

QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

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

Questions	Answers
<p>1. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Please can you tell us to what extent we have been able to secure an Olympic legacy in Oxfordshire as far as sport in schools is concerned: for instance, do all children still benefit from the schools' sports partnerships that were such a success under the previous government?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>Sports partnerships were originally managed both within local partnerships and across secondary schools according to the sport and level of skill. Arrangements for the continuation of partnership working in relation to sporting and related activities are for schools to determine and we have no central record of those arrangements.</p> <p>I am pleased to report, however, that a very quick straw poll of schools reveals some examples of good practice which capitalise on previous practice and , for example, the recently introduced PE and Sport Premium for primary schools. This is a ring-fenced grant available to primary schools for the academic year 2014/15. Schools with 16 or fewer eligible pupils receive £500 per pupil and Schools with 17 or more eligible pupils receive £8,000 and an additional payment of £5 per pupil.</p> <p>The North Oxfordshire School Sport Partnership is an example of a very vibrant organisation, originally established in 2004, working in partnership with 51 schools from across North Oxfordshire. Its overriding aim is to engage more 5 to 19 year olds in high quality Physical Education, School and Community Sport, thereby promoting excellence and lifelong participation in health promoting activity. Annually it organises and delivers over 250 School Games competitions and sports festivals, supports teachers with the development and delivery of high quality PE and school sport, deploys a team of highly motivated specialist PE Mentors and Sports Coaches to support both curricular and extra-curricular initiatives, trains and mentors young leaders as coaches, officials and team managers, and forges effective pathways for</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>young people from schools into community sport.</p> <p>Similarly, down in the South of the county, the Henley School Partnership, for example organises a schedule of tournaments each academic year. Each primary school pays a fee each year to the Secondary school to cover costs for this. This encourages a healthy competitive element across the schools which the children enjoy and benefit from.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>This reply, although it is good news does seem very complacent. The UK population is the most overweight in Europe. Under the Labour government 9 out of 10 pupils were doing 2 hours of sport and PE each week in schools and now there are far fewer doing this and it really isn't good enough for the Cabinet Member to say we have no central record of sport and PE arrangements in schools. We do have a responsibility, we are still the education authority and my question is – how can we ensure that the benefits of schools sports partnerships reach all children and how can we help schools deliver specialist coaching of sports because I do think that there is a role for the Local Authority in this.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Despite what Councillor Pressel thinks we do not have any control over what schools do with sport. What we do, do is encourage and certainly encourage partnerships.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>2. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>There has been a great deal of blame apportioned by a certain City Councillor on the shoulders of the County Council for blocking the City Council's Cycle City plans. Does the Cabinet member accept these criticisms or does he consider that such claims are merely an attempt to blame somebody else for the extremely slow progress of the programme?</p>	<p>COUCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>At a time when the county council are putting millions of pounds and many thousands of hours of staff time into developing and implementing transport schemes in Oxford, including major improvements for cyclists, the suggestion that the county council is blocking investment in cycling is simply wrong.</p> <p>Over the years, county council officers have worked closely with city council colleagues to implement a number of cycle improvements in the city as part of the "Cycle City" plans, including suggestions that were received from the city council.</p> <p>As part of the county council's fourth Local Transport Plan, officers are also developing a transport strategy for Oxford. The strategy will have a strong emphasis on cycling improvements across Oxford and the county council will continue to work with the city council to consider and take forward the right cycling projects.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Would the portfolio holder agree with me that it is much better that the City Council and the County Council work together on these projects as much as possible rather than individuals making statements which in his opinion are completely and utterly wrong.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I totally agree.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>3. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>Are you aware of the recent attack by the Government Minister Norman Baker MP who specifically identified the Oxford County Council in a recent speech for their targeted cuts on the poor and vulnerable as a classic example of the 'nasty party in action'?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER</p> <p>Obviously with a general election on the horizon we can expect efforts by the junior members of the coalition to stake out some independent ground in the hope of regaining their lost voters. It is nonetheless unfortunate that Norman Baker has chosen to speak out in a hyperbolic way against savings which are the result of central government funding reductions for which he voted.</p> <p>He has recently visited Oxfordshire to see our high-profile work on tackling child sexual exploitation. This included a 30 minute meeting with me, following which we had lunch together. At no point did he raise his concerns about our budget position directly, which leads me to believe that his comments are for the gallery rather than a constructive contribution to the debate about how we meet our savings target.</p>
<p>4. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>Are you concerned at yet another very large pay rises for the eight executive directors of Oxford University Hospitals that has recently been announced, especially as they had similar bonus payments last year amounting to a 61% increase in extra payments. Do you accept that paying people massive increases to implement £160 million pounds worth of cuts over 4 years when workers in the NHS are receiving 1% extra this year is disgraceful? Do you accept that meeting targets (i.e. doing your job) is not a sufficient reason to increase senior executives pay by such outrageous amounts?"</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</p> <p>Pay awards for executive directors are a matter for the Oxford University Hospitals Trust, and their Board in particular, to decide. However, I agree that the levels of award are high within the context of significant savings and a 1% award for NHS staff generally.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>5. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>When is the next scheduled meeting of the County Council Pension Investment Committee and as the Chair will you be bringing to their attention the recent debate on fossil fuel disinvestment held in this chamber and illustrating that now is the time to switch investment patterns to renewable power companies?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR STEWART LILLY, CHAIRMAN OF THE PENSION FUND COMMITTEE</p> <p>The next meeting of the Pension Fund Committee will be on Friday 5 December 2014. I will not be raising the issue of investments in fossil fuel, as the Committee has discussed this issue at its meetings of 6 June 2014 and again on 5 September 2014. The meeting of 6 June 2014 considered the legal opinion provided by Nigel Giffin QC on behalf of the Shadow Scheme Advisory Board. This concluded that the Administering Authority's power of investment must be exercised for investment purposes, and not for any wider purposes. Wider social, ethical and environmental considerations could only be taken into account where there is no financial detriment in meeting the Funds investment objectives.</p> <p>At the meeting on 5 September 2014, I specifically referred to the motion at the July Council meeting on this subject, and the Committee confirmed that in light of the advice provided from Nigel Giffin QC, they were happy with the current arrangements. These include the instruction to our Fund Managers to take social, ethical and environmental considerations into account when assessing investment opportunities, but do not limit the Fund Managers flexibility when making their decision. Cllr Coates may wish to note that the Energy Analyst from UBS, one of our current Fund Managers will be speaking at the Annual Employers Pension Fund Forum on 12 December 2014, during which he will cover how they incorporate such issues into their decision making, and their current investment strategy. Cllr Coates is more than welcome to join us.</p>
<p>6. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>When will the City Farm Lease be completed. How much longer do the organisers have to wait before there is real progress ?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER</p> <p>I have previously put on record my personal support for this project. I first met with the project team in 2010 when I was Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure and was impressed with their vision. When a funding issue was</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>identified last year I was able to find a solution which should have unblocked the process. Unfortunately, there was a disconnect in the process and the history behind this was lost until recently.</p> <p>I need to make an apology to Cllr Sanders and the City Farm. At Cabinet on Tuesday 21st October I responded to a similar question saying that this lease should be completed by 24th October. Unfortunately, the officer who provided that answer thought the question related to the next step, which was preparing a report and not the finalisation of the whole process. That report was completed by the 24th October, and has set out the remaining work required to finalise this lease.</p> <p>Unfortunately, I can't give a specific timescale for final completion of the agreement as the lease will be subject to obtaining confirmation that all the conditions have been satisfied. While we can commit to dealing with this as a priority, however, due to the involvement of a number of third parties, we cannot commit them to a specific timescale.</p> <p>For information, the following steps are still required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCC to formally agree to declare this property surplus to the requirements of the County Council • Negotiation of terms for an agreement to lease and the eventual grant of a lease to City Farm Group. This will be subject to various conditions being satisfied, including City Farm obtaining planning permission • City Farm securing sufficient funding to commit to phase 1 • OCC obtaining a formal Deed of Release of a restrictive covenant from Birmingham Roman Catholic Diocese Trust (BRCDT) • Confirming whether OCC needs Secretary of State's consent in respect of Section 77 of the Schools Standards & Framework Act and Schedule 1 of the Academies Act 2010 • OCC to undertake discussions/negotiations with an adjoining OCC tenant in

Questions	Answers
	<p>respect of the access to the land proposed for the City Farm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once all the above steps are concluded issuing formal instruction to Legal Services to produce the required documentation with City Farm legal representatives
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Would the Leader of the Council give a general guideline before Christmas/ Easter that the people who are behind the City Farm would find acceptable in terms of a guide and also an indication to officers when they expect this work to be completed.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>As you can see from my answer I have been involved with this since 2010. I have a very good relationship with the key person there and I think that if I start putting dates down it could mar things. She knows that I am pressing everyone to get this done as quickly as possible but it has got to be done in context as to where we are in the Council. We can't just eliminate procedures, it would be unfair to raise expectations.</p>
<p>7. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>Why has OCC failed to take action to improve traffic in the Air Quality Management Areas in the Oxfordshire outer towns so that air pollution levels are reduced to below EU and UK Government set levels? What provision is being made in LTP4 for traffic management in these areas to achieve the required level of air quality?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Councillors will be aware that District Councils are the responsible body for Air Quality. The County Council's responsibility is to work with them, and in Oxfordshire there is a cross authority Air Quality Group which we are participating in.</p> <p>There is no easy/obvious solution to Air Quality problems: in many cases traffic management solutions have limited benefit or create other local problems. The biggest impact to reducing levels is likely to be through technology advances, for example development of electric or other low emission vehicles. Industry and UK markets set the pace of this progression.</p> <p>The County Council's new Local Transport Plan will seek a step change in the use and investment in non-car travel. We will be supportive and help to facilitate</p>

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	other measures which can help local Air Quality, such as electric vehicles, where appropriate.
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>He has mentioned these electric vehicles in his answers does he also think that there is a role for forms of transport that have no polluting effect at all like walking/cycling.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>LTP4 will be considering all forms of transport to give people as much choice as possible. It has been suggested that we include horses as well.</p>
<p>8. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>I was pleased to see that Cllr Rose sometimes comes into Oxford by train rather than adding to the congestion and pollution by using his car in the rush hour; he was quoted as saying that he feels he should put his money where his mouth is.</p> <p>Can he please suggest how we can persuade his colleagues to follow suit, e.g. by at least using the park and ride?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER</p> <p>I have sometimes felt envy for those who live in an area with an almost infinite supply of buses, or who live within an 8 minute bike ride of County Hall. But I do have to admit that those feelings are VERY infrequent and VERY short-lived. I value the fact that ALL local Members should have a good knowledge of their patches, and will therefore make intelligent decisions on their various transport options. I am not sure that I have the knowledge to advise people who live possibly 25 miles out of Oxford City, maybe not on a bus route and with no local railway station, on what travel choices they should make.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>It says in answer to the previous question that we are seeking a step change in the use and investment in non-car travel. So my original question was how can we persuade people to use the Park & Ride. Is it a question that do as</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Chairman, as a great believer in democracy I have always believed in committees and have always told people to do as I say not as I do myself.</p>

Questions	Answers
I say not as I do.	
<p>9. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>When will we at last be able to see the draft Cycling Strategy?"</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Cycling Strategy is currently being put together as part of our development of the Council's new Local Transport Plan, LTP4, and a draft Strategy is proposed to go out to consultation as part of the Plan in early 2015. The draft Plan is due to be considered by Cabinet on 27 January.</p> <p>Ahead of this, we are proposing to arrange a drop-in session for Members so they can see how the Plan is coming together, and we are intending to schedule this before Christmas.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Does the Councillor agree that it is far too late to try and come up with a coherent cycle strategy.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>It is never too late.</p>
<p>10. COUNCILLOR LAURA PRICE</p> <p>Is the Cabinet member for Adult Social Care aware that, because of a successful legal challenge, the Government is rethinking its withdrawal of the Local Welfare Assistance Fund, previously scheduled for 31st March 2015? Given that the rethink could result in additional funding being made available to Oxfordshire to support the most disadvantaged residents of the county, will she consider reinstating the Oxfordshire Support Fund?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</p> <p>In February this year the County Council agreed that as part of its efficiency savings, the Oxfordshire Support Fund would not continue in its original form beyond 31st March 2014. £500k was agreed as a saving and the remaining £450k has been allocated to frontline teams in children's and adults services to help them address the needs of clients for whom we are statutorily responsible, including many of the most disadvantaged residents of the county. The operational teams are already in contact with these people and better placed to target the resources at those who need them most. As part of this continuing commitment, the money is also being used to ensure all Care Leavers receive a grant to enable them to set up their first new home.</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>As such, a significant amount of the funding previously available through the Support Fund is still available to those clients for whom the Council has a statutory responsibility. There are currently no plans to reduce that funding. If the government were to withdraw the Welfare Assistance Grant as planned on 31st March 2015, this Council would still maintain funding for these clients.</p> <p>We are aware that there is currently a consultation on the mechanism for funding welfare provision post March 2015 and will be responding. The Department for Work and Pensions is also preparing a national report which we await with interest. We would not want to be making any decisions about future services until we have all the information available and so at present we are keeping all options open.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Thank you Councillor Heathcoat for the answer to my original question. Could you clarify whether the Council will ensure a mechanism for the funding which will allow our crucial support agencies across Oxfordshire to support our most vulnerable to access this important safety net and avoid having the money swallowed up by an outside administrating organisations.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>I thought the answer I gave actually answered the question you just asked, but we will be fulfilling our statutory duty. The Council will still be maintaining funding for the clients that fall into our eligibility criteria £450,000 per annum. But I want to keep my options open at this point in time thank you.</p>
<p>11. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>Given that the southern by-pass road works in Oxford are 9 months behind schedule and £600,000 over budget, what confidence do you</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>The majority of the delay and additional cost incurred on the Kennington Roundabout scheme are as a result of a change in requirements from Thames Water from a protection of their service to a diversion of it. More recently, as a</p>

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<p>have that other road schemes scheduled for the city this year and next will be on time and within budget?</p>	<p>result of this and other unexpected third party works the programme was adjusted to ensure that the completion date does not slip, as this affects programmed works elsewhere in the Oxford area. The nature of highway works is such that unforeseen events do happen and can impact on cost and programme however we work hard to minimise the risk of this and have governance processes in place to robustly challenge changes in programme and cost. We clearly sympathise with those who are affected by the current work across the county but we believe the improvement in traffic flows once the works are complete will be worth the pain we are all currently suffering. Council will be pleased to note that road schemes are also being carried out elsewhere around the County. The recently completed works on the Shrivenham bypass were completed early, and on budget. The works on the A4130 Bix dual carriageway is nearing completion on budget and on time.</p>
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Thank you to the Cabinet Member for his answer. Will he agree that what the Oxfordshire public want is not just sympathy but road improvements done efficiently in a way that disrupts normal lives as little as possible and will he accept my congratulations for at least delaying the start of The Plain which would have made an horrific problem even worse.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>Councillor Tanner will be pleased to know that by the time this Council meets again the works at Kennington will be completed and the traffic lights will be taken away. He will be able to cycle round Kennington roundabout. In respect of the works elsewhere in the County there is money available at the moment. We are not turning it down, we are trying to deal with it as best we can to make sure that the future of the whole County and not just the City, is enhanced such that we can have economic growth.</p>
<p>12. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>Our international universities, the BMW car plant and the Culham Science cluster are vital to voters in my division and to the rest of Oxfordshire. How far do you support the Prime Minister in his reported view that the free</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER</p> <p>I am delighted that Councillor Tanner recognises the growing success of the Oxfordshire economy, particularly the success of our knowledge sector following Oxfordshire County Council's successful bid with partners for the Oxfordshire City Deal, and the LEP's success in bidding for our Local Growth Deal. It is, however tedious that yet again he is jumping on another band wagon without</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>movement of people within the European Union should be curtailed?</p>	<p>checking his facts. It's clear from his question that he is relying on second hand reports, whereas I prefer to deal in fact.</p> <p>I have been fortunate to have known the Prime Minister for almost fifteen years. I know he has a long term economic plan that builds a better future for all residents, including those in Cllr Tanner's division. It's clear that BMW agree with him as they have invited him on several occasions to the Cowley factory where they are investing over £500 million into the plant because they recognise the economic drive that has turned this country around since the failed policies of the previous failed Labour government led to the worst recession in almost a century.</p> <p>I absolutely recognise the value to Oxfordshire businesses of being able to recruit from abroad when this is necessary to get the right workers with the right skills. So does David Cameron. Unlike Councillor Tanner, however, I believe we are in a global competition with thriving economies such as the USA and China. In particular I therefore believe it makes sense to ensure our universities and scientific institutions have access to the best talent from across the English-speaking world, rather than just countries which happen to be on our doorstep.</p> <p>I also agree with the Prime Minister that we should do all we can to ensure that local people have the skills and knowledge to compete for those jobs when possible, and that is another major strand of our City Deal programme. The Prime Minister is clear that the uncontrolled immigration policies of the previous failed Labour government led to mass immigration that was of no benefit to those entering the country as well as the residents.</p> <p>Reform of the EU's immigration policy is vital to reassure our voters that politicians are listening to them - over three quarters of people believe immigration should be reduced. Less than one in five believe we have got the balance right. The ability to recruit excellent staff from the EU does not require an open door policy, particularly one which sees the door slammed in the face of academics and professionals from the rest of the world.</p>

Questions	Answers
<p>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</p> <p>Would the Leader of the Council agree that this Council Chamber and indeed Oxfordshire is much the better for having amongst us Arash Fatemian, Jamila Azad, Surinder Dhesi and perhaps others that origins may not have originally been this country and does he not agree with me that his friend David Cameron chasing UKIP votes is a strategy doomed to disaster and furthermore the threatened limits on the free movement of people within Europe and also the restrictions coming in from the USA and the restrictions being made already on American citizens who find it difficult to come here is making a difficult situation much worse.</p>	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</p> <p>It is interesting to work out how many questions Councillor Tanner actually had there. Of course he was getting confused because, first of all he was saying about councillors in the chamber and I agree of course they are more than welcome in the Chamber and actually if you read my answer it is about the global population and it is not just about the premium within Europe. It is about uncontrolled immigration which the majority of people in this country don't want and that is what the Prime Minister is doing it is the uncontrolled and that is what it is about and I fully support the Prime Minister.</p>