

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 SAM COATES</p> <p>The Leader of the Council’s positive stance on taking refugee children is welcome but would he agree with me that we have a Government who are being very selective in how they interpret ‘unaccompanied’ minors as can be seen with recent announcement related to children alone in Calais refugee camps.</p> <p>The Government’s commitment to create a Resettlement Scheme to bring stranded refugee children in Europe to safety in the UK is commendable but with only very narrow selection criteria the numbers will be small and many vulnerable children will still be at risk. Will the Leader be seeking greater clarification as to what selection criteria are being applied and seeking a more open approach?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>Having visited the camp in Calais in March this year I saw at first hand the conditions that people were living in. I have a better understanding of the type of person that was resident at the camp and the challenges they face; along with the opportunities they had.</p> <p>Oxfordshire is working closely with the SESMP (South East Strategic Migration Partnership) who are managing the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) scheme for our region on behalf of the Home Office. Oxfordshire County Council joined the NTS which Oxfordshire’s Cabinet endorsed in July this year. The NTS is designed to redistribute UASC children across different regions in the UK, as areas such as Kent have been overwhelmed due to its proximity to a port entry. Cabinet are fully supportive of the NTS and of ensuring that Oxfordshire commits resources to these vulnerable children.</p> <p>Under the NTS Oxfordshire’s UASC population is deemed to be 99 based on 0.07 of its child population. Oxfordshire with its current figure of 58 UASC believes that it is significantly contributing to meeting the needs of these vulnerable children and is wanting to develop additional placements to meet the current need. However we have already had to place some UASCs who are under 16 years in independent fostering provision out of county because despite achieving a 17% increase in our in house foster placements over the last three years we have experienced a 43% rise in our number of looked after children.</p> <p>The NTS is the means by which placements will be sought for children</p>

	<p>located in Calais who are unable to be reunited with their families based in the UK and UASC children known as Dubs children. We are seeking regular updates from the SESMP in terms of this dynamic situation in order to be able to offer support and assistance where we are able.</p> <p>To address the anticipated increased of UASC and their unique needs the council has embarked on a UASC strategy. This work was already in progress prior to the NTS scheme as Oxfordshire has seen its spontaneous UASC numbers increase over the last three years. The UASC strategy will link to our overarching placement strategy which is seeking to address significant increases in citizen children within our child protection and looked after system.</p>
<p>2. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member for Transport give an update as to where we are with Workplace Parking levies? He may recall this was part of the Green Budget proposal for increasing income rejected at the time by the ruling group. Could he also indicate if he is supportive of a congestion charge levy being introduced in Oxford?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>A paper on the workplace parking levy (WPL) will go to Cabinet in November. This will seek approval of a timetable and funding to progress the WPL.</p> <p>The Oxford Transport Strategy (part of the council's adopted Local Transport Plan) suggests that some form of road user charging scheme could have some role to play alongside a workplace parking levy. Given the likely high start-up and operating costs of road user charging schemes, further evidence is required on this, and the WPL Cabinet paper will make reference to this.</p>
<p>3. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>What are the Oxfordshire figures for referrals to Social and Health Care (children and adults) that have not received a service in this financial year due to not meeting eligibility</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</p> <p>The formal concept of eligibility criteria applies to adult social care rather than children's services.</p> <p>We want people to remain as independent for as long as possible. When</p>

<p>criteria? Of those, how many were met and assessed, and how many were not interviewed at all?</p> <p>The figures will illustrate how much unmet need there is at present by contrasting that against the total figures who have received support.</p>	<p>someone contacts the council we will look to provide them with information about services that are available in their local community to keep them independent. If a more targeted intervention is needed we will offer a reablement service and if this does fully return them to independence we will work with them to identify the long term care needed to meet their needs.</p> <p>Last year we had 13,244 requests from new people for adult social care. 58% were provided with information and advice about local services, 17% received reablement and 25% of people received long term services.</p> <p>Each year we benchmark adult social care services against other authorities. The number of people receiving services is at the level we would expect for an authority with Oxfordshire's relatively affluent and healthy population. We also take part in a national survey of adults who use social care which looks at the extent to which social care services meet their needs. People who use services are asked to what extent the services meet their needs in a number of areas including having enough to eat and drink; feeling safe; keeping clean; how they are able to spend their time and the way they are treated by staff. Oxfordshire consistently scores better than the national average on this measure.</p>
<p>4. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>The Clinical Commissioning Group has suggested that £200 million will be cut from NHS spending in Oxfordshire in the period between now and 2020, including the likely closure of some of our community hospitals. Will you as the Portfolio holder support campaigns and petitions which are intended to increase resources for the NHS to meet the needs of our ageing society and recognise</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE</p> <p>I thank Councillor Coates for his question. I believe that he is referring to the Sustainability and Transformation Plan that is being prepared by the NHS. Early work identified the need to move approximately £200m – or one-fifth of total NHS spending in Oxfordshire around the NHS system in Oxfordshire to provide more support in the community. This links directly to the national figure of £22 billion set out in the Five Year Forward View. NHS spending actually increased this year as the Clinical Commissioning Group received an increase in its budget of over £40 this year.</p>

<p>that this deliberate underfunding will damage the NHS.</p>	<p>We wait to see how the NHS propose to do this in Oxfordshire and the impact this will have on the different services. Our understanding is that the NHS will publish its plans in January. The County Council will be a consultee responding to those plans. We will be giving a robust response on all areas of the consultation – the effects on adult social care and the people of Oxfordshire. I support safe delivery of services and would not want any NHS service in the county to deliver a service that was not considered safe and would put peoples' lives at risk.</p>
<p>5. COUNCILLOR DAVID WILLIAMS</p> <p>When Academies were introduced by the Labour Party in 2001 the cover story was that they were some form of help to failing schools. As time has gone on with various changes it has become clear that they are an attempt to model state funded schools to structures associated with private schools. This has not only been in governance structures reflecting sponsors not communities, locally negotiated pay rates and procurement procedures, standing outside the National Curriculum, employment of non-qualified staff but more recently theoretical 'selection' of intake.(The supposed Grammar School debate)</p> <p>Would the Portfolio holder agree with me that the latest initiative of introducing military academies reflecting an existing but very minor strata of public schools where children as young as 14 will be trained in the 'art' of warfare is yet another attempt to ape the</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>No, I do not agree.</p>

<p>private sector and yet another step along the path to the ultimate goal of fee paying institutions. Will she condemn this latest return to Edwardian education?</p>	
<p>6. COUNCILLOR SAM COATES</p> <p>Is the Chair of the Pensions Investment Committee aware that Waltham Forest Council have made a decision to disinvest in Fossil fuels and have done so on a simple premise that Fossil Fuel Industries are not sustainable long term investments? How long will it be before Oxfordshire does the same for its pensioners and secures their future prosperity?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR STEWART LILLY, CHAIRMAN OF THE PENSION FUND COMMITTEE</p> <p>I am indeed aware of the decision of the Waltham Forest Pension Committee and whilst I fully respect their reasons, The Oxfordshire Pension Fund Committee over a number of discussions has concluded that a simply dis-investment approach is not in the long term interest of, or for, the scheme members. Instead the Oxfordshire Pension Fund asks our fund managers to engage with all companies in which they choose to invest, to ensure that the company boards are taking action to reduce their carbon footprints, have robust and appropriate business plans in place to deal with future business and financial risks, including those associated with climate change. Also, where appropriate engage with companies that are investing themselves in developing sustainable alternatives to current fossil fuels. By investing in a diversified group of well governed companies, the Oxfordshire Pension Fund is more than meeting its fiduciary responsibilities.</p> <p>I have discussed this position with my colleagues within the Brunel Pension Partnership, which we are also progressing, and all of the ten funds within that Partnership – which actually includes The Environment Agency – have agreed our future strategy will remain one based on engagement rather than blanket dis-investment.</p>
<p>7. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member please provide an update on the progress towards the opening</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>The move on home in Didcot has been running at full capacity since April 2016. The move on home in Witney is due to take first two teenagers from</p>

<p>of the 4 new children's homes being built in the County?</p>	<p>Wednesday 2 November and will be full by the 9 November.</p> <p>Thame Assessment Home opened at the beginning of October but will need to close in a fortnight's time for remedial work on the upstairs bedroom walls. We are hoping this will be completed within two-three weeks and the home will be back open by December 2016.</p> <p>Eynsham Assessment Home has reached practical completion and we are preparing it for an Ofsted registration visit in the third week of November. It should then be taking children from the second week of December 2016.</p>
<p>8. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</p> <p>What is the current estimate for the number of a] passenger b] freight c] other services likely to use the portion of East West railway between Oxford and Bicester each day by 2020?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR RODNEY ROSE, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>The current proposed timetable for Oxford to Bicester identifies 85 trains per day, and is expected to still be current in 2020. This breaks down into 76 passenger services; 6 freight services and 3 empty coach stock moves. With this level of use crossing down-times at London Road in Bicester are expected to be approximately 12 minutes in the morning peak hours and 10 minutes in the evening peak hours.</p>
<p>9. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</p> <p>How many requests for a change of school were received by the school admissions team from parents of Year 10 pupils in the UTCs, Studio schools and Free Schools operating in the 2016-17 school-year?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>Currently there are 4 such establishments with a Y10 and/or Y11 cohort in Oxfordshire, none of which share data about children on their roll with Oxfordshire County Council. When application is made for a pupil to move into a school for which we are the admissions authority, details of the establishment at which the pupil is currently on roll are not sought. We are unable, therefore, to say which requests for transfer to another school since 01 September relate to children on roll at one of those 4 establishments.</p>

<p>10. COUNCILLOR JANET GODDEN</p> <p>With reference to the motion unanimously agreed by this Council at its meeting on 12 July (agenda item 43/16), what specific steps have been taken, in accordance with point (2) of the motion, towards asking the district councils to support the community groups in their areas looking to take over the children's centres, and what specific responses have been received?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>Officers have been working with the District Councils to ensure as much support as possible is given to community groups in their areas that are looking to run some open access children's services. Conversations have been taking place with the City Council & Cherwell District Council who are supportive of this approach and have discussed the continuation of services at their local partnerships.</p> <p>South Oxfordshire District Council are engaging at an individual group level such as in Berinsfield, however they have decided to not support the centres with funding from their revenue grants scheme.</p> <p>Conversations are taking place with Vale of White Horse District council, however these are at an early stage.</p> <p>Despite initial meetings with West Oxfordshire District Council these have not progressed further.</p> <p>Any encouragement that fellow Councillors can give to Districts to assist will of course be most welcome.</p>
<p>11. COUNCILLOR RICHARD WEBBER</p> <p>Can the Cabinet member confirm that the criteria for the award of the £1m transition grants to community-run children's centres will take full account of the motion unanimously agreed by this council at its meeting on 12 July (agenda item 43/16) including that the £1m Transition Fund money</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>The Council has already received 17 bids for transition funding to help communities provide open access children's services. That's a hugely positive response which shows the appetite of local people to deliver the services they most want to see in their communities.</p> <p>"We have been working closely with individual community groups on the development of business plans, as this cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach.</p>

<p>should be committed to those areas which were losing their children's Centres?"</p>	<p>Clearly these discussions have covered rental costs, and groups have submitted bids in the knowledge of what these costs would be.</p> <p>“Rent charged by the Council at the Community Rate is typically 50 per cent of the full market rate, and further reductions may apply if activities meet a statutory need. The actual figure in any individual case will take into consideration the various property matters such as intended use, length of term and the condition of the building.</p> <p>“The first round of funding bids are currently being considered and we are already working with other groups who we anticipate will submit business plans ahead of the January 9 deadline for the second round.</p>
<p>12. COUNCILLOR RICHARD WEBBER</p> <p>At the recent public event at the Kassam Stadium, prospective volunteers who, we hope, might take over some of our Children's Centres, were told that rent to OCC would be chargeable under the Council's Asset Management Transfer Policy. Please would the Cabinet member explain how such rent would be assessed?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LINDSAY-GALE, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY, CULTURAL & COMMUNITY SERVICES</p> <p>All community groups have been asked to complete an Expressions of Interest. Once this has been received the County Council's estates team will be in contact with them to determine what rent is applicable with regard to the building they are expressing an interest in, and in light of the use or mix of uses they propose.</p> <p>The levels at which the County Council charges rent are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commercial Rate (the full market rate that can be achieved for a building) 2. Community Rate (notionally 50% of the commercial rent subject to the proposed use, these are the rents that were published in May 2016) 3. Early Years Rate (if meeting a statutory need under the Early Years and Childcare Providers policy published in Dec 2014, further reductions apply) <p>The actual rent applied will take into consideration the various property matters such as the proposed community use, or mix of uses, the length of term of the lease and the condition of the building.</p>

<p>13. COUNCILLOR JEAN FOOKS</p> <p>Is the Cabinet member confident that there are enough staffing resources to maintain levels of service in Children's Centres until the new Structure is in place?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR MELINDA TILLEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES</p> <p>We are not in a position to give reassurance that there are enough staffing resources to maintain levels of service in Children's Centres until the new Structure is in place.</p> <p>In the letter from Jim Leivers to members and partner agencies on 8th August 2016 this was made clear.</p> <p>The letter stated that as the service moves towards implementation of the new delivery structure from September 2016 onwards ,</p> <p>" there will be significant movement of staff as people are appointed to new posts and others decide to leave the service to take up work elsewhere "</p> <p>To date upwards of 55 staff have left OCC employment in these circumstances.</p> <p>The letter goes on to say that these circumstances will "inevitably mean that early intervention service will begin to re prioritise its work and workloads. Wherever possible support in the immediate future will continue to be offered to families who receive support through universal provision however this will not always be possible and as staff capacity reduces it is likely that delivery of other open access sessions will have to cease"</p> <p>The service is trying very hard to avoid changing or ceasing services and we have seen some really innovative work by centres to keep services going</p> <p>The service is clustering resources across children centres and hubs and planning locally to make best use of staffing capacity. Managers are taking a flexible approach when planning services and decisions about service reductions is being based on priority need and the skill of the staff available to run the service but unfortunately some services have had to cease and others</p>
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	<p>will have to change or cease before the new service is fully operational.</p> <p>I would like to take this opportunity to reassure members that the service will do all it can to keep any changes to a minimum. Managers are closely monitoring the situation. If services do need to change or cease we will look at all alternative options, give families and partners as much notice as possible and ensure that vulnerable families are supported.</p>
<p>14. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>The County Council's insistence on unspecified rental charges for children's centres trying to run independently, such as Grandpont children's centre in my own division, has been a very unhelpful step. Will the Cabinet now rule out charging rent for children's centres threatened with closure by this Council?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LINDSAY-GALE</p> <p>The Council has already received 17 bids for transition funding to help communities provide open access children's services. That's a hugely positive response which shows the appetite of local people to deliver the services they most want to see in their communities.</p> <p>"We have been working closely with individual community groups on the development of business plans, as this cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach. Clearly these discussions have covered rental costs, and groups have submitted bids in the knowledge of what these costs would be.</p> <p>"Rent charged by the council at the Community Rate is typically 50 per cent of the full market rate, and further reductions may apply if activities meet a statutory need. The actual figure in any individual case will take into consideration the various property matters such as intended use, length of term and the condition of the building.</p> <p>"The first round of funding bids are currently being considered and we are already working with other groups who we anticipate will submit business plans ahead of the January 9 deadline for the second round.</p>
<p>15. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>The pedestrianisation of Cornmarket has created a safe, unpolluted, vibrant and</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR DAVID NIMMO SMITH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>The Council's adopted transport policy, the Local Transport Plan, does not include any proposals for buses to operate in Cornmarket. It would not be</p>

<p>people-friendly space for all in the heart of Oxford, valued by shoppers, students and tourists alike. Will the Cabinet immediately rule out any possibility of re-introducing dangerous, polluting and unnecessary buses to Oxford's Cornmarket?</p>	<p>appropriate for the Cabinet to rule out a change to this policy indefinitely as circumstances may change in future.</p>
<p>16. COUNCILLOR JOHN TANNER</p> <p>The Conservative Government's Brexit negotiations are likely to have a very damaging impact on Oxfordshire's economy; especially for the car industry, scientific research, farming, hospitals, care-homes and shops and restaurants. What steps is the County Council taking to mitigate this damage and what new opportunities for Oxfordshire does the Cabinet envisage when Britain leaves the European Union?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSPETH, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>The Conservative Government's Brexit negotiations will have a positive impact on Oxfordshire's and the Country's economy. Just last week we have seen that Nissan, the largest car manufacturer in the UK, have pledged to 2 build 2 new models at their plant in Sunderland. I expect we'll see similar announcements in future years, proving that Britain is open for business. This will grow the economy of the whole country providing opportunities at all levels of industry and commerce.</p> <p>The County council is working with the LEP, City, District and other partners to bid for infrastructure and apprenticeship funding to ensure that we have the best conditions to enable all residents of Oxfordshire to grow and prosper once the shackles of the European Union are removed.</p>