

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

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

COUNTY COUNCIL - TUESDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2024

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p>1. Minutes</p> <p>To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2024 (CC1) and to receive information arising from them.</p>	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2024 were approved as an accurate record with the following amendment:</p> <p>Item 88/24, 8th paragraph:</p> <p>Councillor Bartholomew asked the Cabinet Member to provide details of the steps being taken to recover debt owed to the County Council referred to in paragraph 110 in the Annex to the Business Management & Monitoring Report - May 2024. Councillor Levy promised to send a written response.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánaigh)</p>
<p>2. Apologies for Absence</p>	<p>Apologies were received from Councillors Banfield, Bennett, Bulmer, Field-Johnson, Graham, van Mierlo, Miller, Povolotsky and Saul.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánaigh)</p>
<p>3. Declarations of Interest - see guidance note</p> <p>Members are reminded that they must declare their interests orally at the meeting and specify (a) the nature of the interest and (b) which items on the agenda are the relevant items. This applies also to items where members have interests by virtue of their membership of a district council in Oxfordshire.</p>	<p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
<p>4. Official Communications</p>	<p>Council noted the announcements published in the Schedule of Business.</p>	

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<i>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA</i>	<i>DECISIONS</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
<p>5. Appointments</p> <p>To make any changes to the membership of scrutiny and other committees on the nomination of political groups and to note any changes to the Cabinet made by the Leader of the Council.</p>	<p>Council approved the following appointments:</p> <p>Councillor Johnston to fill a vacancy on the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel.</p> <p>Councillor Stevens to replace Councillor Roberts on the Planning & Regulation Committee.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánai gh)</p>
<p>6. Petitions and Public Address</p> <p>Members of the public who wish to speak on an item on the agenda at this meeting, or present a petition, can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection. Requests must be submitted no later than 9am one working day before the meeting i.e., 9am on Monday 4 November 2024. Requests to speak should be sent to committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that if the technology fails, then your views can still be taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9am on the day of the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.</p>	<p>Petitions</p> <p>Josie Proctor – City Centre Playground and highway use</p> <p>Niaz Ali – Parking on Hollow Way</p> <p>Linda Elms – Small Businesses</p> <p>Public Address</p> <p><u>Item 13 – Motion by Cllr Gawrysiak Robert Aitken</u></p> <p><u>Item 17 – Motion by Cllr Middleton Linda Ward</u></p>	<p>DEH (P Fermer)</p> <p>DEH (P Fermer)</p> <p>DEP (R Rogers)</p>
<p>7. Questions with Notice from Members of the Public</p>	<p>Three questions were asked. The questions, responses and supplementary questions are recorded in an Annex below.</p>	
<p>8. Questions with Notice from Members of the Council</p>	<p>Twenty seven questions were asked. The questions, responses and supplementary questions are recorded in an Annex below.</p>	
<p>9. Report of the Cabinet</p>	<p>Council received the report of Cabinet.</p>	

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<i>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA</i>	<i>DECISIONS</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
<p>Report from Leader of the Council.</p> <p>The report summarises the decisions from the Cabinet meetings on 17 September and 15 October 2024.</p>		
<p>10. Oxfordshire's Annual Youth Justice Plan 2024-2025</p> <p>Report by Director of Children's Services</p> <p>Youth offending is a statutory and regulated service, and the local authority is required to produce an annual Youth Justice Plan. The local authority leads the provision and delivery of its youth justice service alongside key stakeholder partner organisations in supporting young people who are at risk of entering the youth justice system as well as those who are already in it.</p> <p>The Council is RECOMMENDED to adopt Oxfordshire's Annual Youth Justice Plan 2024-2025.</p>	<p>Recommendation approved unanimously.</p>	<p>DCS (J Sergeant)</p>
<p>11. Calendar of Meetings 2025-26</p> <p>Report by Director of Law & Governance</p> <p>The calendar of meetings for each civic year is presented to Council for approval.</p> <p>COUNCIL IS RECOMMENDED to approve the calendar of meetings for the 2025-26 Council year attached to the report as Annex 1.</p>	<p>Recommendation approved unanimously.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánai gh)</p>
<p>12. Appointment of Independent Persons</p> <p>Report of the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>The Council must seek the views of an Independent Person, and take them into account, before making its decision on any</p>	<p>Recommendations approved with 51 votes in favour, 1 abstention and no votes against.</p>	<p>DLG (A Bradley)</p>

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<i>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA</i>	<i>DECISIONS</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
<p>allegation investigated under the Member Code of Conduct and other disciplinary processes as outlined in the report.</p> <p>Council is RECOMMENDED</p> <p>a) To appoint Mr Nicholas Holt-Kentwell and Mr Andrew Mills-Hicks as Independent Persons for Oxfordshire County Council from 1 December 2024 to 30 November 2026. The appointments may be renewed once for a period of two years.</p> <p>b) To thank Mr Martyn Hocking for his service to the Council as an Independent Person from 14 July 2020 until 30 November 2024.</p>		
<p>13. Motion by Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak</p> <p>In December Oxfordshire County Council removed seven beds from the Chiltern care home without any consultation with the GP's, Henley Town Council or the community of South Oxfordshire. This lack of consultation by the Council is unacceptable and must not be repeated.</p> <p>These beds were originally provided as 'NHS beds'.</p> <p>Following FOI requests to the Integrated Care Board Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire Berkshire West (ICB BOB) and the Council, it has been established that these beds are NHS beds funded by the ICB, this Council and the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust. They should not therefore have been closed without full and proper public consultation.</p> <p>Dr Broughton interim Chief Executive of the ICB BOB states 28th February 2024 "The beds have not 'lost NHS funding',</p>	<p>The motion was carried with 52 votes in favour; 0 against and 0 abstentions.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánai gh)</p>

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<p>“The beds continued to be overseen by the Oxford University Hospital Hub team.”</p> <p>These beds are therefore NHS beds which cannot be removed without consultation.</p> <p>This Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deplores the beds’ removal without said consultation. 2. Believes that a full and objective account as to why these beds, which serve a population of 140,000 of South Oxfordshire, were removed and what replacement measures have since been taken. <p>This Council requests that Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Asks partners to seek to account for the reasons why the seven Chiltern Court Beds serving South Oxfordshire cannot be reinstated, bearing in mind the new measures that have since been in place and, in the absence of such an account, take steps to reinstate them. 4. Conduct all necessary public consultations. <p><i>Note: The motion constitutes the exercise of an executive function and will be referred to the Cabinet together with any advice the Council may wish to give, in accordance with Rule 13.5.1 (i) of the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution.</i></p>		
<p>14. Motion by Councillor Eddie Reeves</p> <p>This Council notes the government’s decision to means-test Winter Fuel Payments (WFPs). Age UK estimates that</p>	<p>The amendment proposed by Councillor Baines and seconded by Councillor Enright was lost with 13 votes in favour, 37 against and 1 abstention.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánai gh)</p>

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RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA	DECISIONS	ACTION
<p>such changes could hit 2 million people across the country, some of whom badly need the money to stay warm this winter.</p> <p>This Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request that the Cabinet requests a report from officers with proposals for promoting a District awareness campaign working with our local NHS partners, Parish Councils and charitable, civic and religious groups, to encourage elderly residents who are eligible for means-tested benefits such as Pension Credit to register and claim them to ensure that they continue to receive WFPs this Winter and that those in need are sign-posted to the continuing Household Support Fund; 2. Request that the Leader of the Council writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, urging an impact assessment of the government's decision to means test WFPs and asking HM Treasury to examine transitional measures to ensure that vulnerable pensioners, particularly those who are eligible for, but who do not – or cannot – claim, other benefits under current thresholds, are protected from fuel poverty. 3. Request that the Cabinet reprioritises monies within the Council's budget for 2024/5 held within the Budget Priority Reserve and/or within other relevant contingency funds or reserves, with a view to establishing an Oxfordshire Winter Fuel Payment Protection Fund, akin to the Oxfordshire Resident Support Scheme, to ensure that pensioners who are in genuine hardship, but who are not eligible for other government support, are helped through the Winter. <p><i>Note: The motion constitutes the exercise of an executive function and will be referred to the Cabinet together with any</i></p>	<p>The amendment proposed by Councillor Levy and seconded by Councillor Ley was accepted by the proposer and seconder of the original motion and by Council.</p> <p>The motion as amended was carried with 35 votes in favour, 13 against and no abstentions.</p> <p>This Council notes the government's decision to means-test Winter Fuel Payments (WFPs). Age UK estimates that such changes could affect hit 2 million people across the country, some of whom may badly need the money to stay warm this winter.</p> <p>This Council resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request that the Cabinet requests a report from officers with proposals for promoting a District awareness campaign working with our local works with NHS, District Councils, partners, Parish Councils and charitable, civic and religious groups, to promote the full range of available support for low-income pensioners, including the Resident Support Scheme (RSS) and Better Housing Better Health. encourage elderly residents who are eligible for means-tested benefits such as Pension Credit to register and claim them to ensure that they continue to receive WFPs this Winter and that those in need are sign-posted to the continuing Recent Household Support Fund allocations have enabled these programs to expand and directly assist pensioners impacted by WFP changes, with libraries participating in the Warm Spaces initiative positioned for outreach to high-footfall pensioner areas. 	

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<i>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA</i>	<i>DECISIONS</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
<p><i>advice the Council may wish to give, in accordance with Rule 13.5.1 (i) of the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution.</i></p>	<p>2. Request that the Leader of the Council writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, urging calling for an impact assessment and transitional measures for pensioners affected by of the government's decision to means testing WFPs and asking HM Treasury to examine transitional measures to ensure that vulnerable pensioners, particularly those who are eligible for, but who do not — or cannot — claim, other benefits under current thresholds, are protected from fuel poverty. This outreach should address barriers to Pension Credit access and advocate for simplified application processes to ensure equitable access.</p> <p>3. Request that the Cabinet to include addressing fuel poverty among low-income pensioners in the priorities of the council when allocating resources, for example using the Household Support Fund. Priority should be given to strengthening existing high-demand support programs and partnerships to maximize local resources. reprioritises monies within the Council's budget for 2024/5 held within the Budget Priority Reserve and/or within other relevant contingency funds or reserves, with a view to establishing an Oxfordshire Winter Fuel Payment Protection Fund, akin to the Oxfordshire Resident Support Scheme, to ensure that pensioners who are in genuine hardship, but who are not eligible for other government support, are helped through the Winter.</p>	
<p>15. Motion by Councillor Mark Cherry Council requests Cabinet to consider</p>	<p>The motion was carried with 45 votes in favour, no votes against and no abstentions.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhánai gh)</p>

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<i>RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AGENDA</i>	<i>DECISIONS</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
<p>approving the Councils for Fair Tax declaration.</p> <p>This commits Councils to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead by example and demonstrate good practice in our tax conduct, right across our activities. • Ensure IR35 is implemented robustly and contract workers pay a fair share of employment taxes. • Not use offshore vehicles for the purchase of land and property, especially where this leads to reduced payments of stamp duty. • Undertake due diligence to ensure that not-for-profit structures are not being used inappropriately by suppliers as an artificial device to reduce the payment of tax and business rates. • Demand clarity on the ultimate beneficial ownership of suppliers, UK and overseas, and their consolidated profit & loss position, given lack of clarity could be strong indicators of poor financial probity and weak financial standing. • Promote Fair Tax Mark certification especially for any business in which we have a significant stake and where corporation tax is due. • Support Fair Tax Week events in the area, and celebrate the tax contribution made by responsible businesses that are proud to promote responsible tax conduct and pay their fair share of corporation tax. <p>Council also requests the Leader of the Council to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer supporting calls for urgent reform of UK procurement law to enable local authorities to better penalise poor tax conduct and reward good tax</p>		

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<p>conduct through their procurement policies.</p> <p><i>Note: The motion constitutes the exercise of an executive function and will be referred to the Cabinet together with any advice the Council may wish to give, in accordance with Rule 13.5.1 (i) of the Council Procedure Rules in the Constitution.</i></p>		
<p>16.Motion by Councillor Jane Hanna</p> <p>This Council notes that Oxfordshire's High Needs Block deficit is estimated to be £21.3 million for 2023/24, while across England the deficit totals £3.16 billion. The statutory override currently in place allows local authorities to temporarily hold this debt off their balance sheets but this measure only delays addressing a growing financial crisis.</p> <p>The reasons behind the High Needs Block deficit are complex and reflect deep, systemic issues within the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) system. It is unrealistic to expect local authorities to manage such significant deficits in a short time frame without reform of the SEND system and baseline funding increases.</p> <p>Current SEND funding is based on outdated need due to an inadequate funding formula. Education Health Care Plans have risen from 3000 in 2014 to more than 7000 in 2024. Without reform, if the statutory override were to be removed, a quarter of local authorities would be insolvent within one year and another quarter within three years.</p> <p>This Council requests that the Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Education to seek urgent clarity on the government's long-term plan for</p>	<p>The amendment proposed by Councillor Baines and seconded by Councillor Brighouse was lost with 13 votes in favour, 29 against and no abstentions.</p> <p>The motion was carried with 28 votes in favour, 14 against and no abstentions.</p>	<p>DLG (C O Caomhánai gh)</p>

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addressing the High Needs Block deficit. Council recommends that the letter should call for reform of the SEND system to ensure it is fit for purpose and provide appropriate baseline funding to ensure local authorities can sustainably manage their financial responsibilities without resorting to temporary fixes.		
17 to 20. Motions by Members	The time being 3.30 pm, these Motions were considered dropped in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2.	

Questions from Members of the Public

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

<p>1. ROBIN TUCKER</p> <p>What is the value of damage caused to transport infrastructure by vehicle damage in the last full year, and how much of this is reclaimed from the driver/rider or their insurance company (ideally split by road user type)?</p> <p>For clarification, I am not seeking information about ‘wear and tear’ but about damage to infrastructure, from bridges to traffic lights, damaged by collision. For example, I have been made aware of at least one case where the Council reclaimed money for repair of a bridge from a driver’s insurance company, after they crashed into the parapet.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>From April 1st 2023 to March 31st 2024, it was £64,550.00. The incidents are not split between road user type.</p>
<p>2. RICHARD PARNHAM</p> <p>Does Oxfordshire County Council believe it would be useful for the forthcoming ZEZ expansion consultation to clearly set out, for the benefit of those completing the consultation a) details of officially recorded NO2 pollution levels inside the proposed ZEZ expansion area and b) any emergent findings regarding the likely impact of the bus electrification on NO2 pollution levels inside the proposed ZEZ expansion area?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</p> <p>Sufficient information, including relevant baseline data, will be provided to enable people to participate meaningfully in the ZEZ consultation.</p> <p>ANSWER:</p>



<p>SUPPLEMENTARY:</p> <p>Does Oxfordshire County Council currently anticipate consulting on Oxford's ZEZ expansion during the first or second half of 2025?</p>	<p>Thank you. As far as I know, it is planned to be in the second half of 2025. So, yes, that should be in line with the latest verified results of the NO2 in 2024.</p>
<p>3. PETER WEST</p> <p>Could you please advise whether all of the proposed traffic filters are in place and ready for operation / the time it will take to activate the traffic filters after the completion of the bridge works and the Botley Road is re-opened?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The infrastructure works at the filter locations have been substantially completed, except for the cameras and signage, at five of the six locations. Whilst some works have been completed at the Marston Ferry Road, the main carriageway works and signage is yet to be undertaken.</p> <p>The software system to manage permit applications etc is substantially complete. Extensive testing of the integration between the software system and ANPR systems has been conducted. Further testing will be carried out once the ANPR cameras are installed.</p> <p>The remaining works on both elements have been paused until there is more information about the re-opening of Botley Road. The council is currently waiting for Network Rail to confirm when their works will be completed and Botley Road will be re-opened. Only then can we re-engage with the supply chain and reschedule the remaining elements.</p>

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.

1. COUNCILLOR STEFAN GAWRYSIAK

In May 2022, the Horsbridge at Marsh lock was shut because it was dangerous. For 2 years the Environment Agency (EA) argued that they did not own the bridge, wasting time. Now they accept ownership of the bridge and will have to repair the bridge at a cost of £1.3 million.

Currently, the EA are foot dragging such that this repair will not be complete until 2027, some 5 years after it was shut. This has resulted in a 5-mile detour for a bridge that is 500m long.

Cllr Sudbury will you:

1. Put pressure on the EA to get a move on.
2. Refuse to renew the footpath closure so it forces the EA to come up with a temporary or permanent fix.

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

Marsh Bridge has been closed since May 2022 after numerous structural defects were found. The Environment Agency (EA) has acknowledged ownership and is currently exploring funding options for future repairs. Our public rights of way team have been keeping the pressure on the EA to undertake the repair, as have the Thames Path National Trail partnership of which we are part, and many individuals. This appears to be a challenging funding issue for the EA. However, I can confirm that Cllr Freddie van Mierlo MP is following this up with the Parliamentary Under Secretary for DEFRA and the EA and I will ask that he also emphasises the concerns of the council and the Thames Path National Trail partnership.

With regard to the TTRO as the path is unsafe it must be closed and that means that a TTRO must be in place.



2. COUNCILLOR STEFAN GAWRYSIAK

Our current budget of £30 million to repair all of Oxfordshire roads is clearly inadequate. It is one of the topics that is uppermost in the minds of residents.

In the new budget for the next fiscal year, what is the Cabinet Portfolio holder proposing as a budget figure to solve these problems?

COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

The DfT grant settlement is unknown, as well as the fact previous grants were about 60% less than what we need to maintain a steady state; I can confirm that decisions around grant assumptions and additional funding will be discussed and agreed through the budget setting process.

3. COUNCILLOR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW

At the all-member Budget briefing on 14th October, much prominence was given to a market research engagement exercise with 30 school children.

What did it cost the Council to ask these children how they would like to spend Council-Taxpayers' money?

COUNCILLOR NEIL FAWCETT, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES

To support the 25/26 budget and 2024-28 business planning, council officers are delivering a three-phase approach to engagement and consultation. This includes seeking the views of adults, stakeholders, and children and young people:

- Phase one: an independent representative residents' survey with adults, which took place between May and July.**
- Phase two: an online budget simulator tool over the summer that was widely promoted to adults and piloted with children and young people. Four in-person engagement events held with children and young people.**
- Phase three: a consultation will take place in November-December on the substance of the council's budget proposals.**

In total, 64 children and young people have had their say so far. This was through two day-long sounding boards with school aged children, focus groups and through a pilot of the budget simulator which we hope to roll out more widely to all secondary schools in future years. These exercises were multifaceted and included: engaging young people in citizenship conversations including how the council and local politics work and



SUPPLEMENTARY:

You say that overall spending on their participation was £1660 plus staff time. Can you give me an indication of how many staff were involved and how much they spent on it?

specifically informing them about its budget, services and strategic priorities; helping young people to understand more about money management; as well as seeking their direct feedback to inform business planning the budget setting. Overall spending on their participation has totalled £1,660, plus staff time.

The engagement we are doing around budget and business planning forms part of our commitment to youth engagement and future generations. Following a [motion](#) passed by council “Council believes that it is vital to consider the wellbeing of Future Generations in all decision-making in the Council”, Cabinet agreed to the [principle of future generations](#), and the mission statement that sets the direction of Oxfordshire County Council’s work in this space. Supporting this mission statement is a work programme which follows two phases, including in phase one (short term actions) a focus on youth engagement with local democracy.

In line with that motion, Cabinet firmly believes this youth engagement should include seeking the views of children and young people to inform business planning and budget setting. This will help us understand the extent to which young people may have different views or priorities from the general population. It is of course up to the Cabinet, and the whole Council when it makes the budget, to decide how much it takes these views into account when the actual decisions are made.

ANSWER:

I can’t because the project was run as one project and the time and effort it would take to calculate the small number of hours that were specifically spent on the youth engagement part of it was so small that it wouldn’t be worth the time or effort analysing it.



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

Please list the items of discretionary expenditure that the administration has invested in since the last countywide election, including in-year reallocation(s) of budget headings for the financial year 2021/2 and those from the financial year 2022/3 to date.

SUPPLEMENTARY:

I wonder what 3 items of discretionary spending he is most proud of over the last 3 and ½ years?

COUNCILLOR DAN LEVY, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE

The information requested regarding the discretionary expenditure can be obtained from the published budget reports, (22/23 and 23/24 attached), with the current year 24/25 available on the public website <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council/about-your-council/plans-performance-and-policies/financial-plans>. The in-year reallocation of budget headings for 2021/2 and from 2022/23 to date, will be included in reporting of virements that is contained in the finance annexes of the routine Business and Budget Management reports. The information requested has been sent over and can be sent to other councillors at their request.

ANSWER:

It is an interesting question. I think that this Council does an awful lot of good things that it is not statutorily obliged to do, although the bulk of our expenditure clearly does go on statutory measures. At the moment, I am particularly pleased with the way that our public health team and others are responding to the crisis in the finances of individuals and I believe we will talk about that with your motion later on.

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

Does the Cabinet Member agree with well-known hospitality entrepreneur, Mr Clinton Pugh, that he has been forced to sell Café Coco after 31 years of successful trade owing to this Council's "ill thought-out traffic calming disaster", "1.5 miles of road closures", "removal of 600 parking spaces" and "no buses from the park and ride"; and, if not, why not?

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

It is not for me to comment on individual businesses. However, Mr Pugh explicitly stated in an interview given on 8 October 2019 that his decision was taken some time before the traffic policies introduced in East Oxford by the previous Tory administration and Tory government and the current administration:

"... But while it's been a lot of fun, it's time to retire.

"I don't want to think about restaurants anymore. It's a seven day a week job



so I'm going to put them on the market... I'm looking at it as a positive thing, but having reached the ripe old age of 61, I really want to get to 65 without running restaurants... Because it does take a lot out of you, and maintaining that energy seven days a week, well I think I've done my time. It's time to retire."

The purpose of our transport strategy is build on the initiatives of the previous Tory administration in order to make Oxford accessible, attractive, and sustainable. We therefore expect our plans to improve the city's economic performance, not worsen it. In many parts of the city, a minority of visitors arrive by car (in the city centre fewer than 10%), so improving access by non-car modes should lead to greater economic benefit than improving access for cars.

Business performance will always be influenced by a wide variety of factors. The high street is constantly evolving and at a faster rate than perhaps there has ever been, most likely due to rapidly changing consumer habits and the COVID-19 pandemic including wider trends in consumer preferences. There will be many and varied factors that will impact on a specific business in question; cost of living challenges, energy prices and changing consumer habits such as internet shopping, home delivery, and switching to more sustainable brands to name just a few. Indeed, the biggest issue often cited by large and small retailers alike, is the outdated business rates regime. The data to make a causal link between specific transport policies and the performance of individual business simply does not exist, either in Oxford or anywhere else.

In actual fact, raw data on St Clement's and Cowley Road show an increase in footfall from 2019 (pre-LTN and COVID-19) to 2023/24 (post LTN and COVID-19). Furthermore, [reports](#) show that Oxford has weathered the economic impacts somewhat better than [other UK cities](#). Whilst this cannot be solely attributable to the transport strategy, it is certainly not putting people off. Indeed, countless studies have shown that if you create urban areas that prioritise people over cars, it builds vibrant, liveable, and sustainable communities.



SUPPLEMENTARY:

I wonder whether he thinks that businesses, small businesses in particular, have had an adequate voice during this Council term in connection with his policy area, and would he agree with me that it is high time now for a congestion commission so that businesses, our universities and public sector organizations can have a say on traffic policy in this city?

Turning to access from Park & Rides - Three of the city's five Park & Ride sites (Thornhill, Redbridge and Seacourt) have direct connections to St Clements, a short walk from Café Coco. The connection to Seacourt currently requires an interchange at Oxford station/Osney Island due to the Botley Road closure but will be restored to a direct link once the Botley Road reopens. Improvements to Park and Ride and bus access to east Oxford and Cowley Road are part of our transport strategy and will be supported by the trial traffic filters.

ANSWER:

We can always do better in engaging with all sectors and I'm very happy to undertake to continue our efforts to do that in relation to the business sector. In terms of a congestion commission, that is an idea that Cllr Reeves has put forward before and I understand that it is the subject of a motion later on this agenda and if we reach it, we will debate it.

6. COUNCILLOR EDDIE REEVES, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Will the Leader agree to appoint a Small Business Champion to ensure that the voice of businesses across Oxford and the wider county are heard and, given the fact that we have been unable to debate this issue by way of a motion for several months now, will she undertake to do so quickly?

SUPPLEMENTARY:

Is the Leader kicking the can down the road on appointing a Small Business Champion? She

COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN, LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL

We recognise the important contribution that small businesses make to the economy of the county. The County Council has recently taken on responsibility for LEP functions and is reviewing the structure of OxLEP going forwards, as part of that exercise we will make sure that the voice of SMEs is represented. We will consider appointing a small business champion once that work is completed.

ANSWER:

The question, as far as I'm concerned, is what is a small business champion going to do? I think that is best addressed as part of what we're going to be



<p>can self-evidently do so now under the Constitution. She seems to be saying that she won't. Will she or will she not and if so, when?</p>	<p>doing with OxLEP, which as you know, we are looking at and which will be coming to Cabinet very soon in terms of what the structure of the organization, now that it is part of the County Council. Speaking as someone who has run a small business for the last 30 years, I recognise the contribution that small businesses make to the economy, not just to this county but this country. It is very important that the voices of small businesses are heard, not just in Oxford city, but across the county, particularly for our market towns. It will be something that we look at as part of our strategy for OxLEP and we will decide what we want to do about that in terms of how we support those businesses when that strategy has been decided.</p>
<p>7. COUNCILLOR GLYNIS PHILLIPS</p> <p>The safety of the users of the Barton Park Junction remains a concern. At the last Council meeting, the Cabinet Member advised that depending on the suitability of the site that the installation of a speed camera would be installed in the first half of 2025.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member advise whether there is a further update on the date when the speed camera can be installed?</p> <p>SUPPLEMENTARY:</p> <p>I would like you to commit to contacting Thames Valley Police and impress upon them the urgency of installing this speed camera.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>We understand from Thames Valley Police, subject to the final detailed technical viability assessment, that it is hoped a combined redlight and speed camera will be installed and operational from mid-2025.</p> <p>ANSWER:</p> <p>I'm very happy to make that commitment and I have already done so. I'd like to thank the Councillor for her continued work on behalf of her residents of Barton Park. They are living in an extremely unsatisfactory situation which was not of this Council's making and we are doing our best to remedy it.</p>



8. COUNCILLOR GLYNIS PHILLIPS

The Bayswater Road junction in Barton onto the Headington roundabout is the only junction without traffic lights. This results in long tail backs of traffic at peak times and drivers having to make a stressful decision about when it's safe to cross the roundabout. This remains an ongoing issue for residents.

Will the Cabinet Member for Transport Management correct this oversight and install traffic lights at this junction?

SUPPLEMENTARY:

Can the Cabinet Member ask officers to change the sequence on the signal junctions to allow more time to exit from the Bayswater Road junction?

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

The signalisation of the Bayswater Road entry to the A40 Headington Roundabout will be carried out as part of the off-site works for the planned Land North of Bayswater Brook residential development.

ANSWER:

I'm very happy to ask that question and no doubt I will get an extremely detailed technical answer about traffic light phasing and traffic flows, which I'll be happy to share with the Councillor.

9. COUNCILLOR IMADE EDOSOMWAN

In my division (The Leys), there are ongoing problems with potholes. A few days after repair the patch deteriorates, and the pothole is back. How much does this cost the Council and what action will you take to get contractors to use a process that prevents this?

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

ODS maintain the unclassified roads in Oxford under the section 42 agreement.

They have informed us that the roads are failing at the bus stops due to the substructure and makeup of the pavement layer. The carriageways were built around 40 years ago and are not designed to take the volume of vehicles especially large LGV axle weights. The roads mentioned are both on major bus route through the Blackbird leys estate, which doesn't help the cause.



ODS have a bus stop reconstruction program to resolve these issues if funding can be provided. There are no additional funds available for this year's programme but will be submitting the bus stop reconstruction programme in the 25 -26 bid, so hopefully funding can be found in that fiscal year. We do have a duty to make safe hence why we are doing localise repairs but unfortunately until the full depth reconstruction is carried out, we will always have issues doing a permeant repair at these locations. The only option we have at present, until funding is found is to keep make the areas safe with minor patching.

10. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY

Can I draw the Cabinet Member for Transport Management, Cllr Andrew Gant, to the flooding at BoxHedge Road West, adding this to drainage problems at the Fairway Road (by the bus stop), Warwick Road in Banbury Ruscote.

I ask the question: have Oxfordshire County Council, in conjunction with Thames Water, the capacity to resolve the storm drainage clearance inquiry? It seems that the Council hasn't the capability or contractors to schedule regular highways maintenance storm drainage clearance and as a consequence, has to rely on the general public and local councillors to report specific issues in the hope this will progress the matter.

SUPPLEMENTARY:

Would the Cabinet Member agree that a more

COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

Oxfordshire County Council are aware of the issues at the bus stop at Fairway Road/Warwick Road. The particular issue at this location is due to a combined Thames Water surface water sewer drainage system which is under capacity. TWU are aware of this matter and have been chased, however, unfortunately OCC has no jurisdiction over this system but will continue to work with TWU to resolve the problem.

Gully emptying is carried out using a risk-based approach with attention given to those areas with a higher risk of flooding. FixMyStreet is used to report all matters in relation to highway issues and the information given is used not only to carry out repairs within a given timescale, but also to pinpoint areas where problems are 'grouped', such as large amounts of potholes, or blocked drainage. This allows staff to pro-actively attend these areas to assess the problem and therefore inform future programs of work.

ANSWER:

We can always do more and you won't be surprised to know that it will form a significant part in budget discussions, not least due to changes in our climate



<p>proactive approach to road gully clearances is needed, even with a deep-dive, as quite rightly, constituents are not happy with the situation.</p>	<p>and our weather. On a deep-dive, I wasn't sure whether you were referring to a constitutional one by a scrutiny committee or a literal one by a Cabinet Member, but either way, I'd be happy to look into it.</p>
<p>11. COUNCILLOR TRISH ELPHINSTONE</p> <p>The increase in frequency for the 3A bus service has been deferred until after the bus filters are implemented. This increase in service has been paid for from S106 money from Oxford Science Park and Armstrong Road developments. Littlemore residents need this service as soon as possible. Can you explain why the service can't be implemented in October as promised?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The changes to services 3A and 5A cannot be made in advance of the Botley Road reopening and hence the traffic filter trial scheme introduction.</p> <p>For service 3A, this depends on service X40 being re-routed onto Abingdon Road (which is currently not possible due to knock-on impacts from the Botley Road closure). Service 5A cannot commence because it will be operationally linked to current service 4A and will operate via Botley Road.</p> <p>The economics of both service improvements also depend on improved journey times arising from the traffic filter trial scheme.</p>
<p>12. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Please can we have more RTPIUs on at least our busier bus shelters? The City Council is about to install a lot of new ones, which certainly need this facility.</p> <p>SUPPLEMENTARY:</p> <p>I'm sorry about the acronym – it stands for Real Time Passenger Information Unit. I hope that</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>We have been assisting the City Council in a technical and evaluation capacity for the retendering of their bus shelter contract and await the conclusion of the process. We understand that there is a programme to update life-expired assets and provide additional units for the shelters on the railway forecourt (both from existing sources of funding), however there's no immediate plans to add any others at this time. We have noted this suggestion and should any further sources of funding become available, they'll be considered alongside others.</p> <p>ANSWER:</p> <p>I certainly agree with the Councillor's assessment on the usefulness of this</p>



<p>the Cabinet Member will agree to use lots of SIL money to put new real time information in bus shelters that don't have it already and the City Council has now signed that contract so there is nothing to stop us from going for this.</p>	<p>technology and I'm certainly happy to take that suggestion away. It is not for me to commit to spending SIL money here and now, but we will see.</p>
<p>13. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Car club cars are a proven way of reducing the number of cars on our streets. What are we doing to encourage more of them in the county, preferably electric ones?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Car clubs – and in particular electric car clubs – are recognised as being an effective way of helping reduce private car ownership, supporting a modal shift towards active and public transport and reducing congestion. EV car clubs also increase social equity as they provide more people with an affordable way to access electric vehicles.</p> <p>Oxfordshire's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP5) contains a policy on car clubs which states that 'We will support the provision of zero emission shared cars and car clubs, in combination with other measures, to reduce the dominance of private motor vehicles and create a more balanced transport network. This will include working proactively to encourage zero emission shared cars and car clubs in rural areas, smaller towns and villages.'</p> <p>So far, Oxfordshire County Council has worked with District (and City) Councils and a range of car club operators to launch an Oxfordshire EV car club pilot in April 2023 (www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/electric-vehicle-pilot). This pilot project trialed EV car clubs in 18 locations over an 18-month period up to the end of September 2024, with the majority of these being in market towns and villages where no car club had been available previously. The pilot was intended to see whether there was demand for this sort of service and whether it was financially viable for providers, and the results have been mixed but have certainly indicated demand in some areas and seen some locations become self-sustaining after 18 months.</p>



<p>SUPPLEMENTARY:</p> <p>Can we come up with a budget and a strategy?</p>	<p>Full evaluation of the pilot is currently being completed, but the good news is that we expect all of the cars currently in place to remain there for the long-term – a press release will be issued shortly to announce this to residents.</p> <p>Further evaluation of the pilot will inform plans for any further roll out of EV car clubs, and is it hoped that the greatly expanded public EV charging estate due to be delivered as part of the ‘OXLEVI’ programme will provide much greater opportunity to introduce EV car clubs around the county.</p> <p>ANSWER:</p> <p>I’m very happy to take that away and discuss with officers. This is one of several areas where we work with external stakeholders, private companies and providers. So, the tools are not solely within our gift. However, one thing that is within our gift is providing parking spaces for these vehicles. We have done that and we will continue to do that. So, yes, if it is appropriate to turn that into a holistic strategy, then I’m very happy to discuss that.</p>
<p>14. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>The Financial Times describes Tory- run Hampshire County Council as ‘the English county facing the biggest financial ‘black hole’ with a deficit currently at £175m. Please can you tell us how we are getting on with the phased withdrawal from all our contracts with Hampshire County Council?</p> <p>SUPPLEMENTARY:</p> <p>How confident is the Cabinet Member that the management of the payroll is not vulnerable because of Hampshire’s precarious financial position?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAN LEVY, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE</p> <p>The only “contract” with Hampshire County Council is the partnership agreement for the IBC Shared Service. There is no phased withdrawal from this partnership. There are regular partnership meetings throughout the year where risks are considered, and in addition following the published article in the Financial Times, the Hampshire County Council S151 Officer has written to all partners to provide reassurance regarding Hampshire County Councils financial position, confirming that there is no risk to the IBC fulfilling all of its obligations.</p> <p>ANSWER:</p> <p>I am extremely confident that in the unlikely event that Hampshire were to get into proper financial difficulty and issue a Section 144 notice, where there is no evidence that they will do, that the functions they fulfil for this Council will continue.</p>



15. COUNCILLOR CHARLIE HICKS

Street clutter, where badly placed items become obstacles on the pavement, is an issue for pedestrians, wheelchair users, and pushchair users, which particularly negatively impacts people with mobility issues and/or disabilities. This issue has heightened salience amongst the public with the introduction of hire eBikes and it is right that the Council is reviewing the parking bay policy for these to ensure they aren't obstructing pedestrians.

During this review work, will the Cabinet Member and officers also take the opportunity to review all other Council policies and activities relating to other sources of street clutter (e.g. footway clearance distances for EV charging points placed on pavements, disused phoneboxes, the placement of advertising boards, etc.), to ensure that they too are not cluttering our pavements, and also to ensure that Council policy is consistent and aligned with LTCP Policy 1 (i.e. the transport user hierarchy)?

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

The e-scooter trial has been ongoing in Oxford since February 2021 and the e-scooter bays located around the city have been introduced at varying points in time with approval coming from different officers. As Cllr Hicks has noted, the arrival of e-bikes for hire in Oxford has highlighted a need for the micromobility (e-scooter and e-bike share) bays to be audited against our most recent criteria to determine their current suitability and ensure that footways are not being obstructed. This list of criteria has been adapted from a similar checklist used by micromobility officers at The Solent for their e-scooter and e-bike schemes, taking into account the views of Road Safety officers at OCC and the City Council run Inclusive Transport & Movement Focus Group. The audit plans to produce a list of recommendations for the existing bays; including removal, relocation, introducing physical infrastructure, or leaving the bay where it is.

We also plan to audit potential new micromobility parking locations that will be put forward by the operators to generate a list of pre-approved parking bays that could be introduced in the future. This will also include some on-carriageway bays following feedback from residents and councillors who wish to see micromobility parking moved away from footways.

This particular piece of work does not plan to look into the policies relating to other generators of street clutter. However, the principles of minimising street clutter and keeping footways clear for pedestrians are already included in a number of existing and emerging County Council policy and guidance documents.

The Oxfordshire Walking Design Guidelines is in the process of being updated and one key update involves the introduction of a "'3-strip principle". This approach requires planners, designers, and engineers to treat footways as a three-part surface and is aligned with national walking policy, organised as follows:



- **Building Edge (0.3 m):** Reserved for utility boxes.
- **Kerbside Edge (0.7 m):** According to DfT guidelines, this space from the carriageway edge is dedicated to street furniture (e.g., Sheffield stands, lamps, signs).
- **Effective Width:** This is the clear walking space between the two edges above, varying based on street width, where no street furniture should be placed under any circumstances.

The details of this principle are fully outlined in the original Oxfordshire Walking Design Standards that are currently in use – see here:

[walkingstandards](#)

‘Quality Pedestrian Corridors’ are also included within the [Active Travel Strategy](#) (see pgs 13-14) and have these specific actions in the ATS action plan:

- 8.2 Review signage and utilities policies to minimise street clutter and reduce asset costs and risks
- 8.3. Develop a barrier removal and street decluttering programme along all major walking and cycle routes

From a maintenance perspective, any unauthorised signs such as advertising boards, as well as other street problems, can be reported through our online reporting tool FixMyStreet. As the Highway Authority, we may remove any picture, letter, sign or other mark which has, without consent or authorisation, been painted, inscribed or fixed on the highway or on any tree, structure or works on or in the highway, in order to:

- consider the safety and convenience of all pedestrians, especially those with poor eyesight, elderly or disabled people and those with prams, wheelchairs etc.
- ensure the clear visibility, which is vital at road junctions, where pedestrians cross, and at other access points
- ensure a driver's attention is not distracted by any unnecessary increase in the number of these signs.



<p>SUPPLEMENTARY:</p> <p>Does the Cabinet Member agree with me that EV charging points should be designed to leave at least the same amount, if not more space than cycling parking?</p>	<p>We can delegate powers to an agent - usually a parish, town or district council, which will carry out the removal on our behalf.</p> <p>When it comes to highway signage, a less is more approach has already been adopted. However, where a restriction is imposed by a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), or there is a need to warn and inform road users, then signs or markings will be needed. That said, signs should only be provided where a clear need has been identified and should be minimal and sympathetic to their environment. These principles apply in both urban and rural settings.</p> <p>Our policies are always reviewed, and street clutter is something that can be included in future policy reviews with a focus on decluttering.</p> <p>ANSWER:</p> <p>That is a very detailed question, which if he'll forgive me, I will take away and respond in writing.</p>
<p>16. COUNCILLOR ROBIN BENNETT</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member please give an update on the progress of the Minerals and Waste plan? The new development scheme was approved in December 2022. Communities in my division which might be affected by gravel extraction had asked to be kept informed but have not heard anything for some time.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR PETE SUDBURY, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS</p> <p>The Minerals and Waste Policy and Strategy Team are aware that they are behind the timetable set out in the Minerals and Waste Development Scheme, and that this will need updating. The reason for this has been mainly due to awaiting the details of the government changes to the plan-making system expected before the end of December, which need to be considered first before the plan is progressed. These changes are expected to reduce the current plan-making process, from the current 7.5 year process on average, to 30 months. The 30 months is from the formal start date, but preparations are expected to be made prior to that. Once the details of the new process is published by central government a report will be put before the Cabinet Member. In the meantime the following statement has been put on the website to keep all members of the public advised of the situation:</p>



‘Since the publication of the Minerals and Waste Development Scheme, central government have proposed significant changes to plan making, and a revision to the NPPF is expected.

In light of these developments, the County Council’s Cabinet Member will be considering how best to proceed with the Minerals and Waste Plan.

17. COUNCILLOR ROBIN BENNETT

There are ongoing challenges regarding school transport in my division, as you know. One of the issues is punctuality - children do not always arrive in time for registration, affecting their education and the schools' attendance figures. Do you have data on what proportion of the Berinsfield-Abingdon buses (AB84 and TT45) arrive in time for the start of the school day?

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

Home to School transport is a key feature of our education system. In Oxfordshire, the provision of transport needs is identified by the Children, Education and Family Services Directorate, but commissioned through another of the directorates. Nevertheless, the arrival of pupils on time at school is important to everyone. Indeed, the DfE has recently tightened up their criteria for notifying pupil absence and this fact has been communicated to operators.

**Nevertheless, circumstances do arise where buses do not keep to time. Officials have been monitoring both the service bus and our commissioned transport you have cited in your question and can confirm that during the period between the start of term and half-term .
The AB84 commissioned service was late delivering pupils to school on 3 occasions, two of which were due to the Abingdon Fair.**

The TT45, commercial service bus was late delivering pupils to school on 5 occasions, again two being due the Abingdon Fair. The other’s being vehicle breakdown and driver availability.

Meaning that one or other bus was late delivering pupils to school on 8 mornings. There has been an improvement since the start of the September term but I have asked officers to liaise with operators to see what can be done to ensure punctuality for these services, especially as winter approaches.



18. COUNCILLOR ROBIN BENNETT

Is there an update on progress towards a safe crossing of the A415 at Tollgate Rd, Culham? I understand that design work is underway, and some funding is in place. And will this include safe routes across Tollgate Rd and Thame Lane, to enable safe access to Europa School and Culham Campus?

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

There has been progress towards implementing a crossing over the A415 at Tollgate Road with a preferred design proposed that is now being reviewed internally.

19. COUNCILLOR CHARLIE HICKS

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health's report on adolescent mortality highlights that road danger is the leading cause of death of adolescents (10-19) in England. As a result, one of their two headline recommendations is that:

- **“UK Government should resource Local Authorities to provide safer environments for children and young people to walk, play and travel. Local Authorities should commit to:**
 - **Expansion of 20mph zones within built up / urban areas;**
 - **Greater number of cycle lanes;**
 - **Greater number of pedestrian zones;**
 - **Monitoring and measurement of their population's exposure to air pollution, particularly in urban**

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

Thank you for this question. I of course agree that the UK government should resource Local Authorities to provide safer environments for children whilst out in the community and of course we are committed to Vision Zero and clean air for all the population and everyone in our communities.

The remit of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership is set out in national frameworks under Working Together 2023 which requires the partnership to take account of safeguarding in specific areas for children and young people. There are a range of other boards and Committees with statutory functions to address wider community safety and environmental place-based issues which impact population wellbeing. All activity is accountable to the Health and Wellbeing Board.



areas and near schools.”

Does the Cabinet Member therefore agree with me that the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board should, as part of their work on a system-wide approach to keeping children safe from harm outside their home, update their working definition of child safeguarding to include minimising the risks to children from road danger and polluted air, and therefore play a more active role in the development and delivery of the council’s Vision Zero and clean air policies?

SUPPLEMENTARY:

Can he outline exactly how child and adolescent safety is going to be represented in road danger reduction governance and vision zero governance moving forward?

ANSWER:

Incidents of road safety are of course in this first matter for the Police. I think that the circumstances for the Children’s Trust Board, Cllr Hicks talks about the remit of that is set down in such a way. But, I do think that there probably is a sensible way forward to look at our relationships with outside agencies and the Police who lead on it. It might be sensible for the People Scrutiny Committee to put it on their agenda for a deep-dive into how we look at all of this across the whole of the Council, so that we do it in a sensible unified way. It is probably for the Health & Wellbeing Board to have overview of this so that it doesn’t go through several different meetings where it might get lost.

20. COUNCILLOR CHARLIE HICKS

Members have recently learnt of a stomach-dropping £335 million funding gap for highway maintenance (i.e. fixing potholes and pavements) in Oxfordshire over the next 10 years. At the same time, highway maintenance is rated the top area that Oxfordshire residents would like to see the council increase our spend, based on the recent budget simulator

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

The areas mentioned – maintenance, road safety, climate – have always played and will continue to play a key part in the overall budget setting process for this administration.

Regarding any new road schemes, the part of the capital programme which is intended for this purpose is, in the main, directly funded from external sources – generally grants from Central Government agencies.



consultation.

In 2023, the (then Conservative-led) UK Parliament Transport Committee published a report for the DfT that said “future investment [in major roads] should focus more on maintenance and renewal rather than brand new projects.” The Tory-led committee recommended “cancelling complex and costly enhancement projects.”

In the last Cabinet meeting, Cllr Sudbury confirmed that “the Welsh Government’s approach is one of the criteria which Oxfordshire County Council will use to assess road investment decisions.” This includes that new road investment should meet purposes and criteria based on climate and safety impacts.

Based on the above, can the Cabinet Member now commit to a review of the council’s capital programme and capital infrastructure budget so that moving forward it prioritises maintaining the quality our existing roads, road safety and climate, ahead of new costly road capacity-increasing schemes?

SUPPLEMENTARY:

Please can he confirm whether all the capital budget proposals for the 2025/26 financial year capital budget draft, which are not subject to the same external strings attached as referred

As part of securing those funds, that money is ring-fenced for use in those specific projects and so not available for wider maintenance work. However, we will always ensure that safety, the climate, and maintenance considerations are at the heart of any new road design and construction programmes.

ANSWER:

It covers areas in my portfolio, such as highway maintenance, but the supplementary is probably more for Cllr Roberts. Since it is addressed to me, I will just point out, of course, that we have not prepared next year’s budget’s capital programme yet. The LTCP is adopted policy and therefore will be applied in relation to all Council decisions as with all other policy.



<p>to in the question. Please can he confirm that these proposals will align to LTCP 5 policies, specifically policy 36 on roads, and if he can confirm that, please can he also confirm that he will instruct officers to run LTCP 5 alignment tests on all draft capital budget lines?</p>	
<p>21. COUNCILLOR KIERON MALLON</p> <p>What is the precise figure of unspent s. 106 monies that this Council holds or has dedicated to it under existing legal agreements and where does Oxfordshire rank nationally in this regard?</p> <p>SUPPLEMENTARY:</p> <p>Cllr Roberts states that Oxfordshire County Council has £260m in S106 receipts unspent. According to the Home Builders Federation, which compiled the national figures using Freedom of Information requests, they were told that the figure is £287m, as widely reported in the national media. How does she account for this discrepancy and has this administration lost £27m of S106 funding?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</p> <p>The County Council has £260,831,978 in held S106 receipts and £323,232,391 in future funding that is dedicated to it under existing agreements. It is not known where the County Council ranks nationally in this regard, nor is it a relevant metric to measure as all places have different levels of growth and infrastructure demands.</p> <p>ANSWER:</p> <p>I'll have to take that question away to officers and see. But, the details of the spend and the amount of the S106 pool of funds is all in the Infrastructure Statement that is coming to Scrutiny next week and then going to Cabinet after that. I don't know without looking up specifically in that document for the figure. I will go away and check which one it relates to.</p>
<p>22. COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE</p> <p>Flooding caused a major problem to residents in my division last winter. The A417 west of</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>As part of the County's role, under the requirements of Section 19 of the Flood</p>



Wantage was impassable for months between East Challow and West Challow and devastating the Mellors business at their service station at Silver Lane. On my return I am pleased to see the water has cleared but I note water collecting again after recent rain. Some action by the Council has been effective and I ask what OCC will do now to prevent another major flooding problem.

SUPPLEMENTARY:

I hope we are talking about the same stretch of road. I know that this is the junction at Silver Lane to West Challow. I am not satisfied with the response that tells me that the area I'm looking at is still the lack of capacity in the Thames Water surface drainage problem. There is a system where the County Council can do the work for them and charge them for it and I request that you do that now. We do not want another Winter where we are unable to pass that section of the A417, which is a major link between Wantage and Faringdon. I go further; I

and Water Management Act 2010, as the Lead Local Flood Authority - we have prepared and published formal flood investigation. We will be looking to follow up those recommendations, however we only have limited powers to make others implement those recommendations. The Council have undertaken works and will work with others to improve flood resilience.

We have recently had the section of ditch partially cleared between Silver Lane and the Brook and had the Culvert under the road jetted to remove silt from it, which has helped minimised potential flooding. Now that the ditch by Silver Lane is partially dug out it will offer some limited capacity and hopefully keep waters off the road in light to medium rainfall. We will also continue to carry out further cleaning and jetting of the highway drainage system in the vicinity.

However, the Brook downstream needs to be dug out in order to restore correct functionality of the drainage in the area. The landowner has been served a Section 25 Notice to ask them to take steps to clear the Brook. The Landowner is appealing the Notice and we understand that the Magistrates hearing on the appeal will take place in late November.

ANSWER:

I will take those detailed local points away. The answer does say that we have done some of the gully clearance. We are engaging with our stakeholders, including landowners and we are using legal tools available to us, but I will very happily take those points away.



<p>believe there should be a positive programme of contact with landowners in this area beyond the A417. Can we please see a schedule of the risks to be assessed by the County Council? Consult the County Councillors if you do not know where the risks are.</p>	
<p>23. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER</p> <p>Can you confirm when improvements to the Barnard Gate junction on the A40 will be carried out?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Proposals and the associated programme are currently being worked on, once officers have completed this they will be able to confirm likely timeframes for implementation. It is hoped this information will be available for the financial year 25-26.</p>
<p>24. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER</p> <p>Can you confirm how much is being spent within the existing project budget on maintenance for the P&R site at Eynsham per week?</p> <p>SUPPLEMENTARY:</p> <p>There are cabins on site, security on site and people pulling weeds up in the car park from the park and ride. How much is that costing?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</p> <p>Following the completion of construction of the Park and Ride early this year, the project has been in a period of ‘snagging’, which is perfectly normal for projects. During this time, there have been no additional costs for maintenance of the Park and Ride site.</p> <p>ANSWER:</p> <p>I’m confused why you keep asking this question. The contract actually covers the cost of the Park and Ride, which wasn’t finished until the end of October, and we’re only 5 days past that. The contract covered the costs of maintenance of the Park and Ride during this period. I will ask, if you like, what happened but as far as I know from the answer we gave you previously at the previous Council, that contract even covers maintenance costs after October 31st. But I am utterly assured that all costs are covered up until October 31st.</p>



25. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON

The recent serious flooding in my division revealed that a lack of annual maintenance of highway drainage gullies contributed to some homes being flooded, particularly in areas like Begbroke and Garden City in Kidlington where homes are particularly susceptible to run off from the highway. I understand that the reason for this lack of maintenance was the withdrawal of funding by the previous administration which has now been shown to be a short-sighted move that many householders are paying the price for. Can the cabinet member assure me that we will be looking to resume a regular and comprehensive gully clearing programme over the next year and beyond, especially in flood prone areas like mine, and that he will support requests for adequate funding for that to be included in the 2025/26 budget?

SUPPLEMENTARY:

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

Thank you for your question relating to the frequency of gully emptying, which, you are correct has suffered from a significant frequency reduction over the past decade. This has meant that in terms of affordability recently, only approximately one quarter of the gullies on the non-highspeed network have been able to be cleaned annually on a 4 to 5-year cycle.

However, particularly as a result of the change in weather patterns and risk of more frequent heavy and prolonged rain events this year the Highway Operations team have adopted a more targeted approach thus directing our limited resources towards locations that either are prone to flooding or have a history of surface water property flooding.

The other major change with this work is that instead of just cleaning out the gully, which historically has been the norm, whole systems are being cleaned and jetted to ensure that our drains are as clear as possible. As I am sure you can imagine the teams have a huge backlog of locations to work through, this has been helped with an additional £300k investment into this type of work for this year.

Unfortunately, as you may be aware, many visible highway gullies flow into systems and water courses that OCC has no jurisdiction over and hence we face an even bigger battle in these situations as these other agencies face similar resourcing issues to the County Council.

In short, I am expecting the targeted approach to continue and with the work that has been done to date and the more recent areas that have been identified under the 'flood prone' umbrella, the officers from the Highway Operations and LLFA teams are building up a better picture of where the limited responses need to be targeted.

ANSWER:



<p>As someone who's been reporting blocked gullies in my division for some time now, could he assure me that there will be liaison with local Councillors to provide some intelligence on the ground as to where these hotspots are and where gullies need to be urgently cleared?</p>	<p>Yes, I'm very happy to take that away and as I've already mentioned, of course gully clearing and flood mitigation will continue to form a very big part of the budget discussions.</p>
<p>26. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON</p> <p>Recent flooding in my division was made worse what appeared to be a failure of Thames Water infrastructure, particularly with regard to pumping stations in the Garden City area of Kidlington. Can we obtain information from Thames Water about the capability of these facilities to respond to future extreme weather events and records of the performance and operation during the recent floods?</p> <p>SUPPLEMENTARY:</p> <p>Could we press for a response from Thames Water in terms of operational logs, particularly</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR PETE SUDBURY, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS</p> <p>A formal flood investigation under Section 19 of the Flood and water management Act 2010 has been commenced for Kidlington following the recent flooding at the end of September 2024. This investigation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions, andb) whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood. <p>Whilst we investigate and can make recommendations, it does not give us the powers or funding to act on all these recommendations, or make others undertake all recommendations.</p> <p>Most of these reports take over 6 months to complete as they require data and information gathering from a number of sources. For Kidlington, we have contacted Thames water to provide information, and this will be reviewed alongside other information to complete the report.</p> <p>ANSWER:</p> <p>Yes, I think that is what the Section 19 report will require Thames Water to respond. We are currently in discussion with Thames Water and the</p>



<p>on pumping stations in my division in Garden City, Kidlington and Yarnton?</p>	<p>Environment Agency over the need to step up collectively and to deal with problems in an integrated way, because flooding is no longer something that just happens occasionally. It seems to be part of a more normal patten of rainfall. Having the local Lead Flood Authority in my portfolio, I have been in discussion with the Chief Executive and Leader to make sure we have cleared all the gullies we can as early as possible on the basis that it may well be as floody this winter as it was last. With extreme rainfall events, you cannot actually tell where it is going to flood and so we need to take a more blanket approach to clearing gullies. Then, we need to hold to account the other organizations who are not clearing theirs.</p>
<p>27. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON</p> <p>It's great to see that so much of the county has now adopted a 20mph speed limits which are widely supported by local communities. We all know that these measures will significantly improve road safety and reduce the likelihood of serious injury or death, especially for pedestrians. However those improvements will only be achieved if motorists observe and adhere to the reduced limits. Now the roll out of the new limits is close to completion, will we soon be introducing enhanced enforcement regimes, including fixed and mobile speed cameras, speed indication devices and traffic calming measures where appropriate?</p> <p>SUPPLEMENTARY:</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member confirm that there is a commitment from Thames Valley Police to enforce and police the reduced speed limits</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Following completion of the project at the end of the 2024-25 financial year, the council will be evaluating its effect on vehicle speeds and safety, and also on the levels of active travel. Additionally, the views of the local councils participating in the project will be sought. This information will be used to shape further work to achieve the best possible long-term outcome of the project - including liaison with Thames Valley Police on additional speed enforcement and consideration by the county council (with Local County Cllr and Parish/Town councils) of potential traffic management and other measures.</p> <p>ANSWER:</p> <p>Yes, the response of the police to the 20mph scheme, and I'm delighted to hear his welcoming of the scheme, as it has been a huge success, and the response of the Police is well-known about their commitment to enforcing. There has</p>



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and that fixed and mobile cameras can enforce 20mph zones, contrary to the advice we've previously received from the Police and other agencies?

been a change in that. They have confirmed that they are responsible for enforcing 20mph speed limit zones and will do so, and indeed, have done so. That is very welcome. Alongside that, when the scheme comes to the end of its 3 year programme, there will be in the region of 300 communities in our county, each of whom have asked for this scheme. In Wales, they have reported something like a 20% decrease in their casualties because of their 20mph policy. It is a fantastic success and I'm very proud of it. I'd like to thank the Councillor for his support and for welcoming it.