

## **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.

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>1. COUNCILLOR KEVIN BULMER</b></p> <p>In December 2011 the Council agreed to establish 21 Community and Community Plus Libraries where a proportion of the opening hours would be either staffed by volunteers, funded by the community or a mixture of both. Could the Cabinet Member provide an update on progress towards the completion of this programme which is due in April 2015?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE, CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURAL &amp; COMMUNITY SERVICES</b></p> <p>The community supported libraries programme is on track to be implemented in all 21 designated Community and Community Plus libraries by April 2015, in line with the Cabinet decision from 2011.</p> <p>As of 1 September 2014, agreement has been reached with community groups regarding individual models for all of the 21 libraries. These models have already been implemented in 13 libraries, and in the remaining 8 libraries timescales have been agreed for introducing volunteering by January 2015 at the latest. Individual Councillors have been kept informed of progress with libraries in their divisions as appropriate. Progress has also been reported regularly to the Performance Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The volunteering model has been introduced in eleven libraries so far: Stonesfield, Benson, Grove, Adderbury, Goring, Faringdon, Charlbury, Sonning Common, Hook Norton, Woodstock and Chinnor. This model is seeing volunteers support staff in the running of the library. Some of these models also involve funding from the community, to supplement the reduced staffing budgets from April 2015 onwards.</p> <p>Arrangements are in place for funding models at Bampton and North Leigh libraries where the local community is fundraising to pay for their libraries to remain fully staffed rather than volunteers being used. These arrangements will come in to effect from April 2015.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>As for the remaining 8 libraries, volunteers will start at Old Marston Library from 9 September. October will then see the introduction of volunteers at Burford, Kennington, Wheatley, Wychwood and Deddington libraries. The remaining two libraries, Woodcote and Watlington, will then come on-stream with volunteers in January, allowing time for the 3-month transition period before the deadline of April 2015. Some of these models also involve a community funding element.</p> <p>In each community, a Partnership Working Agreement has been signed, or is being finalised, to confirm the arrangements and to clarify the mutual responsibilities that the community and the Library Service have agreed to take on. These legally binding Agreements will provide a robust basis for the models that have been put in place, and guarantee the future of the library for the duration of the Agreement.</p> <p>Despite the economic driver behind the original decision, this has been seen as a genuine opportunity for partnership working. Strong relationships have been established and developed with Friends Groups and community groups around the county, some of whom have been newly established for the purpose of local engagement. Libraries have become even more of a focal point in their communities and local people have felt an even greater sense of ownership of their library. The Library Service has been overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of local people to get involved. More than 300 volunteers have started or completed their training, and both volunteers and library staff are enjoying the experience of working alongside each other.</p> <p>In summary, the decision is well on the way to being fully implemented by the deadline of April 2015. The County Council will maintain current services and opening hours across the whole network of 43 public libraries in Oxfordshire, as a direct result of the enthusiasm and support of Oxfordshire residents for their local libraries, and the hard work of staff throughout our Library Service.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p data-bbox="203 221 741 252"><b>2. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</b></p> <p data-bbox="203 331 853 587">What comfort can the Cabinet member offer to the thousands of motorists who are daily delayed by the road and bridge works in and around the Kennington roundabout in Oxford? In particular when will the work be completed, is it within budget and what benefit is it expected to bring?</p>	<p data-bbox="880 221 2033 288"><b>COUCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p data-bbox="880 331 2022 770">The County Council is investing more than £6 million of City Deal funding in this project which has been developed to bring major improvements to Kennington Roundabout as well as traffic-flow improvement measures at Hinksey Hill Interchange, and the refurbishment of four bridges in the area. The improvements to Kennington and Hinksey Hill roundabouts form part of the Oxford and Oxfordshire City Deal (supported by County, City and District Councils) – and build on recent improvements to Heyford Hill Interchange to significantly improve traffic flows around this side of the Oxford ring road. Around 60,000 vehicles a day pass through the junctions and the scheme will bring significant improvements to the high levels of congestion experienced at the junctions during peak times e.g. a 30% improvement in capacity is expected during the evening peak.</p> <p data-bbox="880 810 2033 1289">We recognise that the works are causing inconvenience to motorists, and where possible the works have been programmed to reduce delays e.g. by working off-peak during the first phase of the works. However a substantial proportion of the works has to be done under a contraflow arrangement to ensure the safety of motorists and our workforce. Apart from the first few days on the contraflow being implemented, and congestion due to other incidents/events, delays have settled down to the levels we would have expected. Several improvements have been made to try and ease congestion in particular areas, and specific traffic management issues have been reviewed and remedial measures put in place when they have occurred. A major communications plan has been implemented to try and ensure motorists/residents/businesses are informed and encouraged to plan their journeys – particularly as schools go back and higher levels of traffic are expected.</p> <p data-bbox="880 1329 2033 1401">All our communications (signs, internet site, bulletins, press releases etc.) explain to the public that the works will be completed at the end of November 2014.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>The scheme is currently within budget and works are expected to be completed by the original completion date. Like any construction project, unexpected challenges will arise. However we are managing these challenges with our contractor and we are working with them to ensure the project remains on track. Regular updates are being given to members and the general public as the scheme progresses, and everyone who is affected by the works is encouraged to sign up to the scheme email bulletin at:  <a href="https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/travel-choices">https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/travel-choices</a></p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>I wonder why, when last time we met the contract was over budget by 40% and that now that overspend seems to have disappeared, and whether the Cabinet Member intends to introduce weekend and Sunday working so that this job can be done by the end of October instead of the end of November and stop the unnecessary suffering for motorists and businesses in the Oxford area?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>The financial status of the contract is still as it was before. As regards the length of time for doing the job, the contractor and the officers have looked at various ways of doing it and rather than flooding the site and doing over extended times, (concrete does have to have time to go off so there will be times when concrete has been set during the day will have to be left over night to go off), so that will limit the amount of out of normal hour working that is being able to be done. So the work will be done as scheduled and as quickly as possible such as we can then have what will be a 30% increase in the amount of traffic able to go around Kennington roundabout and amongst other people it will make life easier for me to get in and around Oxford.</p>
<p><b>3. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</b></p> <p>What has been the cost to the County Council and the taxpayer of the continuing series of strikes and disruption by the Fire Brigades Union in Oxfordshire during the last 12 months? What steps has the Cabinet member taken to get this dispute settled and to make sure that decent pension arrangements are made for our excellent and hard-working fire and rescue employees?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER</b></p> <p>Firstly I would like to thank the officers and staff of our Fire and Rescue Service who have, in very difficult circumstances, maintained a resilient level of fire cover across the county on over 45 occasions that the FBU have undertaken industrial action (IA). Whilst I do not support the action taken by some employees I am grateful that this has been undertaken in a professional manner and there is a local agreement to return to work in the event of a major incident. We have also seen crews continue to work during the periods of industrial action when they have already been in attendance at an incident which has not been replicated elsewhere in the Country.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>This level of resilience has been achieved by significant planning and robust business continuity plans as well as the professional nature of many on-call firefighters who have taken time out from their primary employment and given up valuable time with their families to provide immediate response cover outside of their normal response areas.</p> <p>In response to the costs to the County Council and the taxpayer, once again, I must commend the leadership of OFRS who have minimised the impact on the budget from this external issue over which they have no control. We only need to look to our neighbours to see both the cultural and the financial impact of this industrial action when relationships are not as positive as they are in Oxfordshire.</p> <p>The costs for the Industrial Action are the salary and associated costs for providing an immediate response from our on-call staff during the periods of action. We have not had to bring in external staff to maintain fire cover.</p> <p>The current costs for the IA is off-set by the pro-rata reduction in salary and employer contributions for those individuals who are taking IA.</p> <p>The total cost to date for the IA is approx. £5k.</p> <p>The second part of your question asks what steps have I have taken to get this dispute settled. I must be clear that this is a dispute between DCLG and the Fire Brigades Union as the Firefighters Pension Scheme is a national scheme and is not managed locally.</p> <p>Whilst I agree with the basic premise of your question that decent pension arrangements should be in place for all our employees, we also need to ensure that any future scheme is sustainable and able to provide benefits for future generations of firefighters who undertake a challenging role to protect our communities. The National Joint Council represents Fire Authorities in England and we need to continue to encourage dialogue to allow these individuals to</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>engage with the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Fire Brigades Union.</p> <p>We have also submitted a response to the consultation document for the 2015 pension scheme and it is pleasing to see that many of the issues that we raised are being considered by the Fire Minister, for example the impact on female firefighters who will be required to work beyond 55 in a physically demanding role.</p> <p>The Chief Fire Officer keeps me regularly informed of the current negotiations and we are able to represent the views of the County Council through the Chief Fire Officers Association via our Chief Fire Officer. The Chief Fire Officers Association is taking an active role in advising the Fire Minister and offering advice on possible ways forward around the concerns of the employees. Elected Members are also feeding their views to the LGA Fire Commission who is in regular contact with all sides in this damaging dispute.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Could I congratulate Councillor Rose on his further responsibilities and I am glad that this Council would like to see the Fire Brigades dispute settled. Could he circulate to all members of Council the consultation document to government expressing the views of the County on the need to settle this as soon as possible?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes.</p>
<p><b>4. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</b></p> <p>Does the Cabinet member agree that the County Council should ensure equality of access, fairness and consideration to all its</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER</b></p> <p>The Cabinet member agrees that the County Council should ensure equality of access, fairness and consideration to all its staff and the people of Oxfordshire.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>staff and the people of Oxfordshire? How does the Cabinet member believe this should be achieved?</p>	<p>Oxfordshire County Council is committed to making Oxfordshire a fair and equal place in which to live, work and visit. We want our services to effectively meet the needs of all local residents. We aim to ensure that our staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet the diverse needs of customers, that our services are accessible, and to encourage supportive and cohesive communities through our service delivery.</p> <p>Our Equality Policy (2012 - 2017) sets out how we aim to achieve this goal and meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The objectives set out in this policy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the needs of individuals and communities</li> <li>• Providing accessible, local and personalised services, including to rural areas and areas of deprivation</li> <li>• Supporting thriving and cohesive communities</li> <li>• Promoting a culture of fairness in employment and service delivery</li> </ul> <p>In addition to our objectives we have an action plan, updated on an annual basis which sets out how these objectives will be achieved. The action plan contains a detailed breakdown of specific actions which need to be undertaken and how these actions relate to the Equality Policy objectives.</p> <p>Additionally we monitor our progress towards the objectives to ensure that we are reflecting the work of all our service areas and the priorities of the council. This monitoring enables us to refresh actions to ensure we are working to meet our Equality Policy objectives.</p>
<p><b>5. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>The government promised that the introduction of free school meals for KS1</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>Councillor Carter wrote to all Councillors on 3 September 2014 about the successful introduction, at short notice, of the provision of free school meals for</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>would be fully funded. Please can you tell us if this is the case in Oxfordshire and if not where the extra money will come from?</p>	<p>all infants. In that e-mail he drew attention to the shortfall in capital funding available in relation to those schools for which the authority is responsible for this purpose (ie Community and Voluntary Controlled schools ). The budget provided by the DFE for this purpose was £1,120,000. The actual costs are in the order of £1.9 million. Consideration is being given by officers as to how this shortfall will be addressed.”</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Will it be possible to identify which projects will sadly have to be cancelled or postponed in order to fund this ridiculous short-fall?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I don't think so at the moment, as we said in our reply, we are still working on a plan to find the shortfall. But from my point of view, I think it is one of the silliest policies I have ever heard of and had I been given over £1m to work with disadvantaged children then I could have done an awful lot more for those children to catch them up with the rest of their colleagues. Certainly along the lines of breakfast and after schools clubs. So I am devastated at the amount this is costing us and I am devastated at what we will have to not do to fund it.</p>
<p><b>6. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>Three-quarters of local authorities now have a Marmot Implementation Plan, setting out how they plan to reduce health inequalities. Please can you tell us why OCC does not have one and when we will be getting one?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR HILARY HIBBERT-BILES, CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH &amp; THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR</b></p> <p>The publication “Fair Society, Healthy Lives” (otherwise known as the Marmot Review, 2010) sets out the following policy objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Giving every child the best start in life (highest priority recommendation)</li> <li>2. Enabling all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives</li> <li>3. Creating fair employment and good work for all</li> <li>4. Ensuring a healthy standard of living for all</li> <li>5. Creating and developing sustainable places and communities</li> <li>6. Strengthening the role and impact of ill-health prevention</li> </ol> <p>I have found one example of where a local authority has adopted this “life course” framework for their strategic plans and incorporated them into their</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>Corporate Plan. This was in Walsall, where they referred to some actions as their “Marmot Implementation Plan.”</p> <p>Although we have not adopted this approach in Oxfordshire we can demonstrate that the policy objectives set out are being implemented here and form the basis of several of our plans, not least the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This gives the added impetus of joint work with our key partners to deliver the work to address social determinants of health in the county.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>This answer is about the framework of Marmot report, I am asking in my original question about the implementation so that we can see inequalities being reduced. Please can you give at least one example of how we are addressing social determinates of health in the county?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>Giving every child the best start in life is our highest priority recommendation. The Joint Health &amp; Wellbeing strategy programme 1-4 will tell you that. Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation programme, Thriving Families, Joint Health &amp; Wellbeing Strategy, priorities for the health improvement board to promote immunisation in breast feeding, other public initiatives to reduce smoking in pregnancy, school health nursing etc – how many do you want? And they are all in the public health report if you read it.</p>
<p><b>7. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>Oxfordshire was the worst County in the whole country for delayed transfers of care last year – by no means for the first time. The government recently announced that the badly-needed money for “winter pressures”, which we have come to rely on, is being slashed from £10.2 million to about £4 million. What impact is this likely to have on delayed transfers of care?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</b></p> <p>Although the department of health publishes information by council area on delayed transfers of care, it is not possible to identify which authority is worst. Many people including the audit commission and the Health Select Committee have said that data reported is not comparable across areas. The Health Select Committee said <i>'The national data available on delayed discharges contradicts the evidence of clinicians and managers across the acute sector. The Committee believes that the data is incredible and we recommend that Ministers swiftly investigate the method of data collection in order to understand whether the available figures genuinely reflect the situation on the ground.'</i></p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>What authorities therefore need to do is to ensure that year on year they reduce their delayed transfers of care. To this end as part of the Government's Better Care Fund we have set targets to reduce the number of days people are delayed in hospital by 37% in the current year, from a 2012/13 baseline.</p> <p>The latest figures (at the end of July) show that we have reduced all delays by 21% and within this social care delays by 38% - the target level set. In fact social care delays have now been at this target level since December last year and I am confident that we can therefore deliver those targets which are the responsibility of the council. At the end of July under a quarter (23%) of delays in Oxfordshire were the responsibilities of social care.</p> <p>When the "winter pressures" money was announced last year we neither assumed nor budgeted on it being a recurrent sum of money. Last year we bid for and got £2.5m of the £10m allocated to Oxfordshire. £0.5 million was spent on equipment and subsequently we have increased the equipment budget through the budget process by £0.9million. The rest was used to set up schemes to improve the speed of response. These schemes have been maintained and continually developed in the last year and include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. introduction of 7 day working for social care staff in hospitals</li> <li>2. increasing use of assistive technology in supporting people to be discharged from hospital</li> <li>3. Support for people funding themselves to organise care through a new contract 'My Care My Home'</li> <li>4. Employing reviewing officers to review people post discharge from hospital</li> <li>5. Setting up a contract to provide up to 24 hour short term care for people in their own home when they leave hospital</li> <li>6. Setting up a system of incentive payments to providers to pick up care in 72 hours.</li> </ol> <p>The main reasons we still have delays in social care are that people are awaiting</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>home care packages. This reflects the fact that care cannot be accessed quickly enough. Following earlier trials of incentive payments we have set up new block contracts with home care providers which should be operational by October 1<sup>st</sup> which will guarantee the successful companies' minimum hours of care if they pick up cases in agreed timescales. The allocation of winter pressures has changed this year to an equal allocation for all authorities regardless of their level of delayed transfers, but as we are proposing to use this year's monies to provide continued support to the schemes above we will be making best use of what is available.</p> <p>We continue to work with our Health colleagues to ensure that individuals receive the appropriate discharge plans and where necessary longer term support.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>It is good to see that we are trying to reduce the number of people who are delayed in hospital when they are fit to go home that is very good, but all the other local authorities are similarly reducing their delayed transfers of care, so please could you tell us since there is a league table, like it or not, when will we stop being at the very bottom of it?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>So much is actually happening on the ground to do with detox figures, support of older people, reducing pressure on hospitals, Age UK Oxfordshire with the support of the Urgent Care Board has recently successfully bid for funding to help older people to stay well at home, which is a policy of this County Council. Our own performance update includes the reduction in the days lost for delayed transfers of care and are now in line with the target and this is also mentioned in my response which admittedly Councillor Pressel has acknowledged.</p> <p>Additionally I stated that when the winter pressure monies were announced last year, we neither assumed nor budgeted that it would be a recurrent sum of money again - this is mentioned in my answer. Detox is a multi-agency issue. Much work has been done and will continue to be done. The method of data collection is not uniform across the piece and we could be likening apples with pears with regard to the Detox stats. Do remember that Detox refers to people and they can't be shoved around like apples and pears, from one agency to another and I wish she would remember the compassionate side when she thinks of Detox.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p><b>8. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>A recent major MORI survey of people in Oxford reveals that 70% of respondents feel that road and pavement repairs is the issue most in need of improvement. This issue came top by a long way and is much higher than in previous years. I'm sure this would be similar in other parts of the County. Please can you tell us what you are doing to address this widespread and considerable dissatisfaction?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>The improvement of the condition of roads and footways is an issue which is consistently high on any Local Authority survey and the results of the MORI poll in Oxford is consistent with the national picture (National Highways Benchmarking Survey shows average level of dissatisfaction of highway condition for 27 County Councils to be 69.74%) and the recent increase in dissatisfaction similarly reflects the national trend. This concern has prompted the government to make available an extra £168 million to Highway Authorities to tackle the problem of potholes. The County Council received £3.1m from this fund and in addition have invested an extra £1.8m of its own money to ensure that the Council can improve the condition of roads and footpaths.</p> <p>Furthermore, officers have worked with a cross party member group (including two representatives of Oxford) in revising the councils Highway Asset Management Plan which proposes a strategy to make the best use of funds available and this will be presented to Cabinet in September.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Could I put in a particular plea for cyclists who complain to me all the time about the potholes. They can be deadly for cyclists. Please could someone from Highways go on a bicycle up and down some of our streets and experience what it is like and then perhaps the money be spent in order to make cycling more attractive and safer so that we can get more people out of their car and on to their bikes, especially in weather like this.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I am pleased that Councillor Pressel would like extra money, but I would just remind her that she voted against an extra £1m of maintenance money in last years' budget, so she can't have it both ways.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>9. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</b></p> <p>The Audit Commission says that once again this government has chosen to cut far more from councils in poor areas than it has from councils in richer areas, with the councils covering the 10 most deprived areas of England losing an average of £782 per household, while the councils covering the richest areas are losing just £48 on average.</p> <p>Please can you tell us where Oxfordshire comes in this league table and how much we are losing per household?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR LAWRIE STRATFORD, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE</b></p> <p>The Audit Commission have not released the full tables enabling the ranking of each council by scale of savings so I am unable to say where we are in a league table. However, at the start of the period measured, Oxfordshire only received £742 per household from central government, meaning cuts at the upper end of the scale would not have been possible. The analysis includes all councils at all tiers, so direct comparisons are difficult. The authorities facing the smallest cuts are District councils, both thanks to their large share of the new homes bonus, and their smaller total budgets. In addition the analysis only measured changes in government support, underestimating the challenge faced by those authorities which raise significant amounts of spending locally, in the face of limitations on local income including council tax. It also did not measure the different cost pressures faced by different councils - for example the cost of supporting a growing elderly population.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Would Councillor Stratford agree that it is very unjust that the rich local authorities are having extra while the poor local authorities are losing more and more money?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>As the reply indicates, it is very difficult to compare all local authorities at the moment. I think we will keep a note on it. I do agree it is unfortunate that some get richer at the expense of those that get poorer, but it is not quite as simple as that, as I am sure you know.</p>
<p><b>10. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>Given that numerous care homes in Oxfordshire are now charging well over £1,000 per week for full time and respite care. Would the Cabinet member agree with me that profit taking in the care industry has now reached unacceptable levels and it is now time to look at returning to at least some 'In</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</b></p> <p>The cost of adult social care and particularly the cost of care home services has been the subject of much discussion over the years.</p> <p>Cabinet considered a report on Care Home Fees in April this year and I would refer you to that document for further information.</p> <p>What the report explains is that when reviewing the price they will pay councils</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>House' provision as a more cost effective way of offering high quality care. Would she not agree that this would at least provide a benchmark of what the realistic costs of care are and what we may identify as a profit margin?</p>	<p>are expected to assess the cost of providing care in their area and to consult providers on the same. We carried out this assessment using a cost model developed by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services that had been tested thoroughly in 2013-14 and was updated for 2014-15. We also invited local care home providers to share their operating costs with us but few did.</p> <p>The outcome is that we have reported on the cost that we feel is reasonable for Oxfordshire given the calculations we made and the information made available to us from the care home sector. There is of course a difference between our assessment of the cost of providing care and the price that some providers are charging.</p> <p>Despite our work it is not possible to say what an acceptable level of profit is and because of this it is not possible to say what is an unacceptable level of profit; it will be different for individual homes given their organisational structure, business model, ethos and financial structure.</p> <p>I do not believe we should be returning to in-house provision because of a number of reasons</p> <p>Firstly, our strategy is to support people to live in their own homes whenever possible; it is not to place people in care homes. We are working hard to ensure that opportunities are available through the provision of information, prevention and community based support services so people can make informed choices and continue to do this.</p> <p>We have always recognised and acknowledged that the services that care homes provide within Oxfordshire play an important role in helping to meet the needs of vulnerable adults. However, whilst we expect to continue to purchase some nursing care home services in the future we anticipate purchasing fewer residential care home services and instead we will look to alternatives such as extra-care housing and care at home. This is something that we have shared with the care homes sector on a number of occasions and has been set out in</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>our Business Strategy for some time.</p> <p>A further point I would make is in relation to the opportunity cost of investing valuable resources in the care home sector. Our view is that there are sufficient care homes already in Oxfordshire with more being developed and our service and resource planning process has identified that there are significant pressures on the older people's budget. We are also aware of the future demographic pressures in Oxfordshire; we simply need to focus resources for the benefit of an increasing number of vulnerable people.</p> <p>In conclusion, moving to a position of increasing our strategic spending on care home services would not support this and it would go against our stated business strategy for the future.</p> <p>The final point I would make relates to The Care Act and Funding Reform. Councillors will be aware that we are expecting further information regarding this to be available next month. A key theme in discussions leading up this point has been the cost of 'care' and 'hotel' costs in care homes. The Funding Reforms are expected to lead to a greater level of transparency about the cost of care in care homes... and this is something I welcome.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member agree with me that (in her response she does accept that there is a problem of transparency for accounts put forward by our various care homes and nursing homes) there is a worrying aspect of the whole process? Would she also agree, (she says that this doesn't conform the idea of having some run</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>Chairman, I think I heard three or four questions of 'do I agree' and I am not going to answer any of those parts because I think the reply/response that is on the order paper is very clear. One thing that I think Councillor Williams hasn't taken on board is that, (he obviously does a lot of research, he obviously goes onto websites and he has obviously has family experience at the moment) I have been advised that there is a national figure from the Department of Health for the cost of running local authority care homes and that the cost is over £900 per week, so it would actually cost us more as an Authority if I were to take up his</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>by the local authority so that we can compare prices.) that this position of everything being contractualised is actually deeply ideological, committed to the idea of privatisation and contractualisation, and would she also agree that the gap between the payments that are paid to these homes is growing ever more distance from £850 to nearly £2,000 a week.</p>	<p>suggestion from his question because not only is the cost there per week but there is the resource that would be required so there would be extra staffing to take on. I wish to continue the work to increase the number of older people that can stay within the community in their own home in surroundings they are familiar with and with their friends close to them and I feel that the best way forward is for people to live independently.</p>
<p><b>11. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>In 2012 the City Council passed a motion that they would seek to work with the County and other Districts in following the model of Northumberland County Council in using its investment potential to help the local NHS trust to buy out their burdensome PFI contracts thereby saving their local NHS Trust around £3.5 million per year and at the same time giving Northumberland a decent return on their investment.</p> <p>Could the Cabinet member for Finance give an update on any progress that has been made on this City resolution for clearly the PFI payments per years paid out by the Oxfordshire NHS Trusts (in excess of £20m) are crippling?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER</b></p> <p>The motion in July 2012 was to request the Cabinet to appoint a working party of appropriate Members and Officers to investigate, with colleagues from the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust, the potential for savings to be made through the provision of financial support by the County Council. The motion was put to the vote and was lost by 46 votes to 2.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Would he agree that the County Council turned this idea down – it is correct factually</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I think this is a matter for the City Council’s chamber of which I believe the member in question is a member of and I suggest he takes it there.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>but there still will be overtures from the city to join such a consortium.</p>	
<p><b>12. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</b></p> <p>Will the portfolio holder for transport be backing the concept of a large Oxford City centre cycle parking 'HUB', with inbuilt CCTV security, common in many European Cities? A place where large numbers of cycles can be left with confidence for the length of the working day.</p> <p>Would he agree that such facility if placed in the City centre perhaps in the basement of the redeveloped Westgate Centre would greatly encourage cycling into the City centre, a much healthier and pollution free system of transport. Would he also agree that this would ease the present pressure on the pavement cycle racks in the City Centre which are taking up ever increasing amounts of pavement space?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>We fully understand that we need more space for people to park their bicycles. At least one cycle hub along the lines that Councillor Coates suggests would be extremely helpful. Indeed, it is good news that the proposals for the redevelopment of the Westgate centre include a cycle hub with space for parking 180 bicycles. This is great but is only the start. We will continue to be open to other possible locations for cycle hubs alongside trying to find more space for conventional cycle stands and better management of existing space.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Can I thank Councillor Nimmo Smith for his answer. It is good news about the bicycle spaces in the new Westgate. Can I ask whether he knows whether they will be covered by CCTV surveillance?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>That will be covered by the ultimate detailed planning permission from the City Council.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>13. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</b></p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways give an indication if the County Council would back the recent proposal for the complete reopening of the so called ‘Varsity Line’( i.e. a direct railway link directly between Oxford and Cambridge) closed under the Beeching axe in 1967 but now deemed viable by transport executives ?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER</b></p> <p>It has been a long time ambition of the County Council to improve rail connections by reinstating the former ‘Varsity Line’ between Oxford and Cambridge. We have been an active member of the East West Rail Consortium since 1995 and I am the elected Chairman of the Joint Delivery Board for the Western Section of East West Rail, a project that is seeing the upgrading and reconstruction of the former railway between Oxford, Bicester, Aylesbury, Milton Keynes and Bedford by 2019.</p> <p>Now that the Western Section between Oxford, Bedford and Milton Keynes is going ahead, the local authorities and partners in the East of England have been working to develop the business case for the ‘Central Section’, a linked-project to identify a brand new stretch of railway that will deliver the greatest benefits between Bedford and Cambridge.</p> <p>The County Council welcomes publication of the recent Conditional Output Statement by the Central Section Steering Group which supports the economic case for investment in the ‘Central Section’, and the commitment by Government to provide funds for Network Rail to undertake the next phase of feasibility work to identify a preferred route. We will continue to support their efforts to ensure the residents and businesses in Oxfordshire reap the benefits of the fully completed East West Rail project.</p> <p>Note: The Central Section Steering Group is led by Cambridgeshire County Council and comprises Suffolk County Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Norfolk County Council, Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council, Luton Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Network Rail and Department for Transport.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>14. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</b></p> <p>Last winter, a commitment was given to the councillors who had funded the project from their community allowance that the cycle marking on Cowley Road, now faded beyond recognition, would be repainted during the summer period. As it is now September and the work has not been completed could the Cabinet Member give an indication when this work will be undertaken?</p>	<p><b>COUCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>The Council has been holding the money as requested for remarking Cowley Road to reinstate the cycle lanes amongst other features. It had been intended that significant areas of Cowley Road would be surface dressed this summer however more detailed investigation identified that, following the difficult winter this was now not the best solution and that the area should be resurfaced. This work could not be fitted into this year's programme but is expected to be included in the 2016/2017 programme. In the meantime some structural patching will be done to remedy some of the areas have deteriorated to the point that they will likely become hazardous in the two years prior to this resurfacing work being done.</p> <p>It would have been a waste of public money to undertake the lining prior to a decision on the resurfacing solution for the road but this work will now proceed as a matter of urgency.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Can I ask Councillor Nimmo Smith if he thinks it is acceptable that we might not have an acceptable cycle route until 2017 on one of the main cycle routes into the City?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>We have to work with the monies available, so we can't do everything for everybody all at the same time. We are providing choice all over the place it comes down to funding and availability so that is the best answer I can give at the moment.</p>
<p><b>15. COUNCILLOR ZOE PATRICK</b></p> <p>As the Council's representative on the Thames Valley Police Panel receiving a Special Responsibility Allowance, please would Cllr Mallon provide a report on the work that he has undertaken on our behalf?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR KIERON MALLON</b></p> <p>As the County Council's representative on the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel I have attended a range of strategic meetings across the three counties, primarily through my formal membership of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel and the Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership. I also regularly meet with the Police and Crime commissioner on an informal basis. Further detail is provided below.</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p data-bbox="880 252 1469 288"><b>Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel</b></p> <p data-bbox="880 328 1966 475">There are 6 meetings per year and I attended all of these meetings since the Panel was formed in November 2012, except for one during the recent local elections in May 2014. These meetings move to a different Thames Valley council location each meeting.</p> <p data-bbox="880 515 2029 730">The Panel meetings are open meetings and therefore the public and councillors are welcome to attend. They have been held at a range of different council offices across Thames Valley including in Oxfordshire: County Hall (March 2013), West Oxfordshire District Council Chamber (May 2013), Oxford Town Hall (July 2013), Cherwell District Council Chamber (March 2014) and South Oxfordshire Council Chamber (July 2014).</p> <p data-bbox="880 770 2022 842">At these meetings I have raised the profile of important community safety issues, for example:</p> <ul data-bbox="880 882 2022 1361" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the importance of the work undertaken by community safety partners to prevent crime and thus a need to maintain community safety funding, whilst also pressing for longer term funding;</li> <li>- ensuring critical issues such as Child Sexual Exploitation remain high on the agenda at a Thames Valley level through raising the profile of the work being undertaken in Oxfordshire by the Kingfisher Unit, and the activity being led by the district Community Safety Partnerships (under the auspices of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children’s Board);</li> <li>- supporting the Commissioner with his focus on rural crime and his concerns about major highways (such as the M40) providing ‘corridors of crime’ for organised gangs; and</li> <li>- raising the issue of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) so that it does not get ignored as a minority concern.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="880 1401 1888 1433">Working with the Chairman and other panel members we have held the</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>Commissioner to account for his proposed Council Tax precept of 1.99% to protect front line services. I and the Panel Chairman attend bi-monthly meetings with the PCC to discuss any issues in relation to crime and community safety. At my instigation the panel is exploring the idea of themed meetings to look in depth at subjects that are part of the Commissioners priorities.</p> <p>I have attended and in some cases instigated meetings that will lead to task and finish panels to examine how the Commissioner can work more effectively with partners; the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board for example.</p> <p>In addition, I have attended the two annual conferences that have been organised by the Police and Crime Panel to engage the wider community in the work of the Panel and discuss key issues – the conferences were held in Aylesbury (July 2013) and at the Kassam in Oxford (July 2014).</p> <p><b>Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership (OSCP) Board</b></p> <p>I am an active member of the Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership raising issues on funding, CSE, rural crime, ASB and FGM in particular, as well as broader concerns such as domestic abuse, hate crime and the overall performance of the partnership. I was Chairman of the OSCP Board for two years from July 2010 to July 2012 and in this role, oversaw and pushed through a review of Oxfordshire-wide community safety partnership structures to ensure they were best placed to respond to the incoming election of the Commissioner and the Police and Crime Panel, as well as the development of the annual OSCP Business Plan.</p> <p><b>Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner</b></p> <p>I meet informally and regularly (face-to-face) with the Police and Crime and Commissioner (once every 3 to 4 weeks) to ensure there is alignment of policy priorities and to provide support and challenge on key issues of concern. In addition, we have ad hoc telephone conversations, as necessary. This special</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>relationship I have with the Commissioner and the fact that I have been re-elected Vice Chairman of the panel adds value to the role especially on Oxfordshire issues.</p> <p>I was actively involved in negotiations with the Commissioner on Community Safety Funding levels for the Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership through leading a discussion with partners on how to achieve the best funding outcome for Oxfordshire. I also attended a meeting with Public Health colleagues and the deputy Commissioner to build stronger relationships between the Commissioner's office and the Oxfordshire Health &amp; Wellbeing Board.</p>
<p><b>16. COUNCILLOR STEWART LILLY</b></p> <p>Would the Cabinet member please advise council as to the progress regarding the superfast broadband work for Oxfordshire? Can he also confirm that the work is progressing to programme and is on budget? Can he also update on the opportunity to enhance the installation to the more remote parts of the county as has been pledged by budgetary assistance from all the district authorities, and advise as the the anticipated coverage now expected in percentage terms.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR NICK CARTER, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS &amp; CUSTOMER SERVICES</b></p> <p>The Better Broadband programme is running slightly ahead of delivery schedule (10,000 premises passed/53 cabinets live as at 29<sup>th</sup> August), and is on budget. South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and Cherwell district councils have all committed to fund additional coverage via the County programme. We estimate that, as a result, coverage will be extended from about 90% to an average 95% in the three districts participating.</p> <p>West Oxfordshire is pursuing its own plans for additional coverage. Oxford City seeks to extend broadband coverage through the Government's Superfast City initiative.</p>
<p><b>17. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</b></p> <p>What was the cost to the Council of dealing with the FOI requests in 2013-14 financial Year?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER</b></p> <p>The Council does not specifically record the time spent, or cost of, handling each FOI request. As part of the Council's drive to minimise bureaucracy and increase effectiveness, the Council focuses its efforts on responding to this statutory duty proportionately and in compliance with the legal timescales. To achieve this, the Council has a small, dedicated corporate Complaints &amp; Freedom of Information Team which routes requests to directorates and which advises on the application</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>of the legislation. Responding to requests is devolved to directorates, and each directorate has a co-ordinator who ensures timescales are met. This light-touch but compliant approach prevents the need for every member of staff involved in responding to a request to record their time spent on it; to do this would create a further administrative task.</p> <p>However, the Council is robust in having regard to the ‘appropriate limit’ under the FOI Act – such that any request that would exceed this limit is refused, with advice and assistance to scope it down so that it can be made less burdensome. The statutory regulations say that legitimate tasks in responding to an FOI request should be nominally costed at £25 per hour (regardless of who is involved) to a maximum of 18 hours/£450. There are separate regulations for requests that seek environmental information and the Council will refuse a request where responding to it would be ‘manifestly unreasonable’. I can say, however, that during the 2013-14 financial year, the Council responded to 1080 information requests, 25% more request compared to the previous year.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>I would like to thank Councillor Rose for his response. Can he investigate whether or not we could save money by putting more information on our website and perhaps look at what the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead do in terms of the amount of information they put, because putting it up first may save us FOI requests later.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes, Chairman, I certainly will be exploring that option.</p>
<p><b>18. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</b></p> <p>How many complaints against Oxfordshire County Council has the Information Commissioner either upheld in full or in part</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER</b></p> <p>Between January and August 2014, five (of 7) complaints considered by the Commission were upheld either in full or in part; four of these were from multiple complainants about the same issue. In 2013-14 three (out of three) cases were</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>between January and August 2014 compared with the previous three years?</p>	<p>upheld in full or in part and all three were from multiple complainants arising from the same issue. In 2012-13, two cases were referred but none were upheld. In 2011-12 no complaints were referred to the Commissioner.</p> <p>The Commissioner does not publish comparative statistics for each authority. To put the Council's performance into context, however, the number of our responses actually referred to the Information Commissioner is very small indeed. In 2013/14, only 0.3% of the Council's 1080 responses were considered by the Commissioner, meaning that 99.7% of our responses were not the subject of a complaint. Given that the number of information requests is increasing year-on-year, and given that every response to a requester gives the Commissioner's contact details, this represents a sound situation.</p> <p>The wider governance picture is also encouraging as regards complaints about our services generally and specifically those that were considered by the Local Government Ombudsman; in that context, among county councils, Oxfordshire has the lowest number of referrals to the Ombudsman, the lowest number upheld by her; and the highest number dealt with at first instance as having no case to answer.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>I am concerned about the number of references to the information commission even though it is a small percentage of the overall number it doesn't do the Council credit that the Information Commissioner upholds complaints to him about this Council. Will Councillor Rose ensure that any necessary training of officers now takes place particularly if any of these complaints originate in relation to issues to do with children and young people.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>Yes Chairman.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p><b>19. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member for CEF provide a report on the activities of:  LIPG - Leaders of Initiatives and Partnerships,  ETB - Education Transformation Board,  LAB - Leader's Advisory Board,  In raising standards across Oxfordshire schools?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>An update on the role of key groups providing governance to the delivery of outcome within Education and Early Intervention Services across Oxfordshire.</p> <p>The Leaders of Initiatives and Partnerships</p> <p>This is a group that consists of the chairs of each of the 28 partnerships of schools from across Oxfordshire. The chairs of partnerships meet 3 times per year in area groups and are able to substitute a representative from their partnership if they are unable to attend the meeting.</p> <p>The group has been used as a reference group as and when there is a need to consult on the work of the following teams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Years and Foundation stage</li> <li>• Schools and learning</li> <li>• Early intervention</li> </ul> <p>Their role is to raise any issues facing schools in relation to school improvement and early intervention across all phases and also to communicate progress on school based initiatives. They are expected to feed back to head teacher colleagues within their partnership on all information shared at the area meeting and to identify representatives/volunteers for any new initiatives that are being undertaken.</p> <p>The groups that have met this year in the North and the South of the county have had better attendance than the meeting in the central area. We will be working with all area groups to ensure that the focus of the meetings meets the needs in their localities. Chairs of partnerships have welcomed standing items on the agenda related to:</p>

Questions	Answers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire Ofsted outcomes</li> <li>• Updates on academy conversions</li> <li>• Feedback on Early intervention hub impact</li> <li>• The work of Carillion in schools</li> </ul> <p>They have also given positive feedback in relation to updates on the school transport consultation, the new Vulnerable Learners Service consultation and the refresh of the behaviour and attendance frameworks.</p> <p><b>Education Transformation Board</b>  The Education Transformation Board comprises of key stakeholders from across education sectors, with representation from Oxford Governors association and our university partners within Oxford. The Board is chaired by the Deputy Director – Education and Early Intervention and is attended by leaders of initiatives that are represented in the Education Strategy to enable them to present updates and reports on milestones within the Strategy. This includes representation by the Oxfordshire Teaching School Alliance.</p> <p>The remit of the Education Transformation Board has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviewing progress and actions needed to meet ambitious county-wide targets</li> <li>• overview and administration of any funds made available to support the key strands of work</li> <li>• discussion of areas for joint commissioning across education providers</li> <li>• overview of quality assurance of Oxfordshire County Council services supporting school improvement</li> <li>• reviewing data to identify areas of provision needing further improvement</li> <li>• being outward looking to find the best practice elsewhere from which Oxfordshire children and young people could also benefit</li> </ul> <p><b>Leader Advisory Board</b>  The Advisory Board is chaired by the leader of the Council. Its membership is</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>comprised of local influential members of the educational community, City Council, key Academy Sponsors and the Diocese. Its remit is to act as a think-tank providing synergy through a co-ordinated approach to improving outcomes for Oxfordshire learners.</p> <p>Key areas for focus this year have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A review of outcomes for children at the end of key stages in relation to specific groups</li> <li>• A focus on the new Ofsted requirements</li> <li>• The role of governors in schools</li> <li>• The new National Curriculum</li> </ul> <p>Two areas of development that we are taking forward this term following the last Advisory Board discussion include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing a briefing for schools, governors and parents on the changes to the National Curriculum. Barnaby Lenon will be leading on this</li> <li>• Developing a promotional video to encourage more Oxfordshire residents to consider becoming a governor in their local school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>I would like to thank Councillor Tilley for the long and detailed report. Could I just ask a question about the third of those where she mentions academies. Could she also confirm whether free schools, university technically colleges and studio schools are included in that board thinking about the future and also, although she mentions the city by name she doesn't mention any of the other district councils. Are they included in it or are they left out on the assumption that they don't</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>Thank you for the question, I think you are quite right about the other councils, I think we need to include them, so the answer is yes.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
have anything to do with education?	