CABINET – 15 SEPTEMBER 2020

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Questions	Answers
COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON With the reduced flow of traffic entering the City of Oxford from the west, would you consider diverting traffic from Frideswide's Square along Park End Street and New Road to Worcester Street. Hythe Bridge Street, with its narrow pavements where social distancing is impossible, could then become a pedestrian route from Frideswide's Square to the junction with Worcester Street with the only vehicle access to local properties. This change would make a secure cycling and walking route into the city centre. A temporary arrangement, as with the recent experiment in George Street, would test the benefit of this arrangement to both pedestrians and cyclists.	**COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT (INCLUDING TRANSPORT)** We recognise that footways are narrow and pedestrian flow is heavy along Hythe Bridge Street, but we do not believe that diverting traffic in this way would be a suitable solution at present. Traffic levels appear to be only slightly less than pre Covid-19 and this diversion would need the recent changes to the George Street/Worcester Street/Hythe Bridge Street junction to be removed. The significant benefits for pedestrians and cyclists that have been achieved as a result of this junction improvement would be lost and the additional general traffic using Worcester Street south would have a negative impact on buses and their passengers.
COUNCILLOR JOHN SANDERS Will the cabinet member explain how it has come to pass that after a decade and more of fudge, error and delay this Council still does not have a valid Minerals and Waste Local Plan, that is now to be postponed again by at least two years to 2023?	**COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT (INCLUDING TRANSPORT)** "The Council does have an adopted Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1 Core Strategy. This was adopted by Full Council in 2017 and sets out the vision, objectives, spatial planning strategy and policies for meeting development requirements for the supply of minerals and the management of waste in Oxfordshire over the period to 2031. The Core Strategy provides the Policy on which the determination of all minerals and waste development management decisions are made.

Questions	Answers
	The Core Strategy also provides a policy framework for identifying sites for new minerals and waste developments in Part 2 of the plan - the Site Allocations Plan. “We are now working on preparing the Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 2 Site Allocations Plan (Sites Plan). The Sites Plan, upon adoption, will identify the mineral extraction and waste management sites needed to deliver the policies within the Core Strategy up to 2031. The Sites Plan will sit alongside Part 1 and will not replace it. Together they will form the Minerals and Waste Local Plan for Oxfordshire. Work commenced on the Sites Plan following adoption of the Core Strategy, and the first consultation on the Part 2 work took place in 2018, then a further consultation on Preferred Site Options took place earlier this year. There were a number of unexpected material considerations that emerged through this recent public consultation which challenged the robustness of the evidence base underpinning the selection of preferred site options. For example, one of them included evidence which suggests significantly less sand and gravel at one of the preferred sites, the Nuneham Courtenay site than was estimated in the nomination by the operator. As a result we are working on a revised timeline for the preparation of the MWLP Part 2 which will take account of the need to extend public consultation on the preferred options stage. A report will come back to Cabinet setting out the reasons for the delay and a revised timeline but I hope you’ll agree it is important to ensure to undertake this additional work now in order to ensure our Plan is found sound at Examination.