

## ...Decisions... Decisions...

These notes indicate the decisions taken at this meeting and the officers responsible for taking the agreed action. For background documentation please refer to the agenda and supporting papers available on the Council's web site ([www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk).)

If you have a query please contact Colm Ó Caomhánaigh (Tel: 07393 001096; E-Mail: [colm.ocaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:colm.ocaomhanaigh@oxfordshire.gov.uk))

### COUNTY COUNCIL - TUESDAY, 16 APRIL 2024

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p><b>1. Minutes</b></p> <p>To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2024 (CC1) and to receive information arising from them.</p>	<p>Approved.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánaigh)</p>
<p><b>2. Apologies for Absence</b></p>	<p>Councillors Ash, Banfield, Constance, Field-Johnson, Johnston, Snowdon and Webber.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánaigh)</p>
<p><b>3. Declarations of Interest - see guidance note</b></p> <p>Members are reminded that they must declare their interests orally at the meeting and specify (a) the nature of the interest and (b) which items on the agenda are the relevant items. This applies also to items where members have interests by virtue of their membership of a district council in Oxfordshire.</p>	<p>Anita Bradley, Director of Law &amp; Governance and Monitoring Officer, stated that she had a direct financial interest in Item 16 as a member of the strategic leadership team being consulted with and will leave the meeting for that discussion.</p>	
<p><b>4. Official Communications</b></p>	<p>Ofsted has judged Oxfordshire County Council's Children's Services as 'good' following the inspection that took place in February 2024.</p> <p>Ofsted commented that "Strong political and corporate support has continued and has ensured that the children's directorate has received ongoing investment to develop and strengthen services for vulnerable children.</p> <p>Since the last Full Council meeting in February, the Chair has had the</p>	

	<p>following invitations -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12<sup>th</sup> March Opening of Edmonds Park Pavilion, Didcot</li> <li>• 16<sup>th</sup> March South Oxfordshire District Council quiz night, Chalgrove</li> <li>• 22<sup>nd</sup> March SODC Chair's Civic charity dinner, Chalgrove</li> <li>• 28<sup>th</sup> March Oxfordshire music theatre production, Abingdon</li> <li>• 5<sup>th</sup> April Mayor of Henley's Civic dinner, Henley</li> <li>• 13<sup>th</sup> April Mayor of Thame Civic event, Thame</li> </ul> <p>On the 15<sup>th</sup> of March Cllr Bloomfield held his annual Civic event raising over £3,000 for his chosen charities.</p> <p>Upcoming events are –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16<sup>th</sup> April Oxfordshire employment and annual celebration event, Oxford</li> <li>• 17<sup>th</sup> April Blue Plaque meeting, Oxford</li> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> April Millstream extension opening</li> <li>• 21<sup>st</sup> April Faringdon Civic service</li> <li>• 7<sup>th</sup> May Mayor of Didcot's Mayor making</li> <li>• 14<sup>th</sup> May Inauguration of the Banbury Town Mayor, Banbury</li> <li>• 17<sup>th</sup> May Chair of West Oxfordshire District Council charity quiz, Witney</li> </ul>	
<p><b>5. Appointments</b></p> <p>To make any changes to the membership of scrutiny and other committees on the nomination of political groups and to note any changes to the Cabinet made by the Leader of the Council.</p>	<p>There were none notified.</p>	
<p><b>6. Petitions and Public Address</b></p> <p>Members of the public who wish to speak on an item on the agenda at this meeting, or present a petition, can attend the</p>	<p><u>Item 9: Annual Report of the Director of Public Health</u>  Professor Hugh Montgomery  Professor Sir Andrew Haine</p>	

<p>meeting in person or ‘virtually’ through an online connection. Requests must be submitted no later than 9am one working day before the meeting i.e., 9am on Monday 15 April 2024. Requests to speak should be sent to <a href="mailto:committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk">committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a></p>	<p><u>Item 17: Motion by Councillor Reeves</u>          Claire Wilding          Helen Evans          Krista Beighton          Clare Nelis          Helen Evans</p> <p><u>Item 20: Motion by Councillor Gawrysiak</u>          Janet Waters          Caroline Newton</p> <p><u>Item 21: Motion by Councillor Reeves</u>          Kimberly Morgan          Tressa Verrier</p> <p><u>Item 26: Motion by Councillor Povolotsky</u>          Claire Brenner          Katie Nellist</p>	
<p><b>7. Questions with Notice from Members of the Public</b></p>	<p>Three questions were asked. The questions, responses and supplementary questions are recorded in an Annex below.</p>	
<p><b>8. Questions with Notice from Members of the Council</b></p>	<p>Twenty-five questions were asked. The questions, responses and supplementary questions are recorded in an Annex below.</p>	
<p><b>9. Annual Report of the Director of Public Health</b></p> <p>Report by Corporate Director: Public Health and Community Safety</p> <p>Directors of Public Health have a statutory duty to publish an annual report on a subject of their choice that they feel demonstrates the state of health within their community. The purpose of this item is to share the report for 23/24.</p> <p><b>The full Council is RECOMMENDED to note the Director of Public Health Annual Report and to take every opportunity to support actions and initiatives that will progress related work.</b></p>	<p>Recommendation approved.</p>	<p>CDPHCS (R Rowe)</p>
<p><b>10. Dispensation from Attending Meetings</b></p>		

<p>Report of the Director of Law &amp; Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Full Council has the discretion to approve a dispensation, based on the circumstances of the case, which means that the councillor does not cease to be a member of the Council for failing to attend a meeting during a six-month period.</p> <p><b>The Council is RECOMMENDED</b></p> <p>a) <b>To grant a dispensation to Cllr Yvonne Constance from the statutory requirement to attend a meeting of the Council within a six-month period from the last noted attendance due to illness.</b></p> <p>b) <b>To approve that the dispensation last up to and including 30 November 2024.</b></p>	<p>Recommendations approved.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánai agh)</p>
<p><b>11. Report of the Cabinet</b></p> <p>Report from Leader of the Council.</p> <p>The report summarises the decisions from the Cabinet meetings on 19 December 2023, 23 January 2024, 30 January 2024, 27 February 2024 and 19 March 2024.</p>	<p>Council received the report of Cabinet.</p>	
<p><b>12. Review of Arrangements for Dealing with Complaints against Members</b></p> <p>Report of the Director of Law &amp; Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>On 13 March 2024, the Audit and Governance Committee considered the revised arrangements for dealing with complaints against members and recommended that they be adopted by the Council.</p> <p><b>Council is RECOMMENDED to approve and adopt the revised arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct complaints against members attached</b></p>	<p>Recommendation approved.</p>	<p>DLG (S Smith)</p>

<p>to this report together with annexes 1 to 5.</p>		
<p><b>13. Audit &amp; Governance Committee Terms of Reference - Whistleblowing Policy</b></p> <p>Report of the Director of Law &amp; Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>At its meeting on 13 March 2024, the Audit and Governance Committee received an updated Whistleblowing Policy and recommended its approval.</p> <p><b>Council is RECOMMENDED to amend the terms of reference for the Audit and Governance Committee to include the following addition: 'To monitor whistleblowing arrangements and to approve the Whistleblowing Policy'.</b></p>	<p>Recommendation approved.</p>	<p>DLG (S Harper)</p>
<p><b>14. Further Draft Recommendations re Electoral Arrangements for Oxfordshire County Council</b></p> <p>Report of the Director of Law &amp; Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>During consultation on the draft recommendations, which were published on 3 October 2023, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England received 41 representations, most of which commented on the proposals for divisions in Cherwell District and the Vale of White Horse District. In light of these representations, the LGBCE has amended its proposals and has published further draft recommendations for all divisions in Cherwell and most in Vale of White Horse.</p> <p><b>The Council is RECOMMENDED to support the further draft recommendations of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) relating to the division boundaries for the Cherwell District and Vale of White Horse District and to submit a response to the further</b></p>	<p>Recommendation approved with 2 abstentions.</p>	<p>DLG (S Harper)</p>

<p><b>LGBCE consultation confirming this position.</b></p>		
<p><b>15. Review of Political Balance</b></p> <p>Report of the Director of Law &amp; Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p><b>Council is RECOMMENDED</b></p> <p>a) <b>To note the review of political balance of committees to reflect the formation of a new political group ‘The Independent Voice of Oxfordshire (TIVOO)’ comprising three members: Cllr Stefan Gawrysiak, Cllr Damian Haywood (Deputy Group Leader) and Cllr Sally Povolotsky (Group Leader).</b></p> <p>b) <b>To appoint members to the committees of the Council listed at Annex 1. A fully populated list with nominations from the political groups for the vacant seats will be circulated ahead of the meeting.</b></p> <p>c) <b>To remove the Corporate Parenting Committee from the list of Council committees.</b></p>	<p>Recommendations approved with one amendment to the membership of committees:</p> <p>Audit &amp; Governance Committee – Councillor Champken-Woods to replace Councillor Constance.</p>	<p>DLG (S Harper)</p>
<p><b>16. Proposed Leadership Restructuring</b></p> <p>The information contained in the report is exempt in that it falls within the following prescribed categories:</p> <p>1. Information relating to a particular individual.</p> <p>3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)</p>	<p>Recommendations in the exempt report approved with 20 votes in favour, 12 against and 15 abstentions.</p>	<p>EDR (M Fletcher)</p>
<p><b>Items 17 to 28.</b></p>	<p>The time being 3.30 pm, Items 17 to 28 were considered dropped in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2.</p>	

## Questions from Members of the Public

Questions are listed in the order in which they were received.

### 1. PAUL BARROW

I am District Councillor for the seven villages immediately west of Wantage, a very rural ward and which receives much of its water from the Downs immediately to the south.

We have had a huge amount of rain in the last few months which has led to extensive localised flooding. Flooding on the A417 west of East Challow lasted 10 weeks and badly affected several businesses on the W&G Estate and Mellor's garage with losses of several thousands of pounds and Mellor's coming close to closure as a result of financial loss. The X35 bus between Wantage and Faringdon stopped for a while which caused problems for some residents in Faringdon who I know don't have their own transport.

The local flooding here is largely the result of neglect of maintenance of roadside drains, ditches and stream culverts. Some of this is certainly the result of landowners not fulfilling their responsibilities over several decades. However, some of it can certainly be placed at the door of county council administrations over many years from lack of maintenance of such basic infrastructure. Shrinking budgets increasingly limit what can be done but this itself is very concerning. Clearly this is not sustainable for the future.

Several years ago, I encouraged some of our spring line villages to get road drainage grips cut by a contractor because the county officer told me "that they are lucky if they get it done every 10 years". Lack of maintenance of these grips continues to lead to flooding in parts of these villages and to depositing silt into the

### COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT.

In addition to engaging with Highways on these issues, it would be beneficial to contact the Flood Risk Team. There are several opportunities for working together on these issues where highway infrastructure is not the only issue and this team have recently reached out to Parish Councils for expressions of interest for small scale flood resilience work in their areas. All expressions of interest will be reviewed and allocated as funding allows. If these parish councils have not already done so they can contact the team on [floodmanagement@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:floodmanagement@Oxfordshire.gov.uk) for further information.

We also provide a Flood Toolkit which includes standard letters that Town and Parish Councils are able to send to landowners that are not maintaining their watercourses, and support Town and Parish Councils to involve volunteers in drain clearance work via the Oxfordshire Together scheme. More information is available via the [Oxfordshire Together](#) and [Volunteer for highways and your community](#) pages on the council's website. For insurance reasons there are limits to the extent of the types of work volunteers can be involved in however, we welcome all opportunities to engage with Parish Councils to best use resources.

Additionally, we are currently running a trial volunteer flood warden pilot scheme. This involves volunteers being the eyes and ears on the ground and we will be deciding in the next 2 or 3 months whether this will be continued and expanded.

<p>Letcombe Brook. Is there any way that parish councils could engage more effectively with Highways in future to take on board some of the minor maintenance work which Highways may regard as lower priority as budgets continue to shrink?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY:</b></p> <p>How better can we engage with landowners who have repairing responsibilities to ensure that their water courses are managed properly to reduce flood risk? This has already been answered in the response to the initial question, so thank you.</p>	<p><b>ANSWER:</b></p> <p>I am delighted to have answered the supplementary before having seen it. Please do keep in touch about these issues and we will try to help as best we can.</p>
<p><b>2. JANINE BAILEY</b></p> <p>Why has the lease deal between Oxford United Football Club and Oxfordshire County Council not been concluded, particularly given the contractual documents (the lease option agreement, the lease and the collateral agreement) have been negotiated and officers have provided advice that the Seven Strategic Priorities have been met. Can he also give an indication of when he intends to conclude these, given the pressure the club is under?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DAN LEVY, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE</b></p> <p>The council is in ongoing dialogue with the club as regards heads of terms. As I am sure you will appreciate, projects of this kind are very complex and there is a lot of detail to work through to make sure we secure the best possible outcome for both the club and residents. However, good progress has been made and we hope to make a formal announcement shortly.</p> <p>We fully recognise the pressure the club is under and we are doing everything we can to help the club achieve a long-term home in the county.</p> <p>In addition to agreeing heads of terms, the lease of land at the Triangle comes with a number of conditions, including the club securing planning permission from Cherwell District Council, who are the local planning authority. The county council is a statutory consultee in this planning application in our role as local highways authority and our officers are scrutinising the club's plans in detail.</p>
<p><b>3. ANNE STARES</b></p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Officers have checked our records for ANPR in the Cowley area. The</p>



<p>What is the total of the revenues for all ANPR in the Cowley area for the last 12 months?</p>	<p>only ANPR PCNs issued over the past 12 months are for two bus lane cameras which could be considered to be in Cowley. These are Cornwallis Road and Bartholomew Road. From 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 the total revenue received is £120,661. No other ANPR PCNs have been issued.</p>
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## QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

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.

<p><b>1. COUNCILLOR DONNA FORD</b></p> <p>A recent report in The Times refers to Oxfordshire County Council as having a ‘do as we say, not as we do’ attitude on the environment, reporting:</p> <p><i>“Outside the capital, <a href="#">Oxfordshire county council</a>, which claims to be “leading the way” on the environment by seeking to become net zero by 2030, consumed 66 per cent more gas than neighbouring Buckinghamshire, which is sticking to the national target of net zero by 2050.”</i></p> <p>Is The Times’ report correct and, if not, why not?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR PETE SUDBURY, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS</b></p> <p>Thank you for giving me the opportunity to debunk this sloppy journalism. At the time of writing, I believe three Councils mentioned (including Hackney, OCC and Bucks) have written to The Times, objecting to the gross misuse of data, about which our Estates department briefed them in full prior to publication.</p> <p>Looking at objective benchmarking data. We have two sets, one in the public domain, the other a shadow benchmark. The first is Climate Emergency UK, which used a broad range of benchmarks including Buildings &amp; Heating, Transport, Planning and Land Use, Governance and Finance, Biodiversity, Collaboration and Engagement, Waste Reduction and Food. The highest score, 63%, was the GLA. Our total Score, 53%, Put us Top out of 21 County Councils (average score, 34%). It would have put us 16<sup>th</sup> out of 186 single tier authorities (like Bucks), 5<sup>th</sup> out of 164 Districts, 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 10 Combined Authorities, and 21<sup>st</sup> overall out of 381 authorities in Great Britain. However, comparisons across authority type are not valid.</p>
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The Second benchmark is the Carbon Disclosure Taskforce, <https://www.cdp.net/en/climate> an international benchmarking system with scores ranging from A to D-. We were rated A-, which puts us above over 2/3 of European and ¾ of global participants.

Returning to the tabloid article: it is a cherry-picking exercise finding single datasets to support a false hypothesis. It compares varied organisations on a fallacious "like for like" basis irrespective of type of authority, population served (our population is 1/3 larger than Bucks'), number of employees (20% larger), varied or additional responsibilities (of which the fire service is one example), the types of buildings they own and whether they bulk buy on behalf of schools (a third of our energy use), or for how many schools. If you're after sensible information, this is as useful as comparing apples, pears and coconuts.

However, we are not where we would want to be with decarbonising our estate, scoring just below the mean for County Councils. There might have been more capital available if the previous Conservative administration had not left behind a £38 million backlog of building repairs and maintenance, plus £16 million of remedial work putting right schools built under their useless Carillion contract, presumably without adequate monitoring by that administration.

That notwithstanding, please be assured that our decarbonisation plan fits with our 2030 net zero target, and we fully intend to hit it.

**2. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY**

**COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT**

Would the Cabinet Member for Transport Management,

Officers have confirmed that the surface water drainage at this

<p>Councillor Gant, urgently look at solving the issue of the storm drainage at 49 Fairway Road by the bus stop? Highway officers inform me that this is an issue between Oxfordshire County Council and Thames Water, but as the storm drainage has been overwhelmed by flooding 5 times in 2024, this is also a major inconvenience for people using the StageCoach B5 bus service, as they have the chance of getting drenched when cars drive by whilst waiting for the bus service.</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY:</b></p> <p>Would Cllr Gant agree that storm drainage clearances in places like Banbury, and other areas such as Edgehill, haven't been cleared in around 5 years and that it needs to be looked at urgently?</p>	<p>location is a shared system with Thames Water. I can confirm that Oxfordshire County Council have checked and cleansed the assets that we are responsible for. We will contact Thames Water and impress upon them the need to get this matter resolved.</p> <p><b>ANSWER:</b></p> <p>I'm grateful to Cllr Cherry for bringing that local insight. I can't really comment on specific incidents and it's not the one mentioned specifically in the question, but yes, of course, I absolutely agree that it's been a particularly bad season for storms for reasons we all understand and the answer, I think, makes it clear how important it is that agencies work together and it can be frustrating when you are told, this flood is OCC and this flood is Thames Water and trying to get them to fix the same thing at the same time.</p>
<p><b>3. COUNCILLOR IAN SNOWDON</b></p> <p>The Council makes a lot of its aspiration to reduce car journeys by one in four in its press releases. However, most residents, businesspeople and public sector leaders in Oxfordshire have no idea how this policy aim is to be measured? What is the baseline for this objective and how, by implication, can we measure the Council's success against its progress?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Car trips were not previously monitored and there is not an available data source. Therefore, working with the Council's Innovation team, we developed a bespoke methodology. The methodology was included in the LTCP monitoring report that went to cabinet in October 2023. The monitoring report is published on our website <a href="#">here</a> and includes the methodology in appendix 2 (p40-42).</p> <p>It is a complex measure and the monitoring report highlights that it is a proxy rather than an absolute measure of the number of car trips. The methodology allows us to understand the percentage change from a sample of car trips but does not</p>

provide an overall countywide figure. The 2022-23 monitoring report used a 2019 baseline, due to the impacts of COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021, and compared 2022 data.

We are continuing to work to refine our methodology and increase data sample sizes in future. There will also be the opportunity to review the baseline years used in the 2023-24 LTCP monitoring report.

Separately, alongside our car trip monitoring work, we have been working on a pilot countywide travel behaviour survey. This data will provide further insight about the type of trips in the county and reasons for travel behaviour change.

**4. COUNCILLOR GLYNIS PHILLIPS**

**COUNCILLOR PETE SUDBURY, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS**

In response to a planning application affecting my division, officers noted that the 'network of 7 Household Waste Recycling Centres provided by the County Council is no longer fit for purpose...analysis shows that all sites are currently 'over capacity' at peak times and many sites are nearing capacity during off peak hours. Population growth linked to new housing developments will increase the pressure on the sites.'

Given the number of new housing developments in the county, what are the plans to meet the increased demand on these services?

Thank you for this question. We are aware of the challenges facing our Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC's) which is one replicated in many places nationally. To help address this a new Household Waste Recycling Centre Strategy 2023-2043 was approved by Cabinet in September 2023 a copy of which can be found on the council's website here: [HWRC Annex 1.pdf \(oxfordshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/media/2023/10/HWRC-Annex-1.pdf)

Our new strategy offers the overarching framework for managing the service for the next 20 years and sets our approach to try and ensure that the HWRC network it is not just fit for purpose but is a key component in delivering the Council's climate and sustainability ambitions, encouraging Oxfordshire residents to produce less waste and recycle more.

The new Strategy aims to maintain a network of 7 HWRCs, by securing and expanding (or relocating where this is not possible) existing HWRC sites to manage the expected

population increases, legislative requirements, and support climate ambitions, whilst being mindful of local government budgetary constraints. It lays the foundation that enables the following:

- (a) Securing S106 and CIL contributions,
- (b) Make maintenance, planning, lease, and investment decisions with a longer-term perspective,
- (c) Plan how we will deal with population growth/lack of HWRC capacity,
- (d) Develop the HWRC service to meet future legislative requirements,
- (e) Help to meet the Council's carbon objectives and enable the transition to a circular economy,
- (f) Increase Oxfordshire's reuse and recycling rates.

Officers have a wealth of data and analysis on our network of HWRC's and keep this under regular review, whilst also keeping abreast of emerging and best practices nationally with regards to operation and capacity around HWRC sites. Where further improvements or adjustment can be seen to make a discernible difference and can be justified, we will seek to adopt those.

We always welcome feedback and suggestions on the services we provide. For the HWRC service we do regular customer satisfaction surveys which have delivered excellent satisfaction levels over recent years, and of course we consulted on our DRAFT HWRC strategy before finalising it. However, for any other comments and suggestions residents can always contact us through the council's Complaints and Comments page [Complaints and comments about Oxfordshire County Council | Oxfordshire County Council](#), and we will be happy to respond and/or take on board suggestions for our future service delivery where we are able to do so.

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY:</b></p> <p>Thank you for your reply. Given the assurances in this answer, would the Cabinet Member want to share these with the planning officers who remain concerned about the capacity of the household waste centres?</p>	<p><b>ANSWER:</b></p> <p>I'm happy to share the response with anybody who is interested in them.</p>
<p><b>5. COUNCILLOR FREDDIE VAN MIERLO</b></p> <p>An important consultation took place on the planning application for the Watlington Relief Road. However, residents have reported that they find the OCC consultation page confusing. In particular that responses from statutory consultees are mixed in the list of documents with the consultation documents. An additional concern is that only responses from statutory consultees are made public and not those from other respondents. What action will be taken to improve the user experience of the website to better support engagement?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR GEOFF SAUL, CHAIR OF PLANNING AND REGULATION COMMITTEE</b></p> <p>The list of documents on the Oxfordshire County Council planning application portal does not separate application documents and consultation responses. We appreciate the concerns however, this is how the system works at the present time. It does not have the option to separate out these items. To avoid confusion, the Planning Team ensure that consultation responses are clearly labelled as such. It is also correct that we do not publish representations made by members of the public on our website for data protection reasons. However, we take them all into account in making a decision and a redacted compilation of representations can be provided to anyone requesting it, at the end of the consultation period. Given the ongoing concerns we are also raising this with our planning system provider to see if we can address this with an upgrade.</p>
<p><b>6. COUNCILLOR GEORGE REYNOLDS</b></p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member assure me that the 2 yard stretch of fenced off kerbing at the top of Constitution Hill, B4035 Broughton Road in Banbury will be mended before the third crop of annual wild flowers turns it into a permanent wild life area, as at present it is dangerous and very untidy.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>A works instruction has been raised to repair the kerbing at the top of Constitution Hill, B4035 Broughton Road in Banbury. It is expected the works will be carried out within the next 3 months and I confirm that it will continue to be kept safe in the intervening time.</p>

<p><b>7. COUNCILLOR GEORGE REYNOLDS</b></p> <p>Following the highway department reorganisation which has seen at least 3 members of staff leave, meaning Fix-my-Street is every bodies' main source of contact with OCC. Will the Cabinet Member ensure that not only are contacts acknowledged but regular follow ups are given. At present Fix-my-Street is very good for street light defects but a black hole for virtually everything else from which nothing emerges.</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY:</b></p> <p>I thank him for the reply, but can Cllr Gant explain to me why, certainly since November, 99% of my emails are complaints that either Fix my Street do not reply or if they do reply, nothing gets done.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>I'm aware a number of highways officers have left the organisation, however, this was due to retirement and not as a result of the department reorganisation.</p> <p>As part of the Highway Maintenance transformation, a Highway Engagement Team has been introduced. If you have any concerns regarding Fix my Street reports, please reach out to them directly through <a href="mailto:highwaysengagement@oxfordshire.gov.uk">highwaysengagement@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a> .</p> <p>I can confirm since the implementation of the Highway Maintenance transformation on 1 of November 2023, Oxfordshire County Council have received 21,589 enquiry reports via Fix my Street and have raised over 23 thousands highway related defects. As part of this process, a standard response is provided to each individual site assessment. Bearing this in mind, if you have any examples where this hasn't occurred, please let me know and I will arrange for this to be followed up with the appropriate teams.</p> <p><b>ANSWER:</b></p> <p>I'm grateful to Cllr Reynolds for feeding that back. I think there is a huge demand on the service and I think officers do a wonderful job in working really hard to triage and prioritise issues as they come in, and we all, as Councillors, get messages from people who feel that their particular issue has not been dealt with swiftly enough. That is fair enough. I'd be the first to say that we simply do not have enough resource to fix or mend our roads in the way we would want to do. Having</p>

said that, you are absolutely right that the system needs to be as responsive as it can be, and I think the answer gives some good information about how well our officers do, which won't be of any consolation to any individual not satisfied to their response. It is a process they can go through. I would, perhaps, ask Cllr Reynolds to be a bit cautious about statements such as 'the Highways department reorganisation which has seen at least 3 members of staff leave' – that's not what's happened and I think it is unfortunate to talk about people's jobs in that way.

**8. COUNCILLOR EDDIE REEVES, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**

**COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES**

16 governors have left Woodeaton Manor since 1 January 2023, of which, 4 were staff members who also left their employment. In the same timeframe 25 members of staff left of which 9 gave no reason, and 8 resigned to move to a different position.

**ANSWER:**

I would invite Cllr Reeves, as Chair of the Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to conduct a deep dive into that rather than expecting me to give the complete answer today. But, as he will know, a number of these teachers left for reasons of other employment. There was also a change in headteacher in the summer and then following an Ofsted report, the whole of the governing body resigned. That accounts for a significant number of those governors, but as I said, when I came into post, I looked at the Ofsted reports for a number of schools, including the one from last February, for this school, which was rated as 'good'. Less than 12 months later, that school got an 'inadequate' rating from Ofsted. I think it does merit a proper deep dive by the Education and Young People

How many members of staff and governors have left Woodeaton Manor School or tendered their resignation (i.e. are presently working their notice period) since 1 January 2023?

**SUPPLEMENTARY:**

I'm grateful for the response. 16 governors and 25 staff have left Woodeaton since last year. My question to the Cabinet Member is very simple: how on earth did this Council allow such chaos to ensue at one of its own schools?



Overview and Scrutiny Committee and I invite him as chair of the committee, to do that.

**9. COUNCILLOR TRISH ELPHINSTONE**

Please can the Cabinet Member for Transport Management conduct an urgent review of the operation hours of the Littlemore Road filter ANPR cameras to cease operation outside of peak and school travel hours, with exemptions for blue badge holders and carers; and consider Littlemore and Greater Leys, as areas of higher transport poverty, as trial locations for a new demand responsive bus service in 2024/25?

**COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT**

A review of the ANPR exemptions and timings will take place at the same time as the review of the traffic filter exemptions/timings.

In the meantime, funding has been allocated for this new financial year to undertake a study into a new demand responsive trial bus service. This work has not yet started but will consider Littlemore and Greater Leys.

Littlemore and Greater Leys are both priority areas for the Community Active Travel outreach project, (COATs). Through Active Oxfordshire the county is funding a range of active travel interventions in the area. A list of the projects funded is as follows:

**Oxford:**

- Achieve Oxford - Cycling proficiency sessions in Blackbird Leys.
- Asylum Welcome - Bikes for asylum seekers. Aiming to reach a minimum of 250 people
- Black women bike -Training black women leaders to lead black women bike groups (Abingdon and East Oxford)
- Broken Spoke – “Dr Bike” sessions, bike mechanic training and learn to ride in Blackbird Leys and Rosehill.
- People Place and Participation (Florence Park Community Centre) – and Walk, talk and tea.
- People Place and Participation (Florence Park Community Centre) - Bike racks and training for parents and families
- JoyRiders - Cycle training in Littlemore and Barton
- Oxfordshire Asian Women’s Voice - Walking group for socially isolated Asian ladies

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY:</b></p> <p>Would Cllr Gant come and meet with residents and with local Councillors about what the residents feel the impact for the community would be ahead of the filter trial in October?</p>	<p>Oxfordshire Mind - Walking for wellbeing (Oxford and Banbury) Active Future South Oxfordshire CIC - After school Bike Club (Abingdon and Didcot and Littlemore).</p> <p><b>ANSWER:</b></p> <p>I'm always happy to talk to residents and Councillors, and indeed, have done so on several occasions with Cllr Elphinstone and her colleagues, and members of Littlemore Parish Council. I'm very happy to do that. I think it's worth making the point that this ANPR on Littlemore Road isn't in place yet, so I'm not sure there's much point reviewing it before it has even started. Indeed, what is says in the written response here, is that a review will take place at the same time as a review for the traffic filters as part of the ETRO, which of course, members will know, is itself a live, real time consultation process and it is important to stress that the system works as a whole, being kept under review for performance in real time.</p>
<p><b>10. COUNCILLOR TRISH ELPHINSTONE</b></p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member for Transport Management describe the progress to use the Anti-Congestion Fund (2025L&amp;CO16) and Vision Zero fund to redesign junctions, such as Newman/Oxford Road, The Original Swan, Brasenose Driftway, Horspath Driftway and the Corner House roundabout to improve traffic flows and reduce tailbacks?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>There has been a review of the road safety improvements for cyclists that can be implemented at the junction of Horspath Driftway, and Aldi. As with all Vision Zero schemes, this scheme has been developed to improve road safety, and has not developed as a scheme to improve traffic flows or reduce tailbacks. The scheme is currently with our Contractor Milestone for finalisation of the costings and implementation timetable.</p> <p>The process and prioritisation for allocating the Anti-Congestion Fund has not been fully agreed yet but will be shared with all County Councillors. We have asked officers to prepare a proposal for the prioritisation as we are aware that there are potentially many calls on this funding, including the other junctions referred to which do not fall within the remit of the</p>

	<p>Vision Zero fund. The future reporting of the progress on these schemes will be carried out through our normal council reporting routes and political group leaders meeting.</p>
<p><b>11. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>Cornmarket Street and Queen Street are possibly the most prominent and heavily-used streets in the County, at least by pedestrians. They are in a shameful state. When will they be properly resurfaced?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY:</b></p> <p>I'm very glad that these iconic streets are going to have repair works at a date to be confirmed. Can we please have more details about what these repair works will look like?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Extensive repair works are planned for both Cornmarket Street and Queen Street in this financial year. Works are expected to take place in the summer, starting on Queen Street. The project duration will be between 9 – 12 weeks depending upon conditions and external factors. However, start dates are dependent on delivery of specialist materials from abroad and it is not yet possible to provide a confirmed date.</p> <p><b>ANSWER:</b></p> <p>Yes, I am happy to get those and I am sure they will be of great interest to everyone in the Council. You are quite right, they are a bit of a mess.</p>
<p><b>12. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>There is widespread outrage about the greatly increased dumping of sewage in our rivers and streams by Thames Water. The Tories should hang their heads in shame at the catastrophic privatisation they were responsible for. As if this wasn't bad enough, there is an even greater source of pollution in our poor waterways -- agricultural run-off. Freshwater species have declined by a whopping <i>84% since 1970</i>, so action is urgently needed now. What are we doing to persuade farmers to change their practices to reduce harmful run-off?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR PETE SADBURY, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS</b></p> <p>We agree that the pollution of our watercourses through sewage and agricultural runoff is unacceptable and having a devastating impact on nature. The Environment Agency are the body with both the responsibility and the powers for monitoring and managing the quality of our water courses including these types of pollution, and for working with relevant organisations, landowners, or people to stop that pollution, including taking formal enforcement action where appropriate.</p> <p>The increasing incidence of both heavy and prolonged rainfall</p>

tends to worsen agricultural runoff, but renders riverside fields increasingly unviable for (especially arable) farming. It also raises the importance of landscape scale flood control measures, such as re-establishing riparian flood meadows and woodlands, which reduce nutrient and other runoff. We are working with the charity that runs the Long Mead wildflower meadow to extend that form of land management (which also produces very high-grade animal feed) along the river on land that OCC owns. Separately I am told by the local NFU representative that numbers of farmers are considering "farming water" on floodplain fields, opening up opportunities to extend this.

That links directly with OCC's work with a wide variety of partners to protect and enhance biodiversity in our county including as part of the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership to engage with the farming clusters. We are the Responsible Authority leading on the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) which will identify and map out the priority areas for urgent action for nature recovery. It is already clear from the early engagement undertaken that river health is a major concern for people across Oxfordshire, including farmers. The LNRS will highlight locations where people and organisations across Oxfordshire could carry out habitat improvements including the improvement of river and freshwater habitat health. Defra are then expected to use these LNRSs (which are currently being created across all of England) to increase the opportunities for funding in those areas. LNRSs are expected to publish in spring - summer 2025.

**SUPPLEMENTARY:**

The Cabinet Members notes there is one instance where we have tried to work with a farmer to try to reduce run-off and it is because we own the land. There are also examples of us

**ANSWER:**

We are. We are not DEFRA, which actually is responsible for a lot of the management that would need to happen. We are organising a conference after the impending elections with all of

<p>working with people to increase biodiversity, but we surely have a vital role to bring together all the farmers in Oxfordshire and work together with the Environment Agency and the NFU, to make sure that agricultural run-off is reduced substantially across the county. Why are we not playing this role?</p>	<p>those agencies to try and work out how we address flooding issues around this. They are not simple and are not statutory duties, but we still believe they are important to do.</p>
<p><b>13. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>Every Saturday and Sunday much of Oxford City Centre is gridlocked for hours, because traffic is queuing to get into the Westgate car park, even when it is full up. Residents in my division are utterly fed up with this state of affairs. The traffic filters may well make it even worse, since some people will use their free day passes to get to the Westgate car park and others will continue to access it via Botley Road. Please can you tell me what you are going to do about this?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY:</b></p> <p>Please can you address very urgently the need to have much</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>It is actually quite possible that the trial traffic filters will help tackle the negative impacts of Westgate car park traffic queueing on Oxpens Road. This is because we expect the filters to reduce traffic overall in the city centre. Indeed, a lot of the traffic held in the queue on Oxpens Road approaching the car park entrance isn't destined for the car park. It is carrying on past the car park and through the site of the proposed Thames Street traffic filter. So at least some of the traffic queuing on Oxpens won't be there in the future thanks to the traffic filters.</p> <p>We also expect the filters to make non car alternatives for accessing the Westgate and wider city centre to become much more attractive – buses will be quicker and more reliable and walking and cycling safer and more convenient. This of course includes park &amp; ride. Along with the continuation of the combined parking and bus fare deals for the city's park and rides, this will ensure driving is much less of a default option for people wanting to visit the city centre. We will, of course, be monitoring the traffic filters very carefully during the trial.</p> <p>Furthermore, we naturally continue to work closely with the Westgate Centre to minimise the impact of car park traffic on the highway network.</p> <p><b>ANSWER:</b></p> <p>The purpose of the filters is to manage through traffic, so yes of</p>

<p>better access to the Westgate Car Park so that traffic is reduced?</p>	<p>course, access to the Westgate Car Park has to be maintained and will be maintained. What will be significantly reduced is other through traffic which should, if the models are accurate, make access for those accessing the car park better by reducing congestion overall. That is the purpose of it.</p>
<p><b>14. COUNCILLOR SALLY POVOLOTSKY</b></p> <p>The SEND improvement board is a closed shop, why isn't this meeting broadcast / in public, and / or why aren't minutes of these meeting been circulated to all members and why aren't more stakeholders engaged in the board / task forces? This council's administration makes constant reference to its openness and transparency, why aren't we seeing these values imparted into the SEND Improvement process?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR KATE GREGORY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SEND IMPROVEMENT</b></p> <p>The SEND Improvement Board has been set up to provide accountability to the DfE, and to meet the requirements for monitoring and technical work in respect of the formal SEND Improvement Notice.</p> <p>The Board brings together a wide range of stakeholders including schools, parent carers, statutory agencies, service agencies (most of whom are responsible and accountable for delivering operational services), and importantly, broad elected member representation. Key stakeholders are involved in task and finish groups. They are operational and technical working groups for service delivery involving those with direct responsibility for delivery.</p> <p>The meeting is not a public or council committee and would not be broadcast in public.</p> <p>A regular blog summarising the content of the meeting is provided publicly by the Independent Chair, Steve Crocker. In May, a summary plan-on-a-page will be published and updated regularly to show key milestones and changes over time.</p> <p>The board members have established a positive and collaborative working relationship that is evident from action being taken and willingness of all parties to make things better.</p> <p><b>ANSWER:</b></p>

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY:</b></p> <p>Does the Cabinet Member agree that there is a lack of openness and transparency missing from the SEND Improvement Board and that it should be a priority that for her, a publicly-elected member responsible for SEND Improvement, that more voices from users and residents that we all represent, should be engaged with in a way that they haven't been since this board started?</p>	<p>I do appreciate and understand the level of desire for transparency and openness and it's something that I and Cllr Corkin have both been pushing for. Oxfordshire Parent Carer Forum are there representing parents and carers. In terms of transparency of the meeting, rather than publishing minutes, which can go from one part of the meeting to another, a blog has been created which is a coherent breakdown of exactly what has happened in the meeting. We're also working on more transparency in terms of infographics and road maps to give more of an idea of what is coming up.</p>
<p><b>15. COUNCILLOR SALLY POVOLOTSKY</b></p> <p>At some recent OxPCF events around Co-Production, a "adopted definition" for what OCC sees as Co-Production was presented to the audience. How was this statement of Co-Production reached and what engagement of service users and associated professionals / parents and carers fed into that creation?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY:</b></p> <p>There is still some confusion. Is OCC working on the pre-COVID definition as alluded to in your response, or the 2022 Co-Production Board definition of co-production, or the one that was shown recently at the event as quoted in my question, as there seems to be 3 definitions of co-production in this Council?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR KATE GREGORY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SEND IMPROVEMENT</b></p> <p>The 'adopted definition' of co production is not what OCC sees as co-production but one agreed in partnership. A significant piece of work was undertaken on the definition of co-production pre covid 2017-19 with partners and parents including the PCF. Given the significance of this work already undertaken the definition was sense checked and adopted. Given that it was imperative to have a working definition and in recognition of the previous co-production work, a working definition has been produced.</p> <p><b>ANSWER:</b></p> <p>I will have to get back to you so I can provide a more cohesive response on that.</p>

## 16. COUNCILLOR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW

Government has issued councils strengthened guidance on setting 20mph speed limits, reminding them to reserve such measures for sensible and appropriate areas only – such as outside schools. It is not a model this council has followed. I have repeatedly submitted Questions on Notice asking for data to validate this council's county-wide, multi-million-pound expenditure on the 30mph to 20mph sign-changing exercise but you have not been able to produce any data other than an 18-month-old report for Cuxham and one for Long Wittenham. When I challenged that at Full Council in December you said that such data was unnecessary as the scheme saved lives. Please be specific and state how many lives have been saved and what your source of the information is. Please do not answer with generalised information about the comparative effect on pedestrians of 30mph speeds compared to 20mph speeds as this is meaningless unless the ACTUAL range of 'before and after' speeds at sites is known.

(Note that Transport for Wales measured speed from 3.4 million vehicles across nine new 20mph locations in Wales over a two-week period at the end of November and start of December. It found on average speeds dropped by just 4mph. This is broadly consistent with the limited data available from OCC.)

## COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

The County Council's approach to, and criteria for introducing 20mph speed limits as a part of the Transformation Programme has always been clear, transparent, and dependent on appropriate environmental factors being present. Those requirements are publicly available on our webpage.

Before any scheme is pursued it requires the support of the local town / parish council, and each one follows the ordinary process of advertisement and consultation, all of which is subject to public record.

It is not reasonable, or possible, to state a specific number of the lives that have been saved by the scheme, especially at this early stage.

The Welsh government press release which cites the 4mph speed reduction you refer to also says "*Research shows a strong link between lowering speeds and decreasing the number of collisions and people injured. On urban roads with low average speeds, there is average 6% reduction in collisions per 1mph reduction in average speed.*" This means that the 4.1mph reduction would reduce the number of collisions by approximately 25%. Which is significant.

The number and severity of recorded traffic collisions resulting in personal injury will be monitored across the county in areas where a 20mph limit has been introduced under the transformation programme. This will be done by analysing data of such instances, as is provided to the Council from the Police, over the 3-year period before and after the scheme's introduction.



**SUPPLEMENTARY:**

Thank you for your answer, but once again, you are unable to substantiate your claims that the scheme saves lives, but you admit you have no data to support the claim. How do you counter concerns from residents who say that pedestrians and cyclists are lulled into a false sense of security believing that average speeds have dropped by 10mph when the reality is they've dropped by just 3 or 4mph as the 20mph limits are widely ignored?

**ANSWER:**

It is interesting to be accused of relying on anecdotal evidence and then told that people are being lulled into a false sense of security. I think that having traffic moving at a lower speed is not a false sense of security, it is actual security. It is actual improvement to the safety of the environment and there is plenty of evidence to support this and if Cllr Bartholomew wants to put forward a Budget amendment to monitor speeds in every village in Oxfordshire to provide more data, then he is welcome to do that. I am content with the evidence from elsewhere and the evidence from monitoring done in Oxfordshire from statistics from the Royal Society of the Prevention of Accidents, from the diagrams he will see very soon in the Vision Zero Strategy, about the different severity of impact at different speeds. I am content that it is a legitimate basis for the policy we are putting forward. And he says in his question that 'government reminds Council's to reserve such measures for sensible and appropriate areas' and then says 'it is not a model this Council has followed'. I don't accept that for a moment. Our officers work tirelessly and forensically with town and parish councils, with stakeholders, with schools and always with the local member of the County Council, almost all of whom, in this chamber, have asked for these measures in their own communities, to design exactly where they should go. That is what happens. It is not a blanket measure and of course, we want children to walk out of schools and be safe, but what happens when they get to the bit of road outside their house? Are they suddenly not walking down the side of a road? Our officers work tirelessly to an agreed set of principles about where these schemes work and where they should go, and I am proud of this administration has brought this forward with the support of virtually every Councillor in this chamber, including Cllr Bartholomew.

**17. COUNCILLOR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW**

At your 'Cabinet Member Decisions Meeting' on 22 February, you made the decision to cease late-night summer opening at Household Waste Recycling Centres on Thursdays from 1 April 2024. This measure saves £27,000 per year. Meanwhile, the council is currently recruiting an 'Employer Brand and Marketing Specialist' on £40,000 per annum with 30 days holiday plus Bank Holidays, who only needs to come into the office two to four days per month. Please explain to residents why it is more important for the council to promote its 'brand' and market itself rather than receive residents' waste at HWRCs.

**COUNCILLOR PETE SUDBURY, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS**

Despite regular promotion, the one day a week late night summer opening was a little used additional service, which did not provide the value for money we seek, with sites seeing less than 10 visits per hour on many occasions. In addition to the financial saving there are operational benefits from this change around logistics and working hours. This is a very small seasonal reduction. At present our sites, compared to some other council areas, continue to provide a full, generous, and comprehensive Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) service to our residents. Even after this small adjustment all our 7 sites remain open 9 hours per day, 7 days per week 362 days of the year. The only exception being slightly early closing on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. I am also proud and pleased to state that this much valued service continues to perform extremely well, with market leading recycling performance of over 70% of the wastes received, as well as maintaining customer satisfaction levels of greater than 90% across all sites.

Following recent Government changes, both in terms of legislation for handling and disposal of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP's), and the reduced ability to make charges and recover costs for DIY wastes at our HWRC's, waste management costs have risen by around £1m per annum. As we as an authority try to provide a balanced budget to cover all services, the waste management service is, quite rightly, not exempt from any cuts and efficiencies to its services. The reduction in Household Waste Recycling Centres' operational hours was one of a much wider and necessary list of service efficiency savings across the authority and cannot and should not be directly linked/compared to a specific non comparable cost elsewhere.

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY:</b></p> <p>Thank you for your answer, Cllr Sudbury. But, again, you have not responded to the part of the question relating to alternative uses of Council Taxpayers money. Why is it better to spend Council funds marketing the Council's brand rather than receive residents waste, which actually costs £13,000 less per annum?</p>	<p><b>ANSWER:</b></p> <p>I am perfectly happy to answer questions on climate change, the environment and future generations. I am not going to answer them on other aspects of this Council's business as that are not my portfolio.</p>
<p><b>18. COUNCILLOR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW</b></p> <p>This council has announced that the Oxford city Zero Emissions Zone pilot generated £702,940 income from charges and fines over its first full financial year of operation, thus the scheme is a policy failure but a financial success. The forthcoming Expanded Zero Emissions Zone is projected to generate £25m over a five-year period by the council's consultants. I can see why you welcome this tax-grab that helps you balance the books, but please explain how this fund-raising, 'pay to pollute', policy is compatible with the administration's environmental objectives.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</b></p> <p>The income figure of £702,940 from charges and fines for the scheme's first full financial year of operation (April 2022 to March 2023) is gross income. The overall costs incurred by the scheme for the same April 2022 to March 2023 period are approximately £410,000. Income generated by the scheme must be used in the first instance to pay for scheme operating costs and after that will contribute to an element of scheme development costs. By law, any remaining net proceeds must be spent on schemes and measures that facilitate the achievement of the county council's local transport policies.</p> <p>There is no projection of income yet from a potential expanded ZEZ as this will depend on future decisions made about the scheme, which is at an early formative stage.</p> <p>The ZEZ is a longstanding county council commitment that aims to improve air quality, cut carbon emissions, and move towards zero emission travel in the city.</p> <p>We are encouraged by the findings of the <a href="#">ZEZ Pilot monitoring report</a> that was published recently and which found a substantial reduction in use of polluting vehicles in the ZEZ Pilot area since the scheme became operational. These findings,</p>

when comparing 2022 data to 2021 data in the 12-month period that included the launch and subsequent operation of the scheme, include:

- overall vehicle movements in the ZEZ reduced during the scheme's operating hours (7am to 7pm) by approximately 28%. This figure includes vehicles exempt from ZEZ charges such as buses, taxis and emergency vehicles;
- overall vehicle movements in the ZEZ excluding exempt vehicles reduced during the scheme's operating hours by approximately 37%;
- vehicle movements in the ZEZ outside of the 7am to 7pm operating hours have reduced overall, although by less than the reduction within the 7am to 7pm period;
- there has been an overall shift towards the use of vehicles in the ZEZ with less polluting engines and with lower CO2 emissions.

Additionally, the monitoring report noted that:

- air pollution levels decreased overall in the ZEZ in 2022 by more than the average decrease across Oxford;
- the scheme has encouraged adoption of zero and low emission vehicles;
- the proportion of vehicles used that are zero emission is higher in the pilot area than in other areas of Oxford.

These findings show that the ZEZ scheme is helping deliver our aspirations for environmental improvements particularly regarding improving air quality and reducing vehicle-related CO<sub>2</sub>

emissions.

Early indications from more recent monitoring are that these benefits are being maintained.

Furthermore encouraging [findings published by Oxford City Council](#) show an increase in footfall in summer 2023 and a reduction in business vacancy rates in the city centre.

**ANSWER:**

The information you don't seem to have factored in from my answer is that decisions on the permits and things that are allowed have not actually been made yet. Although we had consultants look at it, this was generated on assumptions which haven't been written as of yet. There is an unknown there. The other thing is that all of the evidence from other places where this scheme has been put forward is that it does generate income to begin with, but as people change their form of transport, the number of fines generated drop significantly. Frankly, until the situation is that we have real data to tell us how the residents of Oxfordshire respond to this type of scheme, we won't know the answer to that. We have consultant views but that has to be based on very generic information, so we need data from our residents, who, on the whole have been supportive of this type of scheme.

**SUPPLEMENTARY:**

Thank you for answering the question I originally put to Cllr Levy, Cllr Roberts about taking all this extra Council Taxpayers money. If the scheme is generating thousands of pounds, then many drivers are paying to pollute. The figure of £25,000,000 over 5 years for expanded ZEZ zones comes from consultants that the Council appointed and they were called Steer and it was done in July 2022. Please explain how you are going to fund the scheme if you are saying that the income would be much less than the £25,000,000 figure?

**19. COUNCILLOR EDDIE REEVES, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**

Since the start of the financial year 2021/22, how many SEND cases have gone to tribunal each year and at what expense to the public purse?

**COUNCILLOR KATE GREGORY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SEND IMPROVEMENT**

For consistency, tribunal figures are calculated on a calendar year. The figures for Oxfordshire are as follows:  
2021 - 193 cases were taken to Tribunal of which 29 were heard.  
2022 - 276 cases were taken to Tribunal of which 20 were

heard.  
2023 - 347 cases were taken to Tribunal of which 29 have been heard.  
So a total of 816 cases of which 78 have been heard.

The average cost of legal support for a Tribunal is £2,500. So the cost for those heard are as follows:

2021	- £72,500
2022	- £50,000
2023	- £72,500
Total	- £195,000

**ANSWER:**

There is some more information around the tribunal data. Although that many were heard, the majority of those had come to an agreement prior to going to appeal. It isn't that nothing has been done. We are working through the tribunals, but there is more information behind it, and there are currently a number of active appeals.

**SUPPLEMENTARY:**

I'd urge colleagues to turn to pg. 44 of the Schedule of Business if they haven't already as this is a total, unmitigated disaster for this Council. £195,000 of public money has been spent on lawyers fees. 738 cases of the 816 that have been lodged by parents are yet even to be heard. Things are getting worse, not better, despite the Cabinet Member being in post for 8 months. What on earth is she going to do?

**20. COUNCILLOR EDDIE REEVES, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**

Since the introduction of the new booking and charging regime at the county's recycling centres, what adverse impacts, if any, have there been on fly-tipping and complaints-handling rates?

**COUNCILLOR PETE SUDBURY, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS**

The impact of the new booking and charging system on complaints has been negligible (single figures) and mainly relating to technical issues rather than policy. We have seen some increases in calls to the Customer Service Centre, since the introduction, however, nothing significant has come from this.

As expected from National data, there is no evidence of any

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY:</b></p> <p>If the law allowed him to, would he reverse this policy?</p>	<p>correlating increase in fly tipping since the introduction of the new system.</p> <p>In general, the new service has been well received with residents now being able to dispose of small amounts of DIY waste for free. It should also be noted that bookings are only needed for the free DIY allocation, no restrictions or bookings are required for additional DIY wastes which remain chargeable.</p> <p><b>ANSWER:</b></p> <p>No.</p>
<p><b>21. COUNCILLOR GEOFF SAUL</b></p> <p>The buried remains of a Romano-British Settlement have been scheduled as an Ancient Monument on land that had been designated to form part of the <i>East Chipping Norton Strategic Development Area</i>. The County Council is the largest landowner on this site which was earmarked in total for 1,200 homes plus associated infrastructure. Can the Cabinet Member for Finance please provide an update on the County Council's revised plans for the <i>Strategic Development Area</i> or alternatively let us have a timescale for such a review to take place?"</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DAN LEVY, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE</b></p> <p>As you know, Oxfordshire County Council has been working with CALA Homes to promote the East Chipping Norton Strategic Development Area for the provision of new homes.</p> <p>Historic England's report was just regarding the land owned by CALA Homes. CALA Homes is seeking clarification from West Oxfordshire DC (WODC) regarding the full implications of the site's scheduling and the future use of the whole site south of the A44.</p> <p>Following the outcome of this feedback, Oxfordshire CC will review the impact on the land it owns and whether it will continue working alongside CALA Homes. The site to the north of the A44 is also owned by Oxfordshire CC and was always seen as the second phase of the development. There is ongoing discussion with the planning team at WODC to establish whether the development of this site can be considered separately to the site south of A44 or whether part</p>

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY:</b></p> <p>Thank you for your answer. I understand the need for the County Council to look after its own interests, but at the same time, can the Cabinet Member appreciate the potential advantages from the point of view of Chipping Norton, that there being a comprehensive approach to the development of the whole East Chipping Norton site with a combined master plan?</p>	<p>of the southern site can be developed how the two sites should be delivered.</p> <p>Once the scheduling of part of the site is clarified, further meetings with the planning team will be arranged.</p> <p><b>ANSWER:</b></p> <p>It is unfortunate that the people 2000 years ago decided that that Chipping Norton was a great place to live, but they did and that's the reason for that particular site being unavailable at the moment. I appreciate the concern in West Oxfordshire to make sure that the local housing plan is delivered, and you know I share that view as a member from West Oxfordshire. I think it does demonstrate the folly of putting most of the housing into a number of strategic sites given that unfortunate things can happen, and once of those unfortunate things is the discovery of archaeological remains. This Council will do its utmost to assist in our obligations as a landowner. We are not the only landowner out there who should be providing land for housing, but we will do our bit.</p>
<p><b>22. COUNCILLOR DONNA FORD</b></p> <p>How many accidents have occurred in the vicinity of the Banbury Road since the installation of 4 way lights?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</b></p> <p>There is no definitive record of traffic collision frequency. Only those which are attended by the Police and where the Police record an instance of personal injury are formally recorded. Even in those circumstances the reports are typically received from the Police several months after the actual incident. Collisions which do not have Police attendance, and/or where no personal injury occurs, are not recorded. Any concerns about road safety at that location, or at any other location in the County can be raised with Officers who will be pleased to discuss them.</p>



<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY:</b></p> <p>There have been numerous accidents since these roadworks were done. At least 4, in which 1 included a pedestrian. Officers and Councillors were warned well in advance of the safety issues and concerns around this sight. People cannot safely cross the road at the moment. How many accidents have to occur before you admit the design is wrong and that you should have listened to the residents?</p>	<p><b>ANSWER:</b></p> <p>As Cllr Ford is well aware, we did attend a session where the residents put forward their concerns and there were various actions taken from that, which have been fed back to you. The answer I have given you explains the delay in reporting in the police system, so you are well aware of all of the facts as they are in the answer. There are regular meetings every 2 weeks with the officers and I will ask them whether they have noted 4 accidents at the site. You are also aware that the current layout is about to change, so we will have to address all of those problems, so it seems now as we are coming to the end of Phase 1, it will be important to see how the next phase goes and to try and make that as safe as possible for all residents. There will be another consultation at that point to try and make sure the next layout makes it as safe as possible.</p>
<p><b>23. COUNCILLOR DONNA FORD</b></p> <p>Can you explain why this Council seems determined to refuse to consult with the public before allowing 2-way cycling in Sheep Street, Bicester?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The results from the initial consultation into the introduction of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) to permit two-way cycling throughout Sheep Street, Bicester will be presented at the Cabinet Member for Transport Management delegated decisions meeting on 25 April 2024.</p> <p>The initial consultation took place over four weeks from 12 February to 11 March 2024. During this period, stakeholders were engaged through various channels to gather feedback on the proposal to allow cycling in Sheep Street, Bicester.</p> <p>Stakeholders including Bicester Town Council, Cherwell District Council, Bicester Vision, Bicester Friday Market, Bicester Bike Users' Group (BBUG) and other cycle groups, Local Councillors, emergency service operators, public transport</p>

operators, and Unlimited Oxfordshire were contacted to participate in the initial consultation process. To ensure comprehensive community engagement, 223 drop-in letters were distributed to properties along Sheep Street and Market Square, inviting residents and businesses to provide their input on the proposed changes.

Should the ETRO be approved on 25 April 2024, the ETRO can run for a maximum duration of 18 months. During the first six months of the trial views of the public and stakeholders will be sought based on their lived experience of the scheme. This consultation will be reported back to the Cabinet Member for a formal decision and whether to make cycling permanent in Sheep Street, amend the times/days that cycling is permitted or return the street to 'no cycling'. Monitoring of cycling levels in Sheep Street will be conducted during the ETRO period in order to understand the levels of change in cycling.

**SUPPLEMENTARY:**

Thank you, Cllr Gant, however you haven't answered the question. When are we going to consult with the main users of Sheep Street? You note that you will be monitoring the levels of cycling in Sheep Street, have they been monitored in advance because as well many of us know, it already occurs when it is banned. Have you also monitored the level of walking and mobility scooters in there as my concern is that one is going to fall as the other rises and many elderly residents have huge concerns with this option.

**ANSWER:**

With respect, you told me I hadn't answered the question and then asked a different question. The written answer does answer the question, which is: 'can you explain why this Council seems determined to refuse to consult?' The answer to that question is that the Council has not refused to consult. The separate question you then asked was: at what point will the users of Sheep Street be engaged, specifically around two-way cycling and concerns from members of the public around mobility scooters. That is absolutely what an ETRO is for. It is for people to tell us what their lived experience is like. Cllr Ford mentions that even when it is banned, it happens quite a lot anyway. This is exactly the kind of issue that needs to be teased out through this due process. There are plenty of other places, such as Queen Street, which are also being looked at for very similar reasons. An ETRO is a good instrument and it is hardly news that this Council, along with many others with administrations of all political colours, finds it the appropriate instrument to use in a case like this. It does not require a pre-ETRO

consultation, but this Council has undertaken one. The public consultation will be part of the ETRO and it is a very well established principle. It can work really well and I hope Cllr Ford will support it and engage with it.

**24. COUNCILLOR MICHAEL WAINE**

During my time as a County Councillor, we have enjoyed a positive working relationship with our local highways officers. Unfortunately since the 'transformation' of the service last autumn, this appears to have broken down. Is this by design or by accident?

**SUPPLEMENTARY:**

Would the Cabinet Member consider a personified surgery service to enable us as County Councillors to do our job properly and not to speak to a computer?

**COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT**

All Members of the Council have been briefed on the highways service changes post-transformation and have been informed of how to contact and engage with the service.

That contact should primarily be via the new Engagement Team and not directly to Officers, many of whom have been assigned different or more focussed roles.

The Engagement Team will only be able to function effectively and provide the service as intended though if Members start to work with them and positively adopt this new way of working.

The Engagement Team can be reached by emailing [highwaysengagement@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:highwaysengagement@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

**ANSWER:**

Yes, absolutely and I am grateful to Cllr Waine for raising this issue. To specifically answer the question he raises, I am extremely concerned that the positive working relationship has broken down and obviously do not want that to continue if that is the case. I have spoken to the Director of Highways and Operations about this and I know he has been in contact with Cllr Waine to work up ideas for exactly the surgery he suggests. I genuinely hope that no-one in this Council thinks that it was by design – of course it hasn't. We absolutely want to maintain those good working relationships between Councillors and officers, and it is about doing that most efficiently. Officers do

sometimes get a lot of pressure on time due to enquiries being directed in the wrong direction and that is partly what the restructure was about. But, yes, I absolutely share your concerns about getting those working relationships working as well as possible and to correct any adverse changes that may have come in.

**25. COUNCILLOR IAN CORKIN**

The recent announcement by the charity, Autism Family Support Oxfordshire (AFSO) that this council has defunded the Parent Support Team, prompting the loss of this essential service and the redundancy of two very experienced practitioners, has caused widespread consternation amongst parents, carers, and young people. So far, almost 1100 people have signed an online petition, many sharing their experience of the service.

Following the announcement, I have received many emails, as well as having the opportunity to discuss the impact with parents face to face at the recent Oxfordshire Parent Carer Forum's excellent Better Together Event. The following is a small sample of the feedback I have had:

- Talking of the support they have received from AFSO:  
*“That could be the difference between a young person able to take their place in the world of work in a few years' time and one who cannot”*
- Writing of her lived experience as a neurodiverse parent of a neurodiverse child:  
*“There have been times when I have doubted whether I could continue to parent my son, on my own and with little support. AFSO supported me through this.*

**COUNCILLOR KATE GREGORY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SEND IMPROVEMENT**

I have also received many emails and spoke to parents and carers at the Better Together Event, and it is clear that the Parenting Support provides a vital service to many families, and I am sorry that the announcement by the charity has caused anxiety and distress for those families impacted.

Commissioning and procurement rules mean that commissioned contracts are only time-limited before they are required to be recommissioned and retendered. This is to allow fairness to all other providers to bid for Council and taxpayer money. It is also required to ensure that the provision of service is adaptable to changing needs across the County.

A decision to recommission and retender short breaks contracts was approved in November 2022 in the run up to the known end date of the contracts in March/ April 2024. Short breaks is a legal definition which means that money should be spent on the direct provision of activity for children. It does not include parenting support. This does not mean that the work by AFSO is not valued, but that it cannot be included in a short breaks definition and there were gaps for direct provision for children.

Prior to my time and to this Cabinet, a decision was made around 2017 to provide AFSO with money because they had not had their service recommissioned by a Health provider.

The Council stepped in on that occasion to help the charity because they had insufficient funding. It was always going to be

*There have been times when I felt my son would be better off without me. AFSO supported me through this.*

*There have been times when I felt I could no longer live in the situations we were living in. AFSO supported me through this.*

*There have been times when I felt I could no longer live, full stop. AFSO supported me through this.*

*Where would I be now if it weren't for AFSO? And my son? I don't like to even think about that."*

- Talking of the impact on a parent's own health: *"thank you for your reply and for trying to help with this situation. It has sent my mental health into a spiral and I'm in touch with other autistic parents who are also struggling massively because of all this. I am truly fearful for the future wellbeing of families like mine"*
- Talking of the lack of transparency in the consultation process: *"We are also appalled by the response by OCC in the press that is blaming the parents for not saying we needed it. Something clearly went wrong with the re-tendering process because we had no idea that the short breaks consultation was also covering family support. If it had been, there is no doubt that parents would have had it at or near the top of their lists of priorities."*
- Finally a parent talking of their relief at finding an ally for the first time in AFSO: *"That's when we first had contact with AFSO. It was incredible. I cried the first time I had a one-to-one meeting with BL. Tears of sheer relief. She just got it. She was incredible. It is so very rare to find people who immediately understand. And who have the strategies and insight to help you reach and teach your child. They have ideas and advice for everything. Not to mention the skills to pick you up from your dark place*

a time limited level of support.

In May, June, and November 2023 it was made clear to the charity that they could not bid for short breaks funding to provide parenting support. However, they were successful in bidding for short breaks money that provided direct support and fitted with the purpose of short breaks funding.

The commissioning and procurement process was compliant with procedures and regulations and addressed gaps in provision. The matter of award of contracts was not discussed directly with me as Cabinet Member and Member's cannot influence commissioning and procurement awards.

Parents and carers working with the PCF were consulted on the types of provision and localities for the direct provision they thought were needed under the definition of short breaks. The consultation had 121 responses/ feedback. The council provided additional finances to ensure there was a wider spread of direct activities by location and to meet different needs for children. The parents were not asked to directly make a choice between short breaks or parenting, as parenting is not within the definition of short breaks.

*and give you the strength to keep going”*

In response to the announcement, the [Oxford Mail](#) reported

*“An Oxfordshire County Council spokesman said: “A re-commissioning process commenced last year for AFSSO with involvement from parents, carers, current providers, other professionals, and social workers. Questionnaires, and a variety of events were used to ensure that any new contracts met the needs of children using the services. Parents and carers overwhelmingly told us that they wanted greater choice for their children. They said they wanted the new offer to provide care for children rather than parenting support.”*

So, my question is:

- What was the exact timeline of the re-commissioning process?
- At what point were elected members involved
- Was the impact of the re-commissioning, i.e. the loss of the Family Support Service, discussed with any elected members, if so who and what was the outcome?
- Please provide a copy of the questionnaire with the answer, as well as details of the number of respondents and the analysis of the data used to justify defunding the Family Support Service.
- Please provide any evidence you have that “*They* [parents and carers] *said they wanted the new offer to provide care for children rather than parenting support.*” and that this would be at the expense of the Family Support Service.

**ANSWER:**

**SUPPLEMENTARY:**

Thank you Cllr Gregory for the answer. It was the last Conservative administration who found emergency funding for that, although possibly imperfectly. The charity is blamed and shamefully, the parents are blamed in the press release last week and again today. 'They said they wanted the new offer to provide care for children rather than parenting support'. That is a very specific set of wording. Will Cllr Gregory now apologise for this administration's victim-blaming and will she ensure that a full correction goes out to the press?

I'm not sure why that quote was used again today – it isn't a new release that has gone out. I believe the media have used an old quote. It's obviously very distressing for those families impacted and yes, I would like to apologise to those families and we do need to get an updated statement out – I 100% agree.