

## QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

## ANNEX 2

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

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>1. COUNCILLOR JOHN SANDERS</b></p> <p>Will the Leader use his influence to ensure that the Olympic torch is carried through Rose Hill and Cowley in my division?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR KEITH MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>I congratulate Councillor Sanders on his enthusiasm to bring some Olympics razamataz to his Division. I am afraid decisions about the Olympic Torch route are taken well above my pay grade and there tends to be a great deal of secrecy around the arrangements. However, I do know that the torch is visiting the BMW Mini plant so it will not be far away and I am sure there will be an opportunity for many of his constituents to witness the event at close hand.</p>
<p><b>2. COUNCILLOR JOHN SANDERS</b></p> <p>We understand that the Council has spent £0.5 million "improving" roads in Headington, putting in raised surfaces at junctions adding yellow lines and altering traffic lights. Could not this money have been better spent on more important minor improvements in the County?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</b></p> <p>The scheme for the New Headington Transport Improvements has been funded by money collected by the county council from developments in the Headington area and also by Sustrans, a sustainable transport charity.</p> <p>The money collected from these developments is restricted by the terms of the legal agreements to be spent on highways improvements in the vicinity of the development sites. It could not therefore be spent elsewhere in the county. Sustrans provided the grant specifically for the proposed scheme.</p> <p>The scheme was developed to mitigate the transport impacts of development in the area by improving walking and cycling facilities, and calming traffic in the area.</p>
<p><b>3. COUNCILLOR JOHN SANDERS</b></p> <p>A recent press release from the County Press Office boasts that 98% of Oxfordshire children are placed in their</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS IMPROVEMENT</b></p> <p>I am afraid that the primary data will be not be available until after the primary school places have been allocated on 20 April 2012. I shall of course let all members have those data as soon as possible after that date.</p>

<p>parents' first, second or third preference secondary school. Will the cabinet member release equivalent statistics for primary schools?</p>	
<p><b>4. COUNCILLOR MICHAEL WAINE</b></p> <p>Does the council believe that a Park &amp; Ride site adjacent to the A41 in Bicester is plausible and could help to alleviate the weekend/Bank Holiday traffic congestion in the surrounding area?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</b></p> <p>The County Council has taken ownership of a Park &amp; Ride site as part of a Section 106 agreement with the South-west Bicester development. Officers are currently exploring viability, deliverability and what markets a P&amp;R might serve. Private sector partnerships are also being explored which would contribute to alleviating the traffic congestion as a result of the success of Bicester Village.</p>
<p><b>5. COUNCILLOR JENNY HANNABY</b></p> <p>What steps are being undertaken by the County Council to improve re-enablement services with Oxford Health?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR ARASH FATEMIAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SERVICES</b></p> <p>We have conducted a procurement exercise to identify a new provider for the Re-ablement Service. Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, the current service provider, has been identified as the Council's Preferred Provider. We are in the process of finalising the contract terms with them, including performance criteria.</p> <p>Under the new contract, Oxford Health will be paid for the number of people it supports (re-ablement episodes). It will receive a bonus if it achieves the Council's targets for number of new people (in-take) and good outcomes for service users. Outcomes are measured by the increase in independence following the end of the reablement episode. Payment by episode introduces a very significant incentive for Oxford Health to increase the number of people it supports – if it does not do so, it will not be paid. The agreed targets for the new contract are 3,250 episodes of reablement in Year 1 and 3,750 episodes in Year 2. If Oxford Health achieves these targets the benefits will be quickly felt by the wider system, as the current in-take is just 1,800 episodes a year. By getting more people into the service we should see a knock-on reduction in delayed transfers of care from acute and community hospitals.</p> <p>The Council is taking steps to strengthen its arrangements for contract and performance monitoring of the Reablement Service, ahead of the new contract coming into effect. Contract and performance monitoring will focus on:</p>

	<p>a) Strategic overview – maintaining a high level, strategic overview of service / contract performance, with monthly, Director-level meetings between the Council and Oxford Health to discuss performance.</p> <p>b) Oxford Health’s capacity &amp; capability – a range of contract monitoring activities aimed at establishing whether they are and remain capable of delivering the performance required, including monitoring of staffing levels, deployment, training, complaints and user satisfaction, handling of serious incidents etc.</p> <p>c) The Service’s effectiveness – delivering the service and the performance required – performance monitoring activities focused on assessing the Provider’s performance against the targets and KPIs, including in-take levels, responsiveness and outcomes for service users.</p> <p>These activities and the intelligence gained at each tier above will inform the others and the over-arching commissioning process. Oxford Health currently provides monthly reports on their service activity and performance. We will be requiring weekly reporting and initiating from May 2012 a series of monthly performance monitoring meetings, including director-level meetings, to increase the focus and pressure on Oxford Health to improve its performance.</p>
<p><b>6. COUNCILLOR ANNE PURSE</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet appoint an Energy Champion to encourage the essential work of reducing energy use in the County Council’s buildings and services?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR KEITH MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>We presently have eight champions for Bus users; Cycling; Heritage; Older people; Olympics; Risk Management; Efficiencies; and the Military. In addition, I have recently appointed members to champion the interests of the five military bases in Oxfordshire. They are Councillor Sandy Lovatt for Abingdon; Councillor Bill Service for Benson; Councillor Kieron Mallon for Bicester; Councillor Don Seale for Brize Norton; and Councillor Tony Harbour for Vauxhall Barracks, Didcot. I have included responsibility for Shrivenham in my role as overall military Champion. These appointments represent my analysis of priority areas where a Champion can make a difference.</p>

	<p>Given that I am standing down as Leader of the Council on 15 May 2012, I believe it would be presumptuous of me to make further appointments at this stage and will leave it to the new Leader of the Council to decide whether he or she wishes to continue to appoint Champions and also to determine the areas for appointment.</p> <p>I therefore suggest that Cllr Mrs Ann Purse needs to wait for the new Conservative Administration to determine its policy on the use of Champions and the appropriate members to be appointed.</p>
<p><b>7. COUNCILLOR JANET GODDEN</b></p> <p>The increase in funding for the Area Stewardship scheme (CCH&amp;TF) for the year 2012-13 is welcome, but the announcement of 8 March that funding may be reallocated to another division if proposals are not received by 1 May is taxing. Members naturally want to consult their communities about which proposals to put forward so as to get best value from the fund. Do you see an overall risk that not all the money will be spent in the wisest way and that important local pressures might end up unfunded? The time needed to cost schemes is understood, but would not a phased deadline be better in the long run?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</b></p> <p>This was a statement made by our Operations Manager as he is charged with making sure there are no underspends in the County Councillors Highway &amp; Transport Fund. I applaud the sentiment but I cannot see this happening. At some point later in the year we will have to make sure members do spend all their allocation.</p>
<p><b>8. COUNCILLOR ANNE PURSE</b></p> <p>In the light of the Coalition Government's interest in safer cycling, will the cabinet be looking towards more interaction to promote new cycle paths/routes or improve existing ones?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</b></p> <p>The cycle mode share in Oxfordshire is well above the national average and Oxford continues to set the bar possessing one of the highest cycling rates in the country. Despite this one of the objectives of LTP3 is to develop and increase cycling for local journeys, recreation and health.</p>

	<p>Cycling is a high priority across the county in LTP3 and the county council continues to invest in new and improved cycle routes. Although many highway schemes include an element of cycling, the county council has, or is currently working towards, delivering more than 20 dedicated cycle schemes over the past few years. These include eleven in Oxford with major improvements to the canal/river tow paths and approximately 1¼ miles (2km) of cycle facilities in New Headington. Six schemes have been or are being progressed in Bicester including better provision on the Banbury, Buckingham, Churchill and Boston roads and approximately five dedicated cycle schemes across the rest of the county with many more resulting from growth in the Science Vale UK area.</p> <p>These do not include hundreds of additional cycle parking spaces and schemes that, on the face of it, are not cycling specific – such as the 20mph speed limit in Oxford, New Inn Hall Street public realm and the Oxford Smart Zone - but which help to create a comfortable environment for cycling. The county council continues to work with developers to provide safe and convenient cycling facilities and the Localities Fund is also being used for cycle schemes.</p> <p>Smarter ways of working have also allowed for cycle schemes to be incorporated into maintenance schemes with minimal additional cost, such as the innovative scheme on the Donnington Bridge Road/Weirs Lane and the introduction of cycle lanes on Iffley Road.</p> <p>The county council remains committed to cycling and aims to improve on the high levels of cycling by providing the means to get people on their bikes.</p>
<p><b>9. COUNCILLOR ZOE PATRICK</b></p> <p>Given that Oxfordshire was the first county to sign the Armed Forces Military Covenant and the Leader of the Council was one of the first to sign up, what practical help and support is being given to military personnel returning into civilian life in Oxfordshire to help them with accommodation and</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR KEITH MITCHELL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>I was indeed the first person in the first council to sign the Covenant and am proud of that fact.</p> <p>With regard to the issue of housing for military personnel returning to civilian, this is primarily a city and district council responsibility as the housing authority.</p> <p>I have taken the following strategic measures:</p>

<p>advice?</p>	<p>(A). I have advised City/District leaders of a specific case that highlights the need for a more joined up approach across the county;</p> <p>(B). I have expressed a similar concern to Brigadier Wade of 145 Brigade (South)</p> <p>(C). I am the LGA representative on the CLG Covenant External Reference Group and raised the issue at a recent meeting of the Group at the Cabinet Office. It met with several helpful responses.</p> <p>(D). I believe there is work to be done in all six Oxon councils to embed the Covenant principles throughout the organisation and I am pursuing this.</p> <p>(E). I am delighted to have been able to put £100k into the base budget this year to support the military and their dependents. This makes ongoing what has been one-off funding in previous years.</p> <p>(F). There is a Motion on the Council Order paper which I hope the Liberal Group will support.</p>
<p><b>10. COUNCILLOR JEAN FOOKS</b></p> <p>The plans for the redesign of Frideswide Square have raised concerns about the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Will the Cabinet member confirm that he will reconsider the detail of the design to meet the valid concerns of cycling and pedestrian groups, such as Cyclox and the Oxford Pedestrians Association?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT</b></p> <p>The safety and comfort of all road users (including pedestrians and cyclists) will be a high priority in the detailed design process for Frideswide Square. Discussions with groups representing the different road users will continue and indeed some useful sessions have already been held since the Cabinet meeting on 13 March.</p>

**11. COUNCILLOR JEAN FOOKS**

Following the positive response by the Coalition Government to the Times campaign for safer cycling, will the County Council be taking advantage of the new freedoms to introduce more 20mph zones and limits, and to install large convex 'Trixi' mirrors at junctions to make cyclists more visible to drivers of large vehicles, such as HGVs and buses?

**COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT**

Not until enforcement is taken on board by Thames Valley Police. Also I do not believe that 'Trixi' mirrors improve safety at this moment in time. We will be looking into this.