

## **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 DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>The National Pensioners Convention has created a Dignity Code and is inviting councils to sign up to it.</p> <p>The purpose of this Dignity Code is to uphold the rights and maintain the personal dignity of older people, within the context of ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of those who are increasingly less able to care for themselves or to properly conduct their affairs.</p> <p>This Code recognises that certain practices and actions are unacceptable in the care of older people. (Full details of the Code are available on line via the National Pensioners Convention.)</p> <p>Could the portfolio holder indicate if they are willing to sign up as a supporter of the Code of Dignity and to uphold these standards in the system of care they fund?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</b></p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council welcomes The National Pensioners Convention's Dignity Code. I have read the code and it sets out standards that are very much in line with those that we specify when commissioning services. It also goes without saying that the Council fully expects that all people receiving care should be treated with dignity and respect at all times.</p> <p>In Oxfordshire we are supporting local people to describe the standards they expect to see when receiving support. In essence we are helping local people to articulate and publish a series of local Customer Standards that describe the service they expect to experience in Oxfordshire when receiving support from others. The purpose of the standards is to help us improve the quality of care through local ownership of issues such as quality and dignity at a provider level, and I suppose we could call these our Oxfordshire 'industry standards' for support.</p> <p>In 2013 we developed Home Care Customer Standards in consultation with people that use this service (copy attached). A recent survey of people who used this service identified that one of the standards that was met most often was</p> <p>"When carers visit you they will be pleasant and treat you with dignity and respect?"</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>In response to this question 75% of respondents said Always, and 21% Usually</p> <p>We are now building on this work and have drafted Customer Standards for Care Home Services and we will be expanding into other areas in the coming year such as Supported Living Services and support provided by Personal Assistants.</p>
<p><b>2. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</b></p> <p>What is the average processing time for an application made by families for funding support from the County Council for those elderly residents of Oxfordshire who are resident at various care homes? Would the Cabinet member accept that the degree of anxiety for relatives is compounded by the length of the wait for confirmation or otherwise of the request for financial assistance especially with escalating costs?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</b></p> <p>When a person is in a care home and funding their own care, once their savings fall below £23,250 they can apply to the local authority to help pay for their care. The local authority has a duty to assess the person and if they have eligible needs within the nationally set eligibility criteria the authority has a duty to meet these needs.</p> <p>Prior to a resident reaching this financial threshold the resident, their family or friends, or the care home can make contact with the local authority and ask for the person to be assessed. The local authority will then assess the person and will negotiate a contract with the care home for their care. We will assess the person as close as possible to the date we will need to pick up their funding as people's needs change overtime and it would be inappropriate to do this before we were due to pick up the care costs.</p> <p>In the last 3 years the council has funded 392 people who had previously funded their own care in a care home and in 85% of cases the contract was agreed on the same day as the person hit the cash threshold and over the 3 years the average time between the person hitting the threshold and the council agreeing and paying the contract was 8 days. One of the issues the council has is ensuring equity between the people it supports. Sometimes we face additional extra costs when a client has privately purchased their placement (e.g. a more expensive room with a garden view) and to ensure fairness and equity these costs need to be reviewed. It is this negotiation with the resident, their family and the home that can take time. Occasionally it is not possible to agree a</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	reasonable price with the home and we need to consider moving the individual to another home which is suitable for their needs. This does not happen often and we will take into account the impact on the person's circumstances.
<p data-bbox="203 371 857 400"><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p data-bbox="203 443 857 842">The supplementary was whether these figures are distinguishing between people who have gone into a care home as a private resident who have had the savings to support that as opposed to people whose relatives have been meaning to have all the intention of applying for funding support straight away, they don't have the means to do that but have just put them into a care home straight away because that is what they think is best for them.</p>	<p data-bbox="880 371 1323 400"><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p data-bbox="880 443 2029 587">Thank you, I believe that I've answered the question that Councillor Coates asked off me and in the question he is talking about people who are in residential care already. I do accept that is obviously a time of anxiety for relatives but I do believe that the Council acts in a timely and caring manner.</p>
<p data-bbox="203 967 792 995"><b>3. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p data-bbox="203 1038 857 1401">The County Council over the last year passed two motions – One on Bee Colony Collapse and the other on the declining numbers of wild animals in Oxfordshire. Both motions called for actions to be taken to halt or even reverse the decline by the County Council. Could I ask what has actually happened as result of those motions when will the called for report with recommendations by officers be presented to Cabinet?</p>	<p data-bbox="880 967 1771 995"><b>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p data-bbox="880 1038 1951 1177">Oxfordshire County Council has no biodiversity officers who are able to specifically action this work, no budgets, and a limited portfolio of land. This information has been provided in previous responses; specific action on pollinators is therefore limited.</p> <p data-bbox="880 1225 2029 1401">Members of staff are working in partnership with Wild Oxfordshire, the local nature partnership, to help deliver on county biodiversity initiatives. One of these includes The State of Oxfordshire's Nature report previously referred to, which can be presented to members if appropriate. The timetable for this is autumn 2015 so we will work to include this on the forward plan.</p>

Questions	Answers
	<p>In terms of other work being undertaken as part of day to day activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first environmental forum has met of the Highways Partnership; this will consider whether our new road verge management regimes are delivering wildlife benefits.</li> <li>• Our approach to biodiversity is set out online <a href="https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshires-biodiversity-action-plan">https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshires-biodiversity-action-plan</a>.</li> <li>• The County Council's Ecology Planning Officer continues to negotiate for a net gain in biodiversity for the county where possible through planning applications.</li> <li>• An Environmental Sensitivity Study has been produced, an internal mapping document compiling information on our biodiversity and other environmental assets for strategic planning purposes.</li> <li>• Some 41 Local Wildlife Sites were surveyed by the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (hosted by Oxfordshire and delivering services on our behalf). These are protected via planning policy. Through a partnership with BBOWT (Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust) the owners of these sites will be contacted to offer management advice.</li> <li>• TVERC has started a project to map priority habitats for nature conservation within Oxfordshire. This was mentioned in the original response as a priority. It will ensure that the locations of important habitats are known for future conservation and local planning developments.</li> <li>• A Strategic Environment and Economic Investment Plan is in development, being led by the Local Enterprise Partnership, which will seek funding for a range of environmental projects</li> <li>• Oxfordshire has both a Biodiversity in Planning guide, and a Community and Parish Guide to Biodiversity available online, alongside information on biodiversity and the work of the team <a href="https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/natural-environment">https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/natural-environment</a></li> </ul>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Thank you Chair, I wonder if the Leader of the Council will agree with me, looking at the first line of the response it says that we have no biodiversity officers and yet the answer goes on to show that there are a large range of activities that the County Council is involved with. As a consequence of all the range of things that is supposed to be going on would it not be appropriate that we do have a biodiversity officer and that in the next/forthcoming budget the money is allocated to this role, because clearly other authorities, whether they are the LEP or the district or city and other wildlife agencies are acting and the Council is involved in that. So there is a role to play – would he agree that it is now time to identify somebody to do this work and to provide a little bit of money?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I think that everyone in the Council Chamber is aware of the financial pressures on the County Council. We have got to make some very difficult decisions, further reductions. I find it difficult to understand which budget you are proposing to cut to pay for this additional member of staff. I think I have provided a very good answer because what it is actually saying is we don't have any dedicated officers but throughout the Council we are doing work and working in the best possible way to get the advantages for the bee community.</p>
<p><b>4. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</b></p> <p>The first round of license applications to Central Government to conduct high-water pressure shale gas extraction, (fracking) have now been completed. Could the portfolio holder confirm that there have been no fracking licenses to drill in areas of Oxfordshire either applied for or considered by Central Government? Does the Cabinet member have any indication if Oxfordshire</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>The Petroleum Act 1998 vests all rights to the nation's petroleum resources in the Crown, but the government can grant licences that confer exclusive rights to 'search and bore for and get' petroleum. These licences confer such rights over a limited area and for a limited period. Licences do not give planning permission; planning permission from the planning authority is also required before any drilling can be carried out.</p> <p>On the 28th July 2014, the government (DECC) invited applications for licences in the '14th Landward Licensing Round'. The areas of the country being 'offered'</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>will face applications in the second phase of licensing that has now commenced?</p>	<p>for licence applications included parts of Oxfordshire. The period for license applications to be submitted closed on 28th October 2014.</p> <p>The Government has not as yet published any information on applications submitted, nor has it yet published any information about its consideration of applications or about any decisions to award licences. Therefore, at present we do not know whether any applications for licences have been made for areas in Oxfordshire nor do we know whether the government has considered any applications for licences for areas in Oxfordshire.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Would the portfolio holder agree with me that this is a disgraceful situation that we can be at the end of the first phase of fracking licence applications and we are completely in the dark as to whether any have been granted or not. Surely the Government officers have contacted our officers and they would know something about what was going on?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>Thank you for that supplementary. I was asked to agree, I do not agree.</p>
<p><b>5. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</b></p> <p>Could the portfolio holder confirm that in spite of a £23m pound cut in the Cycle City Ambition programme nationally, the small £3m grant for cycle improvements for Oxford will go ahead? Could he give a very brief idea of the timescale of this programme and the consultations that will be involved?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>We contacted the Department for Transport about this, who gave us the following reassurance in relation to the Cycle City Ambition Grant round two:</p> <p>“[The £23m cut] doesn’t affect any funding for you (Oxfordshire) at all, neither past nor future...While naturally any future commitments are always subject to Spending Round negotiations, our current plans remain unchanged.”</p> <p>This position may of course be affected by the Chancellor’s Emergency Budget</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>on 8 July or the Autumn Statement – but so far, the money remains committed.</p> <p>In March 2015 the County Council secured £3.3m Cycle City Ambition Grant for the Riverside routes to Oxford city centre project. The funding is for 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18. There will be consultation on the project, but this has not yet been programmed.</p> <p>More details on the project can be found here:  <a href="https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/news/2015/mar/county-council-secures-%C2%A333m-funding-cycle-scheme">https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/news/2015/mar/county-council-secures-%C2%A333m-funding-cycle-scheme</a></p>
<p><b>6. COUNCILLOR BOB JOHNSTON</b></p> <p>At a recent meeting of Full Council in response to a question from Cllr Bob Johnston about the Lodge Hill Park and Ride he replied that it remained "an aspiration". How does he square this statement with the bids at the Growth Board for a Park and Ride at Lodge Hill and Lorry Park for £18.5 million pounds?"</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>For Lodge Hill Interchange, the bid to the LEP for Local Growth Fund money in May 2015, included provision of new south facing slip roads to access the A34 and a combined P&amp;R with freight park adjacent to the junction. This was set out as two phases, with the case for the interchange first, followed by a park &amp; ride plus freight park as phase two. The bid recognises that further work needs to be undertaken for the detailed case for the park and ride facility including the necessary planning stages. It remains an aspiration and ambition which is yet to be fully funded.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>In the light of the fact that I have found great difficulty in getting any information on Lodge Hill and the associated work – would he undertake to ensure that I receive further information as the project develops in a timely a fashion as possible in order that I can answer awkward questions from my electors in general and my five parish councils in</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I am sorry that Councillor Johnston is being asked awkward questions but of course as is the case with all developments across the county as appropriate we will keep the local member full informed/involved and you will have a chance to have a chat through with me and the officers in due course.</p>

Questions	Answers
particular.	
<p><b>7. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</b></p> <p>Could the portfolio publish a list of the Children’s Centres that will close or have their grant severely reduced as a result of the pressure for more cuts mounts?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>It is not possible to publish the list requested. Cabinet on 23 June considered a report on the recommendations of the Early Intervention Cabinet Advisory Group. The following recommendation, among others, was agreed: “<i>Detailed proposals for the future delivery of early intervention services be drawn up for public consultation and communication undertaken at the earliest stage to involve stakeholders, including schools, district councils, town and parish councils, public health and voluntary and community sector.</i>”</p> <p>This work is in progress and will be reported on at the Cabinet meeting on 15 September.</p>
<p><b>8. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</b></p> <p>Following the tragic drowning of 13 year old, Aowan Dogar, in a channel of the Thames at Weirs Lane, Oxford recently what steps will the County Council take to make sure all children and young people are fully aware of the dangers of swimming and playing near water in Oxfordshire?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION &amp; FAMILIES</b></p> <p>The summer months, particularly when the weather is hot, often encourage water based activities as well as other activities close to the water.</p> <p>Schools are being reminded of water safety advice via ‘schools news’ and encouraged to draw pupils’ and parents’ attention to it as appropriate. Of course parents have the prime responsibility for their children’s safety when out of school.</p> <p>In addition to this advice, I would like to take this opportunity to bring to Members’ attention, to the great work done by “Junior Citizens” (JC) in Oxfordshire.</p> <p>JC is a safety education scheme, aimed principally at year 6 children attending maintained primary schools in Oxfordshire. The scheme is run by the Junior</p>



<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
	<p>Citizens Trust (JCT) a stand-alone trust, with Oxfordshire County Council sitting at its head as Corporate Trustee. About 85% of year 6 students in Oxfordshire go through the JC programme every year. .</p> <p>The Junior Citizens Trust is a partnership arrangement. The current partners are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxfordshire County Council’s Fire and Rescue Service.</li> <li>• Thames Valley Police.</li> <li>• St John Ambulance.</li> <li>• Oxfordshire County Council’s Trading Standards.</li> <li>• Chiltern Railways.</li> <li>• RNLI.</li> <li>• OFRS Road Safety Education Team.</li> <li>• Office of Rail Regulation.</li> </ul> <p>Water Safety is just one of the subjects taught at JC and in which the children are taught about the dangers of playing near water, swimming in rivers and lakes, currents, pollution and objects under the surface that can’t be seen. The children are also taught a couple of safe, effective rescue techniques without putting themselves at risk.</p> <p>Seaside safety and making a 999 call to get help is also covered as part of the water scenario.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>I thank Councillor Tilley for her response. I wonder if she would consider writing in her capacity as the Cabinet Member responsible for Education to each of the schools in Oxfordshire reminding them of the importance of making children aware that water can kill</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>Thank you for the supplementary. We already have and already do write to all schools including public schools in Oxfordshire.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p>as well as being something which is very pleasurable indeed the essence of life. Not just the County Council schools but also the academies and even the private schools, because I think somebody of her standing could remind schools, particularly secondary schools, of the importance of this work and if it saves just one life it will be well worth it.</p>	
<p><b>9. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet member consider the possibility of placing double-yellow lines to prevent parking in cycle lanes on main roads, especially on Donnington Bridge Road, Oxford in my Isis division?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>As part of the County Council’s draft Oxford Transport Strategy (OTS), a number of key ‘Cycle Super Routes’ across the City, including Donnington Bridge Road, are identified as corridors for implementing upgraded cycle infrastructure. As set out in the draft OTS, changes to parking restrictions will be considered as part of these upgrades, and local residents would of course be consulted. We do not currently have funding specifically for improvements on Donnington Bridge Road.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>Could I thank Councillor Nimmo Smith for his answer. Could he say how much money would be required in order to put these double yellow lines on Donnington Bridge Road and if he can’t remember the figure off hand, could he email me?</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>I don’t have the figure to hand. I will email you with the answer with a copy to all councillors.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>10. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</b></p> <p>Now that we have a Tory majority Government, will the Deputy Leader tell the many concerned residents in my Isis division when he expects work to start and be completed on the flood relief channel to the west of the railway line in Oxford?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>This is a significant construction project and the largest the County has seen in decades, it is important therefore that everyone ensures that we get as much value from the investment as possible, to this end the finalised scheme is still being developed and a series of exhibition events have recently been held to seek initial feedback to help refine proposals. Timescales will be dependent on final designs, land acquisition, national authorisations and funding being in place, but Officers and myself are regularly engaged in the process to drive the urgency of this scheme with a view to it being implemented as soon as reasonably practicable.</p>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION</b></p> <p>I understand from the Environment Agency that they hope to start this work in 2017. Can I assume that his good work in this area will continue regardless of the fact the now have a Tory majority government.</p>	<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY ANSWER</b></p> <p>Chairman, though you I think the pertinent statement was that they hoped to start. There is nothing definite yet and until that is the case I will be working to get a more definite situation.</p>