



# **County Council**

**5 November 2013**

## **Agenda**

## Declarations of Interest

### The duty to declare.....

Under the Localism Act 2011 it is a criminal offence to

- (a) fail to register a disclosable pecuniary interest within 28 days of election or co-option (or re-election or re-appointment), or
- (b) provide false or misleading information on registration, or
- (c) participate in discussion or voting in a meeting on a matter in which the member or co-opted member has a disclosable pecuniary interest.

### Whose Interests must be included?

The Act provides that the interests which must be notified are those of a member or co-opted member of the authority, **or**

- those of a spouse or civil partner of the member or co-opted member;
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as husband/wife
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as if they were civil partners.

(in each case where the member or co-opted member is aware that the other person has the interest).

### What if I remember that I have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the Meeting?.

The Code requires that, at a meeting, where a member or co-opted member has a disclosable interest (of which they are aware) in any matter being considered, they disclose that interest to the meeting. The Council will continue to include an appropriate item on agendas for all meetings, to facilitate this.

Although not explicitly required by the legislation or by the code, it is recommended that in the interests of transparency and for the benefit of all in attendance at the meeting (including members of the public) the nature as well as the existence of the interest is disclosed.

A member or co-opted member who has disclosed a pecuniary interest at a meeting must not participate (or participate further) in any discussion of the matter; and must not participate in any vote or further vote taken; and must withdraw from the room.

Members are asked to continue to pay regard to the following provisions in the code that *“You must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself”* or *“You must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned.....”*.

Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting should you have any doubt about your approach.

### List of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:

**Employment** (includes *“any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain”*.), **Sponsorship, Contracts, Land, Licences, Corporate Tenancies, Securities.**

For a full list of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and further Guidance on this matter please see the Guide to the New Code of Conduct and Register of Interests at Members’ conduct guidelines. <http://intranet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/Insite/Elected+members/> or contact Rachel Dunn on (01865) 815279 or [Rachel.dunn@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Rachel.dunn@oxfordshire.gov.uk) for a hard copy of the document.

**If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.**

To: Members of the County Council

## ***Notice of a Meeting of the County Council***

**Tuesday, 5 November 2013 at 10.00 am**

**County Hall, Oxford OX1 1ND**



Joanna Simons  
Chief Executive

October 2013

Contact Officer: **Deborah Miller**  
Tel: (01865) 815384; E-Mail: [deborah.miller@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:deborah.miller@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, notice is given that Items 3, 7 and 12 will be recorded. The purpose of recording proceedings is to provide an *aide-memoire* to assist the clerk of the meeting in the drafting of minutes.

---

***Members are asked to sign the attendance book which will be available in the corridor outside the Council Chamber. A list of members present at the meeting will be compiled from this book.***

***A sandwich Lunch will be provided prior to the briefing by Jim Leivers, Director for Children Education & Families, on 'Child Sexual Exploitation in Oxfordshire: the work of OCC and its partners' at 1.45 pm.***

## **AGENDA**

### **1. Minutes (Pages 1 - 32)**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2013 (**CC1**) and to receive information arising from them.

### **2. Apologies for Absence**

### **3. Declarations of Interest - see guidance note**

Members are reminded that they must declare their interests orally at the meeting and specify (a) the nature of the interest and (b) which items on the agenda are the relevant items. This applies also to items where members have interests by virtue of their membership of a district council in Oxfordshire.

### **4. Official Communications**

### **5. Appointments**

To make any changes to the membership of the Cabinet, scrutiny and other committees on the nomination of political groups.

### **6. Petitions and Public Address**

### **7. Questions with Notice from Members of the Public**

### **8. Questions with Notice from Members of the Council**

### **9. Report of the Cabinet (Pages 33 - 38)**

Report of the Cabinet Meeting held on 15 October 2013 (CC9).

## **MOTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

*WOULD MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY AMENDMENTS TO MOTIONS WITH NOTICE MUST BE PRESENTED TO THE PROPER OFFICER IN WRITING BY 9.00 AM ON THE MONDAY BEFORE THE MEETING*

### **10. Motion From Councillor Bob Johnston**

"This Council notes the impending electrification of much of the County's rail network. Council therefore asks Cabinet to use all possible means to ensure that:

- (i) electrification facilitates the construction of a station at Grove/Wantage;
- (ii) that the freight line to Cowley, is electrified to eliminate the "running of diesels under the wire" elsewhere;
- (iii) proper co-ordination in advance takes place with bus companies and diversion routes planned early to help ease the upheaval caused by alterations to many road bridges all over the County."

## 11. Motion From Councillor Liz Brighthouse

“This Council, mindful of the fact that Oxfordshire has already cut £127m and has in place plans to cut a further £74m from its budget, asks the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government asking them to:

- (a) Consider the impact on services of a further cut of £60m given that the additional cut will have to be made on services which are not statutory and will hit the rising number of vulnerable elderly people and children in all communities.
- (b) Mitigate the damage which these further reductions in expenditure will have on communities across Oxfordshire through the Autumn Statement and the Local Government Finance Settlement by a combination of giving greater local determination to elected councillors in relation to the Council Tax and providing a less onerous settlement to local government.
- (c) Consider In the longer term a new approach to securing the financial stability and sustainability of local government.”

## 12. Motion From Councillor Stewart Lilly

“The County Council notes that the Deputy Prime Minister has found an additional £600 million for school dinners. The County Council feels that the money could be better used by targeting the most needy pupils to year 6 rather than this scatter gun approach.

The County Council is concerned that the funding will not be adequate for Oxfordshire and this could lead to a short fall requiring cuts to other areas of schools budgets such as teaching and learning.

The County Council is also concerned that many rural schools do not have adequate, or even existing facilities and will need capital spending to bring kitchens and dining areas up to the required standard.

The County Council asks the Leader to write to the Deputy Prime minister to confirm that the scheme will be fully funded along with any additional capital expenditure required.”

## 13. Motion From Councillor David Williams

“There is mounting concern as to the likely impact on the environment of Oxfordshire in relation to hydraulic fracturing of natural gas and oil, the system popularly known as ‘fracking’.

The Council considers that the potential scale of environmental damage would place a severe strain on County Environmental services and will have immediate consequences on other County services whilst drilling operations are in hand. Of special concern is the potential release of carcinogenic Radon gas from pockets locked in the Oxfordshire geology.

The County Council is also aware that the release of climate changing gases such as methane and carbon dioxide that will result from the extraction of more fossil fuels will contradict the Councils commitment to moving to a local low carbon economy.

With potential drilling sites all over the County this Council asks its Planning & Regulation Committee to have regard to these concerns in dealing with any application to issue a license to conduct exploratory drilling or to undertake full scale extraction production”.

#### **14. Motion From Councillor David Williams**

“This Council notes with concern the Davies Commission’s invitation for invitations to submit proposals for additional airport capacity within the South East and the potential implications for Oxfordshire.

Oxfordshire County Council is dismayed that a consultation and bids for greater airport capacity is being considered again even though only 3 years ago the Conservative party were arguing that there would be no need for greater capacity in the London area and therefore they would not back expansion at Heathrow. (Conservative Manifesto 2010 General Election)

The Council believes that any airport close to the already existing landing systems of Brize Norton and London Oxford Airport is unnecessary and would ring greater pollution and disturbance to the area.

Such a proposal would run counter to all the County Council’s planning policies to date, meaning dramatic changes to assumptions made for transport, housing, environmental control, and economic planning. All County services would be directly affected from education to adult care to wildlife protection.

Oxfordshire County Council urges Cabinet in any consultation response to resist demands for ever more airport expansion because of the carbon burning consequences such proposals generate and to turn down any proposal for a West Oxfordshire Airport as unsuitable to the needs of the County and the Country as a whole.”

#### **15. Motion From Councillor Kieron Mallon**

“That this Council notes that it is estimated that up to 66,000 women and young girls in the UK have undergone Female Genital Mutilation, of this number 20,000 are under the age of 15. We further note that these procedures have no health benefits and is a harmful traditional practice and an act of violence against women and girls, constitutes a violation of their fundamental rights, particularly the right to personal security, physical and mental health and of their sexual and reproductive health and is an act of child abuse. Such violations can under no circumstances be justified by respect for cultural or religious traditions or initiation ceremonies.

To date, there has not been a single prosecution for this in 28 years within the UK for those responsible for perpetrating this horrific crime as opposed to a more proactive approach in France.

We ask all health and social care professionals in Oxfordshire including midwives, obstetricians, nurses, social workers, community workers, police, Crown Prosecution Service and policy makers to work together to identify women and young girls who are at risk and to work in partnership to take effective action to bring to and end this barbaric practice.”

## **16. Motion From Councillor Susanna Pressel**

“Congestion in Oxford City is getting worse by the day. This has a negative impact on quality of life, health, economic development and many other aspects of life for the people of Oxfordshire and our many visitors.

Given the historic value and compact nature of the City and the constraints on the availability of public sector funds there are limited opportunities to tackle congestion without a adopting a different approach. Council therefore instructs the Cabinet to investigate urgently how we can consult the people of our county on moving towards charging for workplace parking in Oxford City as speedily as possible, and to report back to the next Council meeting on progress towards this.”

## **17. Motion From Councillor Janet Godden**

“This Council notes with concern the inevitable further cuts to essential services in Oxfordshire that will result from the reductions in the revenue budgets imposed by Central Government upon Oxfordshire and other County Councils. This County has to cut a further £61m over the next four years on top of the £201m cut achieved over the past three years.

Council would like assurance that those responsible for this drastic revenue reduction have a full understanding of the local consequences.

Council therefore asks the Leader to invite the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to attend and take questions at an additional ‘Talking Oxfordshire’ event, with a randomly chosen audience from across the County. Council further asks the Leader to invite the parliamentary colleagues of the Secretary of State among the County’s MPs to meet with local members and key workers in their own constituencies for the same purpose.”

This page is intentionally left blank



## OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 10 September 2013 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 3.33 pm.

**Present:**

Councillor Tim Hallchurch MBE – in the Chair

Councillors:

Anne Purse	Anthony Gearing	David Nimmo Smith
Lynda Atkins	Mark Gray	Neil Owen
Jamila Azad	Patrick Greene	Zoé Patrick
David Bartholomew	Pete Handley	Susanna Pressel
Mike Beal	Nick Hards	Laura Price
Maurice Billington	Neville F. Harris	G.A. Reynolds
Liz Brighthouse OBE	Mrs Judith Heathcoat	Alison Rooke
Kevin Bulmer	Hilary Hibbert-Biles	Rodney Rose
Nick Carter	John Howson	Gillian Sanders
Louise Chapman	Ian Hudspeth	John Sanders
Mark Cherry	Bob Johnston	Roz Smith
John Christie	Richard Langridge	Val Smith
Sam Coates	Stewart Lilly	Lawrie Stratford
Yvonne Constance	Lorraine Lindsay-Gale	John Tanner
Surinder Dhesi	Sandy Lovatt	Melinda Tilley
Arash Fatemian	Mark Lygo	Michael Waine
Neil Fawcett	Kieron Mallon	Richard Webber
Jean Fooks	Charles Mathew	David Williams
Mrs C. Fulljames	Caroline Newton	David Wilmshurst

*The Council considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and reports, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.*

### **55/13 MINUTES**

(Agenda Item 1)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 July 2013 were approved and signed.

### **56/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

(Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Godden, Hannaby, Hoare, Phillips and Sibley.

## **57/13 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS**

(Agenda Item 5)

The Chairman reported as follows:

- (1) The death of Rob Evans, who was a County Councillor for the Chipping Norton Division 1997 – 2005, died on Sunday 1 September 2013. Councillors Brighthouse, Patrick and Hibbert-Biles paid tribute to the former County Councillor. The Council then observed a Minute's Silence in his memory;
- (2) Council congratulated Gerry Flahive, Hall Keeper at Speedwell House on attaining a Bachelor Degree in History.

## **58/13 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda Item 6)

### Petition

Mr Peter Emery presented a Petition on behalf of Eynsham Parish Council regarding the collapse of the wall at Conduit Lane requesting that the Cabinet Member with responsibility for that area look into the case as a matter of urgency.

The Chairman received the Petition on behalf of the Council.

### Public Address

Mr Ian Leggett, Chairman of Bike Safe spoke in support of the Motion from Councillor Jean Fooks (Agenda Item 15), requesting that the Council develop a comprehensive County-wide Strategy to which the whole Council was committed; which enjoyed high level leadership and which would be sustained for years to come.

Ms Sue Moon spoke on behalf of the School Bus Action Group regarding Home to School Transport (Agenda Item 18, Motion from Councillor Charles Mathew) outlining 8 recommendations to include in the future consultation on Home to School Transport around cost savings and the effect on children across the County.

## **59/13 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2012/13 OUTTURN**

(Agenda Item 8)

The Council had before them a report by the Assistant Chief Executive & Chief Finance Officer (CC8) which set out the Treasury management activity undertaken in the financial year 2012/13.

**RESOLVED:** (on a motion by Councillor Fatemian, seconded by Councillor Hudspeth and carried nem con) to note the Council's Treasury Management Activity in 2012/13.

**60/13 PARTNERSHIP UPDATE REPORT**

(Agenda Item 9)

The Council had before them a report by the Chief Executive (CC9) which provided an update on all Oxfordshire-wide partnerships.

**RESOLVED:** (on a motion by Councillor Hudspeth, seconded by Councillor Rose and carried nem con) to note the report.

**61/13 COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING DATES 2014/15**

(Agenda Item 10)

The Council had before them a report by the Monitoring Officer (CC10) which set out a schedule of proposed meeting dates for the 2014/15 Council Year.

**RESOLVED:** (on a motion by Councillor Hallchurch, seconded by Councillor Purse and carried nem con) to agree the schedule of meeting dates for the 2014/15 Council Year and to waive Council Procedure Rule 2.1 with regard to the full Council Meeting in July 2014.

**62/13 CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS FOR COUNCILLORS**

(Agenda Item 11)

The Council had before them a report by the County Solicitor & Head of Law & Culture (CC11) which sought Council to agree an approach for Criminal Record Checking for Members of the County Council.

The Chairman made a statement regarding the importance of Criminal Record Checking in the current climate.

Councillor Hallchurch moved and Councillor Purse seconded the recommendations set out in the report and on the face of the Agenda as amended with Council's agreement by Councillor Brighthouse in strikethrough and bold italic:

Council is RECOMMENDED to:

- (a) note that criminal records checks ~~should~~ **will** continue to be made in ~~in~~ **any case** for members of Fostering and Adoption Panels;
- (b) ~~agree the approach for criminal record checking~~ **and** for **all** Councillors. ~~having regard both to the options at paragraph 13 and the Monitoring Officer's comments at paragraph 16 to the report.~~

The motion, as amended in bold italic/strikethrough was put to the vote and it was:-

**RESOLVED:** (nem con) to:

- (a) note that criminal records checks will continue to be made for members of Fostering and Adoption Panels and for all Councillors and for all Councillors..

**63/13 REPORT OF THE CABINET**

(Agenda Item 12)

The Council received the Report of the Cabinet.

**64/13 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

(Agenda Item 13)

The Council had before them a number of questions received with notice from members of the Council (Annex 2 of the Schedule of Business).

26 Questions with notice were asked. Details of the questions and answers and the supplementary questions and answers (where asked) is set out in Annex 1 to the Minutes.

**65/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR KIERON MALLON**

(Agenda Item 14)

Councillor Mallon moved and Councillor Atkins seconded the following Motion:

“This Council recognises that it is important to be accessible to all residents of Oxfordshire either physically or by electronic methods. To avoid wasting taxpayers money on an electronic system that might not prove acceptable, this Council wishes to try a system already in place.

This Council would welcome the opportunity to hold the April Council meeting at Bodicote House and therefore asks the Director for Environment & Economy to conduct a feasibility study into this possibility with a report back to Council with a recommendation in terms of a trial and to consider whether this requires a suspension of the Council Procedure Rules.”

Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and was carried by 43 votes to 13.

**RESOLVED:** (43 votes to 13)

This Council recognises that it is important to be accessible to all residents of Oxfordshire either physically or by electronic methods. To avoid wasting taxpayers money on an electronic system that might not prove acceptable, this Council wishes to try a system already in place.

This Council would welcome the opportunity to hold the April Council meeting at Bodicote House and therefore asks the Director for Environment & Economy to conduct a feasibility study into this possibility with a report back to Council with a recommendation in terms of a trial and to consider whether this requires a suspension of the Council Procedure Rules.

**66/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR JEAN FOOKS**

(Agenda Item 15)

Councillor Fooks moved and Councillor Pressel seconded the following motion as amended with Council's agreement by Councillor Nimmo-Smith in bold italic/strikethrough:

"Council notes that many Oxfordshire roads suffer from congestion, which causes serious delays and inflicts pollution on residents. As one of the best and simplest ways to reduce congestion would be to encourage more cycling to replace car journeys where possible, also bringing health benefits to the cyclists, ~~Council calls upon the Cabinet to consider the following:~~ **Council calls upon the Cabinet to support this aim of encouraging cycling and to consider the following (subject to sufficient finances or funding streams being available or identified):**

- (a) that a high quality bid is submitted every time the government, the EU or other organisations make money available for cycling measures;
- (b) whether to require cycle-friendly measures to be incorporated into all new road schemes and new housing developments;
- (c) whether to draw up and consult on a new Cycling Strategy, to be appended to the LTP, which will work closely with partners (district councils, hospitals, the universities and others) and will have ambitious targets and timescales."

Following debate, the motion as amended was put to the vote and was carried nem con.

**RESOLVED:**

Council notes that many Oxfordshire roads suffer from congestion, which causes serious delays and inflicts pollution on residents. As one of the best and simplest ways to reduce congestion would be to encourage more cycling to replace car journeys where possible, also bringing health benefits to the cyclists, Council calls upon the Cabinet to support this aim of encouraging cycling and to consider the following (subject to sufficient finances or funding streams being available or identified):

- (a) that a high quality bid is submitted every time the government, the EU or other organisations make money available for cycling measures;
- (b) whether to require cycle-friendly measures to be incorporated into all new road schemes and new housing developments;
- (c) whether to draw up and consult on a new Cycling Strategy, to be appended to the LTP, which will work closely with partners (district councils, hospitals, the universities and others) and will have ambitious targets and timescales.

**67/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR JOHN CHRISTIE**

(Agenda Item 16)

Councillor Christie moved and Councillor Price seconded the following motion:

"This Council, in demonstrating its commitment to fulfilling its legal duty to advance Equality of Opportunity under the Equality Act 2010, will respect the use by Councillors of gender neutral and inclusive titles in addressing and referring to those who chair meetings of the Council and its Committees.

Council therefore requests the Monitoring Officer to bring a report back to the next meeting of the Council outlining proposals to amend the Constitution accordingly."

Councillor Patrick moved and Councillor Fawcett seconded the following amendment shown in bold italic:

"This Council, in demonstrating its commitment to fulfilling its legal duty to advance Equality of Opportunity under the Equality Act 2010, will respect the use by Councillors of gender neutral and inclusive titles in addressing and referring to those who chair meetings of the Council and its Committees.

Council therefore requests the Monitoring Officer to bring a report back to the next meeting of the Council outlining proposals to amend the Constitution accordingly;" ***—bearing in mind this should be a matter of personal choice***".

The amendment proposed by Councillor Patrick was put to the vote and was lost by 42 votes to 9.

Following debate, the substantive Motion was put to the vote and was lost by 30 votes to 16, with 8 abstentions.

**RESOLVED:** Accordingly.

**68/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS**

(Agenda Item 17)

Councillor Williams moved and Councillor Coates seconded the following motion:

"Given that youth unemployment is now an extremely serious issue with damaging long term social and personal consequences, Oxfordshire County Council should seek to establish from its suppliers that they have employees drawn from all age cohorts and do not neglect young people.

Numerous themes for contract compliance already exist but the County Council as a part of its financial and budgetary and social responsibility asks the Cabinet to strengthen its commitment to youth employment by considering ways by which the County Council can secure that any

contracting organisation or company has a firm commitment to ensuring a reasonable proportion of the its workforce are under the age of 23. (applicable to all concerns with a workforce of 25 or more) and to seek ways to achieve a performance of at least 5% by those contractors.”

Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and was lost by 52 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.

**RESOLVED:** Accordingly.

**69/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR CHARLES MATHEW**

(Agenda Item 18)

Councillor Mathew moved and Councillor Stratford seconded the following motion:

“This Council will need to make significant further savings in very many areas and directorates, in order to balance the Budget from 2014/5. This Council believes that it is therefore reasonable to review all expenditure, including our Home to School Transport Policy” in achieving this unenviable task.”

Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and was carried by 40 votes to 2, with 11 abstentions.

**RESOLVED:** (40 votes to 2, 11 abstentions)

This Council will need to make significant further savings in very many areas and directorates, in order to balance the Budget from 2014/5. This Council believes that it is therefore reasonable to review all expenditure, including our Home to School Transport Policy” in achieving this unenviable task.

**70/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR STEWART LILLY**

(Agenda Item 19)

Councillor Lilly moved and Councillor Greene seconded the following motion:

“Our highway engineers are always consulted by the district council planning officers regarding the highway implications and views on new planning applications for building and development. Officers usually visit the application site for all major developments, and thereafter submit their report back to the planning authority. Frequently County Council members can come under scrutiny by public & Parish Councils within their wards. It is frequently the case that the local member has not been advised of the officers recommendation until after the event.

This Council requires all highway officers to submit a copy of the email they return to the local relevant planning authority also directly to the local member for that member’s information on all applications. This is easily done by inserting the Councillors email in the "cc" address at the head of our email page. By this simple method of communication, the local elected member is

aware of local issues for which he/she may be confronted or questioned, or may not have previously been aware. Communication is a key part of this Councils directives and effectiveness."

The motion was put to the vote and was carried nem con.

**RESOLVED:** (nem con)

Our highway engineers are always consulted by the district council planning officers regarding the highway implications and views on new planning applications for building and development. Officers usually visit the application site for all major developments, and thereafter submit their report back to the planning authority. Frequently County Council members can come under scrutiny by public & Parish Councils within their wards. It is frequently the case that the local member has not been advised of the officer's recommendation until after the event.

This Council requires all highway officers to submit a copy of the email they return to the local relevant planning authority also directly to the local member for that member's information on all applications. This is easily done by inserting the Councillors email in the "cc" address at the head of our email page. By this simple method of communication, the local elected member is aware of local issues for which he/she may be confronted or questioned, or may not have previously been aware. Communication is a key part of this Councils directives and effectiveness.

### **71/13 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR STEWART LILLY**

(Agenda Item 20)

Councillor Lilly moved and Councillor Howson seconded the following motion as amended with Council's agreement by Councillor Howson in bold italic/strikethrough:

"That the Director for Environment and Economy carries out a full evaluation as to the economic advantages, or otherwise, of installing ~~solar panels~~ **appropriate forms of renewable energy generation such as solar and photo-voltaic panels, heat pumps, ground source heating, and other types of micro-generation schemes as appropriate in order to reduce energy bills and** to create electricity on Council owned/leased properties in an demonstration not only of its green credentials, but in its continuing drive to economise on its electrical consumption and thus drive down costs to the Council wherever possible. A full cost evaluation is then presented to the Cabinet for full debate and decision."

The motion, amended in bold italic/strikethrough was put to the vote and was carried nem con:

**RESOLVED:** (nem con)



That the Director for Environment and Economy carries out a full evaluation as to the economic advantages, or otherwise, of installing appropriate forms of renewable energy generation such as solar and photo-voltaic panels, heat pumps, ground source heating, and other types of micro-generation schemes as appropriate in order to reduce energy bills and to create electricity on Council owned/leased properties in an demonstration not only of its green credentials, but in its continuing drive to economise on its electrical consumption and thus drive down costs to the Council wherever possible. A full cost evaluation is then presented to the Cabinet for full debate and decision.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing .....

This page is intentionally left blank

## 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><b>1. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</b></p> <p>In view of the current guidance from the Secretary of State at paragraph 115 of Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance that:</p> <p><i>“115. The Secretary of State expects that local authorities may wish to exercise this discretionary power to ensure that pupils whose parents had expressed a preference for a vocational education at a 14-19 vocational academy were not denied the opportunity to do so by the lack of, or the cost of transport arrangements to such a school. Local authorities should use this power to facilitate attendance at a vocational academy where the school’s catchment area included all, or part of the local authority’s area. Where such pupils were from low income backgrounds, then such arrangements should be free of charge.”</i></p> <p>Will the new consultation on school transport include a section on transport arrangements to the UTC in Didcot and the Studio School in Banbury?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>The Council's position is to support all types of academies and it would wish to treat equally all schools in the county irrespective of their status. At present the Home to School transport policy does not do this. Schools which have catchment areas confer entitlements to free transport to those living within them irrespective of how far children live from the school (provided, of course, they are over the statutory walking distance away). The Europa Free school uses distances from a number of defined points to determine admissions but, since it doesn't have a defined catchment area, only those children for whom it is the nearest school receive free transport. The University Technical College planned for Didcot plans to use groups of post codes to prioritise admissions; again only those children for whom it is the nearest school would receive free transport from the Council. A policy of providing free transport to only the nearest school would remove this inequality and would obviate the need for the home to school transport policy to treat particular types of academy differently. Of course, if the Secretary of State chooses to issue new statutory guidance which <i>requires</i> the Council to actively discriminate in favour of UTCs and Studio Schools (but not Free Schools, converter and sponsored academies), then the Council would, of course, have due regard to it.</p> <p>The national policy of extending the free transport entitlement to children from low income families so that they can attend any one of the three nearest secondary schools between 2 and 6 miles from home (up to 15 miles in the case of faith schools attended for religious reasons) will continue to apply.</p>

Questions	Answers
	Likewise, where there is no entitlement to free transport, but there are spare seats, the charge for these is waived for children from low income families. A 'nearest school only' policy would also safeguard the Council against incurring additional expenditure through the creation of new academies, including UTCs and studio schools, or through existing academies expanding their catchment areas and conferring increased entitlements to free transport.
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Will the new consultation invite discussion about whether or not there should be any changes following the participation age increase which is going through at present?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes.</p>
<p><b>2. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</b></p> <p>Does the Cabinet member agree with me that it is unreasonable to expect Oxfordshire fire fighters to work until they are 60, to sharply increase their pension contributions and to threaten them with no job and no pension if they become unfit?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR LOUISE CHAPMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR POLICY CO-ORDINATION</b></p> <p>a) We have firefighters within the Service who have worked until they are 60 and only last month an individual retired from Wheatley Fire Station aged 63. The current new firefighters pension scheme already has a normal pension age of 60, but there is no restriction on how long an individual can remain in employment as long as they are capable of undertaking the role safely.</p> <p>b) Pension contributions have been raised in line with the Government Actuary Department report which identified the need to increase contributions to ensure that the scheme remained on a sustainable footing. There has been a phased implementation of these rises to reduce the impact on individuals at all levels of the service.</p> <p>c) All employees have a responsibility to maintain their ability to carry out their role to ensure the safety of the public and their colleagues. If a firefighter fails a fitness test then he/she is given the full support of our occupational health and service fitness advisor. They are given a</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>development programme and advice to assist in them regaining their fitness. If they are unable to maintain their fitness due to a medical issue then the pension scheme still enables them to be awarded an ill health retirement. If however they do not reach an acceptable level due to personal choice then the organisation will progress them through the performance management framework. This is designed to give an individual every opportunity to improve to a level which is acceptable for the safety of themselves, their colleagues and the public. There is a significant loss in both financial terms and experience if a competent firefighter has to leave the job, and the FRS seeks to keep people in their role for as long possible. Whilst the FBU would have you believe this is a new issue due to the pension reforms, we currently have the ability to performance manage an individual if they fail to meet the required standards and we will continue to do so.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Is the Cabinet Member saying that our Fire &amp; Rescue staff should not have the right to hold strike ballots or is she simply saying that they should in no circumstances strike, I am not at all clear?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>The Fire Service is an emergency service and they work tirelessly on our behalf, there is not a person in this room or probably in the County that would say anything against them. Of course everybody has the right to strike, but I can assure you that our firefighters, even if they go on strike, if there was a serious incident in this County they have got the vocation to actually come forward and fight any fire.</p>
<p><b>3. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</b></p> <p>Does the Cabinet member agree that the Fire Brigades Union should never have been forced into calling a ballot of its members, in Oxfordshire and elsewhere, for industrial action and that a negotiated settlement is the best way</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR LOUISE CHAPMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR POLICY CO-ORDINATION</b></p> <p>I fully agree that a negotiated settlement is the best way forward and this is reflected in the announcement from the Fire Minister in making the offer of a working group to the FBU to help to address their concerns over the Pension Reforms. However, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority does not agree with the FBU balloting its members to undertake any form of industrial action</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
forward?	that has the potential to put both the lives and property of the people of Oxfordshire – as well as the lives of any non-striking firefighters – at a heightened risk because of strike action that might ultimately result in a degradation of normal emergency cover arrangements.
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Is the Cabinet Member saying in her final answer that she will not write to the government to ask that this dispute be settled quickly?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I think the answer is in the answer I have already given, Chairman.</p>
<p><b>4. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet member write to Her Majesty's Government expressing this County Council's dismay at this unfair attempt by the Coalition to worsen the pensions of our fire fighters and urging a sensible negotiated settlement?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR LOUISE CHAPMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR POLICY CO-ORDINATION</b></p> <p>The current pension scheme is unsustainable and the Hutton report on Public Service Pensions has identified the need to modernise pensions. The existing benefits earned under the two current schemes are protected for all employees with further protection offered to a majority of employees within the 1992 scheme. The pension reform proposals do offer a new set of benefits but this is still an exceptionally good scheme for our staff. It will result in a pension scheme which will be able to be funded into the future as well as delivering a good level of remuneration when an individual retires from the Service. I refer to my previous answer in that the DCLG have offered a working group to help provide a negotiated solution.</p>
<p><b>5. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>Thanks to the government's failed policy of austerity and benefit cuts, even many people lucky enough to have a job are struggling to cope with increasing poverty. Please can you update us on progress towards firstly paying a living wage to all our staff, and secondly</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>Councillor Pressel seems to have forgotten the reason for the austerity programme is due to 13 years of a failed Labour economic policy racking up £1,000,000,000,000 of debt for the country. The policies include making work pay. The benefit system should be there as a safety net for those that need it. Surely Councillor Presell does not believe it's correct that somebody earns more on benefits than the average wage?</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>ensuring that all our contractors will pay a living wage to all their staff by the time any new contracts are signed? Can we also please write to school governing bodies to explain our policy and to suggest that they may like to adopt a similar policy?</p>	<p>The Council's Remuneration Committee considered the issue of the payment of the Living Wage in November 2012 and received a further report in February 2013. The Committee agreed that further information was needed and asked for research to be carried out around the feasibility and implications of any proposals relating to implementing the Living Wage. This research is continuing and a further report will be presented to the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee consulted Schools Forum, which is the accepted consultative route, and received a verbal report of their views. The majority of costs of implementing the Living Wage would fall to schools' budgets and this was a cause of serious concern to them.</p> <p>The Committee also received information on requiring contractors to implement the Living Wage which showed that most councils who have adopted the Living Wage for their own employees do not require contractors to pay the Living Wage to staff delivering council services under contract, this is the case with Oxford City Council. Legal advice received indicates that the Council could not require contractors to pay the Living Wage to their employees, but could ask them to do so. If a contractor agreed to pay the Living Wage in an offer to us, but submitted a higher priced bid than another contractor, and quality standards did not prove to be a differentiating factor in their favour, the Council would probably not be able to justify awarding the contract solely on the basis that the contractor paid the Living Wage. Clearly, this severely limits the effectiveness of asking contractors to pay the wage.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Firstly why is this taking so long, and secondly Cllr Hudspeth refers to Oxford City Council and what they do is weight the payment of Living Wage heavily in the procurement process so</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>It is very important to know that Oxford City Council do not actually ask all their contractors about the Living Wage because they have never asked us. At the County Council we do employ Living Wage and so therefore that is where I am coming from on that, the fact that Oxford City Council haven't</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>that gives an advantage to good employers who do meet the Living Wage aspiration. In the past year the overwhelming majority has gone to Living Wage contractors and if he does know that could he ensure that the County Council also does that in the procurement process?</p>	<p>asked us the question – do we do it</p>
<p><b>6. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>The Flood Management Strategy was supposed to come to Cabinet in July. Why has it been put back to October?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>The Strategy has been developed in close consultation with the City, Districts, Environment Agency and Thames Water and a draft was circulated for comment and a meeting arranged with all parties to discuss feedback to finalise the document in May 2013. Whilst there was broad agreement with the proposed strategy the feedback from the Environment Agency was that, having simultaneously been involved with several other strategies across the region, there were opportunities for sharing some of the good practice they had identified elsewhere, which would improve the County’s strategy. The working group therefore agreed that this opportunity should be taken to ensure that the document was as finalised as possible prior to consultation. Feedback from the consultation will be taken into account when finalising the Strategy.</p> <p>It should be noted that this is a new responsibility for Lead Flood Authorities and therefore no set template of what should and shouldn’t be included within such a strategy. Whilst Oxfordshire was ahead of many other authorities in developing their strategy the opportunity to share information and ideas to ensure that the strategy was effective as possible was welcomed.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Do people think we have all the time in the world to finalise this, many people in my ward have</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>We had the Flood Management Strategy ready to go in May and then got communications from the Environment Agency asking us to relook at it</p>



<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>been heavily and horribly affected by flooding three times in the last 13 years, please can you develop a sense of urgency?</p>	<p>because they preferred that it was written their way. We could not make that decision ourselves without going back to the districts involved for further talks with them, which we are doing and it is now ready to go to consultation. But this is a direct result of the Environment Agency asking to rewrite that strategy. We could not do anything else but comply with their wishes.</p>
<p><b>7. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>The government promised to introduce superfast broadband to 90% of people in rural areas by May 2015. Will we meet this target in Oxfordshire, and if not, why not?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR NICK CARTER, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS &amp; CUSTOMER SERVICES</b></p> <p>The target is (a) premises, not people, and (b) 90% coverage, not specifically rural.</p> <p>In Oxfordshire, our contract with BT is expected to deliver superfast broadband to *at least* 90% of premises by the end of 2015. As the most rural county in the South-East, this is a considerable achievement given that many counties will not complete until May 2016.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Yes, so what the answer seems to be saying is that the government made a promise and in many counties they are breaking that promise is that correct?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>There seems to be a tendency in some quarters of this chamber to apply personal interpretation on information that is generally somewhat different to that interpretation. The interpretation in this case is that there was ever a date of May 2015 applied to anything of this nature. The date was always the end of 2015 and that is the date we are currently working towards. With other county councils in fact it is worth noting that that date is not achievable and has never been achievable.</p> <p>It is a source of some pride and achievement that we are actually ahead of schedule and that is because of the efforts and initiatives that our officers have taken at every stage of this very tortious procurement process. So I am sure that Cllr Pressel will be delighted to hear that we are on track and actually ahead of schedule.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p><b>8. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>The County Council Cabinet recently agreed to defer the decision regarding home to school transport for further consultation but would it not be better by way of response to this question to announce that the proposed cuts will not take place and that Oxfordshire will be following the example of the Staffordshire County Council who recently decided to withdraw a similar proposal as it was not cost effective, had a severe impact on rural schools and legal issues related to parental choice.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>The original consultation consisted of a number of proposals not all of which were intended to reduce the net amount (currently c.£14.5 million) on home to school transport e.g. a two stage appeals process and using the GB Road Safety guidelines as a consistent framework for assessing the safety of walking routes. Others were explicitly to deliver savings e.g. increased charges for 'concessionary seats' and providing free transport only to the nearest school.</p> <p>Officers are doing further work to identify who/which areas/schools would be affected by the original proposals and more extensive modelling of the potential savings/increases in income which they could deliver.</p> <p>As an area of controllable expenditure it would be wrong to simply ring fence the home to school transport budget when other important Council services are having to identify ways of making savings which could see severe reductions. The Council also needs to ensure that as more schools become academies, and so set their own admissions rules including defining their catchment areas, that it is not exposed to the potential of uncontrolled growth in entitlements to free Home to School Transport.</p> <p>Any changes to the Home to School Transport policy will only be made after a thorough and extensive consultation; the impact on families and communities will be given due consideration when Cabinet considers policy changes.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Could I take it that she is not accepting my invitation to (at this meeting) announce the</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
abandonment of the concept of making massive cuts in the Home to School Transport policy?	
<p><b>9. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member agree that the decision to limit the access to free transport only to the nearest school will mean that effectively this will change the catchment of particular schools especially those in more rural areas?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>No. Catchment areas are used to determine which children will be prioritised for admission to schools when there are more applications than places available. As most secondary schools in Oxfordshire are academies the Council has little and declining say over these as they are set by the relevant academy trusts. One important reason for considering whether to cease to provide free transport to 'catchment' schools when they are not the nearest school is that academies can extend their catchment areas and thereby confer an increased entitlement to free Home to School Transport. Some academies already provide transport to out of catchment children at their/parents' expense; under the current Home to School Transport policy they could pass the financial liability onto the Council by extending their catchment areas.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Would the portfolio holder agree that academies being able to charge for Home to School Transport is actually the thin edge of the wedge as we go towards more and more charges being introduced in the state sector, and if this happens the burden will be shifted ever progressively on to parents and we will have abandoned the idea of universal free education.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I have absolutely no control over what academies do and they can set their own catchment areas.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>10. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Is the Cabinet Member concerned that this move will put a further financial pressure on families at a time of austerity especially considering that Oxfordshire does have pockets of rural deprivation least able to cope with the withdrawal of these services?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>At present most parents who are provided with free Home to School transport only receive this when the school their children attend is their nearest school; a minority of parents are in the advantaged position of receiving free transport to their catchment school as well. The proposal to phase out free transport to catchment schools which are not also the nearest school would not affect any children currently benefiting but would affect some currently in primary schools.</p> <p>Children from low income families are entitled to free transport to any of the three nearest secondary schools between two and six miles from their home; this is a statutory entitlement which would not be affected. In addition, where a child is not entitled to free transport but there are spare seats, these are offered on a concessionary basis upon the payment of a subsidised fare. This fare is waived for children from low incomes and this would continue.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>If this is the case, and some people who are desperately poor will get free Home to School Transport where is the savings? If you have a large section of people who are not affected by this policy why on earth are you pushing it forward? Only one stator of the people will be influenced is that not the case?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>There is £14m spent on Home to School Transport at the moment, my department has to save around £22m. I am not suggesting we save all of that but I am suggesting that in some places parents will have to take their own responsibility and get their own children to school.</p>
<p><b>11. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member also agree that this</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>No. In the previous consultation all schools received an e-mail which drew</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>is being done with a without a full consultation with all school governors, staff and parents?</p>	<p>attention to the consultation which was accessible on the Council's public website. Those schools where the 'nearest school' policy would have the potentially greatest impact were also furnished with a letter to circulate to their parents. The fact that hundreds of responses were received from parents and large numbers of governors and staff, some of whom also addressed Cabinet, demonstrates that the consultation was known about by all who had an interest in the proposed policy changes.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Would it not have been better when you launched the consultation to do that at the beginning of term not during the summer period when schools are winding down?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>No.</p>
<p><b>12. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Is the Cabinet Member aware that reducing the number of school buses will, without doubt, mean more cars on the road and more parents involved in a 'school run' something that can only lead to more congestion, air pollution and parental pressure?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>No. In the previous consultation all schools received an e-mail which drew attention to the consultation which was accessible on the Council's public website. Those schools where the 'nearest school' policy would have the potentially greatest impact were also furnished with a letter to circulate to their parents. The fact that hundreds of responses were received from parents and large numbers of governors and staff, some of whom also addressed Cabinet, demonstrates that the consultation was known about by all who had an interest in the proposed policy changes.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>My question is surely this response does not actually address the question that I have put down. There is no indication of numbers or the consequential impact on the roads of extra cars</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I did ask my own daughter who lives in an area where there are two secondary schools and only one will receive Home to School Transport. I asked her what she would do about it. She said she would organise a school bus from the village to the other one. I think that people will organise their</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>being used by parents for school run.</p>	<p>own buses and I think that schools will organise buses and I think that people will organise their own transport. It isn't necessarily the case that more people will drive their children to school.</p>
<p><b>13. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Would the Leader of the Council give an explanation as to how we get into the ludicrous situation of Atkins Ltd selling their contract to undertake work for the authority and what is the legal liability of their actions for Atkins the sub-contractor and the County Council?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>In February 2013 Atkins PLC announced to the Stock Exchange its' intention to focus its' business on consultancy work and move away from blue collar work such as the highways contract they have with Oxfordshire. The decision whether to allow our contract to be carried out by a different organisation lies solely with the County Council and Cabinet considered that decision on 16 July and decided that in principle this was the best course of action for the authority to protect the quality of highway services to the residents of Oxfordshire. To mitigate any risks associated with this action the County Council have been working with colleagues from other councils' who have contracts with Atkins to ensure appropriate indemnity and legal arrangements are in place both with Atkins Ltd and Skanska. In this way we are ensuring that Oxfordshire County Council and its residents are not impacted on by this change in strategic direction from Atkins PLC. The County Council's legal liability in relation to all this is to ensure that, should the move take place, it is not in breach of any procurement or contract legislation and we have sought legal advice and are taking appropriate actions to ensure that this is the case.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Would the Leader of the Council agree that the Atkins fiasco actually indicates something quite fundamental in the contractualisation of services where a provider suddenly decides that they don't want to do this anymore and throws in the towel? Would you agree that that is a consideration whenever we start to</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>First of all one has got to remember that a business is able to change its policy change and its mind and that is what Atkins have done. They decided that they don't want to be on this end of it. Skanska has come along and seen a contract that they think they can provide good efficient services to, it is still the same contract. Monitoring performance is within that contract. If you look across the Country, Skanska are a good engineering company that are providing services right across the road network.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
contracturalise and have out sourcing of any service for the local authority? Clearly in my own opinion this is a contract that should have been kept in house. Would he give any assurance that these sorts of considerations are taking into account whenever you go to analyse whether a service should be contracturalised.	
<b>14. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b>  Would he confirm that the transfer to another provider will in fact increase the costs?	<b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b>  I can confirm that the transfer to Skanska will not have any increase in costs to the Council.
<b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b>  The Leader of the Council says that there is no extra charge for transferring the contractual obligation to another provider. He would in my opinion be wise to ask this question again next year to see if in fact whether there really has been an increase in the amount that is given to this particular contract?	<b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b>  It won't increase the cost to the Council. It is the same contract, there has been no increase in cost in this contract. We hope that Skanska are going to provide as good a service and if not better service.

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>15. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Clearly with Conservative control there is a strict ideological commitment to privatise and contractualisation of everything but would he agree that in the real world outsourcing of services holds a great deal of risk in terms of continuity of service, maintaining the quality of provision and reducing final costs?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>Conservatives are committed to finding the solution that best delivers services; we examine all options.</p>
<p><b>16. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>In view of this fiasco would the Leader consider keeping the Road Maintenance contract in house and for once forgoing the urge to contractualise and instead have a real analysis of the pros and cons of outsourcing in this area?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>The decision by Atkins PLC has not changed the service delivery position for the County Council, of course, when the contract has run its course we will seek to use the most appropriate delivery mechanism for the service bearing in mind the conditions prevailing at the time.</p>
<p><b>17. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Would he at least give a commitment that he will have deeper analysis of the consequences and risks of giving the contract to Skanska than clearly took place when Atkins were the provider.</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>A detailed analysis of the contractual offer was undertaken as part of the award of the initial contract to Atkins and similar due diligence is being undertaken as part of the current process. It was not possible for us to foresee either change in Chief Executive for Atkins PLC two years after the contract was awarded or that he would wish to change the strategic direction of the company that would have such direct relationship with out contract.</p>



<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>18. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Would the Cabinet member for Education agree with me that ‘School Crossing staff both men and woman provide a vital contribution to children’s safety whilst walking to school especially in the primary sector?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>School crossing staff provide a valuable, and highly valued, service which contributes to the safety of children when crossing roads, particularly when they are not accompanied by their parents.</p>
<p><b>19. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Research conducted by Living Streets shows that in 66% of local authority areas the numbers of school crossing staff helping children safely across the road has been reduced and that this may be a contributory factor in the 63% increase over a year in the number of children killed and seriously injured whilst walking to or from school in the UK.</p> <p>Would the Portfolio holder join with worried parents and give a pledge that the number of Crossing attendants will not be reduced in Oxfordshire and that our children will be safe on the roads?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>Although from the cited research we can also deduce that Authorities around the Country are facing similar to ours budgetary pressures we mustn't forget that it is parents who are predominantly responsible for the safety of their children travelling to and from school when they are not entitled to free Home to School Transport. Even where a School Crossing Patrol is provided, parents remain accountable for ensuring their children’s safety, just as they do when a zebra crossing or pelican crossing is provided. While I can't guarantee that no school crossing patrols will ever be withdrawn, I can however confirm that the implications of so doing will be thoroughly considered before any such decision is made.</p>
<p><b>20. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Could the Cabinet member assure parents that if school crossing staffing is withdrawn from a</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>The current procedure adapted by the Council is for a Road Safety Needs Assessment to be carried out for new school crossing site requests or for</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
school a full risk assessment will have been carried out to confirm that it would be safe to do so?	reappointment of posts that becomes vacant. The assessment follows the Road Safety GB School Crossing Patrol Guidelines as revised in June 2011. These guidelines provide a mechanism of assessing the risk based on the traffic conditions (volume and speed) and the site (width of the road, presence of junctions, parking, and obstructions to visibility), together with the number of school children crossing. This information along with any other relevant factors forms the basis for any decisions regarding future deployment of a school crossing patrol officer.
<b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b>  Would the portfolio holder agree that simply taking vacancies as they arise of school crossing personnel is not really a planned way to doing this because it could quite easily be that the schools which perhaps has the least risk has a person who retires or goes to another job and a vacancy is created. That is not the way to plan something where risk assessment is critical. Would the portfolio holder agree that this process that she has laid out is not the best solution to this particular programme.	<b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b>  No I wouldn't agree.

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>21. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Lastly, if cuts are to be introduced has the Cabinet member thought of accepting sponsorship to underpin the financing of school crossing personnel, a process that other authorities have considered?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>I am open to considering any and all creative approaches which could enhance the safety of children and encourage more of them to walk, cycle or use public transport to travel from home to school. 'Walking buses' are an excellent example of schools and parents taking collective responsibility for the home to school journey which also has significant health benefits for the participating children (and their parents!) A recent study has revealed how few children, particularly girls, participate in the recommended level of physical activity each day so I'd like to see more of them walking and cycling.</p>
<p><b>22. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</b></p> <p>What stance has the County Council taken with regard to the proposed HS2 High Speed rail link that that will pass through Oxfordshire and has the Cabinet Member made any representations to the Government as a result?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>The Council's general approach to HS2 is set out in the Local Transport Plan 2011-2030, Policy PT6: 'Oxfordshire County Council is opposed to the High Speed 2 rail proposals on the grounds of the scheme's business case viability and impact on local communities', and paragraph 11.52: 'With no intermediate stations proposed, the line offers few direct benefits to the county. Oxfordshire County Council is unconvinced about the overall business case for HS2. Therefore we are opposed to HS2. Oxfordshire County Council is particularly concerned about the impacts of the current HS2 proposals on the villages of Newton Purcell and Finmere and will keep under review the potential environmental effect on these areas as the design progresses'.</p> <p>Our on-going position is expressed through our membership of 51m, the group of councils opposed to HS2, although I should point out that Oxfordshire County Council has made no financial contribution towards this group or the legal challenge to the project.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>23. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</b></p> <p>The massive increases at County Council Day Care Centres charges will mean that many of the poorest pensioners will no longer be able to afford to attend. Could the Cabinet member give an indication if the numbers attending have started to decline and how she intends to ensure that the least well off pensioners who generally are in the most need of the services can continue to enjoy the community spirit, activities and life support networks that the Day Centres bring.</p> <p>What is the Cabinet Member doing to ensure charges don't continue to spiral in the near future?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</b></p> <p>The revised charges are being introduced during September. Managers facilitated meetings in each centre with users and family carers throughout July to explain the revised charges and answer questions. Each user received a letter confirming this at the end of July and local managers are able to answer queries and concerns from people on an individual, personal basis.</p> <p>At present there are no indications that people will stop using the centres although a few people did say they may use them for fewer days as the prices increase over the next two years but would review this as and when. So far we have not seen any decrease in use and local managers will be monitoring this closely so that we can respond quickly to anyone who feels they can no longer afford to use the centres. People on the lowest incomes are most likely to already be in receipt of financial assistance through a personal budget and this will continue.</p> <p>There are options whereby if a person who currently pays the charges is assessed as needing the service but the charges are cost prohibitive, and not attending would be particularly detrimental to them, this could be taken into consideration and potentially result in a reduced or waived charge and this would be determined through a financial assessment. Local managers are making sure that anyone who wants to consider a financial assessment is given the information to do so.</p> <p>As local managers are monitoring the situation and know their customers well it is envisaged that they can support continued attendance and refer people for assistance as necessary.</p> <p>The increase in charges reflect the decision made by the Cabinet t in January 2013. This was as follows:</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p><u>Tier 3 Health &amp; Wellbeing Centres</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As of September 2013 introduce increased transport charge of £5 per return journey.</li> <li>2. Phase the implementation of increased attendance charges commencing September 2013.</li> <li>3. As of September 2013 increase charge to £7.50 per person for 5 hours and £4.50 per person for 3 hours.</li> <li>4. As of April 2014 increase charge to £10 per person for 5 hours and £6 per person for 3 hours.</li> <li>5. As of April 2015 increase charge to £15 per person for 5 hours and £9 per person for 3 hours.</li> </ol> <p>There are no plans to increase the charges further.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>I would like to thank the portfolio holder for the answer and it is good to hear that there are no future plans to increase the charges, but at what point will that position be considered again?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>We will be making sure that we keep constant watch on numbers attending centres so it is going to be a review that is taking place all the time.</p>
<p><b>24. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</b></p> <p>Over the past three years County spending on cycling has averaged just half a percentage point of the Highways capital budget. Given the popularity of cycling in Oxfordshire and our duty to encourage sustainable means of transport does the Cabinet Member agree that we should be increasing the amount we spend on cycling</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO-SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>The County Council continues to look for opportunities to improve the conditions for cyclists. With capital budgets continuing to be under pressure, this increases the importance of ensuring that we take the needs of cyclists into account at every opportunity possible. For example, the revamp of the central section of High Street saw improvements for both cyclists and pedestrians; we also took the opportunity whilst re-constructing Iffley Road to remove on-street day time parking between James Street and the Plain so</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
schemes?	<p>that an outbound cycle lane could be introduced. These investments build upon initiatives, such as the introduction of a city-wide 20 mph speed limit in central Oxford, that have helped to improve conditions for cyclists. More recently investment in Old Road and the Slade in Headington, together with the works underway to connect Rippington Drive in New Marston with the Parks cycle route, show our continued commitment to cyclists. I was particularly delighted with our recent success in securing an additional £835,000 of Government funding specifically to deliver substantial improvements for cyclists at the Plain by March 2015.</p> <p>In addition to schemes in Oxford we have also supported the following schemes within the County.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burford Road cycleway, Carterton - £133,000</li> <li>• Cycle parking in Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton, Eynsham, Woodstock and Charlbury - £35,000</li> <li>• Cycle lanes and by-pass as part of Bicester Town centre Access improvements which included transforming a busy through route into a cycle friendly residential street providing direct access to Bicester Town Centre.</li> <li>• Hanwell Fields mineral railway line pedestrian and cycle path</li> <li>• Various cycle maps produced (Bicester, Witney/Carterton)</li> <li>• Cycle lanes on Boston Road, Bicester</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Do the Cabinet agree with me that we should be committing to spending a greater proportion of our overall highways budget to cycling?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>Everything is based on the finances available and the demands on the systems and the benefit from the particular thing in question so I can't really give a yes or no answer.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>25. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>How many 'employees' of Oxford County Council are on zero hour contracts?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>None.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Thank you for the response Cllr Hudspeth saying that there are none and that is a very good thing for the County Council. However would he comment on the fact that in the care homes run by private organisations and largely funded by County Council monies this particular practice of zero hours contract is actually rife. He may be able to say none and hold his head up high for direct employees of the County Council unlike the City Council who have 11 of these people on zero hour contracts.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I would like to speak from a business perspective actually on zero hour contacts, because everybody turns round and says they are awful but actually, when you are running a business, the view you take is employing that next person. Zero hours contracts have the ability for an employer to risk something without putting too much risk to it, by giving an opportunity to someone and if you actually give a zero based contract then it means that you give an indication to the employee how many hours they are going to work. I will take an example of my daughter last year she took a zero based hour's contract on the understanding that it would be 10 hours per week she would be given, she was fine by that. The great thing about it was it mitigates the risk for the employer but do you know how many hours she was actually working – 20 hours per week because they realised what a good worker she was. Be very careful in just saying zero hours are no good because actually they given benefit and opportunity to provide more work for people.</p>
<p><b>26. COUNCILLR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member give an assessment of the likely impact of the enormous rail fare increases recently announced on the County's Transport Strategy? Does he think that commuters and other passengers will continue to pay these rip off prices or does he think it will mean a large scale shift from rail to roads and the consequential congestion and pollution this</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>The rail system in Oxfordshire will continue to benefit from the commitments made by the Government for significant investment: in terms of electrification of the Great Western main line to Paddington, the introduction of new trains, the introduction of new services from Oxford to London Marylebone and Milton Keynes/Bedford. Our forecasts show that, taking into account current Government policy on fare increases, this investment will continue to result in significant growth in the number of passengers. The investment in the rail system will provide Oxfordshire residents and businesses with improved</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>will generate. Oxfordshire has been a prime mover in opening up new rail links. Could the Portfolio holder say if these tremendous increases, well above inflation for the last 10 years, will undermine the viability of these new extensions and proposed new rail lines?</p>	<p>options for travel choice. Over the 10 year period that you describe, successive governments have increased fares by above inflation each year, while over that same period, passenger numbers have more than doubled. On that basis, it does not look as though passengers consider that they are being ripped off, as you put it.</p>



Division(s): N/A

## COUNTY COUNCIL – 5 NOVEMBER 2013

### REPORT OF THE CABINET

#### ***Cabinet Member: Leader***

#### **1. City Deal Strategy Overview**

*(Cabinet 17 September 2013)*

Cabinet considered a report that set out an overview of the City Deal proposal and sought approval for the City Deal Negotiation Document prior to its submission and presentation to the Government.

Cabinet approved the approach and overarching strategy for the City Deal proposal; and agreed the County Council to act as the accountable body for the City Deal proposal.

#### ***Cabinet Member: Deputy Leader***

#### **2. Cabinet Business Monitoring Report – Quarter 1**

*(Cabinet 15 October 2013)*

Cabinet noted a report which provided details of performance for quarter one. The report was required so that Cabinet could monitor the performance of the Council in key service areas and be assured that progress was being made to improve areas where performance was below the expected level.

#### **3. Staffing Report – Quarter 2, 2013**

*(Cabinet 17 September 2013)*

Cabinet noted a report that gave an update on staffing numbers and related activity during the period 1 April 2013 to 30 June 2013. It gave details of the agreed staffing numbers and establishment at 30 June 2013 in terms of Full Time Equivalents. In addition, the report provided information on vacancies and the cost of posts being covered by agency staff.

#### **4. East-West Rail Local Contributions**

*(Cabinet 15 October 2013)*

Cabinet had before them a report which sought agreement to the terms of a formal agreement on local contributions for East-West Rail over a 15-year period from 2014, ahead of Oxfordshire County Council entering into the agreement with Buckinghamshire County Council and the Department for Transport by October 2013.

Cabinet approved the principle of the agreement with Buckinghamshire County Council, with approval of the final agreement being delegated to the Deputy Leader in consultation the Head of Legal Services and the Chief

Finance Officer and approved the local contribution for Oxfordshire County of £11.06m.

**5. Oxfordshire Customer Services (OCS) and Children Education & Families (CEF) Externalisation**  
(Cabinet 15 October 2013)

Cabinet had before them a report which following the completion of soft market testing, updated Cabinet on the outcomes and outlined recommendations for the future direction of Oxfordshire Customer Services (OCS) and Children, Education and Families (CEF) services.

Cabinet approved the recommendations including a major procurement exercise to commence in January 2014; and that ICT should continue as an in-house service with the expectation that work to re-shape ICT will continue and thereby, ultimately, the majority of the service requirements will be commissioned; A Joint Venture is the anticipated direction for schools back office and CEF services but a final position on the conduct of the procurement exercise as it affects schools should be taken in December after there has been an opportunity during the Autumn to shape this with Headteachers, Governors, Schools Forum and other stakeholders. Requirements should include arrangements for school representatives to participate directly in the major procurement exercise to begin in January 2014. Trust options for the future of the Music Service should be considered in consultation with stakeholders during the Autumn with a proposed direction of travel to be considered by Cabinet in December; the remaining in-house delivery to meet the Council's own skills/learning needs should cease and all future requirements should be commissioned as necessary and discussion should be opened now with local Oxfordshire providers first with a view to externalising qualification based learning and to determine the future of the remaining skills and learning provision.

***Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care***

**6. Contributions Policy**  
(Cabinet, 17 September 2013)

Cabinet approved a report seeking approval to the Contributions Policy for Adult Social Care, for implementation with effect from 5 January 2014.

***Cabinet Member for Business and Customer Services***

**7. Revised Space Standards for Schools**  
(Cabinet, 17 September 2013)

Cabinet approved a report that proposed revisions to space standards for the design and construction of new school buildings and subsequent amendments to policy documents (The Primary and Secondary School Briefs).

**Cabinet Member: Children, Education & Families**

**8. Home to School Transport Policy Consultation**

*(Cabinet, 17 September 2013)*

Following the decision of the Cabinet on 16 July to consult again on the possible changes to the Home to School Transport Policy Cabinet approved the proposed consultation process.

**7. Edward Field Nursery School – Proposal to Close and provide alternative early Years provision**

*(Cabinet, 17 September 2013)*

Cabinet approve the closure of Edward Feild Nursery School with effect from 31 December 2013 subject to the following conditions:-

- That a lease for Robin Playgroup's use of the school premises be in place by the Nursery closure date.
- That as long as Edward Feild Primary School remains a maintained school the authority will retain an arbitration role to ensure that the lease remains equitable and sustainable for both parties.
- That any surplus in the Edward Feild Nursery School budget at closure is transferred to the Edward Feild Primary School budget and that the funds be spent to maintain or improve the parts of the premises occupied by or shared with the Robin Playgroup.
- The Nursery is to transfer any resources bought for nursery age children from public funds to Robin Playgroup without charge.

**8. Final Decision on Expansion of Watchfield Primary School to 2 form of entry**

*(Cabinet, 15 October 2013)*

Cabinet approved the permanent expansion of Watchfield Primary School with effect from 1 September 2014.

**9. Financial Contribution towards the University Technical College Project, Didcot**

*(Cabinet, 15 October 2013)*

The Department for Education had approved a proposal to create a 600 place University Technical College in Didcot. Subject to the outcome of a public consultation, which was currently underway, the UTC would serve a large catchment area covering the southern part of Oxfordshire. The UTC would make a substantial contribution towards the additional school places required to meet the needs of a rapidly growing Didcot and it was proposed that the Council make available a site on the Great Western Park development.

Cabinet approved the leasing of 2 hectares to the University Technology College trust; and to make a contribution of up to £2 million towards the construction costs of the University Technology College.

***Cabinet Member: Environment***

**11. Thornhill and Water Eaton Park & Rides – Introduction of Short Term Parking Charges**

*(Cabinet 17 September 2013)*

Cabinet approved proposed service changes to introduce new and to increase existing car park charging to the Thornhill and Water Eaton park & rides scheme after consultation.

Cabinet confirmed the timing of the introduction of charges and agreed to remove the Hospital exemption. Cabinet instructed officers to undertake a review between 6 and 12 months of commencement of charging but agreed that issues that arise in the meantime would be investigated.

**12. Witney Transport Strategy – Phase 1**

*(Cabinet 15 October 2013)*

Cabinet had before them a report which sought agreement to detailed proposals to improve the Ducklington Lane corridor; Phase 1 of the wider Witney Transport Strategy. The scheme formed part of a package of transport infrastructure investment in Witney, identified to relieve congestion and support the planned level of growth. The report also confirmed the outcomes of a public consultation and separate Traffic Regulation Order consultation, and the subsequent changes made to the scheme design following this.

Cabinet noted the responses received as part of the consultation; agreed the proposed changes to the scheme reflected in the revised scheme drawing as well as giving approval to the scheme for detailed design and construction; and delegated powers to the Director for Environment & Economy, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, to make minor amendments to the scheme. Cabinet also asked officers to report back to a future meeting of the Cabinet following implementation of the Ducklington Lane Corridor improvements to assess the impact on congestion.

***Cabinet Member: Finance***

**13. 2012/13 Financial Monitoring & Business Strategy Delivery Report**

*(Cabinet, 17 September and 15 October 2013)*

Cabinet considered two reports that focussed on the delivery of the Directorate Business Strategies which were agreed as part of the Service and Resource Planning Process for 2013/14 – 2016/17. In each report Parts 1 and 2 included projections for revenue, reserves and balances. Capital Programme monitoring was included at Part 3. Changes to Fees and Charges were included in Part 4.

At the September meeting Cabinet approved virements, bad debt write offs and noted the updated Treasury Management lending list. Cabinet also approved changes to the Capital programme, the increase to the Wheatley

River Bridge scheme of £0.550m to be funded from the earmarked reserves of the capital programme and the changes to charges at Hill End Outdoor Education Centre.

Cabinet approved virement requests, the transfer of the Schools Amalgamations Reserve to the Academy Conversion Support Reserve and the creation of the reserve for Job Clubs. Cabinet noted the Treasury Management lending and approved the use of £0.300m revenue funding towards the capital project to increase the provision for 2 year olds. Cabinet also approved changes to the Capital Programme and the full updated Capital Programme including the addition of the Milton Interchange scheme in the Capital Programme.

**14. Service & Resource Planning Report for 2014/15 – 2017/18**  
*(Cabinet, 17 September 2013)*

Cabinet noted the first report in a series on the Service & Resource Planning process for 2014/15 to 2017/18, providing councillors with information on budget issues for 2014/15 and the medium term. The report presented the assumptions on which the existing Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is based, known and potential financial issues for 2014/15 and beyond which impact on the existing MTFP, and approved a process for Service & Resource Planning for 2014/15 including a timetable of events.

**IAN HUDSPETH**  
Leader of the Council

October 2013

This page is intentionally left blank