

QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

ANNEX 2

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

	Answers
<p>1. COUNCILLOR SURINDA DHESI</p> <p>E Cigarettes are dangerous and unsafe, what is being done in Oxfordshire to highlight the dangers?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR HIBBERT-BILES, CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH</p> <p>The use of e cigarettes has opened a debate on a national and international scale. Some consider e-cigarettes as harmful to health and a way of introducing young people and non-smokers to smoking.</p> <p>With the increasing amount of conflicting information for and against e-cigarettes becoming available in the public arena there has naturally been confusion for the public and health professionals alike. In response, Public Health England published an evidence update which concluded that e-cigarettes are significantly less harmful to health than tobacco and have the potential to help smokers quit smoking. Key findings of the report included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the current best estimate is that e-cigarettes are around 95% less harmful than smoking• nearly half the population (44.8%) don't realise e-cigarettes are much less harmful than smoking• there is no evidence so far that e-cigarettes are acting as a route into smoking for children or non-smokers <p>Whilst the current position from PHE is that e-cigarettes are significantly less harmful than cigarettes they would encourage people to move towards not using either product and seek help to move to complete cessation. PHE have adopted a current watch and wait stance. In the future if more evidence arises of significant harm then the position could change to support stricter regulation of e-cigarettes.</p>

	<p>Currently e-cigarettes are regulated as a consumer product, and there have been concerns about the varying quality of products that are available. From May 2016 e-cigarette products will have to comply with the European Tobacco Products Directive (TPD), which will create a level of regulation and quality control over the e-cigarette products available to consumers.</p> <p>The current evidence suggests that there is a significant harm reduction in using e-cigarettes instead of tobacco. Public health would encourage any individual who has chosen to use e-cigarettes as a method of tobacco cessation to use the local stop smoking services to help them towards a nicotine free life without either tobacco or e-cigarettes. This current position is open to change with future developing guidance and policy.</p>
<p>2. COUNCILLOR SURINDA DHESI</p> <p>The potholes which are reported and eventually repaired are constantly in disrepair, can we learn from other EU Countries and see what material they use? The roads last longer and need less repair; this will save money and reduce complaints from Oxfordshire residents.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council undertakes pothole repairs using recognised techniques and a 'right first time approach'. The contractual arrangements ensure that repairs are guaranteed for 2 years and any failures are addressed at no cost to OCC. The methodology for pothole repair follows national guidance as set out in the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme Pothole Review published in April 2012.</p> <p>OCC work with national groups and other authorities to share best practise and modify repair techniques to minimise the risk of failure and prolong the life of the highway. In addition, working with our Term Contractor OCC seeks to introduce innovative methods of repair and this has included the introduction of the Dragon Patcher, an operation developed in Sweden that has been introduced in Oxfordshire to repair potholes and other highway defects.</p>
<p>3. COUNCILLOR CHARLES MATHEW</p> <p>Could the Leader update the Council on the progress of the Devolution bid?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>Since last summer the county council had been working hard with partners from the city and district councils, the LEP and CCG to develop proposals for</p>

devolution of funding and power to Oxfordshire that could have resulted in local co-ordination of over £6bn of funding in Oxfordshire, including £1.3bn for health and social care and significant investment in local infrastructure, that otherwise is unlikely to happen.

When I became aware that there was a question mark around the issue of governance for the bid I wrote to all the other Leaders in Oxfordshire on 17th February:

The devolution bid we have is very exciting with the prospect of delivering the infrastructure we lack in Oxfordshire that will drive the jobs & housing growth. Even without the additional funds we'll still have the housing growth only adding to the transport and connectivity problems across the county. Yet we are going to reject this opportunity for all this additional funding, why? Because we aren't prepared to consider a mayor? Our reason that it would add another layer of administration to the system well why don't we have a sensible conversation about removing some of the administration and duplication that would occur yes let's talk about local government in a Unitary context. Let's have a serious look at the options of 1, 2 or 3 councils within Oxfordshire. The idea of cross boundary Unitary would only add to costs and certainly not assist with the health devolution. It's not about 1 council taking over another it would be about all council disbanding then a new or new ones being formed slashing the waste in administration, I'm attaching the EY report regarding the potential savings in Oxfordshire as a reminder, I realise it would have to be updated to take into account recent proposals but the figures would be very similar. In fact when I released this report last year the figures were questioned but nobody came back to me with other figures.

I did not receive any reply to this and was surprised that just over a week later by the announcement in late February from the city and district councils, with the addition of Cotswolds and South Northamptonshire district councils, that they were putting forward separate governance proposals based on four small unitary authorities with an overarching Combined Authority, came as a surprise to the County Council, as the city and district councils had always

	<p>been unwilling to have any conversation with me about alternative governance models, despite repeated requests to consider all options in the best interests of Oxfordshire residents.</p> <p>Since the new proposals were made by the district councils, county council officers have been seeking to clarify the position with the original devolution bid, and were told by officials earlier in March that the proposals for Oxfordshire will not now be considered further by government until the governance arrangements are resolved.</p> <p>Members may share my view that it is of great regret that the unexpected proposals from the district councils have jeopardised the government's willingness to devolve these very significant benefits to Oxfordshire's residents.</p> <p>I, along with all the other political group leaders of this council, am pleased that district and city councils now recognise that the current structure of local government is not fit for purpose. However I do not support the structure that they propose. I would like a public debate on all options for local government reorganisation in Oxfordshire and support the idea of jointly commissioning a single independent report considering all options. Unfortunately the district and city councils have not agreed to this sensible proposal and proceeded with one which focusses on their preferred option. We therefore have had no option to commission an independent review to consider all the options for local government reorganisation in Oxfordshire, a study that we hope will include input from all key stakeholders.</p>
<p>4. COUNCILLOR STEVE HARROD</p> <p>The responsibility for commissioning HV service moved to the council on 1st October 2015. At that time there were some concerns about assuring the safe transfer of services.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR HIBBERT-BILES, CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfordshire County Council has been working with NHS England and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust on the novation of the contract from the NHS to Local Authority;

<p>Can the Cabinet Member assure me that the services are safe?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local Health Visitor Transition Board has held Oxford Health to account throughout the transition process and the process has been further assured through the Thames Valley Health Visitor Transition Board managed by Public Health England; • All of the residents affected by the boundary change have now successfully transferred either into the service provided by Oxford Health in Oxfordshire or out to services in neighbouring counties based on the postcode of their residence; • This has involved assurance for safeguarding and transfer of notes through the Child Health Information Service (CHIS); • CHIS are patient administration systems that provide an active clinical record for individual children and support a variety of child health and related activities; • Oxford Health has recently been inspected by CQC and received an outstanding for their Community Health Services for children, young people and families.
<p>5. COUNCILLOR PATRICK GREENE</p> <p>Could the cabinet member for Fire Services provide an update on the Didcot A emergency</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>You will be aware that on the 23rd February at approximately 4 pm, the boiler house part of the Former Power Station at Didcot A site (whilst being prepared for demolition) collapsed suddenly.</p> <p>Immediate rescues were performed and in the following hours and Days Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue coordinated extensive searching of the collapsed structure and tunnels using specialists from all over the Country.</p> <p>Every effort was made to identify either a location of persons still unaccounted for (3) using a range of tactics, to include Urban Search and Rescue, specialist search dogs, thermal imaging equipment, listening equipment used during earth quakes, Drones with video and heat recording, and Army Bomb disposal.</p>

	<p>After 4 Days of searching (24 Hours a Day), it was decided that due to the Dangerous Nature of the Remaining 10 Storey Building, having been significantly weakened as part of the demolition plan, no further searching would be completed that involved Emergency Responders being put at Risk.</p> <p>The Health and Safety Executive and the Police now have primacy in terms of the recovery phase and any future investigations. To undertake this they have secured the best advice from national specialists and the determination is that the remaining building will need to be demolished before the missing persons can be recovered from the Ground Floor of the collapsed Building.</p> <p>The Fire and Rescue Service are maintaining a permanent Silver Commander so that in the event of either a further unplanned collapse, (a full plan has been developed for this eventuality) or the recovery phase restarting we are ready to immediately deploy.</p> <p>The Chief Fire Officer has made a commitment to return the missing persons to their Family with dignity at the earliest opportunity and this commitment remains.</p>
<p>6. COUNCILLOR NEIL OWEN</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member for Libraries inform me when Wi-Fi will be installed at Burford and Carterton Libraries</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE, CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURAL & COMMUNITY SERVICES</p> <p>Both Burford and Carterton libraries now do have Wi-Fi installed. The Library Service has recently worked closely with our ICT colleagues to successfully bid for funding to install Wi-Fi in all our public libraries. In order to comply with the funding requirements, this work had to be completed by March 31st, and I am very happy to report that we have been able to meet those very tight deadlines. Wi-Fi___33 is now installed in all libraries except Bicester, where we are working within the timeframes set for the new building. The addition of Wi-Fi___33 in our public libraries will add to the library offer and provide an additional service for the people of Oxfordshire, increasing opportunities to get online and further develop their digital skills. There will be local and county wide promotion of this new service during April.</p>

<p>7. COUNCILLOR SANDY LOVATT</p> <p>We all welcome the proposed flood alleviation scheme that will protect the City. Can the Cabinet member explain the impact that the scheme will have on Abingdon and what mitigation is being proposed to ensure there is no adverse effect.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>The Environment Agency is currently analysing the options to decide the preferred option for the flood relief channel. As part of this they are using updated flood modelling to ensure that the preferred option will not increase flood risk downstream.</p> <p>If the modelling shows that risk downstream will change, they will put in place measures to mitigate this. At this stage the Environment Agency cannot say what these measures will be, as these depend on the results of the modelling. The scheme will not get approval from Government or the Local Planning Authority if it reduces flood risk in one location to increase it elsewhere.</p> <p>Once they have the results of the modelling in June, the Environment Agency and partners will be able to provide more information on this to the Abingdon communities.</p>
<p>8. COUNCILLOR JAMES MILLS</p> <p>Will the Cabinet member for Transport agree with me that the proposals for the A40 represent a real vision to improve the traffic flow</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>I completely agree with Councillor Mills. There is significant confirmed investment in the A40 corridor within the County, much of which will happen over the next 3-5 years. The Local Growth Fund provides up to £40m investment in the A40 between Eynsham and Oxford for a scheme to substantially improve public transport journeys which will also benefit car users. Current works at Wolvercote and Cutteslowe roundabout (due for completion in Autumn 2016) aim to increase traffic flow and capacity through these junctions, and accommodate future growth. OCC acknowledge a long term strategy for the A40 is needed, and the public consultation last autumn aids this debate about the type/s of scheme (Bus lanes, guided bus, dual carriageway, tram, train, or other). The consultation will report later this spring, and help determine a long term vision.</p>

9. COUNCILLOR MARK GRAY

What work is being undertaken behind the scenes in an attempt to keep as many children's centres open as possible?

COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES

The Community Initiatives Framework has now been made available on the Oxfordshire Together website along with estimate property costs and frequently asked questions.

As part of the community initiatives offer there is a working group which is meeting monthly to look at communications, project governance and risk management as well as working through the groups and communities that have expressed an interest in running open access services. Cllr Gray has also been invited to attend this group.

There will shortly be a stakeholder communications going out inviting communities to contact us for further discussion. This work is being split by the team into those on school sites, those with childcare on site and other. The team are working with interested parties alongside their county councillor in many cases to look at future solutions.

Community initiatives led by Councillors

Active conversations occurring regarding the following sites :

- Bloxham
- Mapletree
- Chalgrove
- Wantage/ Grove
- Thame
- Bicester
- Faringdon
- Henley
- Carteron
- Wheatley
- Berinsfield

School sites

	<p>Some settings particularly schools are still thinking through what future provision might be ran from the site</p> <p>Conversations are being taken forward with all schools to ascertain where schools are currently in their thinking and take work forward</p> <p>CC sites with childcare</p> <p>The sites with childcare are all being supported to look at delivery of Child care and future sustainability as well as providing a base for outreach</p> <p>We are looking to host an engagement event possibly inviting local groups to hear from officers and members and raise questions.</p>
<p>10. COUNCILLOR NEIL OWEN</p> <p>The HealthCheck programme has the potential to identify those at risk of certain illness at an early stage which in turn can reduce costs to the health system in the longer term. Can the Cabinet Member assure us that the Council is still committed to delivering this service?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR HIBBERT-BILES, CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH</p> <p>The NHS HealthCheck programme is a key national public health programme, the delivery of which rests with Local Authorities. Oxfordshire County Council has always been and continues to be committed to the HealthCheck programme.</p> <p>Since the programme was taken over by the County Council in 2013, the Public Health Directorate has worked hard to raise the profile of the programme with the public with good results. The NHS HealthCheck programme is now the most recognised service advertised by the County Council. A recent consultation has shown that 42% of respondents reported seeing something about health checks locally.</p> <p>The activity of the programme delivered by the 77 GP practices continues to increase in Oxfordshire. Since 2013, 111,503 people have been invited for a health check and 54,787 of eligible adults have had their health check done which ranks Oxfordshire second of the 18 Authorities in the South East Area.</p>

<p>11. COUNCLLOR RICHARD LANGRIDGE</p> <p>The Growth board is working on an assumption that the unmet need of Oxford City is up to 15,000. Does that mean this figure will be evenly divided between the 4 Districts or is there a way that a larger strategic site could deliver added infrastructure along with delivering much needed housing?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>The County and District Councils are working together to look at the way Oxford's unmet need could be accommodated, a process which would identify a proposed apportionment of that need between all of the Councils, to feed into their Local Plan processes. It's disappointing to note that the City and District councils agreed terms of reference and commissioned the SHMA report in November 2012 yet after over 3 years they have failed to agree the figures. This has led to uncertainty in developing their Local Plans that may lead to speculative development on inappropriate sites. There is no assumption that this figure will be divided equally. Work is also looking at the infrastructure which may be needed to support different development options.</p>
<p>12. COUNCILLOR PETER HANDLEY</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member for Fire give an update on service provision across the County</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service constantly reviews its Service Provision and specifically it ability to react to Emergencies. As a result of this iterative process we have deployed a whole-time resource to the West Oxfordshire area based at Burford fire station to support the on-call stations and to provide a resilient resource across the County. We have also set up a resource management team which operate seven days a week to ensure that we deploy our resources effectively across the County to manage our Fire Cover. This enables us to manage our resources at times of peak demand and to move our appliances to areas of greater risk.</p> <p>During this year we are refreshing our integrated risk management plan which identifies how we balance our prevention, protection and response resources across the county to manage our risk. We are currently reviewing the past five year's incident data and overlaying this information over our resource availability. This will provide us with a strategic analysis of risk within Oxfordshire and allow us to ensure our service provision is focused on</p>

	<p>reducing this risk.</p> <p>The recent implementation of the Thames Valley Fire Control Service and the new mobilising system allows us to use Automatic Vehicle Location to mobilise the quickest response to incidents. This alone has led to a significant improvement in our attendance times and we are consistently hitting our performance standards since its inception</p> <p>We are also working with our blue light partners and County Council colleagues to provide a more joined up prevention and protection service. The aim of this is to reduce the number of incidents that we have in the County and to improve the outcomes for our communities. Our previous and new “365 alive” vision sits prevention and education at the heart of what we do.</p> <p>Performance management is key to ensuring that we monitor our service provision and as a result to ensure we provide the highest levels of service delivery we have a Performance Pledge of:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) station availability, andii) attendance times. <p>The Current standards are</p> <p>On Call Stations Availability 100% of the time (Our Whole Time Service Operated 24/7, 365) The Current Performance is 71.9%</p> <p>Attending all Incidents in Less than 11 minutes on 80% of the time. The Current Performance is 87.14%</p> <p>Attending all Incidents in Less than 14 minutes on 95% of the time. The Current Performance is 95.99%</p> <p>The attendance times are the best indication for the level of service provision</p>
--	--

	<p>across the county, as this reflects the service to the communities that we serve.</p>
<p>13. COUNCILLOR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW</p> <p>Various Berkshire councils and enterprise groups have been campaigning vigorously in recent years for a new Thames crossing known as the 'Third Reading Bridge'. This bridge would link the end of the A329 (M) in Berkshire to Playhatch in Oxfordshire. The enthusiasm of the scheme promoters is not shared by many Oxfordshire residents who are concerned about the large amount of extra traffic that would be deposited on to already congested rural roads. You have assured me via a written answer to a question at Cabinet that OCC participation in the Phase One 'Strategic Outline Business Case' does not indicate that OCC supports the proposal. Please confirm what conditions would need to be met for OCC to give support to Phase Two, the 'Outline Business Case'</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>It is important to first make clear that the ambition of the Berkshire authorities promoting this scheme for an extra bridge is to relieve-congestion around Reading and Wokingham as urban growth areas.</p> <p>One of the objectives of this work will be to define the exact location of a bridge in terms of transport movements; therefore the exact location of the bridge is as yet not confirmed.</p> <p>If it is determined that there is justification for developing a full business case proposal for a bridge, the work will need to take account of its potential wider impacts. Oxfordshire County Council has been consistently pushing for a clearer understanding of the benefits and impacts of such a proposal and that any impact would need corresponding mitigation. The business case would need to show, while achieving its overall objective, how it minimises the impacts on the rural network through location and design and any potential impact has feasible mitigation measures within the overall scheme proposal and how this was considered within business case.</p>

14. COUNCILLOR LES SIBLEY

Can the Cabinet member for Transport Update Council on the proposals for London Road Bicester

COUNCILLOR NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

Bicester Village Railway Station was completed in October 2015 and makes way for a new East West rail service, which sees frequent trains between Oxford Parkway Railway Station and London, as well as an eventual service east to Milton Keynes and Bletchley. The service is due to be extended to Oxford Railway Station in December.

The Hendy Report reassesses how rail enhancements, including East West Rail Western Section Phase 2, will be delivered and was published in November 2015. It states that there will be 'significant delivery' by March 2019 and completion in the next five-year period; however completion dates cannot be confirmed at this stage.

The rail upgrading presents some challenges. More rail traffic means that there is more disruption to the road network where the two cross. In Bicester, a new rail bridge at Charbridge Lane Level Crossing is already being planned, but there are other challenges such as the rail crossing at London Road where options need to be developed further.

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), in partnership with the East West Rail Alliance, is progressing the investigation of options that could replace Bicester London Road Level Crossing in the event that it becomes impracticable to use for road traffic, as a result of increasing rail traffic. A high level engineering and network effectiveness assessment has already been undertaken and options have been focussed down to the few remaining.

Network Rail have agreed to jointly (with OCC) fund some further scheme design/development work on options for the crossing, using their consultants, as part of their development work on future phases of East West Rail. This assessment work is due to begin shortly and it is expected that public consultation on the options will be undertaken in the Summer/Autumn. In progressing further work now we can be clear as to what the requirements for a new crossing are for future phases of EWR and have something ready if opportunities arise that can provide funding.

However, the London Road crossing is not part of the scope of the next phase

	<p>of the East West Rail project (phase 2), which includes all the rail infrastructure from east of Bicester (and does include the Charbridge Lane crossing) out to Bedford and Milton Keynes. It is this infrastructure, land requirement etc. which will be part of their Transport & Works Act submission for Phase 2 that does not include London Road as it is not in scope. This all comes back to the Inspector's 2011 view that neither EWR Phase 1 (now open) or Phase 2 required any significant works to London Road, i.e. it could continue to operate as a level crossing even with the extra train services. Network Rail is planning to consult on the T&WA order in the autumn of this year.</p>
<p>15. COUNCILLOR ARASH FATEMAIN</p> <p>Can the cabinet member for ICT confirm that the decision by the City Council not to use our ICT department will free up capacity at the County Council and have no impact on the county council services?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NICK CARTER, CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS & CUSTOMER SERVICES</p> <p>I can confirm that when the existing Partnership Agreement expired at the end of March 2016, the County Council released technical capacity and resource and that there has been a reduction in demand on the ICT Service Desk and broader ICT staff. These reductions have already been identified and taken as part of the existing Medium Term Financial Plan.</p> <p>From a County Council Services perspective, although the City Council shared the County Council's ICT Infrastructure, the business applications and corresponding data was managed on an independent basis. Therefore, we do not expect any impact on the County Council once the City have migrated into their own operating environment.</p>
<p>16. COUNCILLOR KEVIN BULMER</p> <p>Could the Cabinet member responsible for rail tell me what representations OCC can make regarding the fact that Network Rail have failed to carry out a landscape impact assessment in the AONB when erecting the gantries?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Road marking work is generally done for one of three reasons:-</p> <p>Firstly, whenever road surfacing takes place (whether by OCC or by utilities or developers) than any pre-existing lining is usually replaced on a 'like-for-like' basis.</p> <p>Secondly, new road markings are laid either because circumstances have</p>

	<p>changed (for example there are new parking restrictions, speed limits etc. or new developments or our own major schemes have altered the road layout) or because there have been specific requests for lining with associated funding (such as access protection markings across private driveways, or Parish-funded village entry treatments).</p> <p>Finally, there is the general maintenance of existing lining to ensure that it continues to be visible to drivers and delivers the road safety and traffic management benefits that led to its initial introduction. For this area of work, in the 2015/16 financial year we spent around £275,000 on this type of work spread across the County covering a wide range of locations from high volume 'A' and 'B' roads (such as the A4074 from Woodcote down towards Reading, and B4526 around Goring) to more localised ones such as in Goring on Thames and in Whitchurch on Thames. These locations are chosen by the Traffic Technician for the area using their detailed knowledge and experience, coupled with an awareness of complaints that have been received. Clearly we need to prioritise the work to match the available budget and this is done based on a "safety first" principle. The volume of non-safety related line refresh has been reducing over recent years as budget reductions have been agreed by Council. Recognising this problem we have also worked with parishes such as Woodcote who are able to use some of their own funds to supplement ours to smarten up their area.</p> <p>Unless it is related to a specific larger scheme, lining works are generally batched together in order to achieve the best value for money as this service is generally provided via a specialist contractor and costed as an attendance charge plus a charge per linear metre of line (therefore the more linear metres you can include in a visit the less the impact of the attendance charge on the overall cost).</p>
<p>17. COUNCILLOR KEVIN BULMER</p> <p>Could the Cabinet member for Transport</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Road marking work is generally done for one of three reasons:-</p>

explain the procedure for lining across the County?

Firstly, whenever road surfacing takes place (whether by OCC or by utilities or developers) than any pre-existing lining is usually replaced on a 'like-for-like' basis.

Secondly, new road markings are laid either because circumstances have changed (for example there are new parking restrictions, speed limits etc. or new developments or our own major schemes have altered the road layout) or because there have been specific requests for lining with associated funding (such as access protection markings across private driveways, or Parish-funded village entry treatments)

Finally, there is the general maintenance of existing lining to ensure that it continues to be visible to drivers and delivers the road safety and traffic management benefits that led to its initial introduction. For this area of work, in the 2015/16 financial year we spent around £275,000 on this type of work spread across the County covering a wide range of locations from high volume 'A' and 'B' roads (such as the A4074 from Woodcote down towards Reading, and B4526 around Goring) to more localised ones such as in Goring on Thames and in Whitchurch on Thames. These locations are chosen by the Traffic Technician for the area using their detailed knowledge and experience, coupled with an awareness of complaints that have been received. Clearly we need to prioritise the work to match the available budget and this is done based on a "safety first" principle. The volume of non-safety related line refresh has been reducing over recent years as budget reductions have been agreed by Council. Recognising this problem we have also worked with parishes such as Woodcote who are able to use some of their own funds to supplement ours to smarten up their area.

Unless it is related to a specific larger scheme, lining works are generally batched together in order to achieve the best value for money as this service is generally provided via a specialist contractor and costed as an attendance charge plus a charge per linear metre of line (therefore the more linear metres you can include in a visit the less the impact of the attendance charge on the overall cost).

<p>18. COUNCILLOR LES SIBLEY</p> <p>I welcome the new library at Bicester and would be grateful if the cabinet member for libraries could explain some of the details especially the closer working relationship with Cherwell District Council.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE, CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURAL & COMMUNITY SERVICES</p> <p>OCC has worked collaboratively with Cherwell District Council to participate in the construction of a new building to provide excellent facilities for the residents of Bicester. The library has long been planned by Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council as part of Franklins House, the new community building at the heart of the multimillion pound regeneration of Bicester Town Centre. The new library will open its doors to the public on Monday, April 11th. The new library will be larger than the current facility and will allow Oxfordshire County Council’s Library Service to offer an improved service.</p> <p>There will be more public access computers than at the current Bicester Library and the availability of Wi-Fi___33 will offer increased opportunities for people to get online and further develop their digital skills. There will also be a broader choice of books and audio visual items and increased opportunities to join in with regular activities such as weekly rhyme-times for babies and toddlers, family learning activities and reading groups.</p> <p>We will be working closely with Bicester Local History Society and Cherwell’s Economic Development Unit. The Local History Society and the Bicester Job Club will have a presence in the library, with a fortnightly Job Club surgery in the “Bicester Connect” area of the library.</p> <p>The current Bicester library will close its doors at 4:30pm on Saturday, March 19. Staff will spend the closure period moving stock to the new library ready for it to open on Monday, April 11th.</p>

<p>19. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILMSHURST</p> <p>At a time when councils of all persuasions are, or have found it necessary to maintain a sound commercial balance between available funding and facilities across all departments, the Oxfordshire Library Service through the support of a band of dedicated volunteers will continue to serve the interests of the communities it serves across the County.</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member agree?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE, CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURAL & COMMUNITY SERVICES</p> <p>The library service is grateful to our Friends Groups and volunteer supporters who help us to deliver library services across the county. We have 21 community supported libraries and also volunteers who give us their time and expertise to support activities such as rhymetimes, computer buddy activities and home library services. Working with the Communications Team, the library service will be launching a campaign in April to expand our bank of home library service volunteers. We will pilot this in the north of the county, rolling out across the whole county in July and August.</p> <p>Last year 831 people supported the library service as volunteers and 22,000 hours of volunteering were delivered.</p>
<p>20. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>In October 1997 the Swedish Parliament adopted its “Vision Zero” (VZ) road safety policy. VZ sets a target of zero deaths and zero serious injuries in the road traffic environment and puts the responsibility for achieving this goal on all those responsible for the total road safety system. This means that the detailed design of the road, the vehicle and driving behavior must be tackled as a “total system” so that “a mistake in the road traffic environment does not carry the death penalty”.</p> <p>This approach is an ethical and civilised response to the unacceptability of road death and serious injury.</p> <p>Vision Zero has been adopted in Vienna, New York, Blackpool and Edinburgh and has been</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>In December 2015 the government published “Working together to build a safer road system: British road safety statement” - see https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-safety-statement-working-together-to-build-a-safer-road-system ; this adopts a systems approach to improving road safety, and while not following Vision Zero by setting a target of zero fatal or serious injuries, nevertheless approaches the issues in a very comparable way.</p> <p>As mentioned by Cllr Coates, Vision Zero was adopted in Sweden in 1997, and while the detailed approaches of Sweden and the UK in the intervening years have differences, in terms of outcome, it is interesting to see (see chart on page 9 of above publication) that the death rate (per capita) on the UK’s roads is only very fractionally higher than Sweden’s.</p> <p>OCC’s Local Transport Plan 4 sets out our approach to road safety in respect of the interventions that are the responsibility of the local highway authority.</p>

<p>accepted as a long term target by the European Commission. Could the portfolio holder give a commitment that he will investigate this new approach and report back to the Cabinet illustrating how the new approach could be implemented?</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that the current severe funding pressures are inevitably affecting our ability to maintain and improve our road network, including addressing for example accident problem sites, and are also limiting the resources available for local road safety education, training and publicity work. It does not appear that this is affecting to date the number and severity of injuries reported in Oxfordshire, although we will be continuing to monitor trends very closely, including making comparisons with national performance and also our 'statistical neighbours' when the national road casualty statistics for 2015 are released in the early summer (the data available to date for 2016 - to 29/02/2016 - shows the lowest total of killed or seriously injured in Oxfordshire at least over the past 10 years, although clearly not too much weight should be given to the statistics for such a very limited period).</p>
<p>21. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>Flooding is coming again to Oxfordshire. We have had six floods since 2000 and the frequency is increasing. According to the flood map one in six of the residents of Oxfordshire are in the potential danger zone if a great flood comes.</p> <p>Up until now the County Council response to flooding has been excellent and I have no doubt that the police, fire and rescue services, the ambulance staff and the local authority workers will do all that is humanly possible but we need the politicians nationally and locally to accept that there needs to be a real comprehensive programme of flood defences and climate action. Can I have an assurance not only that we are ready for the next flood but that we really are making progress with a truly comprehensive range of</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>We have all witnessed the flooding in Oxfordshire, affecting many homes and causing disruption to many people's lives and also impacting on the local economy. The Emergency Services and Directorates within the Council work hard to prepare for such events and respond in the most effective manner working with the community. The nature of flooding has revealed that no two events are exactly the same, creating new and different challenges with every occurrence. This makes planning for flooding challenging, however all responses are de-briefed to ensure that experience is recorded, learnt from and built upon with each new response.</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service are all actively engaged in flooding discussions, partnerships, and meetings to ensure that the next flood response is more effective than the last and that the affected communities are fully involved.</p> <p>The following actions have been undertaken by the Council to ensure that we can make a difference to the communities of Oxfordshire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing Multi- agency flood plans for high risk areas Provision of fixed pumping facilities on the Botley Road and Abingdon Road Access to up to date on-line information systems (24/7) for emergency

actions that will really make a difference in the medium and long term.

response officers
Providing advice and guidance to the public for early warning
Developing and distributing information on flood reduction topics, e.g. tree maintenance, ditch and drainage upkeep
Developed a Priority Service Register for the vulnerable to register with the utility companies to ensure they are prioritised in the event of an incident
Holding flood protection events to educate and inform the communities
Informing the national debate on flood resilience with DCLG
Identified pre-arranged sandbags dumps for local communities
Promoting business continuity planning for local employers and the universities
The Local Resilience Forum has developed a 4x4 vehicle provision to provide access to rural communities and vulnerable individuals in all conditions
Working with Parish Councils to develop local resilience plans
Working with developers to ensure that new developments do not increase the impact of flooding
Liaising with the EA on the provision of additional flood protection equipment

We are all working towards the same goal of protecting people. We are committed to helping those affected by flooding, however there is only so much each organisation can do. With the current economic climate we are asking everyone to pitch in, helping people to help themselves, and identifying particular risks or vulnerable people, so the responding agencies can be most effective in a response where there are often hundreds of people requiring assistance. Our communities play an important role in the overall flood response and the Emergency Planning Unit promote Community Emergency Plans, Local Flood Groups, and flood wardens as a way of increasing resilience to the area.

As you can see we are undertaking a comprehensive range of activities which provides assurance that we continue to invest time and effort into flooding initiatives to improve outcomes for all those living, working or travelling through the County.

<p>22. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>Is the Leader of the Council aware of the TUC Welfare Charter and the fact that a number of local authorities are backing the call to action that it embodies?</p> <p>Would he agree with me that in an affluent society such as this there is no place for a system that sees pushing people into poverty, the threat of hunger and eviction as a legitimate punishment for not being in work. We need a social security system that enables everyone to have a safe, warm home, good food, proper clothing and being able to participate in society. If he does will he add Oxfordshire County Council endorsement to the recently published TUC Welfare Charter?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>I believe that the best way for everybody to have a safe, warm home, good food, proper clothing is to have the opportunity of a job. Since the General Election 336,000 more people are in work with the latest employment figures showing that 31.4 million people are in work thanks to the long term economic plan of this Conservative Government. A good social security system should be in place as a safety net for those residents that need it not as an alternative to work. The Council is aware that the TUC is developing a Welfare Charter and looks forward to considering this in more detail in due course. As an employer, the Council supports the National Living Wage that has been brought in by this Conservative Government and will implement this on 1 April This will be alongside early payment of the 1% pay award pending the outcome of the national pay negotiations, which will be honoured. The Council has a good track record of equality in the workplace including a range of policies and a robust Job Evaluation system which ensures that pay is free of bias.</p>
<p>23. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>The Chancellor has announced that all schools will be forced to be Academies. Could I ask why you are expressing such shock and awe at this announcement? Surely as a Conservative you have read the Tory Manifesto and its commitment to promote the Labour Party initiative of Academies. Has it not been your policy to move towards all schools being Academies in Oxfordshire for</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>This Council's and my commitment to supporting those schools that wish to become academies is matter of public record. That view has not changed. It is the Chancellor's use of the word 'forced' to which I object".</p>

<p>many years anyway ...why speak out now?</p>	
<p>24. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>The Chancellor in his recent budget stated that he would be cutting the Business Rate by 50% in an effort to help small business. This may seem very commendable but a 50% cut in revenue from the Business Rate will have dramatic impact on local government finances. Could the Portfolio holder give an estimate of how many millions will be lost to Oxfordshire County Council by this move and would he comment on Mr. Osborne's one time commitment to devolve decision making regarding the Business Rate to local government.</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LAWRIE STRATFORD, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE</p> <p>The Chancellor's budget report set out that Councils will be compensated for the extension of small business rates relief via a specific grant until the switch to full rate retention. Ministers have also indicated that councils would be expected to take on fewer additional responsibilities than originally planned after 2020 with the switch to funding via business rates as a result of the changes to reliefs.</p>
<p>25. COUNCILLOR ZOE PATRICK</p> <p>I understand from the last Cabinet meeting that a further study on usage data is to be undertaken before a final decision on bus subsidies is taken. It was reported at the budget meeting in February, that there could be further money from the £9M Transition Fund that could be used for this purpose. Does this mean that some of this money will now be used to subsidise necessary bus services for those who are needy and vulnerable in Oxfordshire who rely on their local service to access vital facilities?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>We will be creating a cross party board of members to consider maximum benefit from use of transition funds across key services and across geography. Council agreed that £1million of this could be used to create a one off pump priming fund for parishes to support Children's Centres which they would help save, and a further £1million is proposed for income generation pump priming. The remaining £2m will need further consideration by the cross party group on what this could support and the approach to be taken.</p> <p>Whilst this transition money is clearly very welcome, it is only temporary funding which gives us breathing space to plan for yet more cuts over and above those we consulted on in October. As you know, over the next four</p>

	<p>years we will have to find the same amount of money - £69m.</p> <p>Unfortunately we still have to continue with these savings. The availability of this temporary funding does not change our intention to terminate all bus subsidies by 20 July this year, and we are proceeding as planned.</p>
<p>26. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>What plans does the Cabinet Member have for repairing the road surface at Folly Bridge, and repairing the dangerous potholes in St Aldates and the High Street in the centre of Oxford?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Minor patching along the kerb line of Folly Bridge is to be undertaken in early 2016/17 financial year. Once structural work has been undertaken to the bridge in summer 2016, a full resurface of Folly Bridge is planned.</p> <p>Any potholes or safety defects found in St Aldates and the High Street will be repaired within 28 days following the monthly walked and driven inspections of High Street and St Aldates.</p>
<p>27. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member be prepared to use some of the £1 million agreed in the budget for pump-priming to support the growing numbers of street-homeless people in Oxford to move-on from hostels to the kind of accommodation provided by the Julian Housing Association?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</p> <p>Thank you for your question, Cllr Tanner. The arrangements for deciding on the use of the transitional funding are in the process of being finalised. Any proposals should be evaluated through those processes when agreed.</p>
<p>28. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>If Grandpont Children's Centre in my division became an independent largely self-financing trust would the Cabinet Member give favourable consideration to a bid from the Centre for transitional and possible match-</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>Yes.</p>

funding from the County Council?	
<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>The devolution debate with central government no matter what structure is chosen will result in massive structural changes to local government in Oxfordshire over the next 12 months. Given that reality, would you agree with me that now is not the time to move ahead with a larger scale senior management restructure and although not an ideal situation the temporary arrangements in place should remain until it is clear what the new structure will be?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>Whilst I would agree that there will be significant structural change likely at some stage whatever the outcome of the unitary discussions and that the Council cannot afford any distraction caused from widespread change to the senior structure of the organisation at this time, what was clear from the senior management review was that our existing structures do not best position us to address the challenges ahead (both short and medium term). Transformation of services is one area we still need to address; succession planning is another important element. As such, whilst the main thrust of the review is paused, it will be important to progress some of the proposals, perhaps on a temporary/interim basis, to better position the Council to do the best for the residents of Oxfordshire over the next few months.</p>