 hours.</li> <li>4. As of April 2014 increase charge to £10 per person for 5 hours and £6 per person for 3 hours.</li> <li>5. As of April 2015 increase charge to £15 per person for 5 hours and £9 per person for 3 hours.</li> </ol> <p>There are no plans to increase the charges further.</p>
<p><b>24. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</b></p> <p>Over the past three years County spending on cycling has averaged just half a percentage point of the Highways capital budget. Given the popularity of cycling in Oxfordshire and our duty to encourage sustainable means of transport does the Cabinet Member agree that we should be increasing the amount we spend on cycling schemes?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO-SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>The County Council continues to look for opportunities to improve the conditions for cyclists. With capital budgets continuing to be under pressure, this increases the importance of ensuring that we take the needs of cyclists into account at every opportunity possible. For example, the revamp of the central section of High Street saw improvements for both cyclists and pedestrians; we also took the opportunity whilst re-constructing Iffley Road to remove on-street day time parking between James Street and the Plain so that an outbound cycle lane could be introduced. These investments build upon initiatives, such as the introduction of a city-wide 20 mph speed limit in central Oxford, that have helped to improve conditions for cyclists. More</p>

	<p>recently investment in Old Road and the Slade in Headington, together with the works underway to connect Rippington Drive in New Marston with the Parks cycle route, show our continued commitment to cyclists. I was particularly delighted with our recent success in securing an additional £835,000 of Government funding specifically to deliver substantial improvements for cyclists at the Plain by March 2015.</p> <p>In addition to schemes in Oxford we have also supported the following schemes within the County.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burford Road cycleway, Carterton - £133,000</li> <li>• Cycle parking in Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton, Eynsham, Woodstock and Charlbury - £35,000</li> <li>• Cycle lanes and by-pass as part of Bicester Town centre Access improvements which included transforming a busy through route into a cycle friendly residential street providing direct access to Bicester Town Centre.</li> <li>• Hanwell Fields mineral railway line pedestrian and cycle path</li> <li>• Various cycle maps produced (Bicester, Witney/Carterton)</li> <li>• Cycle lanes on Boston Road, Bicester</li> </ul>
<p><b>25. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>How many 'employees' of Oxford County Council are on zero hour contracts?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>None.</p>
<p><b>26. COUNCILLR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member give an assessment of the likely impact of the enormous rail fare increases recently announced on the County's Transport Strategy? Does he think that commuters and other passengers will continue to pay these</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>The rail system in Oxfordshire will continue to benefit from the commitments made by the Government for significant investment: in terms of electrification of the Great Western main line to Paddington, the introduction of new trains, the introduction of new services from Oxford to London Marylebone and Milton Keynes/Bedford. Our forecasts show that, taking into account current Government policy on fare increases, this investment will continue to result in</p>

rip off prices or does he think it will mean a large scale shift from rail to roads and the consequential congestion and pollution this will generate. Oxfordshire has been a prime mover in opening up new rail links. Could the Portfolio holder say if these tremendous increases, well above inflation for the last 10 years, will undermine the viability of these new extensions and proposed new rail lines?

significant growth in the number of passengers. The investment in the rail system will provide Oxfordshire residents and businesses with improved options for travel choice. Over the 10 year period that you describe, successive governments have increased fares by above inflation each year, while over that same period, passenger numbers have more than doubled. On that basis, it does not look as though passengers consider that they are being ripped off, as you put it.