

County Council

8 September 2015

Schedule of Business

This page is intentionally left blank

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – 8 SEPTEMBER 2015

SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS

AGENDA ITEM	PAGE NO.	MAXIMUM DURATION	APPROX START TIME TIME LIMIT PER DEBATE	SUBJECT	PROPOSALS (M = Motion; SEC = Seconder; Am = Amendment S = Statement; Q = Question; REC = Recommendation to be determined)
1.	1	30 mins	10.00	<p>Minutes</p> <p>Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 July 2015 (CC1).</p> <p>Members are asked to note the following addition to be added to Minute 39/15:</p> <p>“The Leader made a statement in relation to the Cabinet Report, which included the Council’s response to the A-F Serious Case Review following on from Operation Bullfinch. . The Leader apologised on behalf of the political leadership of the Council past and present for failing in their responsibility to protect the Council’s most vulnerable children and for not doing everything possible to stop the abuse.”</p>	

AGENDA ITEM	PAGE NO.	MAXIMUM DURATION	APPROX START TIME TIME LIMIT PER DEBATE	SUBJECT	PROPOSALS (M = Motion; SEC = Secorder; Am = Amendment S = Statement; Q = Question; REC = Recommendation to be determined)
2.	1			Apologies for Absence	Cllr Richard Webber Cllr Janet Godden
3.	2			Declarations of Interest	
4.	2			Official Communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joanna Simons • Former County Councillor Anne Bonner; • Former County Councillor Dick Rymer 	Hudspeth, Brighouse, Fawcett, Williams; Mallon, Brighouse, Mrs Fulljames
5.	2			Appointments	

AGENDA ITEM	PAGE NO.	MAXIMUM DURATION	APPROX START TIME TIME LIMIT PER DEBATE	SUBJECT	PROPOSALS (M = Motion; SEC = Seconder; Am = Amendment S = Statement; Q = Question; REC = Recommendation to be determined)
6.	2			Petitions and Public Address	<u>Public Address</u> Dr Helena Whall, Campaign Manager, Protect Rural Oxfordshire (PRO), Agenda Item 14, Local Transport Plan 2015 - 2031; Ms Julie Mabberley, Agenda Item 14, Local Transport Plan 2015 - 2031; Ms Jill Huish, Agenda Item 8, Questions with Notice from Members of the Council; Mr Alexander Murray, Agenda Item 15, Motion From Councillor Laura Price; Mr David Hartley, Witney Resident, Agenda Item 15, Motion From Councillor Laura Price.
7.	2			Questions with Notice from Members of the Public See Annex 3	Mrs Alison Williams to Councillor Judith Heathcoat

AGENDA ITEM	PAGE NO.	MAXIMUM DURATION	APPROX START TIME TIME LIMIT PER DEBATE	SUBJECT	PROPOSALS (M = Motion; SEC = Seconder; Am = Amendment S = Statement; Q = Question; REC = Recommendation to be determined)
Additional Item				Item of urgent Business – A Statement from the Leader of the Council on the Council’s response to providing essential support and assistance to Syrian refugees coming to Oxfordshire.	Brighthouse, Fawcett, Williams

AGENDA ITEM	PAGE NO.	MAXIMUM DURATION	APPROX START TIME TIME LIMIT PER DEBATE	SUBJECT	PROPOSALS (M = Motion; SEC = Seconder; Am = Amendment S = Statement; Q = Question; REC = Recommendation to be determined)
8.	2	30 mins	11. 00 am	Questions with Notice from Members of the Council (1) Johnston to Nimmo Smith (2) Williams to Nimmo Smith (3) Coates to Nimmo Smith (4) Coates to Nimmo Smith (5) Williams to Hudspeth (6) Coates to Hudspeth (7) Tanner to Tilley (8) Tanner to Nimmo Smith (9) Tanner to Nimmo Smith (10) Dhesi to Tilley (11) Pressel to Hudspeth (12) Pressel to Hibbert-Biles (13) Pressel to Tilley (14) Williams to Tilley (15) Harris to Hudspeth (16) Dhesi to Nimmo Smith	
9.	2	15 mins	11.30	Senior Officer Appointments	(M) Hudspeth (SEC) Rose S Tanner S Williams

AGENDA ITEM	PAGE NO.	MAXIMUM DURATION	APPROX START TIME TIME LIMIT PER DEBATE	SUBJECT	PROPOSALS (M = Motion; SEC = Secunder; Am = Amendment S = Statement; Q = Question; REC = Recommendation to be determined)
10.	3	10 mins	11.45	Treasury Management Outturn 2014/15	M) Stratford (SEC) Hudspeth S Hards S Smith
11.	3	45 mins	11.55	Partnerships Update Report	M) Hudspeth (SEC) Rose S Brighthouse S Pressel S Price S Tanner S Dhesi S Fooks S Hannaby S Smith S Fawcett S Williams

AGENDA ITEM	PAGE NO.	MAXIMUM DURATION	APPROX START TIME TIME LIMIT PER DEBATE	SUBJECT	PROPOSALS (M = Motion; SEC = Seconder; Am = Amendment S = Statement; Q = Question; REC = Recommendation to be determined)
12.	3	30 mins	12.40	Director of Public Health Annual Report	M) Hibbert-Biles (SEC) Hudspeth S Phillips S Pressel S Brighthouse S Dhesi S Rooke S Fooks
13.	2	20 mins	2.00 pm	Report of the Cabinet Deputy Leader (Rodney Rose) Children, Education & Families (Melinda Tilley) Environment (Nimmo Smith) Finance (Lawrie Stratford) Public Health & the Voluntary Sector (Hilary Hibbert-Biles) Business & Customer Services (Nick Carter)	Cherry, Tanner, Hannaby, Williams(1) Beal (3) Fooks (5), Hards (6) Hards, Phillips, Smith, Coates (7) Howson (9)

AGENDA ITEM	PAGE NO.	MAXIMUM DURATION	APPROX START TIME TIME LIMIT PER DEBATE	SUBJECT	PROPOSALS (M = Motion; SEC = Seconder; Am = Amendment S = Statement; Q = Question; REC = Recommendation to be determined)
14.	4	90 mins	2.20 pm	<p>Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015 - 2031</p> <p>The Chairman has agreed to allow 15 minutes debate on the amendment and 1 hour on the Plan.</p>	<p>(M) Nimmo Smith (SEC) Hudspeth (AM) Fooks (SEC) Smith S Curran S Brighthouse S Price S Beal S Cherry S Pressel S Hards S Philips S Dhesi S Lygo S Azad S Tanner S Howson S Fawcett S Rooke S Johnston S Williams S Coates</p>

AGENDA ITEM	PAGE NO.	MAXIMUM DURATION	APPROX START TIME TIME LIMIT PER DEBATE	SUBJECT	PROPOSALS (M = Motion; SEC = Seconder; Am = Amendment S = Statement; Q = Question; REC = Recommendation to be determined)
15.	3	30 mins	3.50 pm	<p>Motion From Councillor Laura Price</p> <p><i>Councillor Price will seek Council's consent to amend her motion by the suggestion of Councillor Heathcoat.</i></p>	<p>(M) Price (SEC) Heathcoat (AM) Price (SEC) S Heathcoat S Nimmo Smith S Hibbert-Biles S Atkins S Brighthouse S Hards S Pressel S Rooke S Hannaby S Williams S Coates</p>

AGENDA ITEM	PAGE NO.	MAXIMUM DURATION	APPROX START TIME TIME LIMIT PER DEBATE	SUBJECT	PROPOSALS (M = Motion; SEC = Seconder; Am = Amendment S = Statement; Q = Question; REC = Recommendation to be determined)
16.	4.	15 mins	4.20 pm	Motion From Councillor Kevin Bulmer	(M) Bulmer (SEC) S Bartholomew S Constance S Curran S Tanner S Hannaby S Fawcett S Williams S Coates
17.	4	15 mins	4.35 pm	Motion From Councillor Roz Smith	(M) Smith (SEC) Johnston (AM) Bartholomew (SEC) S Tanner S Rooke S Hannaby S Williams S Coates

AMENDMENTS TO MOTIONS ON NOTICE**Agenda Item 14 – Local Transport Plan 2015-2031 - Amendment to be moved by Councillor Jean Fooks**

This Council passed a motion in April 2014 recommending that LTP4 should recognize the need to reduce pollutants from road traffic.

Whilst admitting that air quality “may well get worse with increasing traffic levels”, LTP4 seriously underestimates the impact on health of exposure to NOx gases and Particulates.

LTP4 estimates that 13,000 premature deaths a year are caused by overall combustion emissions, with road transport being the biggest source, although the estimate until recently was that 29,000 premature deaths are caused each year due to particulates alone. Even this figure is less than half the latest estimate by the “Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants”.

Council therefore requests that LTP4 should be strengthened in its aims to reduce air pollution by more positively:

- Encouraging walking and cycling
- Restricting diesel vehicles in town centres
- Working more proactively with the city and District Councils to develop and enact Air Quality Action Plans.
- introducing low-or zero-emission mass transit vehicles.”

Agenda Item 15 – Motion From Councillor Laura Price - Amendment to be moved by Councillor Laura Price

“Since May 2014 several of our Community Hospitals have undergone changes to the services they deliver and how those services are delivered. Individually these changes have not been deemed appropriate for public consultation and communities have been left feeling cheated of an opportunity to engage.

These hospitals form an integral part of the work of Oxfordshire Adult Social Care and are crucial in providing seamless appropriate and timely care for vulnerable elderly and disabled people in the County.

This Council, therefore, asks that in their role as commissioner, the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group lead on a full public consultation on the future shape of Oxfordshire's Community Hospitals and that Oxfordshire Council fully engage with the process and ~~Oxfordshire County Council urgently co-ordinate a full public consultation on the future shape of Oxfordshire's Community Hospitals~~ before further incremental changes damage the public's relationship with these vital services."

Agenda Item 17 – Motion From Councillor Roz Smith - Amendment to be moved by Councillor David Bartholomew

"This Council recognises the invaluable work undertaken by volunteers running village halls and community centres throughout Oxfordshire. The community buildings the volunteers look after provide facilities such as lunch clubs, exercise classes, pre-schools, libraries and other activities to improve health and wellbeing.

Austerity measures and budgets cuts have meant grants towards the costs of improving and maintaining the village halls and community centres are diminishing. The volunteers have to fund raise even more vigorously to maintain and upgrade the buildings they look after. Most building work on village halls and centres is liable for VAT at the standard rate of 20%; **but usually parish councils are able to claim this back. However, in some instances charities or community groups not aligned with parish councils could, for example, have to find another £20,000 for the VAT bill on a £100,000 extension.** ~~for instance, a village hall committee raising funds for a £100,000 extension has to find another £20,000 for the VAT bill.~~ This is a tax on voluntary effort.

This Council agrees to show support for the National Village Halls, **by instructing the Chief Financial Officer to write to parish councils clarifying the VAT position and by writing to all Oxfordshire MPs to ask them to support calls to reduce the VAT burden on charitable organisations looking after our village halls and community buildings when VAT cannot be reclaimed.** ~~Forum campaign to reduce the VAT rate for building improvements to charitable organisations by writing to all Oxfordshire MPs to ask them to support the campaign to reduce this tax burden on charitable organisations looking after our village halls and community buildings when considering the next national budget."~~

QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

ANNEX 2

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

Questions	Answers
<p>1. COUNCILLOR BOB JOHNSTON</p> <p>What is the status of rail (both heavy and light) in respect of LTP4, given that all reference to them was deleted at the July Cabinet meeting?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>This is going to be covered in the report to Council (8 September) on LTP4. The relevant extract is as follows:</p> <p>“The addendum to Cabinet outlined our strategic priorities and ambition for rail investment in Oxfordshire. Extensive consultation took place on the 2012 Strategy and work to revise this is substantially complete. The updated Strategy is proposed to be finalised this autumn, for stakeholder consultation and further consideration/amendment, before being submitted for approval as part of the LTP4 update in spring 2016.”</p>
<p>2. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>Cutting £6 million from the subsidies from bus services will be undoubtedly mean that certain services especially in rural areas and the Dial a Ride network are in danger of closure. Does the Cabinet Member for Transport agree with me that there is something seriously wrong when the County is spending millions on road widening schemes, redesigning roundabout and building ever more park and rides whilst at</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>The capital funding investment being used to improve the road network is coming from Central Government, developments, or the Local Enterprise Partnership to support and enable Oxfordshire’s future growth. It is generally the result of specific bids to government which have clear growth outcomes linked to it and cannot be spent on other areas of council business. In many instances these schemes will provide improved bus service journeys. The Council’s Local Transport Plan is very much focused on improving and investing in the bus network creating conditions and maximising levels of patronage to ensure bus services can be operated on a commercial basis.</p>

<p>the same time turning its back on public transport and its obvious advantages in transport planning , pollution control and carbon emissions?</p>	<p>With continuing financial pressures the Council cannot justify or sustain investing its limited revenue funding year on year into subsidising Bus Services. Ensuring accessibility for those in rural areas is a challenge and one we recognise - we must look at different way and model of providing this. The Council currently supports approximately 9% of the bus network, the remainder being run on a commercial basis, and it is committed to supporting rural communities within the financial constraints that it has. We have made a lot of progress on this through the community transport project but a significant proportion of this support needs to be through providing an environment where the commercial bus network can grow so that it does not place an on-going burden on the tax payers of Oxfordshire.</p>
<p>3. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member for Transport indicate how many full time designated cycle officer are members of the dedicated transport infrastructure planning team? Could the Portfolio Holder take into account that most local authorities have cycle officers (Coventry have 6) as a part of the senior design team and without them cycling is always an afterthought with a constant and supreme priority for cars.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>The simple answer is the Council has no full time, designated cycle officers. However, this is because cycling, along with other specific modes of transport is part of the role of all the transport planners. They are expected to consider what we can do to promote/encourage and deliver infrastructure for cyclists, in both planning and design teams, ensuring cycling is not an afterthought. Most schemes we build tend to have a cycling element or have indirect benefits for cyclists and we have been very successful in attracting funding through this model. This has been the Council's approach for some years.</p>
<p>4. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member comment on the recently issued figures from the Department of Transport which show that Oxfordshire is</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>A number of significant measures are being put in place to create the foundation for cycling to be a major model of travel in Oxfordshire. The new Oxfordshire Cycling Strategy forms an integral part of Connecting</p>

now far behind Cambridgeshire in its monthly cycle usage rates (30% Cambridge and 24% Oxfordshire). Could he outline what measures are being implemented to narrow this significant gap?

Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031 (LTP4), alongside Area Strategies which set out specifically what will be implemented in these areas. It has been written in close collaboration with the Oxfordshire Cycle Network (a county-wide network of cycle campaigners) and our colleagues from Public Health and Countryside. Here are some of the measures that we will be putting in place:

1. A Quality Infrastructure

We will identify a series of strategic routes in collaboration with users, which we will develop into Cycle Premium Routes and Cycle Super Routes, which will become the focus of our future investment. Over time, local cycle networks will be upgraded to Connector Routes, which will enable safe, signed routes throughout the county as well as providing links to the Cycle Premium Routes and Cycle Super Routes

2. Cycling as part of a Journey

Cycling alone cannot replace the car for long journeys but a combination of cycle-rail or cycle-bus can. We will create better links between our developing cycle network and popular public transport hubs with safe and secure cycle parking available – not just in the obvious places such as rail stations, but also at main stops on key bus routes.

3. New Developments

In September 2013, Oxfordshire Councillors approved a motion that included requiring cycle-friendly measures into all new road schemes and housing developments. For large, new or expanded housing developments, developers must demonstrate through master planning how their site has been planned to make cycling convenient and safe for cyclists and must be constructed with cycling in mind. We will ask developers to fund cyclability

audits so that local users can evaluate the quality of existing cycle routes and how they could be improved.

4. Providing a Safe and Well Maintained Network

Evidence shows that sharing narrow carriageway space with fast moving vehicles is why most people will not cycle on the carriageway. We will provide more segregated cycle lanes and other measures such as advance stop lines at junctions. We will consider lower speed limits and other traffic calming measures. Where space is not available, we will seek to sign cyclists along safer route options. A safe cycle network is also a well-maintained cycle network. Given limited resources, we will identify a list of priorities for maintenance on key cycle routes.

5. Encourage People to Cycle

Even in cycling cities like Oxford and Cambridge, the majority of people do not cycle regularly. We want to make people feel that cycling is something for them. In collaboration with the Oxfordshire Cycle Network, we will develop options to support new or returning cyclists to build confidence in all aspects of cycling. In collaboration with our Public Health colleagues, we will promote cycling to people who are concerned about their health and fitness. We are also currently exploring ways of expanding the extremely successful pilot OXONBIKE cycle hire scheme serving Thornhill, Headington and Cowley to cover the whole city - and possibly beyond.

6. Implementation Plan

In summary, cycling is a vital component of the council's transport policy. A number of cycle schemes are underway to strengthen infrastructure and encourage more people to cycle. Provision for cyclists will continue to play a key role in planning for growth across Oxfordshire.

<p>5. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>Is the Leader of the Council concerned that all meeting of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership are held in secret with no members of the public and even County councillors excluded? How does the Leader who sometimes attends the LEP defend this lack of accountability in view of the Government's stance that as the LEP is spending public money LEPs are liable to an 'assurance framework' on their website that includes openness and transparency? How can the other Nolan Principles of Public Life such as honesty and objective leadership be affirmed if all meetings are secret?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>The tone of the question by Cllr Williams is trying to give the impression that the LEP is some sort of secretive organisation that is spending tax payers money. I would suggest that Cllr Williams reads through all the documentation of the LEP website. The LEP was set up by the coalition government and operates under the relevant regulations. He will see that all democratically elected members of the 6 councillors are members of the LEP and therefore the democratic accountability sits firmly with them. I'm not sure what Cllr Williams is trying to say about my attendance when he uses the word 'sometimes' as I have attended 21 of the 25 meeting since I've been Leader. The partnership report debated at today's Council meeting gives all members the opportunity to ask questions regarding this successful partnership.</p> <p>He will also see that the LEP has been successful in obtaining funding deals worth over £200 million the benefits of which are already seen on the Southern approaches. Is Councillor Williams suggesting that this funding of vital infrastructure in Oxfordshire is something that he and the Green Party would not support?</p>
<p>6. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>There have been numerous suggestions in this Council County Chamber about how to lobby the Government against further cuts in the level of rates support grant in the name of the 'Austerity' Programme most of which have been rejected or amended into impotence. Could I ask what you have actually done so far to formally lobby members of the Government on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council that the long term programme of cuts set out in 2010, the cuts announced in June</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>I can confirm that every time I have been formally asked a council meeting to write to government I do so. There are frequent briefings to the local MPs that contain the financial details of the council. The deficit reduction is a national issue and we are full members of LGA and CCN who make the case on behalf of us and their other members, as do officers through their own networks.</p> <p>At every opportunity when I meet MPs I always make them aware of not just Oxfordshire funding situation but that of all councils across the UK. I do not see the different between a formal or informal meeting; in fact I would say that an informal meeting offers a better opportunity to get a point across. I do not see the point of going back through my diary over the last 5 years bringing</p>

<p>2015 and the further cuts expected in the Autumn Statement are more than this Council can take without devastating consequences to services? Does he agree that crocodile tears are not enough?</p>	<p>forward a list of times I have met MPs or government ministers but I can assure Cllr Coates that I do talk frequently about our financial situation.</p> <p>I would like to remind Cllr Coates that on 7 May 2015 the country elected a Conservative government that has a clear aim of reducing the country's deficit. This will mean we all will have to prioritise the funding resources to those most vulnerable in our society. What the country clearly rejected was the fantasy policies of the Green party that would simply rack up even more debt that would only be passed on to our children.</p>
<p>7. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>What assurances can you give the parents and children who use Grandpont Children's Centre and Donnington Doorstep family centre about the future provision of open-access support for parents and children in my division?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>I do not wish to pre-empt the Consultation process, by answering this question. I need to keep an open mind for the results of the Consultation process.</p>
<p>8. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>Does the Cabinet member agree with me that the popular Redbridge Recycling Centre in my division should continue to remain open following the consultation on the savage cuts to recycling centres around Oxfordshire?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Councillor Tanner is being very premature in the use of such words as "savage" and "cuts", when the consultation process has barely even started. The main aim of the process is to have a strategy in place to allow S106 to be collected to improve and replace [as necessary] our Household Waste and Recycling Centres. All areas of the County council have been asked to identify savings in preparation for the coming year's budgets, with a target of £350K to come from HWRC's. Should this mean the number of sites be reduced to 3 or 4, then the aim will be to place them in reach of all – a centre in or around the City will certainly be needed, although I fail to see why Cllr Tanner should think his Division should be privileged above all others.</p>

<p>9. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>How bad does the road surface of the heavily used Folly Bridge in Oxford have to become before the County Council takes seriously its responsibility to keep that (and other road surfaces) at a decent level for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council is currently in the process of programming investigatory work to Folly Bridge, St Aldates. This work is necessary in order to add the bridge surface to our forward programme of carriageway patching. The investigatory work includes digging trial pits on the bridge to ascertain the (build-up of bituminous layers), details of the existing construction and to gain certainty on the locations and depths of utility services. The trial pits will also give evidence of any potential water ingress to the bridge deck and will assist in determining the specification of the most suitable (re-surfacing material) type of repair. Following these investigations, it is anticipated that the necessary work to Folly Bridge will be undertaken early next financial year. Until this work is completed, Folly Bridge is inspected each month as part of the St Aldates inspection route. Any safety defects identified during these inspections will be remedied as per our inspection policy.</p>
<p>10. COUNCILLOR SURINDA DHESI</p> <p>What is the County Council doing to encourage more children to participate in the free school meals uptake?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>Free school meals are, of course, of immediate benefit to the children and families entitled to them, both from a financial and nutritional (and therefore learning) point of view.</p> <p>They are, also, of immediate financial benefit to schools as the principal determinant of the Pupil Premium; the more children at a school in receipt of free school meals (under the original free school meal mechanism as distinct from the new Universal Free School meal entitlement) the more pupil premium the school will receive.</p> <p>Headteachers and governors are very well aware of the importance of all of these benefits, not least the financial ones and, generally, do all they can at a local level to maximise take up.</p>

It is, of course, for parents to decide whether they wish to apply for free school meals and it would be difficult to come up with just one initiative for increasing uptake that would work for all schools where take up is low given the many and various barriers to take up from school to school, many of which flow from parents' perceptions.

Colleagues in Facilities Management are working with individual schools, the Food With Thought catering team and other catering providers to try and identify which barriers are relevant to which schools. They intend to send out a survey to all parents (via schools where the take up is below 80%) to help establish the causes of low take up.

Of the 89 schools identified as having a take up of lower than 80% (measured at the January Census day), 65 have been referred back to the DfE Task Force and have received / will receive an individual visit from an advisor who will work with the school and the catering company to produce a report outlining potential solutions for that particular school. This will be particularly useful in the schools where there is limited enthusiasm from the staff for the Universal Free School Meals initiative. When these visits have been completed we shall be in a position to decide whether an 'all schools' initiative would be beneficial.

In addition, some works have been taking place over the summer and into this term to help address some barriers already identified. Examples include new kitchens, additional or new tables, upgraded servery equipment aimed at improving the quality of food offer and the dining experience.

11. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL

Please can you tell us what is happening about the “Tri-Counties” proposal?

COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The title has changed to England’s Economic Heartland to enable other councils to join. I am pleased to say that a joint letter supported by OxLEP has been sent to the Chancellor and Secretaries of State outlining the proposal, I attach a copy.

My reason for a larger alliance has always been clear. The number one transport issue which affects all the councils in Oxfordshire is the A34, as any incident has a knock-on effect across the network, as I’m sure Cllr Presell is only too aware. I first asked the Secretary of State for Transport about local control three years ago, as I believe we can find a better local solution. However as we’re only talking about 30 miles of road, then it’s always going to be a challenge, due to economies of scale etc. By joining together with the councils, we have a larger offer of trunk roads to work together on. We currently have indicative funding of £35 million for the junctions at Peartree & Botley, with around £15 million for Lodge Hill. Then there is the additional junction on the M40 near Bicester. This brings the funding to around £100 million, yes the proposed work will ease the traffic by increasing the capacity but it won’t be the final solution. However, if we use the funds to work on an alternative solution linking into the Oxford-Cambridge expressway, we may be able to achieve greater funding and find a more permanent solution to the A34 that would enable business to flourish within Oxfordshire.

I am a strong supporter of an Oxfordshire Devolution proposal as I see the two deals as complementing each other rather than competing.

Chancellor of the Exchequer England’s Economic Heartland

1 Horse Guards Road Programme Office
LONDON Buckinghamshire County Council
SW1A 2HQ County Hall

Walton Street
Aylesbury
HP20 1UA

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

2 Marsham Street

LONDON
SW1P 4DF
Secretary of State for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
LONDON
Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET
29th July 2015

Dear Chancellor and Secretaries of State

England’s Economic Heartland Strategic Alliance: Strategic Transport and Infrastructure Proposition

The Strategic Alliance of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire is delighted to submit our Strategic Transport and Infrastructure Proposition.

We are at the heart of science and technological innovation in the UK. With a population of 1.9m and an economy valued at £48bn, we are an economic powerhouse that matches any outside of London. Our economic success comes not from having a single dominant city rather it comes from our network of innovators and entrepreneurs for whom an efficient transport system is vital.

Our productivity is 30% higher than traditional city-regions: investment in new jobs generates 40% higher return. However, these impressive figures mask a simple fact: to be truly competitive requires investment in order to boost our productivity to match the levels of our global competitors.

Our proposition sets out how the County Councils and Local Enterprise Partnerships are working together on strategic infrastructure to realise the potential of our economy to grow by 20% by 2020 – delivering an additional £9bn per annum for the UK economy.

Our proposition is unique in terms of the scale of its ambition and its offer.

We can reduce the costs of infrastructure projects by up to 40% and accelerate their delivery by a third by simplifying our processes, removing duplication and realising efficiencies in the use of the technical skills available to us. We will deliver investment faster and more efficiently, make the funding available work harder and are engaging with our

	<p>Local Planning Authorities to ensure that our transport proposition contributes to accelerating the delivery of new jobs and homes.</p> <p>Moreover, following a meeting in Central Bedfordshire's offices last week, we have opened up a very positive conversation with our neighbouring Unitary authorities, and have agreed with them that we will rapidly develop the Alliance proposition further so as to create an even bigger and more powerful offer for England's Economic Heartland.</p> <p>Our proposition is submitted with the intent of securing a new deal with Government on strategic transport that will enable England's Economic Heartland to beat even stronger.</p> <p>We look forward to having an early discussion with you and your officials as part of your wider considerations ahead of the Comprehensive Spending Review.</p> <p>Yours sincerely</p> <p>Cllr Martin Tett Cllr Ian Hudspeth Cllr Jim Harker Leader Leader Leader Buckinghamshire County Council Oxfordshire County Council Northamptonshire County Council Alex Pratt Adrian Shooter John Markham Chairman Chairman Chairman Buckinghamshire Local Oxfordshire Local Northamptonshire Enterprise Enterprise Partnership Enterprise Partnership Partnership</p>
<p>12. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Five year old children in Oxfordshire have a very high incidence of tooth decay, compared with other similar counties. Please can you tell us why this is and what we are doing about it?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR HILARY HIBBERT-BILES, CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH & THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR</p> <p>The latest available data on oral health of 5 year old children in Oxfordshire is from a survey in 2012/12 as part of a National programme of surveys. This data was discussed in the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 18 September 2014, the report of which is publicly available.</p> <p>The average number of decayed, missing and filled teeth (d3mft) for 5yr old children in Oxfordshire is 0.98, which overall is statistically similar than national levels (d3mft = 0.94).</p> <p>The mean number of 5yr olds with decayed, missing or filled teeth in Oxfordshire has increased slightly in 2011/12, however is this based on a smaller sample size (approximately 26% of all 5yr olds).</p>

	<p>Cherwell and Oxford City continue to have higher than the national average in terms of numbers of decayed, missing and filled teeth for 5yr olds.</p> <p>The rate of decay in 5yr old children in West Oxfordshire increased since the last survey. It is thought that this increase is likely due to a statistical anomaly created by the sampling methods used for surveying the children.</p> <p>The mean for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of the White Horse is lower than England.</p> <p>The County Council let an improved contract for prevention commencing 1 April 2015 which in collaboration with wider dental services aims to contribute to prevention oral health problems in children. The priorities of this service are detailed in the most recent Director of Public Health annual report.</p> <p>The Public Health Directorate recommend that all young children should regularly attend a dentist from when teeth first begin to appear in the mouth. As such the council advocates parents to consult their local dentist for advice and guidance on the oral health needs of their child.</p> <p>The responsibility of the commissioning of dental services lies with the NHS England Local Area Team. We would advise the councillor to contact the NHS England LAT if they wish to have information on the delivery of local clinical dental services.</p>
<p>13. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Please can you tell us how many two-year olds in Oxfordshire currently have a place in a nursery school or other setting? How does this compare with other counties?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>The local authority does not keep records of all two year-olds attending childcare provision (parents paying fees). On-going records are kept of two year-olds accessing local authority 'funded' places. In the summer term, 2015, there were 1428 children taking up a place from a possible eligible cohort of 1900. This represents 74% take-up across nursery schools, children's centres, pre-schools, day-care and childminders. For take-up, Oxfordshire is 45th of the 152 local authorities.</p>

	<p>In June 2015, Oxfordshire was sixth of the 19 South East local authorities ranked by percentage take-up of funded two year-old places. Average take-up was 64%.</p> <p>Compared with statistical neighbours, Oxfordshire was fifth. Buckinghamshire was the highest at 78%, and average take-up was 71%.</p> <p>The DfE sends ranked score-cards to local authorities on a termly basis. Oxfordshire has performed well throughout the process with percentage take-up consistently in the 70s.</p> <p>The majority of funded two year-olds in Oxfordshire attend private or voluntary childcare provision although local authority teams are proactive in encouraging schools to develop provision for two year-olds with some positive results.</p>
<p>14. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>Clearly the present guidance on School admissions and Appeal is focused on the direct well-being of the child but would the Portfolio holder agree that domestic circumstances such as a registered disabled parents put under stress or unable to cope by the decision to refuse a place must be taken into account for that too can have an influence on the child's future happiness?</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member for Children and Education to write on behalf of the Council to the Secretary of State for Education to seek a review of the Guidance Codes sent to local</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>The School Admissions Code of Practice is quite restrictive in terms of what factors can be included in over-subscription criteria and specifically excludes a number relating to things such as parental income, education, hobbies or previous activities. Parental disability isn't referred to either as an allowable factor nor as one which is prohibited. However, any over-subscription criterion must be "reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair and comply with all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation." [para 1.8 of the Code]. It is difficult to think of such a criterion that could be applied where only one parent has a significant disability. Where both parents have a disability that would prevent them walking their child to school, the Council would provide free transport even if the journey were under the statutory walking distance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The over-subscription criteria for most schools do, however, give priority to <i>children</i> with disabilities where physically accessing the school is an issue.

<p>Authorities and the Independent School Admission Appeal Members which addresses the Councils concern?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeals are considered by Independent Appeal Panels. Where these are 'class size appeals' (those where the class already has 30 children) there are only very limited circumstances in which the appeal can be upheld. Essentially it comes down to whether there was an administrative error by the Council which, had it not occurred, would have resulted in the child being allocated a school place. In 'class size appeals' there is no weighing of the parents' & child's circumstances against the impact that an additional child would have on the efficient operation of the school. The 'Infant Class Size Limit' means that if a 31st child were admitted the school would need to take 'qualifying measures' which would include having to employ an additional teacher at a cost of at least £30,000 p.a. against additional pupil funding of around £4,000 p.a. In the absence of maladministration this cost is sufficient basis to reject the appeal. • I understand from officers that the current Admissions Code of Practice is being reviewed and the Schools Minister, Nick Gibb, has said that the priority given to siblings is being looked at as this has emerged as a national issue with growing numbers of families having to send their children to different schools. I will ask him whether he thinks that parental disabilities should also be considered in relation to either or both of the admissions and appeals processes.
<p>15. COUNCILLOR NEVILLE HARRIS</p> <p>The report of November 14th 2014 (published 19th January 2015) Strategic Financial Case for a Unitary Authority raised again the opportunity for a discussion with a view to determination of how the interests of the residents of Oxfordshire could be best served in terms of streamlined effective, efficient and equitable local government. Does the Leader agree that, as laudable as such discussion and determination would be, no meaningful attempt to promote them has followed the</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>The purpose of commissioning the report was to establish the various saving that could potentially be realised from the various options of local government within Oxfordshire.</p> <p>The idea of a referendum is an interesting suggestion but we must bear in mind that there would be a cost of around £600,000. Whatever the outcome of a referendum the Government are clear that they would not allow a reorganisation of Local Government unless all parties agreed.</p> <p>I am willing to talk to Councillor Harris or any councillor about saving taxpayers money.</p>

report's publication?

Please advise me on how you think a referendum might be organised by OCC which would enable the views of the County's residents to be expressed with regard to their various elected councillors seriously embarking on such worthwhile discussions. The multiplicity of tax gathering decision makers and resulting different levels of taxation puzzle many, as does the absence of a single planning authority. No less puzzling is the plethora of senior officers, accounts departments, public relations teams and many other examples of needless plurality.

People do understand how reactive those whose jobs might be in jeopardy and those whose political influence might be reduced or removed might be. Accordingly could you give particular attention as to how potential vested interest could be minimised if not excluded from such discussions?

Do you also agree that any discussion on the form and shape of local government for Oxfordshire would be challenging and that a referendum with its possible accompanying campaigns for a yes or no vote would put before Oxfordshire's residents all of the arguments and counter arguments for both sides of the proposition.

Would he further agree to talk to me and any other interested County, District or City Councillor on how such a referendum might

<p>be best arranged and worded.</p>	
<p>16. COUNCILLOR SURINDA DHESI</p> <p>How much money is spent in repairing persistent potholes?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>The Council's contract requires a 2 year guarantee on any defect repair and so the Council do not pay any additional money for repair of persistent potholes.</p>

Questions with Notice from Members of the Public

Mrs Alison Williams to Councillor Judith Heathcoat

Can the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care assure ratepayers, Councillors and those who use the services that thorough risk assessments have been undertaken which take into account potential health & safety hazards that will be faced by the most vulnerable people in our county as a result of reduction in services due to the most recent cuts to their budgets in this financial year and following years?

Furthermore, can the responsible Councillor explain and give proof to elected members residents and users that reassure us that none of the people of Oxfordshire will be at any serious risk or harm as a result of this third round of severe cuts in services.

Answer:

Adult Social Care prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all service users and carers, and has overarching statutory responsibility for safeguarding the adult population of the county. As such, all decisions taken in the directorate include full consideration of the potential impact they will have, both positive and negative, to ensure that there will not be any unacceptable risks or consequences resulting from proposed changes.

In line with national good practice and Oxfordshire County Council policy, all proposals to change policy, service delivery or projects are informed by a Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA). This considers the potential impact of the proposals on individuals and communities, staff, other service areas, and partner and provider organisations. Assessments consider the full range of potential risks and impacts, including health and safety, and set out the action that will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts identified.

The Service and Community Impact Assessments are used to inform decision-making within Adult Social Care and for the Council as a whole - Service and Community Impact Assessments accompany Cabinet papers recommending changes in policy, projects and service delivery. An overall impact assessment considering the cumulative impact of changes in the council budget on particular groups and individuals is also produced each year as part of the papers agreed by Cabinet and Council.

This page is intentionally left blank