

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – 4 NOVEMBER 2008**

**SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS**

<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>	<b>PAGE NO.</b>	<b>MAXIMUM DURATION</b>	<b>APPROX START TIME TIME LIMIT PER DEBATE</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>PROPOSALS (M = Motion; SEC = Secunder; Am = Amendment S = Statement; Q = Question; REC = Recommendation to be determined)</b>
1	1	20 mins	10:00	<p><b>Minutes</b></p> <p>Minutes of the meeting on 9 September 2008</p> <p>(a) for accuracy;</p> <p>(b) to receive for information any matters arising on them</p>	<p>Minute 74/08 – to read as follows: 11 – Brighthouse – Personal – Husband is employed as a Technical Adviser to Paul Hamlyn 14 &amp; 17 – Brighthouse - Personal – Member of Learning &amp; Skills Council</p> <p>Minute 83/08 Question 14 (Councillor Mathew)</p> <p>Answer from Councillor Belson to supplementary question:</p> <p>“Following the Council meeting an officer visited the site and took photos of the Ragwort. We have spoken with WRG and they agreed to remove the existing ragwort.”</p> <p>Minute 85/08 should read Paragraph 5 “Councillor Legge moved and Councillor <i>Bones</i> ...</p>

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2	1			<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	Godden, Joslin, Glass-Woodin Dhesi will be late
3	1			<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
4	1			<p><b>Official Communications</b> The Chairman of the Council will report as follows:</p> <p>(1) The County Council won an award from the Oxford Preservation Trust for a new building at Florence Park Family Centre.</p> <p>(2) Abingdon Town Council won an award from the Oxford Preservation Trust for the Market Place Improvement Project, Abingdon and wishes to thank the County Council formally for its help through a generous grant towards the overall cost of the refurbishment of Abingdon's Market Place.</p>	

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5	2			<b>Appointments</b>	
6	2			<b>Petitions and Public Address</b>	Mr P Gibb – petition about the proposed incinerator at Sutton Courtenay  The petition to be referred to the Planning & Regulation Committee
7	2			<b>Questions with Notice from Members of the Public</b>	Dr Su Braden – incinerator (Question and Answer – see Annex 1)
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET</b>					
8	2	20 mins	10:20	<b>Financial Monitoring and Revisions to the Treasury Management Strategy</b>	REC (M) Shouler SEC Mitchell S Armitage S Harris S Brighthouse

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9	2	20 mins	10:40	Member Champion - Role	REC (M) Mitchell (with amendment - see Annex 2) SEC Robertson S Patrick S Wise S Harris
10	2	10 mins	11:00	New Executive Arrangements - Extraordinary Meetings of Council	REC (M) Mitchell SEC Robertson S Patrick
11(a)	3	45 mins	11:10	<b>Report of the Cabinet (items which do not have recommendations to Council)</b>	
				<b>Deputy Leader of the Council</b> 1 – Performance Management – First Quarter Report of Progress against Priorities and Targets	Q Johnston
				2 – Establishment Review	Q Johnston
				<b>Finance</b> 3 – Financial Monitoring to end of July 2008	Q Armitage
				4 – Better Offices Programme	Q Armitage
				5 – Annual Report on the Property Portfolio	Q Armitage

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				6 – Service & Resource Planning Report for 2009/10-2013/14	Q Armitage
				<b>Children, Young People &amp; Families</b> 7 – Early Years Capital Plan	Q Brighthouse Q V Smith
				8 – Children’s Centres	Q D Turner Q Brighthouse
				<b>Social &amp; Community Services</b> 9 – Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum Project	
				10 – Fundamental Service Review of Day Services for Older People	Q Gatehouse Q Brighthouse
				11 – Fundamental Service Review of Cultural Services	Q Legge Q Bones
				12 – Scrutiny Review of Integrated Health and Social Care	
				<b>Sustainable Development</b> 13 – South East Plan – Proposed Modifications (Consultation on Secretary of State’s Proposed Changes)	Q Seale Q Carter Q Hallchurch Q Hannaby Q Harris

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				14 – Eco-towns: Draft Planning Policy Statement and Sustainability Appraisal – Progress Report	Q Hannaby Q Harris
				<b>Transport</b> 15 – Scrutiny Review of Flooding	
				<b>Community Safety</b> 16 – Fire and Rescue Service Contingency Planning	
				17 – July 2007 Flooding – Further Reports	Q Altaf Khan
				18 - Items exempt from call-in	Q Johnston
11(b)	3	15 mins	11:55	<b>Partnership Working in Oxfordshire</b>	Q Hannaby Q Altaf Khan Q Fooks Q Patrick Q V Smith Q Brighthouse

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12	3	30 mins	12:10	<b>Questions with Notice from Members of the Council</b> (1) McIntosh-Stedman to Mitchell (2) McIntosh-Stedman to Mitchell (3) McIntosh-Stedman to Waine (4) McIntosh-Stedman to Mitchell (5) McIntosh-Stedman to Couchman (6) Atkins to Mitchell (7) Fooks to Waine (8) Bryden to Belson (9) Godden to Hudspeth (10) Fooks to Hudspeth (11) Legge to Waine (12) Wise to Mitchell (13) Patrick to Hudspeth (14) J Sanders to Hudspeth (15) Brighthouse to Hudspeth (16) Gatehouse to Couchman (17) Gatehouse to Couchman (18) Gatehouse to Couchman	See Annex 3 for questions and answers

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13	3	20 mins	12:40	<b>Motion from Councillor Armitage</b> Financial Investments	(M) Armitage SEC Patrick (Am) Shouler (see Annex 2) SEC Mitchell
<b>LUNCH 13:00-14:00</b>					
14	4	40 mins	14:00	<b>Motion from Councillor Brighthouse</b> Sustainable Communities Act	Joint Debate with 15 (M) Brighthouse (with amendment - see Annex 2) SEC Harris S Wise (Am) Mitchell (see Annex 2) SEC Robertson
15	4			<b>Motion from Councillor Patrick</b> Sustainable Communities Act	Joint Debate with 14 (M) Patrick (with amendment - see Annex 2) SEC Fooks
16	5	30 mins	14:40	<b>Motion from Councillor Gatehouse</b> Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance – Blind People	(M) Gatehouse SEC Dhesi S Brighthouse (Am) Couchman (see Annex 2) SEC Mitchell



Question from Dr Su Braden

Does the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development consider that the technology-neutral process for obtaining tenders for a residual waste management solution adopted by OCC complies with all relevant European directives?

In particular to directives calling for:

- (1) The essential objective of all provisions relating to waste management should be the protection of human health and the environment against harmful effects caused by the collection, transport, treatment ... of waste. (2006/12EC)

and

- (2) Member States shall take appropriate measures, in cooperation with other member states where this is necessary or advisable, to establish an integrated and adequate network of disposal installations, taking account of the best available technology not involving excessive costs. The network must enable the Community as a whole to become self-sufficient in waste disposal (2006/12EC).

Answer by Councillor Belson

At the start of the procurement of a residual waste treatment solution for Oxfordshire, Cabinet recognized that there were a number of waste technologies that could provide a value for money solution and therefore to follow a policy of being technology neutral.

The approach the Council took was completely above board and professional. It was not designed to avoid the question about which technology to procure, but it was designed to give the market the freedom to propose the most economically and technologically viable solution for Oxfordshire. This procurement technique is commonly referred to as using an 'output specification' whereby the Council sets out what it wants to achieve and tenderers develop their best solutions to deliver this. Using an output specification is recommended procurement practice and delivers better and fairer competition and better value for money.

The Council evaluated fairly and equitably all the solutions that were put forward using evaluation criteria that included technical, legal and commercial considerations. All the solutions that the Council received were for energy from waste incineration.

We are aware that some members of the public are concerned about possible health implications of incineration. Please let me assure you that modern incinerators emit very low levels of emissions and do not pose a risk to public health. Any treatment facility will need to be permitted by the Environment Agency who have the responsibility for regulating waste treatment plants. The

Environment Agency has very strict rules for such facilities and will not allow anything that is unsafe. The Environment Agency has a position on waste incineration which can be found on their web site.

In addition the Health Protection Agency has responsibility to protect human health and they too would not allow anything that is unsafe. The Health Protection Agency has a position statement on municipal solid waste incineration which can be found on their web site.

Campaign groups have singled out Energy from Waste as an option to be opposed. However, this technology is widely and safely used in many European countries and is increasingly used here in Britain. There are already approximately 20 Energy from Waste facilities in the UK, 128 in France, 65 in Germany, 30 in Denmark, 29 in Sweden, and 28 in Switzerland.

## AMENDMENTS

### **Agenda Item 9 - To be moved as amended by the addition of the following sub-paragraph**

- (b) *To note the following additional informal champions, not formally appointed by Democracy and Organisation Committee:*  
*Bus Champion – Cllr Patrick Greene*  
*Design Champion – Cllr Mrs Catherine Fulljames*  
*Heritage Champion – Cllr Don Seale*

### **Agenda Item 13 - Motion from Councillor Armitage – Amendment to be moved by Councillor Shouler**

“Council notes recent events in global financial markets, and that its officers have followed Treasury advice and invested its capital within the guidance, like many other authorities. This Council has been fortunate in being one of the least exposed in the country but its investments have still been affected by the recent problems.

Council welcomes the government’s commitment to support local authorities and its aim to recover as much money as possible from banks on behalf of public sector investors, but recognises that there is an uncertain prospect of the full capital and anticipated interest being returned.

Council calls on government to:

- (a) work with local government to protect tax payers and front-line services;
- (b) ensure that DCLG and the Treasury are working together to advise and support local authorities who have investments at risk;
- (c) support the capitalisation of such losses as occur to ensure that in-year front-line service cuts do not become necessary; and
- (d) liaise closely with the Local Government Association to ensure that all councils are able to benefit from the freezing of the UK assets of foreign banks.

Council asks officers to report to Cabinet on cash holdings, investments and cash flow in the context of the collapse of some banks.

Council asks the Cabinet Member for Finance to write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government *and the Chancellor of the Exchequer* to lay out the specific situation facing this authority and to keep Council informed of developments as they occur.”

**Agenda Item 14 - Motion from Councillor Liz Brighthouse - To be moved as amended below** (shown in *italic*)

"This Council:

- (a) reaffirms its support for the Sustainable Communities Act;
- (b) notes that the Act resulted from campaigning by a coalition of over 90 national citizens organisations called Local Works and was supported in parliament by all the main English parties;
- (c) notes that the Act provides a process designed to allow local authorities and their communities to drive the help that central government gives in reversing community decline and promoting thriving, sustainable communities;
- (d) asks the Cabinet to explore the possibility of using the Act to make, following consultation with one or more panels of representatives of local people *and via the Local Government Association which has been appointed as the “selector” under the terms of the Act*, proposals to the Secretary of State that would contribute to the promotion of sustainability in Oxfordshire (and which could include requests for transfers of functions from one body to another);
- (e) further asks the Cabinet to inform the local media and local MPs about this motion and about the opportunities the Act could provide for local groups.”

**Councillor Mitchell to move the following amendment** (shown in *italic*)

"This Council:

- (a) reaffirms its support for the Sustainable Communities Act *based on an expectation that it will devolve more power from Whitehall to councils and communities in Oxfordshire and other areas;*

- (b) notes that the Act resulted from campaigning by a coalition of over 90 national citizens organisations called Local Works and was supported in parliament *on second reading (19 Jan 2007) by 175 MPs voting for (overwhelmingly Conservatives) and with 17 against (all of whom were Labour MPs)*;
- (c) notes that the Act provides a process designed to allow local authorities and their communities to drive the help that central government gives in reversing community decline and promoting thriving, sustainable communities *but is deeply sceptical about the willingness of the current government to support a reversal of community decline when it singularly failed to prevent the closure of thousands of Post Offices that were so important to the sustainability of the communities they served*;
- (d) asks the Cabinet to explore the possibility of using the Act to make, following consultation with one or more panels of representatives of local people, proposals to the Secretary of State that would contribute to the promotion of sustainability in Oxfordshire (and which could include requests for transfers of functions from one body to another);
- (e) further asks the Cabinet to inform the local media and local MPs *that the Cabinet will be exploring what opportunities it might provide for furthering the social, economic and environmental well-being of our residents.*

**Agenda Item 15 - Motion from Councillor Zoé Patrick – To be moved as amended below** (shown in italic)

“Oxfordshire County Council:

- (a) supports the bottom up process in the Sustainable Communities Act designed to allow local authorities and their communities to drive the help that central government gives in reversing community decline and promoting thriving, sustainable communities;
- (b) notes that the Act gives local authorities the power to:
  - (i) make proposals to government on the action and assistance government must take or give to promote sustainable communities; and
  - (ii) argue for a transfer of public money and function from central to local control; and
- (c) further notes that the Act defines the work of creating sustainable communities as:

- (i) improvement of the local economy;
- (ii) protection of the environment;
- (iii) promotion of social inclusion; and
- (iv) participation in civic and political activity.
- (v)

Council resolves to ask the Cabinet to:

- (a) use to the full its powers under the Act by preparing and submitting proposals to central government; and
- (b) seek to establish a representative panel of residents to consult with the Council in deciding on which local issues are submitted to the Communities and Local Government Minister *through the "selector" appointed by the Secretary of State to short-list proposals for the government*;
- (c) inform MPs, other local partners and the media of this decision."

**Agenda Item 16 - Motion from Councillor Barbara Gatehouse – Amendment to be moved by Councillor Couchman** (shown by strikethrough and in italic)

"This Council:

- (a) notes that blind residents, *together with others with serious disabilities*, face additional costs as a result of their difficulty in accessing their community, including Council and other services, without practical help to get around;
- (b) supports the campaigns of the Royal National Institute of Blind People *and of other disability groups* on securing the Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance for blind *and other disabled* people;
- (c) notes that the RNIB has been lobbying the Department for Work and Pensions about giving blind people access to this component *with the support of the Oxfordshire MPs Andrew Smith MP and many others*;

- ~~(d) welcomes the support for the RNIB campaign from Andrew Smith, MP for Oxford East, who has written to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the issue and put down a parliamentary question about it;~~
- (e)(d) notes that the government has committed itself to continue to look at this issue and asks the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions explaining why Oxfordshire residents who are blind *or have other serious disabilities* should have access to this component.”





**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.

Questions	Answers
<p>1. <b>COUNCILLOR MCINTOSH-STEDMAN</b></p> <p>With regard to the Communities Act Guidance Sheet No 1 Section 1 will the Leader agree that Loss of Community or Community decline is part and parcel of Modernity and many people find diverse cultures very overwhelming? They would prefer no interference in their individualistic life styles or local authorities to 'opt in' for the sake of promoting sustainable communities.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR KEITH MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>“Loss of community <i>identity</i>” (my italicised addition) is certainly a feature of modern life and one to cause concern.</p> <p>“Community decline” can be construed in a number of ways. If used as another way of expressing a loss of community identity, then the answer is identical to my first one. If it is taken as meaning the decline of community infrastructure, whether physical, social, moral or spiritual, we have our share of this in some of Oxfordshire’s neighbourhoods and it is this administration’s firm aim to work with those communities to reverse such decline and to break the cycle of deprivation that normally accompanies it.</p> <p>“Diverse cultures” can represent both an opportunity and a threat to civilisation. Recognition of and respect for diverse cultures and lifestyles should be a symbol of civilisation. However, I believe there are dangers in the inappropriate application of multi-culturalism. Just as minority cultures can feel threatened by intolerance; there is a reverse danger that the indigenous, majority population can feel their long standing national culture is at threat out of a fear of offending anyone not fully a part of it. Our reluctance to display national symbols and our gradual loss of so much of our sense of history are examples of this danger. For example, we rightly stigmatise slavery but fail to celebrate our country’s leading part in its abolition.</p> <p>I fear that, in our schools, there is a danger that we teach young children such a broad selection of faiths and cultures that they fail to grasp the real meaning of any of them and, in particular, the culture of our own English and British nations. As always, there is a difficult balance in this whole area.</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>Turning to the Sustainable Communities Act, I have recently received a missive from the campaign group <i>Local Works</i> which has done nothing to reassure me. The document contains a long list of signatures from people I would suspect to be almost entirely <i>Guardian</i> readers – the <i>Countryside Alliance</i> being one of a small number of honourable exceptions! However, it is heralded as "reclaiming local democracy" and had all-Party support in its passage through the Commons, most notably from my own Party. I therefore await the outcome of this legislation with interest.</p>
<p>2. <b>COUNCILLOR MCINTOSH-STEDMAN</b></p> <p>Does the Leader agree that another good way to welcome in Citizenship is to have a 'Tidy Up' leaflet to give them an idea of the sort of pride of place they will be making their new home in a foreign land?</p> <p>Do you agree this leaflet will be good to promote tourism globally as words will spread about the special care we promote for our clean/ free from litter environment?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>We already have a first class Citizenship programme by which our excellent Registration Service welcomes those residents wishing to take up UK citizenship. Applicants take part in an impressive and moving ceremony in which they receive their citizenship – frequently from the Queen's representative or one of his deputies. Indeed, recently HRH Princess Anne attended one of our citizenship ceremonies and welcomed our new citizens while standing next to a picture of her mother!</p> <p>I think it would be a mistake to confuse the important issue of citizenship with one of the perennial problems we face which is the propensity of some residents who have been lifelong citizens of our country to spoil it by discarding litter, cigarette ends, sweet wrappers, drinks cans or chewing gum on the assumption that someone else will clear it up. All too sadly, it is my experience that many residents of foreign countries have a much more responsible approach to a litter-free environment than our own citizens. I fear there is something lacking in our own pride of place and respect for our environment that needs addressing.</p>
<p>3. <b>COUNCILLOR MCINTOSH-STEDMAN</b></p> <p>Will you be recommending parents get one or more allotments</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR WAINE, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS IMPROVEMENT</b></p> <p>The many benefits of allotment holding (fresh wholesome food, exercise and community activity) are well rehearsed elsewhere and need no promotion by OCC. Indeed, I understand that demand for allotments is outstripping supply and encouraging some</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>depending on the number of children to help with the high price of food and also the £15,940 cost for schooling?</p>	<p>160,000 parents to take up an allotment would simply create a demand that could not be met. On a personal note, I kept an allotment throughout my teenage years and would fully recommend it as a beneficial and fulfilling activity.</p>
<p>4. <b>COUNCILLOR MCINTOSH-STEDMAN</b>  Because many criminals fear and indeed lose friendship of family and friends and may even succeed in committing suicide out of embarrassment, should the Rehabilitation Centre be publicised to give them a chance not to be a recidivist? Does the Leader agree that Scales of Justice of the Magistrate Court should be published e.g. A Banbury man stealing £ 60 worth of meat plus others on motor offences?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b>  <u>Rehabilitation</u>  The Thames Valley Probation Service has responsibility for rehabilitating offenders (for example, they have just reported on a successful Restorative Justice programme - <a href="http://www.thamesvalleyprobation.gov.uk/media/index.html">http://www.thamesvalleyprobation.gov.uk/media/index.html</a>). However, we do support drug and alcohol treatment services in Oxfordshire which include residential rehabilitation for people who use drugs and may come into contact with the criminal justice system. In terms of rehabilitation for young people, our Youth Offending Service manages significant programmes that include interventions regarding offending behaviour, victim awareness and direct reparation with victims where appropriate. The service also supports individuals regarding the opportunities that are available to them, including access to appropriate housing, social support, benefits, physical and mental health services, education, training and employment opportunities.  I am also concerned about the number of offenders with a military background. We are currently in discussions with our colleagues in the military about this issue and are working together on a response.  <u>Magistrates</u>  A recent decision by the government requires that the Magistrates Court supply the local press with a free copy of the register of decisions of the court. I understand that the press usually publish the lists supplied. The <i>Oxford Mail</i> has published these under the heading of 'Scales of Justice' but it is clearly their prerogative whether to do so or not.</p>
<p>5. <b>COUNCILLOR MCINTOSH-STEDMAN</b>  Bearing in mind that it has been said that Cervical Cancer may be</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR CHAPMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE &amp; FAMILIES</b>  The national vaccination programme is organised locally by the PCT, with the full support of OCC and schools. One of our overriding duties is to do all we can to ensure that the</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>caused by promiscuity by girls, do you agree that the national vaccination of girls age 12 to 13 against HPV (Human Papilloma Virus) started this September may allow girls to be more promiscuous, thereby bringing on/adding other sexually transmitted killer diseases?</p>	<p>children and young people of Oxfordshire are healthy. This programme contributes to that duty. There is no reason to believe that the programme, of itself, will have any material effect on behaviour but there is every reason to believe that it will reduce the incidence of HPV.</p> <p>HPV vaccination is best given before the start of sexual activity. While most girls do not start having sex until they are at least 16 or quite a bit older, it has been shown that the vaccine provides the best protection if it is given at 12 to 13 years of age. The HPV vaccination programme is about protecting against cervical cancer. It is not about safer sex. It is important to maintain all our efforts to encourage safer sex practices.</p>
<p>6. <b>COUNCILLOR ATKINS</b>  What steps is the Leader of the Council taking to follow the excellent example of Harrow Council in abandoning jargon in favour of language we can all understand?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>While I accept that the London Borough of Harrow is a high performing council with a good track record on the use of Plain English, I would have expected nothing less from a Conservative-controlled council. I am pleased to report that Oxfordshire County Council similarly performs well and has a wealth of advice and guidance in support of Plain English in its publications and web sites. Here are a few examples:</p> <p><b><u>Corporate Guidance</u></b></p> <p>The Corporate Editor, based in the Communications Unit, leads on Plain English. Guidance is available on writing in plain English and avoiding jargon and effective email communication on the council intranet (<a href="http://intranet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/plink/insite/support/W/Insite/Support/Communications+marketing+and+advertising/Internal+communications/">http://intranet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/plink/insite/support/W/Insite/Support/Communications+marketing+and+advertising/Internal+communications/</a>). The Communications Unit has also produced a corporate style guide setting out corporate style and advice on common grammatical errors, which can be found under the same section on the intranet. The Communications Unit publish regular reminders through our internal communications channels of all the important communications guidance on offer. Recent topics have included:</p> <p><b>INSIDE articles</b></p> <p>October 2008 – Proofreading</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>July 2008 – Corporate style guide  February 2008 – Copyright rules  January 2008 – Speakeasy section – style guide</p> <p><b>INSITE news items</b></p> <p>16 September 2008 – Proofreading  11 January 2008 – Guidelines on copyright  20 December 2007 – Plain English Day</p> <p>Our communications protocol requires that all publications (hard copy and electronic) are checked by the Communications Unit for compliance with 'plain English' standards and corporate style. All applicants for jobs within the Communications Unit are rigorously tested for both an ability to use Plain English and to cut through jargon.</p> <p><b><u>Putting Customers First Guide</u></b></p> <p>Section 4 of the Putting Customers First Guide sets out the council's Service Standards, which includes the importance of being customer focussed and using jargon free English in our communications. It is designed to reinforce the guidance from the Communications Team. The 'Putting Customers First Guide' has been distributed widely across the council and is to all new staff members as part of the Corporate Induction Events. The new edition was recently publicised as part of National Customer Service Week and is available to all staff via the intranet (<a href="http://portal.oxfordshire.gov.uk/content/public/corporate/CustomerService/Puttingcustomersfirst2008.pdf">http://portal.oxfordshire.gov.uk/content/public/corporate/CustomerService/Puttingcustomersfirst2008.pdf</a>).</p> <p><b><u>Charter Mark</u></b></p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council is the first county council to achieve the Corporate Charter Mark award. In order to achieve Corporate Charter Mark, individual service areas must demonstrate (via independent assessment) that they 'provide customers with the information they need in plain, jargon-free language and in ways which meet their needs and preferences' (criteria 2.3.1).</p> <p>All the service areas assessed and the council as a whole (through an additional assessment) were found to be compliant with this criteria. Three of our service areas were judged by the Charter Mark assessors as providing best practice: Learning Disability</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>Day Services; Museums &amp; Heritage; and the Registration Service.</p> <p><b><u>Ask Oxfordshire/Mystery Shopping</u></b></p> <p>Action 17 in our new Consultation &amp; Involvement Strategy (which will go live from April 2009) sets out the ambition to ensure the council's Plain English guidelines and Clear Print guidelines always apply to council consultations.</p> <p>Our on-going mystery shopping programme evaluates individual service areas against a range of criteria including the use of Plain English, in our drive to provide customer focussed services.</p>
<p>7. <b>COUNCILLOR FOOKS</b></p> <p>A number of Oxford City children starting school in 2008/9 are being given primary school places outside the City because all the City schools are full for this age group. How many children are affected and were any alternative arrangements considered? Does the Cabinet member know why the forecasting of required places was wrong and what action is going to be taken so the same does not happen next year?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR WAINE, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS IMPROVEMENT</b></p> <p>For the present academic year a total of 48 pupils were not allocated a place at their designated area school in the city. However, all but 6 of those were allocated places at another city school. Of the remaining 6, 5 were allocated places in Kidlington and 1 at Wheatley.</p> <p>So while there was clearly pressure on places in the city, of the c.1,400 city places allocated this September, only a very small minority (6) were not accommodated in a city school.</p> <p>Forecasting pupil numbers generally and for individual schools in particular is not an exact science. The natural ebb and flow of people within, in and out of the City makes precise forecasting of where parents will eventually want their children to attend particularly difficult.</p> <p>Of course there is always room for improvement. In the light of this year's experience, officers are looking at increasing the precision of forecasting where that is possible and matching likely pressure points to potential for school growth. In relation to the latter, some city schools with potential for expansion have already been identified and early discussions are taking place.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>8. <b>COUNCILLOR BRYDEN</b></p> <p>How many applications for diversion of existing rights of way and registration of new rights of way are in the pipeline for determination; at the current rate of progress how long will it take to determine these; and what is the County Council going to do to speed up the process?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR BELSON, CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p><b>Public Path Order applications:</b></p> <p>There are currently 37 applications for the diversion of existing public rights of way. These include 33 applications under s119 Highways Act 1980 (HA) and four applications under s257 Town &amp; Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA). In addition, and dealt with under the same work programme, there are three applications for concurrent extinguishment and creation (under s118 and s26 HA) and one application for a s118 HA extinguishment.</p> <p>Applications are dealt with in accordance with the council's <i>Statement of Criteria and Priorities</i> for this area of work as approved by Planning &amp; Regulation Committee in November 2006. TCPA applications take precedence and are dealt with as a priority. Thereafter HA applications are dealt with in chronological order of receipt. As an approximate guide, waiting times for new applicants for HA orders are estimated at 3 - 4 years.</p> <p><b>Definitive Map Modification Order applications:</b></p> <p>There are currently 89 applications to modify the Definitive Map and Statement. Of these 42 are applications to add a new way and 47 are applications to change the status or otherwise vary the record of existing public rights of way (for example to record bridleway rights along a way currently shown on the Map as a public footpath). One application can include evidence relating to multiple ways.</p> <p>Applications are dealt with in chronological order of date of receipt in line with the council's <i>Statement of Criteria</i> for this area of work. It is very difficult to give accurate estimates of timescales as it difficult to predict how complex a case will become when work starts on researching it. New applicants are advised that research is unlikely to begin for several years. As an approximate guide, waiting times are currently estimated at</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>8 - 9 years.</p> <p>A Best Practice Review (BPR) has been carried out on this service and in a nutshell the overall conclusions are that the processes we are using are both efficient and sound and that the solution to the backlog is one of resources. To this end the recommendation is that to remove the backlog will require £273k per year for three years to employ consultants. It has been decided that this is a pressure we are unable to sustain, and so the decision has been that the service will remain as it is.</p>
<p>9. <b>COUNCILLOR GODDEN</b></p> <p>Does the Cabinet Member agree that Oxfordshire Highways drainage pipes known to suffer regular blockage from silt and limescale should be flushed through twice a year? Is this frequency being attained? How widespread is this problem throughout the County?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR HUDSPETH, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</b></p> <p>I agree that drains that serve flood prone areas should be cleansed more often and this is carried out by the Area offices. It is harder with limescale build up due to the fact that springs do move and then different pipes have limescale build up. Drains can be blocked for various reasons, for example, vehicles over-running the verges and blocking gullies and pipes or intense storms and river flooding. As the intense storms and flooding increases more silting up of systems could occur.</p> <p>In the known problem areas the frequency is being maintained. It is very hard to say how widespread the problem is, probably more frequent in the South of the County than the North. Maybe 5 – 10% of the drains.</p>
<p>10. <b>COUNCILLOR FOOKS</b></p> <p>Many residents in Oxfordshire suffered in the floods of July 2007. However, some residents had had their homes flooded just as badly in earlier years. In my division, some people have had their homes flooded repeatedly, with</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR HUDSPETH, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</b></p> <p>We have carried out several small schemes to help Chalfont Road / Polstead Road over recent several years from additional gullies to making sure the sewers are working at full capacity to stopping any water from Frenchay Road entering Chalfont Road. The final option is to place a bund across the top of Polstead Road to restrict the flow down Polstead so that the sewer can cope. This will of course cause additional temporary flooding on the Woodstock Road. It is still in the drainage programme to be done and we hope to undertake this work in February 2009 when we go back into Woodstock Road to lay some more ACO (drainage) kerbing.</p>



Questions	Answers
<p>considerable damage being done, in 1994, 2002, 2004, 2005 and 2006. Is it right that a very minor engineering job to reduce water flow from the Woodstock Road into Polstead Road in times of high rainfall that was promised over a year ago to help these people, is being delayed while priority is being given to those flooded in 2007?</p>	
<p>11. <b>COUNCILLOR LEGGE</b></p> <p>When will the new accommodation for the post-16 pupils at Kingfisher Special School in Abingdon be completed and fully functional for the pupils to use?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR WAINE, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS IMPROVEMENT</b></p> <p>A project officer from Environment &amp; Economy and a representative of the Council's Property consultants (Mouchel) visited the site on 16 October and met the Head to work through an action plan for any remaining work. This list was completed by the contractor next day, less 3 items requiring a lead in time.</p> <p>The school had made some limited use of one room prior to this final work and now has full use of the facility. The external canopy is due for installation on Monday 3 November. Mouchel will visit again after the canopy is installed to conduct a final check.</p>
<p>12. <b>COUNCILLOR WISE</b></p> <p>Noting the Leader's change of attitude to Private Eye magazine, will there be a copy of it in the Members' Lounge from now on?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>I am on record as warning regular readers of <i>Private Eye</i> that a trashy reading diet might lead to trashy thinking. I did warm slightly to <i>Private Eye</i> when a colleague told me they were taking a pretty scathing view of "eco-towns" but this most definitely does not extend to buying the magazine or even reading someone else's copy. I certainly have no plans to use taxpayers' funds to make a copy available in the Members' Lounge.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>13. <b>COUNCILLOR PATRICK</b></p> <p>Can I be reassured that the County Council has now cut back the overhanging branches on the route of the 32 double decker bus, so that passengers can be assured a smooth journey without broken windows?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR HUDSPETH, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</b></p> <p>Oxfordshire Highways staff are working with Thames Travel and District Council staff to arrange removal of overgrown vegetation necessary as a result of the decision to introduce double-deck buses on route 32. Maintenance of the overgrown hedges and trees mostly is the responsibility of owners of adjoining land and this can be enforced by the County Council using section 154 of the Highways Act 1980. However this is a time-consuming process and in this instance the County Council will arrange and bear the cost of the initial trimming – subsequent trimming will revert to being the landowner’s responsibility. Hedge trimming was carried out late October and trimming of trees (with the possible exception of trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders) will be carried out during November.</p>
<p>14. <b>COUNCILLOR J SANDERS</b></p> <p>I note with regret that the Council has decided not to proceed with a pilot scheme at some schools to test the effectiveness of using traffic orders to enforce no-stopping rules outside schools. It has decided instead to ask schools to recruit children to advise errant parents of the inadvisability of stopping their cars on yellow zigzag lines. As some time has now elapsed since that decision was made, please can the Cabinet Member advise me whether this alternative scheme has been implemented. If so, please can he advise me</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR HUDSPETH, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</b></p> <p>The answer to (a) is that we’re launching the STARS (School Travel and Road Safety) programme now at 8 schools, and will be working with Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) from January to develop a joint approach (PCSOs / schools / pupils) to tackling the issues around stopping on zigzags. Some schools have already tried the approach out with success on the day. However, what we are also looking for is how best to sustain the initial impact.</p> <p>In response to (b) we are not aware of any instances of either injury or abuse to pupils.</p> <p>More information on the STARS project is available, e.g. Travel Plans can supply a CD containing all of the materials if required. The project was also covered by <i>The Surveyor</i> magazine last month, an article partly predicated on how the scheme is envisaged to help with school parking problems.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>a) whether the scheme has yet had any success;  b) whether any child has suffered injury or abuse from said errant parents.</p>	
<p>15. <b>COUNCILLOR BRIGHOUSE</b>  Since the London Road Roundabout was finished concerns have been raised about the safety of the junction of the A40 and Collinwood Road. Can you tell me when residents using this junction are likely to be consulted about improving safety there for motorists and pedestrians?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR HUDSPETH, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</b>  A lot of thought was given to possible improvements (including the signalization of the junction) as part of the Headington roundabout works, but it was then decided that the most appropriate option would be to monitor how the latter impacted on this junction. Thankfully accident numbers have appreciably reduced, presumably because average queue lengths are shorter and there is less risk of turning vehicles being masked by stationary traffic; we nevertheless hope that it will be possible to improve further on this by lower cost measures such as additional signing and road markings. The road safety team is currently busy on a number of other projects, but will be working on this in the very near future.</p> <p>As improvements are likely to be low cost measures such as signs and lines we are likely to implement and monitor rather than carry out consultation. However, if a larger more involved scheme is required we will consult more widely. In all cases the local member will be kept informed on progress.</p>
<p>16. <b>COUNCILLOR GATEHOUSE</b>  Please could you state the number of people waiting for Occupational Therapy assessments, the average time for which they have been waiting and the number who have been waiting for more than 28 days.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JIM COUCHMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL &amp; COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>  The table below shows the most recent position broken down by geographical area (pending some recent assessment activity which may improve the position once recorded):</p>

Questions	Answers																				
<p>In each case please could you give separate figures for North Oxfordshire, South Oxfordshire and Oxford City.</p>	<table border="1" data-bbox="952 256 1751 563"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>North</th> <th>City</th> <th>South</th> <th>Oxon</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Number of people waiting</td> <td>423</td> <td>88</td> <td>354</td> <td>865</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Average wait in days</td> <td>108</td> <td>33</td> <td>177</td> <td>128</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of people waiting over 28 days</td> <td>370</td> <td>41</td> <td>243</td> <td>654</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		North	City	South	Oxon	Number of people waiting	423	88	354	865	Average wait in days	108	33	177	128	Number of people waiting over 28 days	370	41	243	654
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<p>17. <b>COUNCILLOR GATEHOUSE</b> How many of the people permanently admitted to a county council funded care home place in 2007-08 were not offered a single room?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JIM COUCHMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL &amp; COMMUNITY SERVICES</b></p> <p>The table below states both the number of people and the percentage offered (PAF indicator D37). 97% was top banded, 5 out of 5, and was an improvement on 96% reported in 2006-07:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="745 887 1783 963"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Number of people not offered a single room</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Percentage of people offered a single room</td> <td>97%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Number of people not offered a single room	17	Percentage of people offered a single room	97%																
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<p>18. <b>COUNCILLOR GATEHOUSE</b> The Scrutiny Review of Integrated Health and Social Care recommended the Cabinet, “Alongside the Oxfordshire PCT and the acute hospital trusts, to issue a joint statement in response to this Review setting out a set of clear</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JIM COUCHMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL &amp; COMMUNITY SERVICES</b></p> <p>Events have overtaken this recommendation. In addition to regular Health Liaison meetings attended by the Leader of the Council, myself, the Chief Executive and the Director of Social and Community Services with similarly senior directors of the PCT and the Oxfordshire Radcliffe Trust, it has been agreed that the Chief Executives of the County Council, the PCT and ORH Trust should meet on a frequent basis to discuss matters of coordination and integration between the three partners with a particular emphasis on resolving the long running issue of Delayed Transfers of Care. To have</p>																				

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
shared expectations as to what degree of integration and coordination can be expected by 2010". Why did the Cabinet not accept this recommendation?	called for a Joint Statement regarding these important issues would more likely have hindered than helped this process. Accordingly I recommended Cabinet not to agree Recommendation 10 of the Scrutiny Review.