

...Decisions... Decisions...

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

*If you have a query please contact Democratic Services (E-mail: [CommitteesDemocraticServices@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:CommitteesDemocraticServices@Oxfordshire.gov.uk))*

## **County Council - Tuesday, 8 July 2025**

<i>Recommendations from the agenda</i>	<i>Decisions</i>	<i>action</i>
<b>1. Minutes</b>  To approve the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 20 May 2025 ( <b>CC1a</b> ) and the minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting also on 20 May 2025 ( <b>CC1b</b> ) and to receive information arising from them.	The minutes of the Annual meeting on 20 May 2025 were approved with one amendment:  Item 27/25: paragraph 5, line 5 – replace “Councillor Rooke” with “Councillor Lygo”.  The minutes of the Extraordinary meeting on 20 May 2025 were approved.	DLG (C Ó Caomhá naigh)
<b>2. Apologies for Absence</b>	Apologies were received from Councillors Creed, Field-Johnson, Filipova-Rivers, Graham and Stevens.	DLG (C Ó Caomhá naigh)
<b>3. Declarations of Interest - see guidance note</b>	None	
<b>4. Official Communications</b>	Council noted the announcements published in the Schedule of Business.	
<b>5. Appointments</b>  Report by the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer  This report notifies Council of nominations received from the political group leaders and given effect by the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer on 28 May 2025 under a delegation in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers.  <b>The Council is RECOMMENDED to note the appointments listed in paragraph 7 of this report to</b>	The amendment proposed by Councillor Leffman and seconded by Councillor Fawcett was agreed unanimously:  Paragraph 7, on the Corporate Parenting Panel: Councillor Ben Higgins to be replaced by Councillor Sean Gaul  The recommendations were approved as amended.	DLG (C Ó Caomhá naigh)



<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the Corporate Parenting Panel</li><li>• Oxfordshire County Council and Employees Joint Consultative Committee</li><li>• Oxfordshire County Council and Teachers Joint Committee</li><li>• Oxfordshire County Council Joint Consultative Committee for Uniformed Members of the Fire Service</li></ul>		
<b>6. Petitions and Public Address</b>	<p>There were no petitions.</p> <p>The Chair accepted the following requests to speak:</p> <p><u>Item 16: Motion from Councillor Jane Hanna</u> Melody Drinkwater</p> <p><u>Item 18: Motion from Councillor James Plumb</u> District Cllr Sally Povolotsky Kimberly Morgan Neil Barry Claire Brenner</p>	
<b>7. Questions with Notice from Members of the Public</b>	Nineteen questions were asked. The questions, responses and supplementary questions are recorded in an Annex below.	
<b>8. Questions with Notice from Members of the Council</b>	Fifty eight questions were asked. The questions, responses and supplementary questions are recorded in an Annex below.	
<b>9. Report of the Cabinet</b>  Report from the Leader of the Council.  The report summarises the decisions from the Cabinet meetings on 20 March 2025, 25 March 2025, 22 April 2025 and 17 June 2025.	Council received the report of Cabinet.	
<b>10. Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee Annual Report</b>	Recommendation approved.	



<b>2024/25</b>  Report by Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer  <b>Council is RECOMMENDED to: -</b>  <b>a) Receive and note the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee's (JHOSC) Annual Report set out in Annex 1.</b>		
<b>11. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2024/25</b>  Report by Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer  <b>The Council is RECOMMENDED to</b>  <b>a) Receive the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report.</b>	Recommendation approved.	
<b>12. Appointment of Independent Members of the Audit &amp; Governance Committee</b>  Report by the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer  <b>The Council is RECOMMENDED to:-</b>  <b>a) confirm the appointment Kate Cartwright and Paul McGinn as Independent Members of the Audit and Governance Committee for a term of four years.</b> <b>b) record the Council's gratitude and appreciation for the contribution of Dr Geoff Jones as Independent Member of the Audit and Governance Committee and Chair of the Audit Working Group.</b>	Recommendations approved.	DLG (C Ó Caomhá naigh)
<b>13. Appointments to and Formation of the Independent Remuneration Panel</b>  Report by the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer	Recommendations approved.	DLG (C Reynolds)



<p><b>The Council is RECOMMENDED to: -</b></p> <p><b>c) confirm the appointment of Benjamin Anim-Antwi, Martyn Hocking, Stephen McKechnie and Dave Shelmerdine as Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel and</b></p> <p><b>d) to form the Independent Remuneration Panel for a period of two years.</b></p>		
<p><b>14. Councillors Parental Leave Policy</b></p> <p>Report by the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p><b>Council is RECOMMENDED to approve a parental leave policy for councillors, ensuring support for new parents and best practice in local governance. The policy includes provisions for temporary cover and reflects the council's commitment to promoting equality and diversity among elected officials.</b></p>	<p>Recommendation approved.</p>	<p>DLG (S Smith)</p>
<p><b>15. Presentation of scroll to Alderman Bob Johnston</b></p> <p>Report by the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>The Extraordinary Council meeting on 20 May 2025 approved the appointment of former Councillor Bob Johnston as Alderman. As Alderman Johnston was unable to attend on that day, Council agreed to defer the presentation of the scroll to this meeting.</p> <p><b>Council is RECOMMENDED to note</b></p> <p><b>a) the conferral of the title of Honorary Alderman, under section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, on Mr Bob Johnston at the Extraordinary Meeting on 20 May 2025 in recognition of his significant contribution to the Council</b></p>	<p>Recommendations approved.</p>	



<p><b>in particular and public service in general;</b></p> <p><b>b) that Alderman Johnston was unable to attend the conferral meeting due to holidays; and</b></p> <p><b>c) that Council agreed to defer the presentation of the scroll until its next meeting on 8 July 2025 so that Members would have the opportunity to pay tribute.</b></p>		
<p><b>16.Motion from Councillor Jane Hanna</b></p> <p>Council notes with deep concern the failure of successive governments to address the crisis in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Provision.</p> <p>Councils across the country are grappling with soaring high needs deficits, which the Local Government Association (LGA) predicts will exceed £5 billion nationally by next year.</p> <p>Over half the councils providing these services warned they would face effective bankruptcy when the statutory override for SEND deficits was to expire in 2026. The extension to 2028 has not solved the underlying problem.</p> <p>Between 2020 and 2024, Oxfordshire County Council's deficit on the `Dedicated Schools Grant` was £46 million. This increased to £85m at the end of financial year 2024-25 and is budgeted to reach £127m by the end of financial year 2025-26.</p> <p>Oxfordshire saw a 27% increase in requests for Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs) during 2023/24 with an increase of 18% of approved EHCPs. These increases continue upward.</p> <p>The LGA says that the current SEND system is "not working for anyone in it". The Spending Review once again failed to</p>	<p>The motion was carried unanimously.</p>	<p>DLG (C Ó Caomhá naigh)</p>



<p>provide clarity on how the Government will address these mounting deficits.</p> <p>The announced increase in core school funding amounts to just a 1.1% uplift-insufficient to keep pace with inflation and rising pay costs in schools.</p> <p>The Council asks the leader to write to the Chancellor, Rachel Reeves MP, urging her to set out urgently how the Government will eliminate high needs deficits and deliver a SEND system that works for children, families and councils alike.</p>		
<p><b>17.Motion from Councillor Liz Brighouse</b></p> <p>The Children's Society notes that transport poverty exacerbates other inequalities, with children from low-income families potentially missing out on school trips, extracurricular activities, or suffering poor school attendance. A 2025 report by the Institute for Fiscal Studies similarly identified that young people's mobility is closely tied to long-term social and economic outcomes.</p> <p>This Council, being aware of the levels of child poverty in this county and the effect this has on the ability of families and young people to travel by public transport, asks the Cabinet to set up a Cabinet Advisory Group to consider a scheme to provide free or significantly reduced bus travel for children and young people up to age of 18.</p> <p>Such a scheme could be funded from fines from ANPR enforcement and would enable children and young people to get to school and college settings by enabling bus companies to develop routes to school that better meet the travel needs of families and children.</p> <p>This Council notes West of England Mayor Helen Goodwin has funded free travel for children up to 16 this summer.</p> <p><i>Note: The motion, if passed, would constitute the exercise of an executive function in which case it will be referred to</i></p>	<p>Councillor Levy proposed an amendment to Councillor Kerr's amendment under CPR 14.1 (vi). The new amendment was accepted by the proposer and seconder of the original amendment.</p> <p>Council voted to take the new amendment with 39 votes in favour, 21 against and no abstentions.</p> <p>The amendment was carried with 40 votes in favour, 21 against and no abstentions.</p> <p>The motion as amended was carried with 40 votes in favour, 21 against and no abstentions.</p> <p>The Children's Society notes that transport poverty exacerbates other inequalities, <del>with children from low-income families potentially missing out on school trips, extracurricular activities, or suffering poor school attendance.</del> <b>A and a</b> 2025 report by the Institute for Fiscal Studies similarly identified that young people's mobility is closely tied to long-term social and economic outcomes.</p> <p><b>The Council notes that it is working with bus companies to improve services in Oxfordshire and thanks them for their support for its schemes to make bus services more reliable, quicker and more extensive. It would welcome the</b></p>	<p>DLG (C Reynolds)</p>



*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.*

**opportunity to make services more accessible to young people and others.**

**This Council notes that there are many transport disadvantaged groups who could significantly benefit from targeted support with public transport, such as those under 18, care leavers and asylum seekers.**

~~This Council, being aware of the levels of child poverty in this county and the effect this has on the ability of families and young people to travel by public transport, asks the Cabinet to set up a Cabinet Advisory Group to consider a scheme~~ **for the whole county** ~~to provide free or significantly reduced bus travel for children and young people up to age of 18~~ **where the money for such scheme would require substantial funding to be viable and longterm and that this will require funding from central government in addition to Oxfordshire making a contribution were a Workplace Parking Levy to be introduced.**

~~Such a scheme could be funded from fines from ANPR enforcement and would enable children and young people to get to school and college settings by enabling bus companies to develop routes to school that better meet the travel needs of families and children.~~

~~This Council notes West of England Mayor Helen Goodwin has funded free travel for children up to 16 this summer.~~

**18. Motion from Councillor James Plumb**

Council notes the increasing pressures on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services across Oxfordshire, with rising demand, complex needs, and a need

The time being 3.30 pm, this motion was considered dropped in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2.





for stronger local support.

Previously, Oxfordshire County Council had a dedicated Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement, reflecting the importance of this area.

This role was recently removed, diluting specific leadership and focus on one of the most challenging areas of Council responsibility.

Council believes that:

1. Children and young people with SEND deserve a dedicated champion at the highest political level within the Council.
2. A single Cabinet Member with clear and focused responsibility for SEND would enhance decision-making, oversight, and transparency.
3. Reinstating this post would demonstrate a renewed commitment to improving outcomes for families who rely on these vital services.

Council therefore resolves to:

- a) Ask the Leader of the Council to reinstate the Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement as a standalone portfolio within the Cabinet.
- b) Ensure this role has clear responsibility for SEND policy, provision, and engagement with parents, carers, and stakeholders.
- c) Request that the Leader provides a written response to this motion, setting out the steps being taken to strengthen leadership and accountability within SEND services.

**19. Motion from Councillor Ian Middleton**

A well-functioning opposition is a vital part of our democracy. The recent elections returned the first majority controlled council at OCC for years along with 3 main opposition party groups. Labour were the largest single party, but the Conservatives alliance with some independents resulted in two groups of equal size. This led to

The time being 3.30 pm, this motion was considered dropped in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2.





confusion over which group would be the 'Official Opposition'.

As this situation was not envisaged within our constitution, the Monitoring Officer advised that both groups should be considered as the official opposition with Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) available to both. It was also deemed that the Chairs of the 4 main overview and scrutiny committees should be split between them.

This has created a constitutional anomaly requiring urgent consideration. It's also an opportunity to consider how financial and operational support for all significant opposition groups could be provided given the changed political landscape of OCC.

We therefore request an urgent review of the constitution and allowances scheme in respect of opposition groups, to determine:

1. How a principal opposition group should be defined where groups have equal numbers.
2. If members of all opposition groups above a certain size should be entitled to SRAs from a single proportionally shared budget.
3. The possibility of providing a support officer for all opposition groups on a timesharing basis, reflecting the relative sizes of recognised groups.
4. If chairs of scrutiny committees should be available to any member of a recognised group outside of the controlling administration, based on proportionality.



## ANNEX

### Questions from Members of the Public

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

1. BERNADETTE EVANS	COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT
<p>The installation of the pilot ZEZ scheme in 2021 was delayed until after Christmas <i>"because we want to give Oxford's economy a helping hand to have the best Christmas possible"</i>*. According to the council's website the Congestion Charge is due to begin 'in the autumn'. Can Cllr Gant confirm what is meant by 'the autumn' and that the Congestion Charge won't be installed immediately before or during the Christmas trading period?</p> <p>* Cllr Tom Hayes (Oxford City Council), Cabinet Member for Green Transport and Zero Carbon Oxford, said it was being launched after Christmas because businesses had been "hit by shortages and Covid's lingering effects". "We want to give Oxford's economy a helping hand to have the best Christmas possible," he said.</p>	<p>This is a false comparison.</p> <p>The zero-emission zone pilot covers a handful of streets in the city centre. Car access to the zone is extremely limited, and there's no public car parking apart from blue badge holder parking, which is exempt from ZEZ charges.</p> <p>The decision to delay the ZEZ pilot was therefore unrelated to considerations of customer access; the Council simply felt it was preferable not to introduce a new scheme which might require additional administrative effort on the part of city centre retailers in the immediate run-up to Christmas, when there was no urgent need to do so.</p> <p>In late 2021, businesses were still facing numerous post-Covid challenges and traffic levels were down due to the continuing effects of the pandemic on travel habits. All the main traffic routes into the city centre were fully open. Congestion was not a pressing concern, and in any event the ZEZ pilot wasn't designed to tackle congestion.</p> <p>There was therefore no urgency to introduce the ZEZ, and on balance the councils felt an early 2022 launch was more appropriate.</p> <p>In 2025 we find ourselves in a different position. Botley Road remains closed. Bus operators and the city council have urged the council to act quickly to address traffic congestion in the city, and the county council is doing just that.</p> <p>If the temporary congestion charging scheme is approved by the council's Cabinet following consultation, we will introduce it as soon as possible. Until the consultation has been completed and any changes made to the proposals in response to feedback, we can't set a specific date.</p>

	<p>For the 90% of city centre visitors who come by park and ride, rail, bus, on foot or by bike, the congestion charge can only make visiting Oxford city centre easier (and potentially cheaper). Boosting the city's attractiveness for 90% of visitors is surely the best way to support city centre retail and hospitality businesses during their most important trading season.</p> <p>With 100 free permits for Oxford residents and 25 for Oxfordshire residents, many of the 10% arriving by car should also benefit from clearer roads when they head out to do their Christmas shopping, without paying a penny extra.</p>
<p><b>2. EMILY SCAYSBROOK</b></p> <p>Best practice Council consultations on schemes likely to have a significant and lasting impact on people's daily lives - including how they work, travel, access services, and support their families - typically run for 12 weeks and avoid scheduling over holiday periods. With that in mind, can Cllr Gant explain why the Council has chosen to depart from these widely accepted principles, with a six-week consultation scheduled over the summer holidays, and specifically explain how he believes this approach satisfies the legal standards established by the Gunning principles, particularly the duty to allow adequate time and information for intelligent consideration and response?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The Transport Act 2000, the legislation that governs charging schemes, does not specify a consultation duration but it should be proportionate. The temporary congestion charge proposals have been based on the previously approved traffic filters trial, which has been through lengthy engagement and consultations over the years with wide ranging media reporting. The temporary congestion charge proposals were also outlined and debated at the county council's cabinet meeting on 17 June 2025 with papers published on 10 June, introducing the concept. Approximately 20 speakers made representations, many with a good level of understanding, even before the consultation had begun. Additionally, less than 24 hours after the consultation opened, more than 1500 responses had already been received. After week one, almost 3,000 responses to the consultation were received. With more than 3,750 responses after 10 days. The county council objective is to reach as many people as possible, which statistics show we are.</p> <p>Four weeks is the advised minimum duration for council consultations, as per the council's corporate guidance. The consultation started on 23 June – prior to the start of the summer holidays by some 4 weeks. The Gunning Principles do not set out at which time of the year consultations should be undertaken.</p> <p>As explained in the Cabinet paper debated on the 17 June and the consultation materials, the proposal being consulted on is a <u>temporary</u> congestion charge so is not expected to have a "lasting impact on people's lives". The traffic filter trial is expected to be implemented soon after the Botley Rd reopens, currently scheduled to be in August 2026. The traffic filter trial had its own engagement, consultation and decision-making process and will include a six-month consultation during the trial, when people can provide feedback based on their experience of travelling in Oxford with the scheme in place.</p>

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Given the importance of transparency and public trust in the consultation process, how does the Council intend to make all consultation processes, appropriately redacting personal data, available to the public in their entirety, and by when? Specifically, can the Council please confirm that the responses will be published in a searchable format and that safeguards will be in place to prevent any risk of selected quotation, emission, or misrepresentation in future reporting or decision making? Furthermore, can the council please confirm that such data will be made available well in advance of the Council's decision due in September?</p>	<p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes.</p>
<p><b>3. PETER WEST</b></p> <p>Could you please explain why the baseline DM-BR Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) outlined in Ricardo's Oxford Traffic Interim Scheme dated 13th June 2025, are, in numerous locations, significantly different from those recorded in the measured data</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>All transport modelling is subject to uncertainties. Our transport model is designed to assess the broad impacts of transport interventions. Forecasts for individual roads should therefore be treated with caution.</p> <p>The Ricardo report estimates the air quality impacts of the proposed congestion charge by comparing modelled flows on selected road “links” under a congestion charge scenario with flows previously modelled for the traffic filters, for which full dispersion modelling was completed.</p>

recorded on the OCC website please? e.g Ricardo's Report - London Road 4,560, OCC 16,360.

Concentrations for the present scenario (Botley Road closed) and a scenario with Botley Road closed and £5 congestion charging points in place were estimated based on the forecast change in annual average daily traffic (AADT) from the traffic filter modelling. These estimates represent a reasonable approximation of the changes in nitrogen dioxide concentrations resulting from traffic flow changes caused by the congestion charge scheme. The limitations of the methodology are clearly noted in paragraph 2.2 of the report.

The AADT figures in the Ricardo table differ from the AADT figures shown on the council's website for three reasons:

1. The AADTs on the council's website are two-way flows. The flows in the AADT report are in one direction only. In air quality modelling road links are often split into two directions to allow more accurate modelling of pollution dispersal. Ricardo have selected the direction of flow closest to the monitoring location for which nitrogen dioxide is being estimated.
2. The transport model used for the traffic filters and congestion charge is a strategic model, designed to assess the broad impacts of transport interventions throughout Oxfordshire. We do not expect or need the model to forecast flows with 100% accuracy on every road in the model. The model has been developed in line with Department for Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG).
3. The transport model was last updated in 2023 and reflects the city's permanent transport network – i.e. with Botley Road open. The present transport network with Botley Road closed differs significantly from that permanent condition. The figures shown for the "DM-BR" scenario (with the Botley Road closure in place), are therefore a forecast of this temporary arrangement.

It is therefore to be expected that absolute flows on specific roads in the model will differ from traffic count data on our website. As set out in the Modelling and Income Forecasting Report the forecasts are more reliable in terms of forecast impacts at a strategic level (e.g. impacts on overall car demand), and less reliable at more granular levels of detail. This does not alter the model's suitability for assessing the broad impacts of the proposed congestion charging points.

	<p>If implemented, the scheme will be monitored using data from our extensive network of traffic and air quality monitors.</p>
<p><b>4. ELIZABETH MCHALE</b></p> <p>Given that proposed central Oxford congestion charge locations would operate 7am - 7pm seven days per week, and therefore cut across the daytime / night time, week day / weekend Oxford economy, please specific the specific evidence source (or sources) that informed the specific timings of these proposed congestion charge locations?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Traffic flows and congestion in Oxford city centre are highest between 7am and 7pm, as shown by the charts below. We consider these to be the simplest and most effective operating times to tackle congestion in the city centre. The congestion charging points are a temporary step towards the approved trial traffic filter scheme, so we have aligned most aspects of the scheme with the traffic filters. However, the proposals are currently out to consultation and views on the operating hours and all other aspects of the proposals are welcome.</p> <p>Only 10% of city centre visitors drive and park in the city centre. The other 90% won't need to pay the charge and their journeys will improve.</p> <p>Around a third of public car parking in the city centre and all of the city's 5,900 park and ride spaces will remain accessible without paying charge. Residents of Oxford and Oxfordshire will be eligible for 100 days and 25 days free travel respectively through the congestion charging points. The city centre is well served by bus and park and ride services. Both flows and congestion are high until 7pm on weekdays (the figures for "6pm" below are for the hour from 6pm to 7pm).</p> <p>Traffic flows and congestion are lower at weekends before 10am and from late afternoon onwards. However, having different operating times on weekdays and weekends would complicate the scheme and the signage, and reduce the income available for transport improvements. Reducing the operating hours also increases the risk of increasing congestion in the hour or two before the charges start and the hour or two after they finish as people re-time their journeys to avoid the charge.</p> <p>Few early visitors to the city centre would avoid paying if the charges started at 10am, because they would still incur the charge on their outbound journey if leaving later than 10am.</p>
<p><b>5. RICHARD PARNHAM</b></p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p>



Can you please explain why the baseline "DM-BR" NO2 pollution numbers in the Ricardo "Oxford traffic filters interim scheme" report repeatedly overestimates (or, to a lesser extent, underestimates) real-world 2024 NO2 pollution levels (as reported in the City Council's recently published Annual Air Quality annual status reports) in the vast majority of the locations set out in Annex 2 - thereby providing an unclear baseline against which to evaluate the possible pollution impact of the £5 daily charge?

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Given that the Botley Road was closed in April 2023 and shut for the entirety of 2024, why do you regard it better to use a "modelled" baseline version of "now" via "DM-BR", rather than a readily available — and far more robust - version of "now", using real-world pollution readings from

All transport modelling is subject to uncertainties. Our transport model is designed to assess the broad impacts of transport interventions. Forecasts for individual roads should therefore be treated with caution.

The Ricardo report estimates the air quality impacts of the proposed congestion charge by comparing modelled flows on selected road “links” under a congestion charge scenario with flows previously modelled for the traffic filters, for which full dispersion modelling was completed. The dispersion model used was validated against the latest measured air quality data available from before the Botley Road closure (2022).

Concentrations for the present scenario (Botley Road closed) and a scenario with Botley Road closed and £5 congestion charging points in place were estimated based on the forecast change in annual average daily traffic (AADT) from the traffic filter modelling. These estimates represent a reasonable approximation of the changes in nitrogen dioxide concentrations resulting from traffic flow changes caused by the congestion charge scheme. The limitations of the methodology are clearly noted in paragraph 2.2 of the report.

Differences between the “DM-BR” estimates and the city council’s latest published data are to be expected. Air quality is strongly influenced by numerous factors including weather and fleet changes, as well as by traffic flows. The Ricardo report provides an estimation of the impact of the Botley Road closure and congestion charge proposals based on traffic flow changes alone. The purpose of the report is to highlight where the congestion charging proposals is expected to improve or worsen air quality (relative to not implementing the scheme), and the methodology is entirely appropriate for this central purpose.

#### **ANSWER**

In a transport model, all scenarios are by definition modelled, and all comparisons are therefore by definition between model scenarios. Based models are validated against observed data, but creating and validating a based model is a lengthy and expensive process, and it wouldn't be a good use of funds to create a validated based model for the present temporary situation with the Botley Road closed because the purpose is to model the scenario when the Botley Road reopens.

We believe that the DM-BR scenario in the Ricardo Report provides a sufficiently robust representation of the current situation to model the broad impacts of a congestion charge,

2024?	which is what it is for.
<p><b>6. CITY COUNCILLOR AJAZ REHMAN</b></p> <p>Can Councillor Gant explain how your congestion charge plans, that are projected to significantly increase traffic levels and pollution on the Eastern bypass (directly alongside housing in Cowley) will help to reduce congestion in that part of Oxford and especially in the city ward of Lye Valley?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>All transport modelling is subject to uncertainties. Our transport model is designed to assess the broad impacts of transport interventions. Forecasts for individual roads should therefore be treated with caution.</p> <p>The congestion charge proposals will reduce congestion where it most affects bus passengers, other road users and residents. Like the trial traffic filters, it is not a magic wand and we have never claimed either scheme will reduce congestion everywhere.</p> <p>The traffic increases on the Eastern bypass are forecast to be in the 5-15% range, with a corresponding nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) increase (excluding the effects of background fleet improvement, weather and other factors) from 25.5 microgrammes per cubic metre to 27 microgrammes per cubic metre at the TF30 monitoring site at the end of Oliver Road immediately adjacent to the Eastern Bypass. However:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall, the number of dwellings adjacent to roads where traffic increases are forecast is far lower than the number of dwellings adjacent to roads where traffic reductions are forecast (including numerous dwellings in and around Hollow Way, in the Lye Valley ward)</li> <li>• Few dwellings are affected by traffic increases on the Eastern bypass, and any affected dwellings are some distance from the road.</li> <li>• In 2022 NO<sub>2</sub> at site TF30 was 34 microgrammes per cubic metre, so even with a small increase to 27 microgrammes per cubic metre, the air at this site would be significantly cleaner than three years ago.</li> <li>• The site is expected to continue to meet both the national target for NO<sub>2</sub> and the city council's local target of 30 microgrammes per cubic metre</li> <li>• There may be no increase at all at TF30 because non-traffic factors will also affect the</li> </ul>

	<p>actual future NO2 levels. For example, the Botley Road closure increased traffic flows on Abingdon Road by 16% between 2022 and 2023, but NO2 dropped from 21 to 18 microgrammes per cubic metre over the same period.</p>
<p><b>7. PETER WHITE</b></p> <p>Can you explain why the Ricardo report - which your Council commissioned - has focused its evaluation of traffic and pollution impacts of the planned £5 daily congestion charge on a side road (Ashhurst Way) in Rose Hill, but not on the far more important Rose Hill itself (near Newman Road) where there is both a traffic monitoring and pollution monitoring sensor?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>All transport modelling is subject to uncertainties. Our transport model is designed to assess the broad impacts of transport interventions. Forecasts for individual roads should therefore be treated with caution.</p> <p>The Ricardo report includes air pollution estimates at a sample of 39 sites across the city.</p> <p>Whilst not included in the Ricardo report, Rose Hill is included in the transport modelling report, which forecasts little change on Rose Hill. We would therefore expect no significant change in air quality on Rose Hill as a result of the scheme.</p>
<p><b>8. MEHMET KARAKUS</b></p> <p>What is the predicted traffic and congestion impact on Garsington Road as a result of Oxfordshire County Council's £5 congestion charge plans, especially at peak times – and what is the predicted pollution impact? Please be as specific as possible.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>All transport modelling is subject to uncertainties. Our transport model is designed to assess the broad impacts of transport interventions. Forecasts for individual roads should therefore be treated with caution.</p> <p>Between John Smith Dr and Hollow Way there is a predicted increase (total 2 way) of 1325 vehicles in a 24 hour period. Between A4142 and John Smith Dr there is a predicted increase of 2180 vehicles (2 way in a 24 hour period). These increases are in the region of 10-15% depending on the section of Garsington Road in question.</p> <p>In the AM peak (8-9:00) there is a predicted increase of 280 vehicles (two-way combined) between A4142 and John Smith Dr and 90 vehicle (2 way combined) increase between John Smith Dr and Hollow Way. The larger increase is in the region of 20-25%</p> <p>For the PM peak (17-18:00) the two-way flow increases are 350 and 330 vehicles for the respective sections of Garsington Road. The larger increase is in the region of 20-25%.</p>

	<p>Taking only traffic flow changes into account, we would expect these changes to increase nitrogen dioxide concentrations by around 5-6%. In 2024, the measured nitrogen dioxide level on Garsington Road was 14 microgrammes per cubic metre (down from 20 in 2022 and 17 in 2023). An increase of 6% would take this to 15 microgrammes per cubic metre (rounded up).</p> <p>However, there may be no pollution increase at all at because non-traffic factors will also affect the actual future NO2 levels. For example, the Botley Road closure increased traffic flows on Abingdon Road by 16% between 2022 and 2023, but NO2 dropped from 21 to 18 microgrammes per cubic metre over the same period.</p> <p>The congestion charge proposals will reduce congestion where it most affects bus passengers, other road users and residents. Like the trial traffic filters, it is not a magic wand and we have never claimed either scheme will reduce congestion everywhere.</p> <p>This scheme should be seen as part of a wider strategy to reduce congestion and improve public transport, walking and cycling across the city.</p>
<p><b>9. NICHOLAS HARDYMAN</b></p> <p>Building on the partial modelling data provided by Steer and Ricardo, can councillor Gant please provide me with the latest AM and PM peak time traffic numbers on Banbury Road (ideally focusing on the area between Davenant Road and the Cutteslowe Roundabout) - and also the predicted equivalent AM and PM peak time traffic number totals in the same location, if the £5 daily congestion charge is introduced?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>All transport modelling is subject to uncertainties. Our transport model is designed to assess the broad impacts of transport interventions. Forecasts for individual roads should therefore be treated with caution.</p> <p>In the “without charge” model there are 1,200 vehicles in the AM (8-9:00) and 1,160 vehicles in the PM (17-18:00) as a combined 2 way flow on Banbury Road between Cutteslowe roundabout and Davenant Rd.</p> <p>In the modelled scenario with a charge of £5, the total 2 way flow is predicted to be 1,250 in the AM (net increase of 50 vehicles an hour) and 1375 in the PM (net increase of 215 vehicles an hour).</p> <p>The congestion charge proposals will reduce congestion where it most affects bus passengers, other road users and residents. Like the trial traffic filters, it is not a magic wand and we have never claimed either scheme will reduce congestion everywhere.</p>

	<p>This scheme should be seen as part of a wider strategy to reduce congestion and improve public transport, walking and cycling across the city.</p>
<p><b>10. ADRIAN ARBIB</b></p> <p>Has OCC sought to establish what impact congestion charge proposals will have on the total vehicle miles driven in Oxford?</p> <p>If so, what is the estimated impact?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>You said that the model forecasts a 1 per cent reduction in the total vehicle miles driven in Oxford, including the Ring Road, as a result of the congestion charge proposals. Can I have the data that proves that assumption?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>All transport modelling is subject to uncertainties. Our transport model is designed to assess the broad impacts of transport interventions.</p> <p>The model forecasts a 1% reduction in the total vehicle miles driven in Oxford, including the ring road.</p> <p>The congestion charge proposals will reduce congestion where it most affects bus passengers, other road users and residents. Like the trial traffic filters, it is not a magic wand and we have never claimed either scheme will reduce congestion everywhere.</p> <p>This scheme should be seen as part of a wider strategy to reduce congestion and improve public transport, walking and cycling across the city.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>All of the model on which this modelling is based is published as part of the consultation and the modelling for the report.</p>
<p><b>11. SHEENA PREW</b></p> <p>Regarding the proposed Congestion Charge, what defines "frequent" in terms of "frequent hospital patients permit" eligibility, and what specific sensitive personal data or personal health information would need to be</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>All hospitals in Oxford will be accessible at all times without paying the congestion charge by choosing a route that does not pass through one of the six charging locations.</p> <p>All residents of Oxford will be eligible for 100 days free travel through the charging locations per year, while Oxfordshire residents will be eligible for 25. Permits are available for people with disabilities, for unpaid carers caring for someone outside their household, and for volunteer drivers taking people to hospital appointments.</p>

<p>shared with the Council?</p>	<p>No charges are payable at the two charging locations closest to the city's main hospitals between 9am and 3pm, or on Sundays.</p> <p>For patients who choose to drive through one of the congestion charging locations during the hours when the charge applies and don't have one of the other types of permit mentioned above, a "frequent hospital patient" permit is proposed.</p> <p>Patients would be eligible for a frequent hospital patient permit if they are required to attend a hospital in Oxford for planned medical appointments on at least three separate occasions in any 90 day period.</p> <p>Patients will be asked to upload a copy of their appointment letters and will be asked to redact confidential or sensitive medical information. We will only require the following details to be visible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patient/applicant name</li> <li>• Date, time and location of the appointments</li> </ul> <p>This information will be used solely to verify eligibility for the permit and will be handled in accordance with our data protection policy.</p>
<p><b>12. SAM HARDAKER</b></p> <p>Regarding the proposed Congestion Charge, can you please clarify how Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Oxford will be treated under the 2 permits per household rule? Specifically, how many Congestion Charge permits will each tenanted room be allocated, given that they're considered separate households for certain purposes (e.g., BBC license fee payments) and each tenanted</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Under the current proposals, there would be a limit of three permits per address in the Oxford Permit Area, and two permits per address in the Oxfordshire Permit Area. In common with controlled parking zone parking permit limits, the maximum applies per eligible address.</p> <p>HMO would be treated as a single address, with a limit of three permits for an address within the Oxford Permit Area. Each permit holder would be entitled to 100 days free travel per year through the congestion charging points.</p> <p>Further details of all permits are on our consultation webpage <a href="https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/congestion-charge">https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/congestion-charge</a></p>

room may need to use a car for essential journeys?	
<p><b>13. PHILLIPA JACKSON</b></p> <p>If the Oxford Congestion Charge goes ahead how will the subsequent increase in the number of cars on Marsh Lane affect staff, patient and visitor access to the John Radcliffe Hospital?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>All transport modelling is subject to uncertainties. Our transport model is designed to assess the broad impacts of transport interventions.</p> <p>The congestion charge is designed to improve access to the city's hospitals, by reducing congestion and improving access by bus, park and ride and active travel.</p> <p>Bus services to the John Radcliffe have recently been improved, including the new 600 park and ride service. These improvements have been made in anticipation of the approved traffic filter trial, for which the congestion charge is a temporary precursor. If the congestion charge and traffic filter trial don't proceed, the roads will remain congested and bus services are likely to get worse, not better.</p> <p>Our transport modelling forecasts a small traffic increase on Marsh Lane, in the region of 5%.</p> <p>The congestion charge is expected to significantly reduce traffic on Cherwell Drive. This should mean we are able to give more 'green time' to Marsh Lane at its signal-controlled junction with Cherwell Drive. We are also reviewing the traffic signals at the Marsh Lane with the aim of increasing capacity for traffic turning into and out of Marsh Lane. These changes should mitigate any additional delays on Marsh Lane resulting from the small forecast traffic increase and may even reduce delays compared to the existing situation.</p> <p>Together with wider congestion reduction, the availability of permits and public transport improvements resulting from the scheme, we therefore expect the congestion charge to significantly improve staff, patient and visitor access to the John Radcliffe hospital.</p> <p>If implemented, we will carefully monitor all impacts of the congestion charge, including any changes in congestion on Marsh Lane.</p>
<p><b>14. JENNY WELLS</b></p> <p>Why wasn't removal of the East</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The LTNs are County Council policy and support the County Council's vision to remove 1 in</p>



<p>Oxford LTNs considered by OCC officers as way of reducing congestion in Oxford city, given that the bus companies have directly blamed the East Oxford LTNs for an "immediate and profound collapse in service reliability and bus productivity across East Oxford" in a joint letter sent to OCC on 19 July 2023.</p>	<p>4 car trips in county by 2030 and accord with the adopted road hierarchy, which prioritises those walking and cycling over car drivers, many of whom are in single occupancy cars – the least efficient form of transport. They offer significant benefits to those living in (or walking and cycling through) the LTN streets which were previously dominated by through traffic. Bus operators support the broad intent of traffic restraint policies, including LTNs, which are part of a comprehensive package of measures to reduce congestion in the city to make walking, cycling and public transport the natural first choice for many trips.</p> <p>It is unfortunate that the County Council has not been able to implement the traffic filter trial due to Network Rail's ongoing works on Botley Road as this would have allowed us to build on the LTNs to tackle congestion on the city's main roads and address the bus operators' legitimate concerns about congestion affecting their services. That's why we are proposing a pragmatic and effective first step towards the traffic filters with the temporary congestion charge.</p> <p>In June 2011, the Oxford Mail reported that Oxford was the 13th most congested city in Europe (Cambridge was 48th), long before the LTNs were conceived. LTNs did not cause Oxford's congestion and removing them will not solve it.</p> <p>I'm grateful to Ms Wells for presenting a petition to the council in February on behalf of mobile tradespeople operating in the city, who are of course exempt from the congestion charge under the current proposals and will benefit from freer running traffic across Oxford if the scheme goes ahead, without having to pay the daily charge.</p>
<p><b>15. AMANDA CLARKE</b></p> <p>Regarding the proposed Congestion Charge, do you think it's a good use of already overburdened GP's to effectively become gatekeepers of your unpaid carers permit scheme, creating further stress on the NHS?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>According to the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, physical inactivity is associated with 1 in 6 deaths in the UK and is estimated to cost the UK £7.4 billion annually. Schemes like the proposed congestion charge are one of the best ways to get more people walking and cycling, whether for their whole journey or as part of a bus or park and ride journey. Far from placing stress on the NHS, schemes like this are essential to tackle the huge burden physical inactivity is placing on our entire health system.</p> <p>We are keen to recognise the needs of unpaid carers in our proposals, and we need a fair and transparent way for unpaid carers to prove their eligibility for a permit. The NHS already strongly encourages unpaid carers to register with their GP, so we are not asking people to</p>

	<p>do anything the NHS is not already recommending. We are engaging with GP practices during the consultation on the proposals and are happy to work with them to address any concerns they might have about additional pressures that might arise for their administrative teams.</p>
<p><b>16. RUSSELL WILLIAMSON</b></p> <p>I would like an answer to the question as to when this congestion charge was first conceived? The same question was asked on the Nextdoor social media site and Neil Fawcett initially answered saying it was after the County elections took place and not before.</p> <p>He was asked another question by someone else regarding the Botley Road fiasco and said the five weeks prior to the elections wasn't long enough to come up with the congestion plan.</p> <p>When it was pointed out that it had been less than five weeks since the County elections and they had suddenly formed this plan in less than five weeks, Neil Fawcett stopped replying.</p> <p>I would like to know when the County Council formulated the plans for this unfair and unnecessary congestion charge, and also why they failed to</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Since 2021, the county council administration has been very clear with its priorities to reduce traffic and prioritise those walking, cycling and using public transport. It has taken the necessary steps of progressing these aims by approving the traffic filter trial, which was due to commence on November 2024. However, due to Network Rail's prolonged work at Oxford station, the trial has not commenced as planned. The temporary congestion charge proposal is a variant of the traffic filter trial – instead of a prohibition through the 6 filters points, a £5 charge is being proposed.</p> <p>Since Network Rail announced the further delay to reopening Botley Road at the end of January preventing us from launching the traffic filters trial, and subsequent calls from the city council and the bus operators, amongst others, in February and March 2025, officers have been looking at ways to reduce traffic in the interim period.</p> <p>Now that we understand the feasibility and benefits of this proposed temporary interim scheme, making use of the traffic filters infrastructure, the council's cabinet has authorised a public consultation on the proposal.</p> <p>Until early May it was unclear whether a temporary congestion charge would be a) feasible b) effective and c) supported in principle by the council's new administration, which was not officially formed until 20 May. Indeed, DfT sign authorisation was not received until 19 June 2025. This authorisation is key for the temporary congestion charge to operate and be enforced.</p> <p>It would have been presumptuous to present the option any sooner than we did.</p>

<p>mention this plan prior to the County elections?</p>	
<p><b>17. NASREEN MAJEED</b></p> <p>As a Marston resident, I am concerned that the proposed congestion charge will exacerbate local traffic congestion.</p> <p>Can Councillor Gant explain how plans, that are projected to increase traffic level and pollution on the already frequently congested residential Marsh Lane, by directing it away from the largely free flowing Marston Ferry Road, will help to reduce congestion in Oxford?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>How will marshalling be able to cope with the additional traffic diverted from Marston ferry Road? Marsh Lane is already heavily congested at peak times.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>All transport modelling is subject to uncertainties. Our transport model is designed to assess the broad impacts of transport interventions. Our transport modelling forecasts a small traffic increase on Marsh Lane, in the region of 5%.</p> <p>The congestion charge is expected to significantly reduce traffic on Cherwell Drive. It should therefore be possible to give more ‘green time’ to Marsh Lane at its junction with Cherwell Drive. We are also reviewing the traffic signals at the Marsh Lane with the aim of increasing capacity for traffic turning into and out of Marsh Lane. These changes should mitigate any additional delays on Marsh Lane resulting from the small forecast traffic increase and may even reduce delays and air pollution compared to the existing situation.</p> <p>The central section of Marston Ferry Road may be free-flowing, but at either end there is frequent peak-time congestion. At the western end of Marston Ferry Road and on Cherwell Drive, traffic speeds between 8am and 9am are almost 60% slower than in free-flowing conditions. Getting buses moving along the B4495 (of which Marston Ferry Road is part) at peak times is critical to improving bus and park and ride services to the hospitals and other workplaces in north and east Oxford.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>The written answer addresses that specific point.</p> <p>The significant improvement in traffic flows on Marston Ferry Road will result in potentially beneficial changes at Cherwell Drive and for the phasing of the signals there, which will have a knock-on effect on Marsh Lane.</p>
<p><b>18. DISTRICT CLLR SALLY POVOLOTSKY</b></p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p>

<p>Would the Leader of the Council please explain why the families and carers of pupils at Woodeaton School were not informed in advance of the decision to close and relocate the school due to maintenance and repair costs, and instead learned of this significant news through a BBC article published on 6th June 2025?</p> <p>Does the Leader agree that this method of communication—or lack thereof—was deeply distressing for these families, particularly given the needs of neurodiverse children for whom stability, familiarity, and routine are vital to both their learning and emotional wellbeing?</p> <p>In light of this, parents are calling for a thorough and transparent review into the events leading up to the ‘chaotic’ OFSTED inspection in October 2023, and an honest assessment of how a once ‘Outstanding’ and much-loved school deteriorated to ‘Inadequate’ in such a short space of time.</p>	<p>Thank you for the question. The Council is committed to improving the outcomes for children and young people across the county. Woodeaton Manor School is a grade 2* listed building which is not fit for purpose for our most vulnerable children and young people in the 21st century. Proposals to relocate the school have been in the public domain since February. Our plans for the future relocation of the school are at a very initial stage and will take a number of years to develop. I can understand that for parents and their children, the prospect of moving the school is disturbing. When these plans are firmer, we will involve parents and the school community on how we move forward.</p> <p>Ofsted is external to the Council and is responsible for its own judgements. Prior to the inspection, the local authority raised its concerns about the leadership and management of the school with the governing body. The foundation governing body was responsible for running of the school during the period referred to in the question. The governing body resigned in the Autumn 2023.</p> <p>The Council remains committed to improving outcomes for all our children and young people and in particular providing excellent governance to ensure an education fit for all children.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Will the Leader now confirm</p>	<p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>The whole question of what happens to the school is under review.</p>

<p>whether the Council will commit to a formal review or task force to look into the handling of Woodeaton Manor school over the last 24 months, and whether she will offer full apologies to families for the lack of transparency throughout this whole process?</p>	
<p><b>19. CITY COUNCILLOR ANNE STARES</b></p> <p>Given that the traffic filters scheme anticipated an awareness raising lead time of three and a half months, can Cllr Gant confirm how long residents would have to register for permits before the scheme goes live, if the congestion scheme is approved in September?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Apologies that this was missed off the agenda.</p> <p>As the temporary congestion charge is proposed as an urgent measure, the pre-registration period would be shorter than previously envisaged for the traffic filters – likely around 8 weeks. An intensive communications campaign will accompany the pre-registration period.</p> <p>This means the charge would start around early November. The start date for the trial traffic filters (before it was delayed again due to the Botley Road closure) was November 2024.</p> <p>For the first six weeks after enforcement of the congestion charging points starts, a warning letter will be sent for a driver's first offence. The letter will highlight that permits are available for certain categories of road user. Any further offences will result in a penalty charge notice.</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 NATHAN LEY**

In light of the recent Government Spending Review - in which they assume (and therefore insist) councils raise council tax by up to 5% every year for the rest of this Parliament - could the Cabinet Member for Finance set out what this assumption reveals about the Government's approach to funding local services — and what the implications are for residents here in Oxfordshire

**SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Could the Cabinet Member for Finance tell us any more about the forthcoming rebalance of funding from shire counties toward metropolitan councils and what effect that will have on us?

**COUNCILLOR DAN LEVY, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PROPERTY AND TRANSFORMATION**

We appreciate the Government's efforts in providing additional funding to local government. It recognises local government as being under significant financial pressure.

At the same time, choices made by the Government have increased the costs of local government, for instance by increasing National Insurance contributions and only partially compensating councils. There will be costs incurred in Local Government Reorganisation; whatever model ends up being picked by the government.

It is very concerning to see the expectation that the bulk of increases in funding, to pay for local services, will be funded through council tax rather than through government funding. The expectation that council tax will increase by 5% every year for the next three years is a significant burden on taxpayers and removes autonomy from councils. This approach places an undue strain on residents who are already facing financial challenges. Council Tax is by no means the fairest tax and has little relationship to ability to pay.

We will continue to provide services to residents who need them, while continually looking for efficiencies in how the Council operates but expect significant pressure on our budgets.

**ANSWER**

There are no further details yet. However, it is likely that there will be a rebalancing toward metropolitan councils and Oxfordshire will have less money as a result.

<p><b>2. COUNCILLOR GLYNIS PHILLIPS</b></p> <p>I first raised the safety concerns of residents of Barton Park in this chamber in December 2023. At that meeting I was told that a 'no U-turn Traffic Regulation Order was in place to help prevent unauthorised vehicle movements. Can the Cabinet Member say how many drivers have been sanctioned as a result of this order being in place?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>328 vehicles have been identified contravening the banned U turn at Barton Park. Breakdown of PCNs below.</p> <p>Warnings – 68 (early days of scheme where 1<sup>st</sup> offence received a warning notice rather than a PCN (legal requirement))  PCNs – 249  Unable to locate owner so no warning/PCN issued - 11</p>
<p><b>3. COUNCILLOR GLYNIS PHILLIPS</b></p> <p>The safety concerns of residents of Barton Park are not going away and we are fed up of waiting for years for any effective action and this reflects the lack of urgency shown by the administration in putting safety measures in place. Can the Cabinet Member advise when speed cameras are going to be installed at the Barton Park junction and whether the installation of safety barriers at the pedestrian crossing points are being considered and costed?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The installation of safety barriers has been investigated taking account of the relevant national guidance and site observations together with a detailed review of the reported collisions. This work indicates that barriers would not materially reduce risks, but we are continuing to monitor safety here closely.</p> <p>The planned red light / speed on green safety camera installation is being procured by Thames Valley Police with the County Council providing a financial contribution and we are looking forward to it being operational as soon as possible, although with no firm date for this currently available.</p> <p>I do not accept the questioner's characterisation of the administration's actions. I would remind her that Oxford City Council, as planning authority, allowed a proposed footbridge over the A40, included in some early visualisations of the Barton Park development, to be dropped. This council, as highways authority, thus had to respond to a planning decision to build a large development essentially the other side of a four-line A road with only at-grade crossing. It is always infinitely harder to retrofit poor decisions than to get them right in the first place.</p> <p>The question about safety barriers was asked and answered at Full Council in September 2024.</p> <p>I continue to discuss this issue regularly and in detail with officers and other</p>



<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>How would the Cabinet Member characterise the speed of implementation for these safety measures?</p>	<p>stakeholders and remain committed to delivering the best possible outcomes for residents within the parameters available.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>This Council takes this issue immensely seriously, and we are doing what is available for us to do within the circumstances that we have been bequeathed.</p>
<p><b>4. COUNCILLOR NICK FIELD-JOHNSON</b></p> <p>Please can I get a response on the Carterton Underpass.</p> <p>It is continually full of water and no solution is being put forward. Can I ask for a response and what is planned? This conversation has been ongoing for at least six years.....</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</b></p> <p>Officers arranged for a tanker to visit the site in April to remove the water. They are also working to contact the District Council to arrange urgent clearance of the rubbish and detritus which have accumulated.</p> <p>However, this will only provide temporary improvement. There are on-going issues with drainage and high ground water levels such that the pumps are unable to clear the volumes of water which typically accumulate.</p> <p>Investigation of possible options for a long-term solution are ongoing.</p>
<p><b>5. COUNCILLOR THOMAS ASHBY</b></p> <p>There have been long awaited plans for a new fire station building in Carterton, West Oxfordshire. Please can the Cabinet Member update Council as to whether land has been secured and when this project is likely to start?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JENNY HANNABY, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND SAFETY</b></p> <p>The site has been secured by way of a section 106 agreement and at present the service is operating out of a good but temporary location whilst plans are finalised for the new building. The Fire and Rescue Service recently conducted a review of their emergency response model which will lead into both a service and asset strategy. The review involved modelling all of the sites and there are a few opportunities that have arisen. The service is currently reviewing all of these prior to making any decisions. This review will be going to cabinet shortly to seek support for proceeding to public consultation. Once that is complete, we can press ahead with the relevant property projects that emerge, including Carterton.</p>

## **6. COUNCILLOR THOMAS ASHBY**

We are seeing more and more vape shops pop up within our communities. These vape shops are increasingly trying to lure young people in by not only selling vapes, but they are also now selling knock-off trainers and toys in order to target a younger audience. Can the Cabinet Member tell me what trading standards are doing to protect our young people from this trade?

## **COUNCILLOR JENNY HANNABY, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND SAFETY**

Our trading standards team, working with colleagues in public health, have been conducting a significant amount of work in relation to both the supply of non-compliant vapes and vapes being sold to children, much of this has been reported in local and national press. Since 2022, this has included conducting over 120 targeted inspections, seizing over 12,000 vapes and visiting 50 premises as part of underaged test purchasing exercises. 13 businesses have been prosecuted or faced other alternative enforcement actions and there are a significant number of matters either within the court process or under active investigation. The team have also submitted a number of license reviews, to relevant licensing authorities.

Since the introduction of the ban on single use vapes on the 1<sup>st</sup> June, the team have also contacted over 180 businesses to provide written advice (pre-ban), held an amnesty event for businesses with stocks of single use vapes, inspected 24 businesses post-ban and seized or collected over 1,000 single use vapes.

However, there is very limited legislative controls regarding the marketing of such products. The council does not have the ability to prevent shops selling vapes in close proximity to schools or selling alongside other products that might be attractive to children and the council (as an upper tier authority) does not have the ability to apply for closure orders on retail premises used for public nuisance or disorder – such as those found to be persistently selling illegal products.

The Government's Tobacco and Vapes Bill seeks to introduce restrictions on the advertising and sponsorship of vapes and nicotine products and will also allow ministers to regulate the flavours, packaging, and display of vapes so that they do not appeal to children. We will certainly be watching closely how ministers choose to use such powers. We are also pleased to report that Oxfordshire County Council will be benefiting from the decision of the Department of Health and Social Care to fund approximately 80 Trading Standards Professional Apprenticeships across England and Wales.

Finally, if any of your constituents has specific information about either the sale of illegal vapes or the sale of vapes to children, we would encourage them to report this

	<p>to trading standards, via the national consumer helpline using the details below:</p> <p>Citizens Advice consumer helpline: 0808 223 1133  (Relay UK textphone: 18001 then 0808 223 1133)  Lines are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Lines are closed on bank holidays.</p>
<p><b>7. COUNCILLOR THOMAS ASHBY</b></p> <p>Please can the Cabinet Member inform me of a breakdown of all S106 funding available in Witney West &amp; Ducklington, Witney South &amp; Central and Witney North &amp; East, whilst providing details of what this money is going to be spent on?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Is the dashboard available and can it be shared with us?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</b></p> <p>The total held funding for the Witney divisions and the assigned use is as follows:</p> <p>Adult learning - £803.76  Countryside - £136,900  Education - £10,344,221  Libraries - £308,737  Social and Healthcare - £102,694  Transport- £3,452,091  Waste - £207,154</p> <p>Additional details on s106 funds are now published in the Members' s106 dashboard.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes, the dashboard is available. It went out on Thursday, 26 June, by email, and on Monday, 8 July, I asked officers to place it on the Members' area online.</p>
<p><b>8. COUNCILLOR TOM GREENAWAY</b></p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member confirm what steps the County Council are taking to engage with the Environment Agency to fix and reopen the weir footpath across the River Thames at Abingdon? When are residents likely to have access again to this essential and much-loved walking route?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The Thames Path Partnership has established a Bridges Working Group in collaboration with the Environment Agency, which is facilitated by Oxfordshire County Council as the National Trail host. The Environment Agency is currently awaiting the results of the latest engineering inspection report of the Abingdon Weir Walkway before providing further update. The walkway is closed due to safety concerns identified in a previous investigation. Oxfordshire County Council continues to maintain open communication with the Environment Agency, fully recognising the</p>

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Does the Cabinet Member agree with me that it is vital that national government funds repairs to infrastructure, so that these walking routes can be protected for the future, and we don't end up with a scenario where a footpath is closed for years?</p>	<p>walkway's significance and popularity among local residents and users of the National Trail.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes.</p>
<p><b>9. COUNCILLOR LEE EVANS</b></p> <p>The appalling condition of the A417 between Stanford in the Vale and Wantage has inconvenienced local residents for far too long. There is considerable relief that some of the road has finally been resurfaced, but residents are anxious that if the flooding is not addressed then the road will become impassable again in the winter. Can the Cabinet Member for Transport Management provide an update on action to reduce flooding on the A417 between Stanford in the Vale and Wantage and reassure my residents he is doing everything he possibly can to ensure flooding does not return?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Drainage investigation works have been in progress on the A417, between Silver Lane and Woodhill Lane, since 9 June 2025. The work has been complex, with the discovery of buried headwalls, chambers and historic ditch lines with the drainage system filled with heavily compacted silt.</p> <p>The gullies and associated pipework have been thoroughly cleaned and jetted, and the system has been surveyed using CCTV. Vegetation on the verges has been cut back to expose the ditches, and an ecological survey was procured to check for protected species throughout the site beforehand. Desilting work has commenced on three ditches in the vicinity of Mellors garage.</p> <p>Additionally, repairs to gullies and their immediate surroundings have been completed using a proprietary repair method.</p> <p>Senior Managers have met with Local Councillors on site to keep them informed of the current situation and conversations are ongoing between the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA), District Council and Landowners who are working together to mitigate further flood risk.</p> <p>I can certainly assure the questioner that I am doing all I can to mitigate and minimise the risk of recurrence: as noted above I had the pleasure of visiting the location in person with local councillors, officers and contractors just a few weeks</p>

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Is the cabinet member now satisfied that the full causes of flooding on the A417 between Stanford and the Vale and Wantage are fully understood, and that all necessary action can be taken?</p>	<p>ago. However, as also noted in the paragraph above, this issue is not unique in involving responsibility on the part of multiple stakeholders, including riparian landowners and other local landowners, so complete solutions are not by any means entirely within the gift of this council. The conversations and actions referred to above continue.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>No, I cannot give that guarantee, but every action is being taken that can be.</p>
<p><b>10.COUNCILLOR LEE EVANS</b></p> <p>Last year Oxfordshire topped the list of local authorities with unspent developer contributions, with £287.5 million being kept by the Council rather than spent improving our communities. Can the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Transformation confirm how much of that money relates to projects which were undertaken in the Kingston &amp; Stanford division?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DAN LEVY, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PROPERTY AND TRANSFORMATION</b></p> <p>Over the four years from 2020/21, we have spent £118m in s106 contributions, including £90m on education schemes, £24.3m on transport including bus services, and £1m on libraries.</p> <p>The capital programme, as presented to Cabinet on 25 March 2025, outlines a further £92m in planned S106 expenditure across 2025/26 and 2026/27, including £66m for schools to support the Pupil Place Plan</p> <p>It is the case that we hold S106 funding (£236m as of April 2024), but it is not the case that this is “unspent”.</p> <p>Developer funds (here and at all councils) are held in line with legally binding agreements and are often related to large and complex projects.</p> <p>These often assemble funding from multiple developments over many years.</p> <p>For example, the construction of a new secondary school will require tens of millions, often collected from many different sites. However, the school will not become viable operationally until a substantial percentage of the new homes contributing to it have actually been built and occupied. Indeed, opening the school early would risk the</p>

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member commit to working with me, as well as the Cabinet Member for Place, Environment and Climate Action, to get Section 106 money intended for the Kingston and Stanford division to the communities there?</p>	<p>viability of other near-by schools until there are sufficient pupils in the area. Therefore, funding is held on behalf of the community, until there is sufficient demand to build and open the school.</p> <p>We have been very effective at securing contributions from developers over a prolonged period and we are working hard to accelerate our delivery of infrastructure so that we can continue to meet community needs, as most recently reported to the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee in April 2025. To do that we are updating systems, processes and governance so that we become better and faster at deliver.</p> <p>Fundamentally the system, for financing community infrastructure in England set down by national planning rules needs to be looked at afresh. We are locked into a system of negotiations and legal complexity that slows down delivery. We argue that infrastructure should be funded at the start of development, not at the end, and for more effective mechanisms to capture the value created through development on behalf of new and growing communities.</p> <p>£4.1m of S106 funding is held for the Kingston &amp; Stanford division.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes.</p>
<p><b>11. COUNCILLOR JAMES ROBERTSHAW</b></p> <p>Would the Leader find out what role town and parish council are likely to play any Council reorganisations?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>As the first tier of local government, town and parish councils play an essential role in the day to day lives of our residents. For many months, we have been listening to Town and Parish Councils via their representative organisation, the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils. They want a strong voice in the discussions associated with local government reorganisation, and some of the larger town councils have let us know that they are keen to explore codesigning and delivering hyper local services at a hyper local level.</p>

	<p>Our resident and wider stakeholder engagement is now open, and we are keen to hear the views and ambitions of everyone in this great county – especially Town and Parish Councils - for a future Oxfordshire Council.</p>
<p><b>12. COUNCILLOR JAMES ROBERTSHAW</b></p> <p>Regarding the Witney High Street changes, would the Councillor please advise how much money has been spent so far out of the £1.98 million from the Active Travel Grant?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The total spend to date on the Witney project is £515,443.</p>
<p><b>13. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION</b></p> <p>Please can you confirm when the access to the Park &amp; Ride site at Eynsham is likely to be completed?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Is the Cabinet Member able to confirm whether it will be a roundabout or traffic lights to get in?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The access road and junction to the Eynsham Park and Ride will be delivered as part of the A40 Eynsham Park and Ride to Wolvercote project.</p> <p>The A40 Eynsham Park and Ride to Wolvercote scheme completed its public engagement activity earlier this year and is in the process of submitting documents for planning. Subject to the planning activities completing successfully, the project will look to begin construction in early 2026 with the priority being the construction of the Park and Ride junction. Once safe to do so, the Park and Ride will be opened and made operational, which is planned for 2027. Further updates on the progress of the scheme will be shared regularly with stakeholders.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>No.</p>
<p><b>14. COUNCILLOR LEE EVANS</b></p> <p>For families of children with Special Education</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR SEAN GAUL, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE</b></p> <p>Thank you for the question. The Council is committed to ensuring the very best</p>



<p>Needs &amp; Disabilities, the delays in receiving an education, health and care (EHC) plan is a great frustration. Can the Cabinet Member for Children &amp; Young People confirm what percentage of EHC plans are currently being completed within the target timeframe (on a comparable basis, in the context of the past five years)? Thank you.</p>	<p>outcomes for all our children and young people. We recognise that some families find the system frustrating and this has been recognised nationally as well as locally.</p> <p>At the time of the last inspection in 2023 – according to the SEN2 data, 4% of EHCPs were completed within 20 weeks. The most recent SEND data shows our performance as 38.5%. this is higher than our statistical neighbours and the SouthEast average (33.8% and 38.2% respectively). However, it is lower than the national figure (46.4%). Although we are not completing all EHCPs within the 20 weeks deadline, the majority are completed within 30 weeks (94%). Our focus is on ensuring high <b>quality</b> EHCPs working with parents and schools so that the plan accurately reflects the child’s needs. We have invested significantly in our Educational Psychology service and additional case workers so we can continue to improve our performance. We believe a focus on getting the plan right for the child is of paramount importance, even if it takes a little longer.</p> <p>We have improved our timeliness performance despite increasing demand for plans. Since the inspection, we have witnessed a 24% increase in demand in 2023 and a 25% increase in 2024. Across the last five years, there has been a 62% increase in demand. At the time of the original SEND reforms in 2014, Oxfordshire had roughly 2000 pupils with EHCPs. By the end of 2025, we estimate that there will be over 8000 pupils.</p> <p>In order to deal with the increase in demand we have taken effective action, making our schools more inclusive through funding an additional 20 enhanced pathways from September 2025 ,investing in capital through an expansion of resource bases and rolling out new special schools across the county. This shows our commitment to continuing to improve outcomes for all our children and young people.</p>
<p><b>15. COUNCILLOR GARETH EPPS</b></p> <p>Many of the communities in the North Oxfordshire villages I represent want to see better public transport. Express buses to Oxford take an hour to travel 14 miles.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Oxfordshire has historically had the highest bus use per capita of any shire county in England. However, despite comparatively high bus use and a well-developed bus network, bus services can sometimes be too slow, infrequent or unreliable to meet people’s needs.</p>

Should the temporary congestion charge measure go ahead, what are the possible steps that could be taken to make transport from North Oxfordshire more accessible and better?

Traffic congestion deals a “dual blow” to bus services: it makes buses slow and unreliable, meaning fewer people use them, and hugely increases bus service operating costs. Over time this can lead to circle of decline, with service frequencies being cut and services withdrawn entirely.

Whilst the proposed temporary congestion charge (if implemented) won’t directly improve bus journey times outside the city, it should reduce delays on certain sections of the Banbury Road of route S4 from Banbury to Oxford (via Deddington and other villages).

As part of the ongoing congestion charge consultation we’re asking for feedback on what the income raised by the scheme could be spent on (by law it must be spent on transport improvements). This could include schemes to reduce the cost of park and ride and improved bus services. If this scheme goes ahead, we will finalise an investment plan taking the consultation feedback into account.

Whilst I can’t promise specific improvements for the S4 and other buses serving Deddington and surrounding villages will be included in the investment plan, those travelling into Oxford by bus or park and ride from those areas should see some journey time and reliability improvements, and potentially reduced park and ride costs.

In the longer term, with the planned Oxford traffic filters, zero emission zone and workplace parking levy in place along with countywide investment in bus infrastructure and services through our Bus Service Improvement Plan, we hope to create the conditions for interurban bus routes like the S4 to develop and thrive, with improved frequencies, newer vehicles, and faster, more reliable journey times.

I would draw the questioner’s attention to recommendation (c) of the cabinet decision of June 17 2025, which resolved to “**Request officers to develop an ‘income spending strategy’ which will focus the net surplus income on reducing the costs of bus travel, including potential park and ride incentives, in accordance with relevant legislation.**” I look forward to working with all councillors who support the visionary ambition of the scheme to improve people’s lives on exactly how that can best be done.

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member confirm that this measure is going to be designed to serve all bus users, regardless of where they live?</p>	<p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes.</p>
<p><b>16. COUNCILLOR NATHAN LEY</b></p> <p>With several library refurbishments across the county recently - including Chinnor, Goring and Henley - what has been the impact of this on usage and footfall?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR NEIL FAWCETT, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES</b></p> <p>This administration is committed to investing in our libraries so that more people use them for traditional library services, for new services and so that they become hubs for community activity, working with local partners.</p> <p>I'm delighted to report that the initial impact of our recent development projects has been wholly positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Henley - reopened in early April 2025 following a refurbishment - Visits up by around 40% (May 2025 compared to May 2024).</li> <li>• Chinnor - reopened in late March 2024 following refurbishment - Visits up by 148% (Apr/May/Jun 2024/25 compared to Q1 2023/24).</li> <li>• Goring - reopened in mid-November 2024 following refurbishment - Visits up by 15% (Q4 Jan/Feb/Mar 2025 compared to Q4 2024). For note, this growth has continued into 2025/26, but the overall size/opening hours of this library compromises usage to a fair degree, and we have plans to extend this building through Community Infrastructure Levy investment in 2027.</li> </ul> <p>This follows the trend seen after other recent refurbishments, including those in Faringdon, Wheatley, Botley, Bicester, Summertown, and Westgate.</p> <p>More library projects are on the way, including Witney which is currently being refurbished.</p> <p>All these projects have transformed the library space and have reduced the carbon</p>

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Does the Cabinet Member agree that we can be proud of all our county's libraries and the work that they do, including the Abingdon Library?</p>	<p>emissions of the buildings too.</p> <p>My thanks go to our Library and Property teams, to the brilliant designers, to the parish and town councils that have supported the projects and to our library friends groups.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes. Thanks are due to library staff, and to the Libraries Service for their work refurbishing libraries. The Director for Public Health and Communities and the Head of Libraries have visited Abingdon Library, which is massively well used, and we are actively looking at opportunities either for refurbishment or redevelopment of the site, or for alternative premises in the future.</p>
<p><b>17. COUNCILLOR SAJ MALIK</b></p> <p>According to Oxfordshire County Council's own traffic count in 2024 which shows more cars in Abingdon, Thame, Eynsham and Bicester and other Oxfordshire Towns. Why is the Council undertaking a consultation on the congestion charge &amp; bus filters only in Oxford and not in other areas? Why Oxford?</p> <p><b>(Charts attached below)</b></p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Congestion is by no means unique to Oxford and we aim to tackle it across the county. However, Oxford must be the top priority because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's highly congested compared to most other parts of the county (only Abingdon is similar)</li> <li>• 173,000 vehicles enter or leave Oxford each day – almost twice as many as Banbury, the county's second largest settlement</li> <li>• 70% of all bus commuting journeys made in Oxfordshire start or end in Oxford and suffer delays because of Oxford traffic</li> <li>• High traffic levels in the city hamper efforts to improve bus services, cycle routes and pedestrian crossings (which everyone says they want)</li> <li>• Oxford has narrow streets and high levels of walking and cycling, meaning traffic-related air pollution affects many more people than in other parts of Oxfordshire</li> <li>• The city's bus operators have invested over £40m in new electric buses on the understanding the council would take effective action to improve bus operating conditions in the city. The council must keep its end of the bargain.</li> </ul> <p>Directly comparing traffic volumes between settlements is difficult due to differences between their road networks. However, taking traffic crossing 'outer cordons' – an</p>

imaginary ring around each settlement – as rough guide, in 2022/3 the figures for the county's three largest settlements were as follows:

Place	Vehicles crossing outer 'cordon' per day, 2022/3
Oxford	173,000
Banbury	93,000
Abingdon	80,000
Other smaller towns and villages	Limited data, but significantly fewer

Average morning rush hour traffic speeds provide an indicator of congestion:

Place	Average AM peak traffic speed (A & B roads, miles per hour, 2024)
Oxford	10.4
Banbury	15.4
Abingdon	10.2
Witney	18.2
Bicester	14.6

#### SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

Why are the traffic filters being implemented in Oxford City and Oxford East first?

#### ANSWER

The locations of traffic filters were decided over a very long period of time by a joint working group of members from this Council and from Oxford City Council. The reasons they were chosen have been outlined very clearly around reducing through traffic in the city, and that will affect wards in North Oxford as much as anywhere else.

#### 18. COUNCILLOR SAJ MALIK

Many Cowley residents and business owners feel they have no say in what happens in their own

#### COUNCILLOR NEIL FAWCETT, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

There is a myriad of ways in which residents of Cowley, whether they are one of the thousands of ordinary people who regularly cycle, plumbers, grocery shop owners,

neighbourhood and are made to feel like they are a nuisance when they try to get involved. Cycling activist groups are named council stakeholders and have a disproportionate influence over decision making which impacts our community. Most of them don't even live in Cowley. Why are ordinary folk not included in these discussions - where are the local plumbers, the Temple Cowley grocery shop owners, older people, the less able and faith group representatives? Indeed, even elected representatives such as myself are often the last to know about changes being made to our divisions. This should not happen, and I ask Cllr Fawcett what efforts can be made to treat us as partners in decision making?

older people, less able people or people of faith, can influence decisions that affect their community. (Many of the thousands of cyclists in Cowley will also be members of those other groups listed too.)

Every significant change in county council services for Cowley residents, including any highways, traffic or active travel schemes, will have been preceded by an appropriate consultation process. The wide range of current public consultations can be seen at <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/>. We routinely see relatively high levels of engagement with our consultations.

We also utilise many other forms of engagement with residents and businesses on local schemes. For example:

- In the [decision meeting](#) for Westbury Crescent, the Chair cited the proposal as “a good example of co-production with local residents, officers and local Councillors to ensure that the details are right.”
- We have established a co-design group for the East Oxford Active Neighbourhoods that has invited a cross-section of representatives, with insight from the area including representatives of elderly groups, accessibility groups, business groups and faith groups. A separate county councillor steering group kept local county councillors fully updated on this project. We are currently planning to undertake local engagement with more local representatives later this year.
- We undertook an informal consultation on early proposals for Hollow Way parking. This included a walk through the area and listening to business owners. We are currently reviewing the outputs from this process. There would be further local engagement on any further proposals here.

Every county councillor has numerous opportunities to influence decisions on behalf of their constituents, including questions at council, like this one, or by asking questions or speaking at committee meetings, direct contact with officers etc.

No amount of consultation and/or engagement will result in everyone being happy with every decision. Clearly there are strongly held opposing views on some issues. In those cases, some people will end up feeling unhappy with the outcome, but that does not necessarily mean there was any failure to consult.

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>How come anti-car lobbies have been allowed to dictate transport policy?</p>	<p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>It is not helpful to characterise people as pro- or anti-car or pro- or anti-bike. The majority of cyclists in Oxford, of whom there are tens of thousands, are also drivers. A very large proportion of drivers in Oxford are also cyclists or pedestrians or bus-users or taxi-users.</p> <p>As a Council, we have an agreed policy on transport and will work with any group to help develop them, but no-one group has special access.</p> <p>If any one group is unhappy with a decision, it does not mean there was anything wrong with the consultative process.</p>
<p><b>19. COUNCILLOR DAVID HENWOOD</b></p> <p>Some London boroughs have successfully reduced initial assessment waiting times to under six months. Will the Cabinet Member consider a cross-party initiative to visit these boroughs, with a view to developing a collaborative strategy that could help us reduce assessment waiting times here in Oxfordshire?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR SEAN GAUL, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE</b></p> <p>Thank you for the question. We are always keen to consider new initiatives so thank you for drawing this to our attention. We have been in touch with the ICB and they are keen to work with us on this. We will report back to Council in due course.</p>
<p><b>20. COUNCILLOR DAVID HENWOOD</b></p> <p>Given that 1,266 bike thefts were reported in Oxford between November 2022 and November 2023, with clear seasonal spikes in May and June, and considering that for lower-income families bicycles are often essential and increasingly unaffordable to replace, what specific measures are being taken—or planned—to ensure equitable access to secure, affordable bike storage and protection across all neighbourhoods, particularly</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>We're currently working with the City Council to install a number of new public cycle parking racks across the city. We've got a long list of requests that have come from residents and councillors, and we've used this as a starting point when considering locations. These racks are all being funded through the City Council's CIL funded Cycling Infrastructure Fund.</p> <p>A total of 56 additional racks have already been installed through this funding stream, providing parking for 112 bicycles across Oxford.</p>

<p>those with limited private space or high theft rates?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member also consider secure bicycle parking and parking for scooters at bus stops to expand the network?</p>	<p>We're in the process of producing and finalising the drawings for the next set of proposals that will be covered by the funding, and based on the proposals, a maximum of 61 racks (122 spaces) could be delivered, subject to consultation and approval.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the funding won't be able to deliver all of the suggested locations on the long list. That being said, it's useful to have this long-list should any additional funding become available in the future. We can share the list of requests we've received that details the status of each request and its location if that would be helpful.</p> <p>In terms of permission for cycle racks, we're going through the Traffic Regulation Order process for any on-carriageway locations which is subject to a statutory 28-day public consultation and a report is taken to Cabinet Member Decisions (Transport Management) for a final decision. For cycle racks on footways, there is no statutory consultation process, but the City Council has been working with us (County) to get technical sign-off on the locations and layouts, and some local frontage consultations will take place.</p> <p>I am delighted to see Cllr Henwood acknowledging the vital importance of non-car travel modes, particularly cycling, to many in our city, and I look forward to working with him on continuing to make this option safer, easier and more convenient.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes.</p>
<p><b>21. COUNCILLOR SAJ MALIK</b></p> <p>How much is the Council spending on the consultation on the congestion charge &amp; why is the Council consulting when the scheme is temporary?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The introduction of congestion charging points – even temporary ones – is a major decision with significant implications for residents, visitors and businesses. We want to hear views from as many people as possible before making decisions about whether and how to introduce the scheme. Consultation is also a legal requirement for a road user charging scheme.</p>



<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member guarantee that he will respect and listen to the outcome of the consultation?</p>	<p>The consultation has been prepared and managed in-house to keep costs to a minimum. Officers are working on all aspects of the scheme, not just the consultation, so it is not possible to itemise the consultation costs.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes.</p>
<p><b>22. COUNCILLOR JAMES PLUMB</b></p> <p>Many families of children with Special Educational Needs &amp; Disabilities feel deeply let down and concerned by the decision to scrap the dedicated Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement. Can the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People confirm how many children and young people in Oxfordshire with SEND are currently not accessing full-time education and how this compares to the previous five years?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR SEAN GAUL, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE</b></p> <p>Thank you for the question. Our focus on special educational needs remains strong. Recent feedback from inspectors is that we are very much on the right track. As such we believe it is now the right moment to have the cabinet member for children's services focusing on SEND directly alongside all the other hugely important services for children and young people provided by the County Council.</p> <p>In terms of children and young people with SEND, for some of these children full-time education is not appropriate to meet their needs. For some children, full time education at school is not suitable. For example, children who receive EOTAS packages or are electively home educated may not be educated 'full-time' since this would not be supportive of meeting their needs. Currently we have over 700 children and young people who access alternative education provision. Not all of these will have SEND. Roughly 8% of children and young people with EHCPs access alternative education provision. This may be on a part-time or full-time basis depending on the needs of the student.</p> <p>Although the number of children with SEND on part-time timetables has increased (from 197 in 2020/21 to 230 in 2024/25) the proportion of pupils with SEND has declined (from 1.16% to 1.11% for the same period). This reflects the steps our school leaders are taking to make schools more inclusive. As the summer break approaches, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all our school leaders,</p>

	<p>their staff and our parent/carers community and our pupils for their continued work to make our schools inclusive.</p>
<p><b>23. COUNCILLOR JAMES PLUMB</b></p> <p>Residents in my division are concerned about delays to planned work at the A415/A338 junction in Frilford and the A415 through Marcham. The County Council website states that “an assessment of the shortlisted options and a traffic modelling assessment of the to-be-identified preferred option are on-track to be completed during Spring 2024”. It is now Summer 2025 and there has been no progress. Can the Cabinet Member provide an update on this project, including the preferred options for the scheme and when work is likely to commence?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member provide further information on the three options for the Frilford lights scheme, on whether there is a preferred option, and how the best option will be chosen?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>We are currently working through (and reaching the end of) the modelling and costings for three different options for the Frilford and Marcham junction to identify the best option. Physical improvements to this junction are due to be delivered by a nearby housing developer and once a preferred option is selected, a period of negotiation will take place to understand whether this will be a developer, or council led project.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes.</p>
<p><b>24. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY</b></p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member for Transport Management note that, as a ward councillor for Banbury Ruscote and a trained OCC super user, I was drawn to a FixMyStreet report pavement condition on Warwick Road by A &amp; C chip shop that leads into Cromwell Road as a member of public had an accident. This pavement on closer</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>When considering schemes for capital maintenance, the type of treatment required often necessitates a lead-in period for surveys and design work. This means that, in most cases, schemes are identified in the year prior to delivery to allow sufficient time for planning.</p> <p>In the interim, scheduled safety inspections are carried out, and reports submitted via Fix My Street are investigated, and if deemed necessary, addressed to ensure the</p>

<p>inspection has deteriorated substantially. I put a report in on FixMyStreet and reported to highway officers directly on the highways. I was informed that this section of pavement would be on a highways program for 2026-2027 and any urgent defects repaired.</p> <p>My question essentially relates to how long it does take for a county councillor to lobby or get pavements on the highways program to be resurfaced. The pavements in question on Warwick Road and Cromwell Road the pavement needs digging up and totally resurfaced in my view a slurry Asphalt repair would not be adequate I would say. The pavement in question is deteriorated substantially over a six-year period as I have personally put reports in on this issue.</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member look into allocating more funding for pavements?</p>	<p>network remains in a safe condition.</p> <p>While it is clear that resurfacing footways would be more cost-effective in the long term, Oxfordshire has historically received only around £23 million per year from the Government to maintain all of its highway assets. These include roads, footways, bridges, street lights, traffic signals, and drainage. As I'm sure you'll appreciate, this falls significantly short of the funding required. Unfortunately, this means we are not always able to include every scheme in the programme.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>It is not up to me to allocate specific fund for specific schemes, but certainly the question of the balance of funds is something that will be discussed when it comes to approving the next budget.</p>
<p><b>25. COUNCILLOR BETHIA THOMAS</b></p> <p>Early in the last administration, a motion set the scene for catering within County Hall, with all lunches provided during County meetings restricted to vegan options only. This caused a lot of controversy at the time and has continued to spark comment especially as meals have not been sourced locally, and do not promote sustainability or wholly reflect the policies set out in the Oxfordshire Food Strategy which the council endorses.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>The decision to serve a plant-based menu at our Full Council meetings was taken following a motion from Cllr Ian Middleton, which the council endorsed. The current supplier for our full council lunches is a local company, Parkers, which is based in Kidlington. We also use a range of local caterers for internal and external events at the council, including Damascus Rose and Waste2Taste – an Oxford-based community interest catering company who use surplus ingredients to provide high-quality food. At the recent Council of Sanctuary event where we received our certificate, the food was supplied by an Afghan family, who we hope will be able to provide catering for us at some of our future events.</p>

<p>While I am very happy to have a meal of any sort provided for me, I would prefer it if we could rethink our existing catering policy and consider different options, including the use of local produce, to reflect the county's rural economy and our farmers' role in food production; working with non-profit organisations like the Oxfordshire Food Hub to consider the use of 'waste food' that would otherwise go to landfill; and providers like Damascus Rose Kitchen, a social enterprise serving up delicious Middle Eastern food, while supporting refugee women in the city; alternatively, as has been suggested before, we could always bring our own lunches or go out for a lunch to support local business.</p> <p>Could the Leader explain her thoughts on the catering options available to us at the start of this new administration?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>I am disappointed that given the context of the question, and the importance of the rural economy to our county, that there is no mention of farming and local food production in your response. Could you give me your assurance that food and farming will be a consideration going forward, including a champion for this sector?</p>	<p>I have asked our facilities management team to review the current arrangements for full council lunches, in line with our commitment to the Oxfordshire Food Strategy and to supporting the local economy.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>The Oxfordshire Food Strategy refers to local production, and we will adhere to that. It is not always possible to produce food only from the county. It is very important that we support our farmers and that we do everything we can to ensure what we consume in this Council is produced locally.</p> <p>We should be looking at making good use of waste in terms of food production, but it may not be possible for suppliers like Waste2Waste to make the number of meals that we need for this Council.</p>
<p><b>26. COUNCILLOR BETHIA THOMAS</b></p> <p>Over the last twenty years Faringdon, like other</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DAN LEVY, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PROPERTY AND TRANSFORMATION</b></p> <p>Following a period of marketing the site the former Youth Centre and Highways</p>

small towns across Oxfordshire, has seen a huge increase in population with hundreds of new homes being built in several major developments across the town.

Historical planning decisions dating back many years have not allowed for the requisite infrastructure and key facilities which could mitigate the effects of such development. Many residents now recognise the need for a discrete community centre to accommodate the many sporting and social groups that are currently struggling to find a home.

The Council owns a property on the Highworth Road on the outskirts of the town. I believe it had once been leased to the Town Council and used as a youth centre but has been left empty and derelict for many years. Since the youth centre closed a residential development has been built around the site, and in many people's views, may give the opportunity for a community centre which would serve a range of groups and social clubs in the town.

The site has had a chequered history, and the last time I asked, the property was on the market, however, I believe it was never sold. Could the Cabinet Member give an update on the site, and whether any consideration could be given to this site being reserved for community use, given that so few facilities are available to residents?

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

For my own reassurance and that of my parish,

depot in Highworth Road, Faringdon is under offer to a preferred purchaser. The terms of the deal are close to being finalised and will be subject to receipt of planning consent.

Before marketing, the property was offered internally to all OCC departments. The initial marketing of the site was then delayed in order to give the Town Council and other local organisations the opportunity to put forward their ideas for the site, but no proposals were forthcoming, nor was any interest expressed in the site from Community Groups to the sales agents during the marketing.

Negotiating the details of the sale has taken some time as the site does not have the benefit of planning consent for uses other than for its former use. It has taken some time for the preferred purchasers to receive and consider pre-app advice. It has also been necessary to ensure that the purchaser understands the potential contamination issues on site and is able to fully address these issues.

Whilst the sale is subject to planning it is anticipated that exchange will be completed during this financial year, with the sale occurring when planning is granted.

#### **ANSWER**

Yes.

<p>could you supply me with a history of any offers on this site and further details of offers relating to Faringdon Town Council?</p>	
<p><b>27. COUNCILLOR BETHIA THOMAS</b></p> <p>I am aware of significant funding secured through S106 Developer Contributions designated for use on adult social care in Faringdon. This matter has been under consideration for some time now, and while I believe we were making progress towards plans for the fund, I would like an update to give to residents and the parish.</p> <p>Is there any plan to spend the funds refurbishing the upper level of Faringdon Library to provide a community space for groups who are focussed on delivering services for residents; alternatively could these funds be spent on securing and refurbishing the council owned site on Highworth Road on the outskirts of Faringdon to provide a similar space for community groups in the town?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>I am concerned that a proportion of monies that were generated in Faringdon, and collected to support residents in Faringdon, will be sent to Wantage to fund a substantial scheme to refurbish</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</b></p> <p>S106 Developer Contributions are subject to agreements which determine how the funds can be spent. As such we have to ensure any spending meets the requirements set out in the agreement.</p> <p>As there is not a Community Support Service site in Faringdon, Faringdon residents are served by facilities in neighbouring communities, for example, in Wantage. A substantial scheme to refurbish and redevelop Wantage Community Support Service (CSS) is in planning to enable it to become a multi-use community setting. Some elements of funding collected to support Faringdon residents is therefore expected to be used on this project.</p> <p>Following a major refurbishment of Faringdon library in 2022, I am pleased to say that we are about to carry out further S106-funded improvements to the library area. There has been a degree of community usage of the first-floor space in the past and further use would be welcomed. However, there are significant accessibility challenges to make the first-floor a fully usable community space. I have asked officers to review the possibilities in conjunction with the library and property services.</p> <p>The property on Highworth Road is on the disposal list. It was offered to the community however, as this was not taken up it was subsequently put on the market and is currently under offer.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes. The total amount going in Section 106 money to Wantage is £791,135. The amount of Faringdon money that is involved is £178,695. I will arrange for you to liaise with the officers to find out exactly how they will encourage people from Faringdon to be able to use this new facility.</p>

<p>and redevelop Wantage Community Support Service, just because there is currently not a Community Support Service site in Faringdon. Can you tell me how much of this fund will be spent in Faringdon, and how much the residents of Faringdon will benefit from funding sent to services in Wantage?</p>	
<p><b>28.COUNCILLOR JAMES BARLOW</b></p> <p>We know that getting people travelling more actively and using more public transport is an important contributor to improving mental and physical health, building community (active and public transport are more sociable ways to get around) and mitigating climate change. This month I've been informed that children in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell will no longer benefit from a bus service to transport them the 2 miles to Wallingford School. Whilst the soon-to-be installed toucan crossing across the busy A4130 will mean a few more children may cycle than today, residents in the village fear that many more parents will now choose to take their children to school by car. Two suggested options include not discontinuing the school bus and / or changing the times of the #33 privately-operated bus to make it more likely that school children will use that to go to and from school. What is the Cabinet Member for Transport Management able to do to help the physical and mental health, and climate-safer future of Brightwell's secondary school aged children by ensuring more privately-owned cars are not forced onto these road at peak times in my division?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>We fully recognise the importance of promoting active travel and public transport as part of our broader commitments to health, community wellbeing, and climate resilience. The concerns raised by residents about the potential increase in car journeys are understandable, and we are actively exploring options to mitigate this.</p> <p>The Home-to-School Travel and Public Transport teams are currently reviewing the situation, including what, if any, changes could be made to the timetable or routing of bus service 33 to better accommodate students travelling to and from Wallingford School. This includes reviewing our existing messaging with Wallingford School, assessing operational feasibility, demand, and alignment with school start and finish times.</p> <p>We are also continuing to work closely with colleagues in infrastructure and road safety to ensure that the new toucan crossing on the A4130 supports safer active travel choices for families in the area.</p> <p>We will keep you updated as this work progresses and will ensure that any proposed changes are communicated clearly to the community.</p>

<p><b>29. COUNCILLOR JAMES BARLOW</b></p> <p>The last #33 bus from Didcot to Wallingford, via Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, now leaves Didcot at 22:11. Residents have informed me that whilst they don't want to get into their cars for the short journey home after a (often commuter) train journey, trip to the Cornerstone or sporting engagement, they are now forced to do so. What can the Cabinet Member for Transport Management do to reinstate a later service to support residents in my division make the right choice in terms of travelling more actively and using more public transport? (We know travel choices are an important contributor to improving mental and physical health, building community (active and public transport are more sociable ways to get around) and mitigating climate change to give us a better chance of less climate chaos and collapse in the next few decades.)</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>When will we know whether funds will be allocated to support public transport later than 10.00pm at night in Didcot to contribute toward the target of removing 1 in 4 car trips?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Service 33 in the evenings is operated commercially by Thames Travel and therefore decisions on timings are theirs to make. Through developer contributions, the Council already provides significant funding for this service to double the frequency between Didcot and Wallingford in the daytime, for the Sunday service and also for the extension of services to/from Henley-on-Thames. The service through Brightwell would be significantly poorer if it was not for the Council's intervention.</p> <p>Officers have engaged with Thames Travel to identify what may be possible to make evening services later to Brightwell and have sought prices for a later journey. However, any action will be dependent on securing available funding. The Council invests £10m per year in supporting the bus network and mitigating the impacts you describe, so are fully committed to ensuring that public transport services meet the needs of residents as best as possible with the money available.</p> <p>I certainly share Cllr Barlow's commitment to viewing transport choices through the lens of public health and climate change mitigation, and I look forward to working with him and all other members who share this view to continue to offer the best possible options for all our residents.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>I will send Councillor Barlow a written response.</p>
<p><b>30. COUNCILLOR JAMES BARLOW</b></p> <p>Officers and members are to be congratulated on OCC again being rated top county in Climate Emergency UK's (CEUK) 2025 <a href="#">climate action scorecard</a>. And I welcome the Oxfordshire Climate Change Adaptation Route Map which directs us to</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</b></p> <p>Since endorsement of the Climate Adaptation Route Map for Oxfordshire by the Oxfordshire Leaders Joint Committee (OLJC) in January and adoption by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Cabinet in February, progress has been made on the initial implementation steps, with efforts being focussed on the 15 priority actions to be implemented over the next 12 months. The Oxfordshire Climate Adaptation</p>



look at the impacts climate change is having on our residents and geography already, way beyond net zero.

On 17th March I participated in the inspiring, frightening and much-needed OCC Climate Adaptation Workshop. I learnt more specifics about flooding and extreme heat risk and likelihood amongst other things. At the workshop I participated in a break-out group looking at Adaptation Capacity Building for Senior Leaders to support the following priority: "Develop a set of adaptation capacity building materials that are specifically targeted at executive officers, Cabinet Members and Councillors across the county. [since] senior officer buy-in underpins many actions within this Plan, and they are crucial to enabling local action on climate adaptation. Capacity building materials will help to strengthen this buy-in through engagement."

This is one of the 6 high priority "Enabling actions: governance, reporting and monitoring" actions to be taken by March 2026. (See page 5 of the Oxfordshire Climate Change Adaptation Route Map).

Please can the Cabinet Member update us on what progress has been made against these priorities, whether we are on-track, and how we as members can all support these vital priorities.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reading the Climate Adaption Working Group

Summit in March brought together stakeholders responsible for the implementation of the Route Map. The first ZCOP Climate Adaptation Working Group was then convened in April to coordinate delivery of the Route Map amongst stakeholders. Further information on implementation progress can be found in the [Progress Update on the Implementation of the Climate Adaptation Route Map for Oxfordshire](#) report submitted to OLJC in June 2025.

Regarding priority action number 5 specifically (developing capacity building materials for executive officers and members), the working group recognised the large number of stakeholders (private, public and voluntary sector organisations) within the scope of this action and the need for an initial scoping exercise to clearly identify specific stakeholder requirements. It was also agreed that this aligns closely with wider need for a strategic communications plan for climate adaptation (as requested by OLJC) and that the OLJC secretariat would be well-placed to undertake this working with district and county council communication teams. Climate Adaptation has now been included in the Carbon Literacy Training that the council is offering to all staff and will be offering to Cabinet Members.

I would be grateful if councillors do:

- Engage with parish/ town councils and community groups on developing [Community Emergency Plans](#) - simple plans that are maintained by the community to assist them to coordinate local resources to respond to a disruptive event.
- Promote and circulate the [Are you Ready?](#) guide to preparing for emergencies (including storms, heatwaves and flooding) amongst residents.
- Share the [Business Continuity Managment Toolkit.pdf](#) with local businesses and encourage them to adopt their own business continuity plan.
- Engage with residents, businesses and local decision makers on the importance of adapting to climate change (as well as reducing carbon emissions) and circulate the [Introduction to Climate Adaptation](#) to enable capacity building

#### **ANSWER**

I will get Councillor Barlow a written response.

<p>Report, it is good to see that funding is being allocated to two new flood officers to support community resilience in Oxfordshire. When will the flood officers be recruited and in place?</p>	
<p><b>31. COUNCILLOR TED FENTON</b></p> <p>Residents living in Little Faringdon whose children attend Burford School are currently transported to school by bus but have been given notice that because of the condition of the roads the bus company is no longer prepared to operate the route. The alternative for pupils is a 1 ½ mile walk along a busy road with no footpath to reach the nearest bus stop that will continue to be served. This is unacceptable in the summer and potentially lethal in the winter. Can the Cabinet Member use his good offices to ensure that resurfacing work on roads in the area is completed over the summer so that these students can continue to get to school by bus?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member use his considerable influence to get the stretch of road fixed?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>We believe this probably likely relates to a privately operated route by PS Coaches conveying children not eligible for free home to school travel assistance.</p> <p>Although the route and problem area are not confirmed, we don't believe there are currently any plans for highway surface improvement along the route this coach takes. We will arrange for an inspection to take place if one is not scheduled to take place soon, and any defects that cause a potential safety concern will be repaired and the overall condition fed back to the capital programme team for consideration against other priorities.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>I will do what I can to get that stretch of road fixed.</p>
<p><b>32. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>I'm still getting countless complaints about the "ludicrously complex" website that our poor residents are now forced to use if they need to apply for a visitor parking permit. The complaints are coming from people who are extremely</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>I can confirm that following the feedback from users, Officers have been reviewing the points raised and have identified areas for improvement. That work is underway and I will ask officers to keep councillors informed.</p>

<p>computer-literate, as well as from people who don't have internet access (perhaps because their Wi-Fi system is down). There seem to have been no improvements whatsoever in the software supplied by the disastrous firm selected to provide this new permit system. Why was this firm chosen and why are they unwilling or unable to make the necessary improvements?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Why was this firm chosen and why are they unwilling or unable to make the necessary improvements?</p>	<p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>The allocation of a contract is a matter for officers. Improvements are required and are being looked at.</p>
<p><b>33. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>We are <i>still</i> waiting for a contract to be signed for the supply and installation of EV cross-pavement charging channels. They will be at least two years late. However, we are also still waiting for on-street or public chargers in many parts of the county. Meanwhile, people are reluctantly buying petrol or diesel vehicles, unable to wait any longer for adequate EV infrastructure to be provided. Why is progress so disappointingly slow?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</b></p> <p>The council has been at the forefront of developing the processes and exploring the regulatory frameworks surrounding the novel concept of cross pavement EV charging, and as such officers have been seeking solutions and gathering information without the option of learning from central government or other local authorities until very recently. A number of technical and regulatory questions and challenges have arisen during the development of the project which have required investigation and resolution, often involving liaison with national bodies such as the Health and Safety Executive, Institute of Engineering and Technology.</p> <p>We are proud that central government and councils across the country have been learning from and building on Oxfordshire's hard-won knowledge and experience – with officers being invited to contribute to government guidance for other local authorities. Oxfordshire's large scale EV cable channel pilot of up to 500 cable channels across the county will be the largest Council-led roll-out of EV cable channels to date in the UK – far exceeding any other scheme in numbers.</p> <p>The procurement of a contractor to install and manage EV cable channels is in progress, with the award notice due to be published in August. In order to expedite,</p>

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>We are also still waiting for on-street chargers; where are they?</p>	<p>the council is cut out to open applications to the public prior to this date. Applications will start to be taken in July as communicated in a recent (13<sup>th</sup> June) members briefing.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>I am aware of several on-street chargers; however, I will get you a written answer for the ones you are referring to.</p>
<p><b>34. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>As well as the endless and immensely inconvenient Network Rail work in Botley Road, Thames Water has closed one lane of Osney Bridge for a similarly endless project to replace their water main and to strengthen the bridge. Often the closed lane is used for parking private cars. Surely this conflicts with our active travel policy and with our attempts to reduce congestion and pollution? Can we insist that the owners of these cars use the nearby park and ride car park?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Who is checking that the cars are really being used to transport equipment if they park on this lane?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The lane, which is closed as part of the Thames Water work on Osney Bridge, is in place to act as a delivery point for equipment and materials required to carry out the inspection and repair of the bridge. When cars are seen parked, these will be Thames Water company vehicles used by <i>operatives working on site</i>. <i>Where this is done by</i> those dropping off/ picking up equipment at the site, it is considered that due to the nature of those making the journeys and the heavy/ bulky equipment being moved, that is acceptable for them to travel in by car.</p> <p>The timescales for the projects are of course a matter for Network Rail and Thames Water respectively. It is not accurate or helpful to describe them as "endless".</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>Nobody is out checking the boots, but I agree that nobody should be parking their vehicles there if they are not transporting equipment.</p>
<p><b>35. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON</b></p> <p>There is a desperate need to improve speed and weight restriction enforcement in many divisions, including mine in areas like Sandy Lane, Cromwell Ave and Bicester Road. This could take the form of fixed or mobile camera enforcement and/or</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The initial £8 million capital funding for the implementation of the 20mph programme was reduced and reallocated as part of the budget setting process the year before last, as such there is no underspend to the programme. I can confirm that the council's road safety Vision Zero programme includes an allocation for trialling some lower cost supporting traffic management measures which is hoped can inform</p>

<p>speed indicator devices located in recognised poor compliance hotspots. As the budget for new 20 MPH schemes has been significantly under-spent, would it be possible for all or some of the remaining funds to be redirected to support parish and town councils to help finance targeted enforcement on a full or matched funding basis?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Can we help parishes and towns to install speed indicators; if so, how would they apply for that funding?</p>	<p>potential low-cost schemes potentially funded by the county council and/or parish/town councils. Specifically on the 20mph programme as set out below (see para 12 in Agenda item 12 in <a href="#">Choose agenda document pack - Cabinet 19 October 2021   Oxfordshire County Council</a> ) it was recognised at the outset that further supporting measures may be helpful but with the presumption these would be locally funded.</p> <p>It is accepted that in some locations non-compliance with traffic regulations, including speed limits and weight restrictions is an issue which can impact on safety in local environments, and that work is needed to address this at a national level in part.</p> <p>Only the police currently have powers for enforcing speed limits and they also have strict criteria for deployment of resources based on need and severity. Enforcement of structural weight limits is also still a criminal offence and as such can only be enforced by the Police or Trading Standards. Environmental weight limits (which allow local access) can be enforced by the county council through moving traffic offence powers. This isn't considered straightforward though and different ways of potentially doing this are being explored and liaison with other local authorities on this is also taking place. Any solution would require capital investment and budget for ongoing operational costs for the installation and management of ANPR cameras (accepting that any income from fines will be able to help fund this).</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Yes, and I would be delighted to help any town or parish apply for that funding.</p>
<p><b>36. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON</b></p> <p>Residents in my division on the Bicester Road were recently subjected to prolonged noisy roadworks right outside their houses from around 9pm to 3am with no warning. Much as I</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The timing of works is agreed based on traffic management considerations to reduce the impact on the road network. However, responsibility for noise, working hours, and resident notification lies with the works promoter. They are subject to environmental legislation and are expected to liaise with the relevant District Council</p>

<p>appreciated that these works needed to be done (especially as I had been asking for them for over 9 months) they were extremely disruptive to nearby residents, especially those with young children. What is our policy on notification to residents in cases such as these?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Can we impress on these promotional contractors that they should liaise with whomever they need to inform local residents especially when very noisy works are being carried out overnight.</p>	<p>regarding noise control, including applying for a Section 61 consent where necessary.</p> <p>We do not directly supervise the works, but we carry out inspections to ensure compliance with permit conditions and safety standards, in line with Department for Transport guidance.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes. In this case, they should have done that, and, if they did not, I would be happy to follow up.</p>
<p><b>37. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON</b></p> <p>For over 3 years I have been trying to get ANPR installed on the High Street in Kidlington to enforce access restrictions. This is to replace the rising bollard which has never worked properly since it was installed and became something of a laughing stock. I have since been variously promised numerous dates for the installation, none of which have been honoured. It was then finally taken to consultation in February and approved with funding agreed. I have been in frequent contact with the officer dealing with it who keeps telling me that it's in hand and awaiting a quote from the installers. I've now heard nothing further from the officer concerned since March, despite 2 chase emails. The situation is now becoming almost as ludicrous as the failed bollard itself. Can the Cabinet Member please give me an update on the position and provide a definite date for when the installation</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Thank you for your continued patience and for raising your concerns regarding the installation of ANPR enforcement on the High Street in Kidlington and the issues you have raised with the rising bollard, please note this bollard is operated by Cherwell District Council.</p> <p>The council is currently reprocuring its contract for ANPR installations, this new contract will enable delivery the installation of the Kidlington High Street site. Approval to procure this contract will go to Cabinet in mid-July with an expected 'go live' date in Q4 of this financial year. I can confirm the installation of a camera on Kidlington High Street sits at the top of the priority list for sites and will be implemented quickly once the contract is in place.</p>

<p>will finally go ahead?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member specify the date for the installation of the ANPR enforcement on the High Street in Kidlington as it had been promised for over two years and had already been approved by the Cabinet.</p>	<p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>I do not know the answer to that, but it is at the top of the priority list, and I will be very happy to chase this up.</p>
<p><b>38. COUNCILLOR GAVIN McLAUCHLAN</b></p> <p>What are we doing about clearing the cycle lanes across the county, in particular I am referring to the cycle lane that runs along the A4074 from Warborough to Benson. It is currently impassable and therefore not usable. This encourages short inter-village journeys to be taken by car, not by bicycle.</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Has the Cabinet Member thought about creating a</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Over the last two years some one-off additional funding was identified that enable extra maintenance work to be undertake work on our cycleway / footway network. The allocated funding was: 2023/24 – an additional £1m, and 2024/25 an additional £500k. In these years were able to undertake a substantial amount of vegetation clearance, returning many of such routes to their original intended widths. Even with vegetation cleared though, as several shared cycle routes on routes such as this were historically design as footways, they do fall well below the current design standards for shared use facilities.</p> <p>For year 2025/26 we have circa £300k for this type of work and will prioritise based on need from a user safety perspective. Having stated that, the council does have increased capital budget for physically repairing walking and cycling routes and when carrying out such work, clearance work will also be undertaken where possible.</p> <p>In terms of the A4074 cycle path, officers will investigate the particular section in question, as I understand it is part of a route that has been previously cleared, with a view to cutting back the vegetation.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>I will discuss this with officers.</p>

<p>separate active travel management team to look at maintaining cycle paths?</p>	
<p><b>39.COUNCILLOR GAVIN McLAUCHLAN</b></p> <p>How and when are all the OCC owned lands across the county maintained? In my area (Benson &amp; Crowmarsh) we are looking very overgrown at the moment, part of which is down to the season, however many areas are rarely if ever maintained and are a local eyesore. Roadsigns are obscured in many places which isn't particularly helpful to those needing to follow them and pathways are often inaccessible. It would also be useful to understand which lands are actually managed and maintained within each area, as often there is confusion.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DAN LEVY, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PROPERTY AND TRANSFORMATION</b></p> <p>The County Council is one of the bodies responsible for cutting verges and footpaths, along with private owners, parish and town councils and the district councils. Our priority is safety as well as supporting wildlife through selective trimming.</p> <p>If you have specific areas which you believe require attention, please use FixMyStreet to report them.</p>
<p><b>40.COUNCILLOR GAVIN McLAUCHLAN</b></p> <p>Speeding is a massive issue in my area (Benson and Crowmarsh), especially down the A4074 which is somewhat of a race track. What is being done to ensure that TVP takes measures to manage and penalise the offenders? There is a day (11th July) where TVP are encouraging the Community Speed Watch groups to actively get out and monitor traffic speeds, however there is much doubt about the actions then taken - with no real successes attributable to CSW actions in the past. There is also an issue with "recognised" speed measurement devices, with TVP often not using the data generated by certain cameras (i.e.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Speed enforcement is a police responsibility and concerns over speeding on specific roads can be reported to them for consideration of and prioritisation of enforcement. County Officers regularly liaise with the police on road safety matters including enforcement and will share the above concerns with them for their consideration. As part of the council's road safety Vision Zero programme speed limits across the County on A and B roads, including the A4074, are being reviewed and reduced where appropriate. There are specific plans to amend the current Dorchester Bypass lining arrangements to improve safety.</p> <p>I have raised the issue of speeding enforcement at the Road Safety Partnership convened by the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner and drawn his attention to the success in other areas of community-led initiatives such as Operation Snap. I continue to ask for more active support from TVP and the PCC in</p>



AutoSpeedWatch - which also collects other very useful information on whether the car is MOT'd or insured etc.), which are recognised by other police organisations.	communicating the very significant benefits of lower speeds and in enforcing them.
<p><b>41. COUNCILLOR LAURA GORDON</b></p> <p>The appointment of public transport and active travel champions will enable us to move these important agendas forward and benefit residents across the country. Will the Cabinet Member join me in welcoming these appointments and commit to working with Members to identify opportunities in our divisions to deliver better facilities to residents?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Does the cabinet member agree with me that there are fantastic opportunities to promote rural active travel, including in villages in Otmoor, and will he and/or the Active Travel Champion meet with me to discuss how we can take this forward?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Yes. These appointments reflect the importance the administration places on these vital areas of policy. I am delighted to welcome Cllrs Brant and Kerr to the roles and I look forward to working closely with them to improve the lives and travel choices of all of Oxfordshire's residents. They both bring a huge amount of energy and experience to the roles. I would also like to thank previous holders of both roles for their work</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>One of the great advantages of champion positions is that because they are not executive positions, they can be more or less what the holders want them to be.</p> <p>We are absolutely committed to bringing forward active travel schemes in rural areas.</p>
<p><b>42. COUNCILLOR LAURA GORDON</b></p> <p>It is welcome that the Council is developing a parents and carers' leave policy to enable Members to take periods of absence from their roles when they become new parents or take on caring responsibilities. This is long overdue but I hope will benefit other members in future. Can the cabinet member join me in thanking officers for developing the policy so quickly and confirm the timeframe for this policy to be implemented.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR NEIL FAWCETT, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES</b></p> <p>I very much welcome the proposed policy and join you in thanking our officers for their speedy work.</p> <p>If the policy is accepted by Council today then it will be implemented immediately.</p>

<p><b>43. COUNCILLOR BRAD BAINES</b></p> <p>Given that the £8 million 20 mph transformation scheme was agreed as a three-year scheme set to be completed by 2024/5, what reasoning can the Cabinet Member for Transport Management provide for why Oxford continues to lack a comprehensive 20 mph network as promised by the "Oxford review"?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member explain why the 20mph review in Oxford has been delayed?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>A review of further 20mph limits in Oxford is scheduled following the introduction and assessment of the planned major measures to address congestion in the city.</p> <p>The county council has committed through its <a href="#">Enhanced Partnership Plan</a> (see 7.9 and 7.10) to “bus productivity improvements of at least 10% within the Oxford SmartZone area, compared to a 2019 base, by the end of 2025”.</p> <p>The <a href="#">trial traffic filters project</a> (possibly preceded temporarily by the proposed temporary congestion charging points) is one of the main schemes planned to meet this commitment. However, the traffic filters will be a trial scheme with various uncertainties, so we don’t know exactly what its impact will be. We want to understand the impact of this and other schemes before assessing the need and implementing further 20mph limits in Oxford.</p> <p>I would remind the councillor and his party that if they want the benefits of increased bus productivity outlined in the EP (which, as he knows, also underpins the business case for the wonderful new ZEBRA buses), they must support the measures this administration is taking to deliver them, measures which his Labour party colleagues helped design and voted for. Pretending to want the benefits of our policy without supporting the means to deliver those benefits is fundamentally dishonest.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes – Botley Road is on the list of the 20mph scheme, and the review has been deferred until such time as the Botley Road reopens.</p>

<p><b>44. COUNCILLOR BRAD BAINES</b></p> <p>Residents in Grandpont, Iffley Fields and New Hinksey are very keen to make the transition to driving an electric vehicle and help reduce their carbon footprint, however they face a difficulty charging such vehicles due to a lack of local charging stations and the delays to the GUL-e roll out. Could the Cabinet Member provide a full list of areas identified as high-priority for new roadside charging stations as part of the LEVI scheme?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>When will the date for the shortlist of sites for on-street charging be published?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</b></p> <p>The council has been at the forefront of developing the processes and exploring the regulatory frameworks surrounding the novel concept of cross pavement EV charging, and as such officers have been seeking solutions and gathering information without the option of learning from central government or other local authorities until very recently. A number of technical and regulatory questions and challenges have arisen during the development of the project which have required investigation and resolution, often involving liaison with national bodies such as the Health and Safety Executive, Institute of Engineering and Technology.</p> <p>We are proud that central government and councils across the country have been learning from and building on Oxfordshire's hard-won knowledge and experience – with officers being invited to contribute to government guidance for other local authorities. Oxfordshire's large scale EV cable channel pilot of up to 500 cable channels across the county will be the largest Council-led roll-out of EV cable channels to date in the UK – far exceeding any other scheme in numbers.</p> <p>The procurement of a contractor to install and manage EV cable channels is in progress, with the award notice due to be published in August. In order to expedite, the council is cut out to open applications to the public prior to this date. Applications will start to be taken in July as communicated in a recent (13<sup>th</sup> June) members briefing.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>People apply, and the applications are commencing, and that will determine where they are going to go.</p>
<p><b>45. COUNCILLOR BRAD BAINES</b></p> <p>Page 17 of the Modelling and Income Forecasting Report for the Administration's new Congestion Charge once again shows a preference for a</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>We know from the National Travel Attitudes Study what people say would encourage them to cycle (or cycle more).</p>

modal shift from private cars to cycling rather than public transport. In light of this, what steps is the Cabinet Member for Transport Management taking to understand the views and needs of those in Oxford not currently cycling and what additional (not already announced) infrastructure investment is planned to make it easier and safer to do so?

In 2023, 61% said "safer roads", by some margin the most common response. 52% said "off-road and segregated cycle paths".

In 2021, those who said "safer roads" would encourage them to cycle were asked how important they consider four different aspects of safer roads. 98% said "more considerate drivers" are either very important or fairly important, along with "less traffic" (88%), "slower driving speeds" (86%) and "more roads where cars are banned or restricted for part of, or all of the time" (66%).

The proposed temporary congestion charge is forecast to reduce morning peak traffic flows in the city centre by 15-20% and by 2-5% in the outer parts of the city. On some streets, traffic reductions of over 60% are forecast at peak times.

Like the trial traffic filters, the scheme should therefore have an immediate impact on the city's attractiveness for cycling.

The congestion charge is a short-term measure; there won't be time to implement major infrastructure changes before or while the scheme is in place.

However, the trial traffic filters (if successful and subsequently made permanent), together with other schemes like the workplace parking levy and zero emission zone, will lead to:

- Less traffic
- More off-road and segregated cycle paths (with less traffic, we can reallocate road space to cyclists and use the income from WPL and ZEZ to provide new infrastructure)

We will also be able to offer more of the other things people say would encourage them to cycle more, such as well-maintained road surfaces, secure cycle parking, and showers and changing facilities at workplaces.

We will continue to engage with local cyclists, would-be-cyclists and cycling groups to understand local needs and priorities. The consultation on the temporary congestion charge asks people for their views on what the income could be spent on.

<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Given that the Cabinet Member's answer does not reveal any commitment to better understand the active travel needs of those living in wider East Oxford nor to introduce any additional infrastructure alongside the introduction of the temporary congestion charge, how does he have confidence that the modal shift modelled will actually be achieved?</p>	<p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>I do not accept that this administration is guilty of not engaging with the views and needs of those in Oxford who wish to use active travel and is not making it easier and more convenient for them to do so; that is absolutely at the heart and the core of our policy.</p> <p>Infrastructure is expensive. But what I think the answer draws real attention to is that the one thing which comes clearly through for people who would like to cycle more and like to allow their children to cycle more is safety and that comes down to one simple thing which is less traffic which is to do with reducing congestion and that is what we're doing.</p>
<p><b>46. COUNCILLOR ROBIN JONES</b></p> <p>Can the Cabinet member update the Council on the promised plans for traffic restrictions on the Culham/Sutton Courtenay and Clifton Hampden/Long Wittenham road bridges given their importance in reducing the impact of induced traffic demand that will be caused by the £410m HIF1 roads and new Thames crossing?</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Could residents and the affected parishes obtain in writing some traffic modelling around the impacts, as there will no doubt be unorthodox movement and unintended consequences, and can you ensure they are consulted and informed during the whole process?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Thank you for your question regarding the complementary measures at the existing River Thames crossings at Culham/Sutton Courtenay and Clifton Hampden that are linked to the HIF1 scheme. The Place Planning South team are currently exploring all the potential options for both bridges in anticipation of the HIF1 being opened. Work will continue into next year whereby Officers hope to have preferred options for both bridges.</p> <p><b>ANSWER</b></p> <p>I shall take this question away</p>

<p><b>47. COUNCILLOR EMILY KERR</b></p> <p>We congratulate the County Council on the success of the pop-up play space scheme which ran in the city centre. Could the cabinet member please clarify how this moves the scheme forward to a permanent solution and what the ETA might be? And could the cabinet member please detail the collaboration ongoing with the city to find a more permanent location for a city centre playground?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The free pop-up play spaces have been a Place Shaping initiative funded in conjunction with the Central Oxfordshire Movement and Place Framework, where the work identified that there were limited play opportunities for children in the city. The pop-up play spaces have been run in partnership with Oxfordshire Play Association (OPA) and the City Council. They have been a great success and really well attended. The temporary nature of the scheme has also provided feedback from the participants on the needs and criteria for play spaces within the city which will be taken on board when looking at a permanent solution.</p> <p>In the last County Council budget, funding has been allocated to two feasibilities looking at permanent measures to transform the public realm in Broad Street and St Giles. Officers will be looking to include more permanent play spaces into the designs for these areas and are looking to secure funding to deliver these.</p> <p>In the meantime, officers and OPA will be looking at further opportunities for pop-up locations in the city throughout the year. A number of private organisations are looking to support and host the free pop-up play spaces within the city and we will be looking to broaden this out to other urban areas to support Place Shaping and community wellbeing.</p>
<p><b>48. COUNCILLOR ANDREW CRICHTON</b></p> <p>Residents who live off Dukes Meadow Drive in my Division, are rightly fed up that there are very few crossings with drop kerbs to allow them to cross the road. Residents with mobility difficulties or pushchairs may have to walk as far as 500 metres to cross the main road at an appropriate crossing point. I have been raising this through my colleague at the Banbury Traffic advisory committee for several years now, but so far to no avail. Are there any plans to install drop kerbs and</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The Traffic and Road Safety team have no knowledge or plans regarding this request. We have a committed works programme for the 2025/26 Financial Year; however, we will add this request to our list of schemes in Cherwell for consideration in future years.</p>

crossings at the junctions of Watts Road and Nickling Road with Dukes Meadow Drive at all? If not, could this please be looked at as soon as possible?	
<p><b>49. COUNCILLOR ANDREW CRICHTON</b></p> <p>Earlier this year, councillors were informed that there would be a mass gully clearance in Banbury Hardwick Division by the end of May 2025. Walking through the division, I have noted a large number remain blocked. Are there any plans to return and clear the rest of them, or is this plan delayed in some way? I am happy to start reporting blocked gulleys again, but I don't want to do it if this mass clearance is ongoing.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>Following discussions with the Highways Operations team, I've been informed that the gully emptying programme has experienced some delays due to resourcing challenges. In the Hardwick area, 68% of gulleys have been successfully cleansed, 6% were attended but could not be cleansed due to obstructing vehicles, and 26% remain outstanding.</p>
<p><b>50. COUNCILLOR JAMES FRY</b></p> <p>A flat £5 congestion charge is clearly regressive, as is the £70 traffic filter charge. Since it is impossible to tailor these charges directly to the income of drivers, will the Council consider using data on the size, age and market price of a vehicle to adapt the charges to these as proxies for income?</p> <p>The Traffic Modelling and Income Forecasting report contrasted the impacts of £3 and £5 congestion charges. The report concluded that the annual revenues from a £3 charge would be £4.57 million, which is not much less than the £5.02 million generated by a £5 charge. Did the Cabinet</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The purpose of the congestion charge is to improve public transport services and make Oxford safer and more attractive for cyclists while we await the delayed traffic filter trial.</p> <p>This will benefit the 32% of the city's population who don't have access to a car, and people on low incomes who depend on public transport for access to work, education and other services.</p> <p>National Travel Survey data confirms households within the lowest income quintile make the most active travel and public transport trips, and the fewest car trips.</p> <p>In the 2011 census, bus use in Oxfordshire's most deprived areas was more than double that in the least deprived areas for journeys to work.</p>

take account of the undoubted benefit for the lowest income car drivers of a 40% reduction from £5 to £3 when opting for the higher charge?

However, the scheme will also benefit the long list of drivers who are exempt from the congestion charge or eligible for a permit. This includes many groups who may have lower incomes such as:

- Residents (who'll get 100 days free for Oxford, 25 free for Oxfordshire)
- Traders using any vehicle other than a car, or using a car as a goods vehicle
- Community health and care workers
- People with disabilities
- Unpaid carers
- People attending frequent hospital appointments.

The Council is already considering linking the congestion charge to vehicle size – a question on this very topic appears in the consultation survey currently open.

It is true that the income projections for a £3 and £5 charge are similar. This is because more people would pay a £3 charge, making it less effective in reducing traffic – the scheme's main objective. The consultation survey seeks feedback on the level of the charge and views on this will be considered when Cabinet makes a decision on the scheme later in the year.

There is no such thing as a "£70 traffic filter charge". The trial traffic filters will only be introduced when Botley Road reopens, meaning it will be possible to get to and from every part of Oxford without passing a filter. No-one will be forced to pay a fine to access their destination by car.

The traffic filters prohibit cars without a permit, with a £70 penalty charge (reduced to £35 if paid within 21 days) for contraventions. Civil enforcement of traffic regulations relies on a system of financial penalties; no other sanctions are available for decriminalised enforcement. Traffic regulations from double yellow lines to pedestrian zones rely on penalty charges for their enforceability, and the traffic filters will be no different.

Penalty charges are set nationally, so the County Council cannot vary the amount charged or link charges to vehicle size or weight.

Cllr Fry might also like to note that the City Council, where he is a member of the



	<p>governing Labour group, charges over £15 for 3-4 hours parking on a Saturday in Worcester Street car park, with no concessions for blue badge holders (or anyone else). Some might argue the congestion charge is somewhat less regressive.</p> <p>Cllr Fry might also like to explain how he, and other Labour members, campaigned (in his case successfully) for election to this council on a manifesto commitment to oppose the traffic filters policy, while simultaneously being members of the Labour group on the City Council, which supports them.</p> <p>I also assume that since he and his party colleagues appear to be opposing the interim charging scheme as well as the traffic filters, he will also oppose the benefits which could potentially flow from them, such as enhanced bus services and new safety measures for walking and cycling.</p>
<p><b>51. COUNCILLOR JAMES FRY</b></p> <p>Many key workers, such as teaching assistants and health workers, cannot afford to live in the city. Public transport is often inconvenient for getting to work and they often need to bring equipment with them. Some use city leisure centres before or after work. Can the categories of exemptions from the congestion charge and traffic filters be expanded to include such key workers, who say they will have to leave jobs in the city if they face the new charges?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The central goal of the congestion charge and traffic filters is to improve the city's public transport system so that it is not 'inconvenient' for anyone. It is not possible to make serious progress towards this goal without first tackling congestion.</p> <p>Most parts of the city (including all schools, hospitals and healthcare providers) will remain accessible to anyone without paying the congestion charge.</p> <p>Under the filters scheme, all parts of the city will be accessible without passing a traffic filter. The further away from Oxford someone lives, the less the length of their route to work will be affected by changing route to avoid the congestion charge or traffic filters. Many won't even need to change their existing driving route to work.</p> <p><a href="#">Permits are available for people using cars as goods vehicles</a> as part of their job, along with permits for community-based health and care workers.</p> <p>For those opting to change mode, recently-improved park and ride services serve most parts of Oxford, along with direct bus services from many places.</p> <p>Labour Councillors from both the City and County Councils were fully involved in</p>

	<p>developing the filters scheme, including the scheme of permits and exemptions, and voted to approve them. Both the congestion scheme (if implemented) and the filters scheme will, as always, be kept carefully under review.</p> <p>Conditions in our city will be better, safer, cleaner, and more convenient for everyone under these schemes.</p>
<p><b>52. COUNCILLOR JAMES FRY</b></p> <p>It is remarkable that Summertown now has no bank or post office. Please will the County add its voice to that of local residents to secure for Summertown a joint bank/post office hub, such as exist in many other similar sized communities that have lost both? (Individuals can register interest in securing such a hub at <a href="http://www.cashaccess.co.uk/hub">www.cashaccess.co.uk/hub</a>, but the County's voice would surely add weight to the request.)</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR BEN HIGGINS, CABINET MEMBER FOR FUTURE ECONOMY AND INNOVATION</b></p> <p>I agree that local services are valued and important I am very happy to add our voice to the campaign which I thank Cllr Fry for bringing to my attention. I intend to write and express the Council's support. In addition, Cllr Fry may wish to note the motion that was agreed by Council in April 2025 on banking hubs. A formal response will be made to Cabinet in due course.</p>
<p><b>53. COUNCILLOR IAN SNOWDON</b></p> <p>The Steventon to Milton Heights scheme to create a new bus and cycle lanes along with new traffic lights has still not began after years of planning, a significant amount of vegetation was removed in December and January to facilitate the works. However, as we reach July, it appears that progress has stalled, with much of the area now overgrown and the equipment remaining idle behind the harass fencing.</p> <p>It is concerning to see a multimillion-pound initiative in your portfolio come to such an abrupt halt due to funding issues. Residents are</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</b></p> <p>The project team is now targeting commencement of the construction/delivery of the A4130 Steventon Lights scheme during September 2025, subject to receipt and approval of an updated target cost from the County Council's 'build' contractor. Whilst a value engineering exercise has been undertaken to ensure that the scheme is affordable, the scheme will deliver bus, walking and cycling enhancements, together with required junction and capacity improvements as per the requirements of the original scheme.</p> <p>Any vegetation that has grown since the period of vegetation removal associated with the scheme will be removed ahead of the upcoming construction start, and please note that the compound for the scheme is ready to receive the welfare facilities that will serve the project through the construction period. The project webpage has been kept updated to reflect the latest / updated programme, and to</p>

<p>understandably anxious about the future of this project. Could you please provide reassurance that the new plans, which aim to reduce costs by nearly £2 million, will still meet all the substantial needs and requirements of the original scheme?</p>	<p>ensure that local residents and businesses are kept informed of delivery timescales.</p>
<p><b>54. COUNCILLOR EMMA GARNETT</b></p> <p>Speeding is an issue across Oxfordshire, which needs work done by both Thames Valley Police and the County Council. My residents on Morrell Avenue have been calling for speeding enforcement and say that speeding has got worse in recent years. At the end of May - the day after I met with the local speed watch group - there was a serious collision with two people taken to hospital after a speeding BMW driver crashed into the back of a taxi. Could the cabinet member confirm if Morrell avenue can receive some of the funding from the mini Holland project to put in measures and street furniture to tackle speeding?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The County Council is committed to improving road safety through our transport policy, and particularly our commitment to Vision Zero – aiming to have zero fatalities and serious injuries from road collisions in Oxfordshire by 2050.</p> <p>Reducing speed and improving speed compliance from vehicles is central to achieving this. We have just finished a programme of introducing 20mph limits across the county and are now reviewing the remaining and other high speed limits on our strategic classified road network. Accepting that we need to complete the review of 20mph limits in Oxford which is planned following the conclusion of the traffic filter trial.</p> <p>The East Oxford Active Neighbourhoods project (formally titled Mini Holland) covers a large area of East Oxford. Improving conditions for people walking and cycling on streets across this area will be key to the objectives of the project. Work on the project is still at an early stage of prioritising various potential interventions. It is, therefore, not possible to say at this stage which projects will move forward to design, but I have asked officers to note your request. I understand we hope to be in a position to be able to share more details of the project later this year.</p>
<p><b>55. COUNCILLOR EMMA GARNETT</b></p> <p>Residents are concerned that the county council gave SGN permission to close the cycle and footway along Parks road for the next 12 weeks without adequate substitutes or alternative routing. Will the Cabinet member help facilitate a meeting</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>I fully recognise that this situation is inconvenient for the many people who use this cycle and footway regularly, not least schoolchildren. As always, OCC officers applied all relevant standards in designing and installing mitigation. I am of course more than happy to continue discussions with the councillor and local stakeholders to monitor the situation and see if improvements can be made, including a meeting</p>

<p>between highways officers, SGN contractor, Cyclox and Oxford Pedestrians' Association to look into mitigation measures?</p>	<p>on site if appropriate.</p>
<p><b>56. COUNCILLOR IAN SNOWDON</b></p> <p>Recently the councillor for Didcot Ladygrove posted on social media a claim that the NPR3 is "ready to go" and works on site will start in 2026/27, along with the statement that Oxfordshire County Council received the funding in 2013 for the scheme.</p> <p>As this contradicts what officers are saying could I ask for your clarification so residents of Didcot are not being misled.</p> <p>I was led to believe the southern section of NPR3 will be delivered by the developer prior to the 500th dwelling so could you confirm the date is 2026/27 as stated?</p> <p>As you are aware there are many highway infrastructure schemes that are delayed around Didcot so it's important to residents updated with the facts, so I appreciate your clarification.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR PLACE, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION</b></p> <p>I can confirm that the Didcot NPR3 scheme is being delivered in two sections.</p> <p>The northern section of the Relief Road plus the Abingdon Rd Junction is being delivered by OCC (this section is funded) and AtkinsRealis have been recently instructed to undertake detailed design and Planning.</p> <p>The Southern section is to be built and funded by the Ladygrove East Development (Bloor Homes), this section is subject to a planning condition and S106 legal agreement that the southern section of the Relief Road will be built prior to occupation of the 500<sup>th</sup> unit.</p> <p>Therefore, to clarify, the northern section to be built by OCC is funded, it is anticipated that Planning will be submitted in late 2025 and with a favourable planning outcome, construction would commence in 2026.</p>
<p><b>57. COUNCILLOR EMMA GARNETT</b></p> <p>During the Waynflete building demolition (beginning 7<sup>th</sup> of July) on St Clements the cycle lane pedestrians will have to walk in the cycle lane, and cyclists use the lane with motor vehicles. The Plain roundabout is a known accident hotspot -</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The road works will be set up as required using national guidance and best practice (referred to as "chapter 8"). A walkway in the carriageway will be provided and no overtaking cyclists signs will be used. The layout will be approved by the county council and will be inspected to ensure it is set up as approved and working as intended.</p>

<p>what measures will be taken to ensure road safety for all as far as possible during the works?</p>	
<p><b>58. COUNCILLOR LAURA GORDON</b></p> <p>The return to annual gully clearance has been welcomed by communities across Kidlington and Otmoor who are regularly affected by flooding. Can the Cabinet Member a) confirm if the programme is on track and b) comment on whether reviews of the schedule will be considered to respond to emerging risks?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>The gully cleaning programme has got off to a slower than expected start. However, additional resources have been sought to improve this. The current programme is scheduled to run throughout the year, and this is still expected to be the case. Additional information on this programme is available on our website and will be updated there - <a href="https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/roadworks/planned-road-maintenance">https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/roadworks/planned-road-maintenance</a>.</p> <p>While we are carrying out a programme of gully cleaning, we are also able to respond to defects. This allows us to address areas of concern outside of the scheduled programme.</p> <p>There is also a targeted investigation programme, where larger capital works are undertaken to resolve drainage issues on the network.</p>

## MQ17 – Charts attached.

### Oxford (Andrew Gant - Oxfordshire-wide cabinet member for Transport management)

Planned congestion charge location	Average daily traffic count (2024)
St Clements	14,677
Hythe Bridge Street	13,366
Thames Street / Oxpens (average)	12,299
Marston Ferry Road	10,205
Hollow Way	8,961
St Cross Street	7,332
<b>Average across all six locations</b>	<b>11,140</b>

### Abingdon South (Neil Fawcett)

Abingdon South only	Average daily traffic count (2024)
Marcham Road	26,403
Drayton Road	16,684
Ock Street	14,006
Bath Street	5,894
Spring Road	5,244
<b>Average across all locations</b>	<b>13,646</b>

### (Bicester East) Sean Gaul

Bicester East only	Average daily traffic count (2024)
King's End	22,894
St John's Street	14,069
Buckingham Road (North)	10,066
Skimmingdish Lane	12,911
Buckingham Road (South)	14,905
London Road	8,020
Churchill Road	8,599
Launton Road	9,686
<b>Average across all locations</b>	<b>12,644</b>

### Enysham (Dan Levy)

Enysham, Stanton Harcourt	Average daily traffic count (2024)
Standlake Road	12,237
B4449	10,267
Oxford Road(Near Swinford Bridge)	9,731
Witney Road	8,323
Stanton Harcourt Road	4,443
<b>Average across all locations</b>	<b>9,000</b>
<b>Plus A40 (Cassington)</b>	<b>21,825</b>

### North Hinksey (Judy Roberts)

Botley, Dean Court, Flitchampstead	Average daily traffic count (2024)
Botley Road	16,266
Eynsham Road	8,285
Farmoor Road	3,192
<b>Average across all locations</b>	<b>9,248</b>
<b>Plus A420</b>	<b>28,753</b>

### Thame (Kate Gregory)

Thame, Chinnor and surrounding roads	Average daily traffic count (2024)
Western Bypass	18,507
Tythorp Way	12,227
Thame Road (North of Thame)	11,440
Alysbury Road	9,900
Howland Road	8,358
Garden City	2,498
<b>Average across all locations</b>	<b>10,488</b>

### Wantage West (Jenny Hannaby)

Wantage and East Challow	Average daily traffic count (2024)
Wallingford Street	12,339
Mably Way	10,928
Denchworth Road	8,967
Challow Road	6,854
Faringdon Road	5,981
<b>Average across all locations</b>	<b>9,014</b>