

CABINET – 27 FEBRUARY 2018

ITEM 4 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Question received from the following Member:

Questions from Councillor Cherry to Councillor Constance

1. Has there been any progress in recruiting more road gangs to repair potholes by Council highways contractors Skanska

Answer

Skanska have allocated additional gangs to respond to the increase in reported pothole numbers, this equates to one gang in the North and similarly in the south. In addition to this where resources permit weekend working is being undertaken

2. After a Banbury Guardian article on Thursday 15th February 2018, can I be assured that the FixMyStreet depth and width for fixing potholes has not been changed this includes highways officers inspecting potholes that have been reported by FixMyStreet or directly by local councillors.

Answer

Official intervention levels for footway and carriageway defects have not changed, however, a small element of discretion has been introduced for the inspectors to reduce the 'pothole next to a pothole not being fixed' type of enquiry

3. Question from Councillor Howson to Councillor Hibbert-Biles

Following this comment from Ofsted in a recent report on a visit to a maintained primary school in London:

'The local authority has provided some support to the school in managing the manipulative and sometimes abusive correspondence and comments made by email and across social media. However, considering the position the school found itself in, and the fact that some correspondence appears to have been coordinated, the local authority's approach has been perfunctory at best, stopping short of supporting the school in its policy position. Instead, the local authority has positioned itself as a moderator to manage relationships between the school, councillors and community groups. The expected level of emotional care and public support for school staff from the local authority has been too limited and, as a result, ineffective.'

What mechanisms does this local authority have available to deal with any contentious issues affecting a maintained school in Oxfordshire?

Answer

“Through ‘Workforce Steering Group and the ‘Oxfordshire County Council and Teachers Joint Committee’ a new social media policy is in the process of being agreed. This will apply to all maintained schools and will be available to academies to adopt or adapt as they see fit. The policy will include clear guidance about how school staff should deal with cases of ‘cyber bullying’ including the importance of retaining evidence. Where schools buy into the Council’s legal services they can access support where there may have been a potentially criminal act or, if short of this, perpetrators could be written to requiring them to desist. In principle this would be the same approach as adopted in the case of a vexatious parent or member of the public who could be barred from a school site. Ultimately the Council could take legal action on behalf of its employees, including head teachers.”

4. Question from Councillor John Sanders to Councillor Constance

I am aware of the concerns about on-street parking in residential areas in the city. A number of new controlled parking zones are already in the pipeline, and updates on the progress of these has been provided through the Oxford locality briefing papers, which all Oxford locality members will have received.

Answer

However there are also a number of zones across the city which are not currently being progressed, but where we know there is concern about on-street parking. Officers have prepared a draft programme setting out how and when all the remaining zones in the city could be progressed, but some discussion with local city and county members (including some prioritisation) will be required before anything is published. I have asked officers to ensure these discussions happen as quickly as possible. Funding will need to be identified for any zones which are not already funded.