

QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Annex 3

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.

<p>1. COUNCILLOR CHARLIE HICKS</p> <p>Has the Council, or Active Travel England, undertaken any audits of the quality of active travel schemes and/or designs in Oxfordshire using review tools provided by Active Travel England (which can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/active-travel-england-scheme-review-tools)? If so, please can the Cabinet Member share which schemes and/or designs were reviewed and what they scored?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Active Travel England continue to expand their range of tools for Local Authorities and the specific tools mentioned (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/active-travel-england-scheme-review-tools) were launched in February 2024.</p> <p>Officers are attending regular training sessions hosted by ATE as new tools are released to ensure tools are used appropriately. Where the use of tools are specifically requested for example through the Active Travel Funding Tranches this is adhered to. Schemes reaching the current deployment phase were in planning before the tools were released so the tools would not have been used for these. Upcoming schemes will have the tools applied where appropriate based on the type of scheme, and where resources are available to support the cost of collecting the required data and this is reasonable and in proportion to the overall cost of the scheme. Other analysis tools are also used such as Healthy Streets assessments and the Cycling Level of Service – among others to ensure the projects we deliver are of a high quality and benefit our communities and provide a safe and useful experience for those walking, wheeling and cycling. For details on specific projects please do engage with the relevant project manager.</p>
<p>2. COUNCILLOR MARK CHERRY</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member note that there is a large number of trees that fall into to the ownership of Oxfordshire County Council in Banbury Ruscote</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR PETE SUDBURY, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council’s Tree Service conduct a cyclical programme of tree inspection and tree care across the whole county. This encompasses all trees growing within land denoted as public highway, with the planned frequency of the cyclical programme being every four years.</p>

<p>and every few years Council contractors need tree surgery work.</p> <p>Constituents quite rightly raised concerns of overgrown trees on roads like Warwick Road, Fairway Road, Cromwell Road and Edmonds Road.</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member assure me, as the local member for Banbury Ruscote, that there are adequate funding resources to move forward tree surgery work when needed in a planned Council tree maintenance schedule?</p>	<p>Banbury was due to be surveyed with associated works issued last financial year, however this work is currently one year behind on our original programme schedule. As such, Banbury will be surveyed this autumn/winter with the aim to issue works next spring.</p> <p>As Cllr Cherry has raised, the aforementioned roads contain mature tree stock. Historically the Tree Service have conducted pollarding works on trees across this area, trees on roads such as Cromwell will have further pollarding specified. This ensures trees remain appropriate for context and situation in which they are growing.</p> <p>The tree care budget is managed to enable the Tree Service to prioritise tree care in line with the planned survey schedule and inspection outputs.</p> <p>Through the inspection process, if specific tree care is determined by the Tree Service as being a greater priority than other tree care operations in the area, the budget plan can change to accommodate this need. This may include phasing of work to ensure it can be accommodated within the budget available.</p> <p>Officers will provide further detail once the tree surveys are concluded in his division.</p>
<p>3. COUNCILLOR SALLY POVOLOTSKY</p> <p>Steventon Bridge has now been a single channel coming up to 3 years, and we have lacked communication as to next steps and timelines. Given the high likelihood of continued and sustained damage to the structure, can the Cabinet Member please inform my residents how long he expects the repairs to take and how long they will</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Works to strengthen the bridge are planned to commence in October and be finished by the end of March 2025. There are still some design considerations to resolve around utility services due to their depth and potential location. They are carrying out trial holes to verify its location. This is in the area currently protected by the road narrowing. The outcome of these findings may influence whether the single traffic channel needs to remain a permanent feature. The current design of the strengthening works does not include modification to the single traffic channel, but this may enable consideration for it to be removed. A firm decision on whether the</p>

<p>last, and will the single traffic channel be a permanent feature after repairs?</p>	<p>single traffic channel should remain as a permanent feature, potentially with enhanced facilities for cyclists, has not yet been made.</p>
<p>4. COUNCILLOR SALLY POVOLOTSKY</p> <p>The voice of young people is lacking in this chamber and throughout many of our services, given many of the decisions in this chamber are medium and long-term plans. Will the Leader of the Council commit to looking at options for a youth council under the chair of councils remit to engage young people across our communities for better engagement, input and ideation around this Council’s policies and strategies for place and service shaping in the future?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>The Council is committed to ensuring the voices of children and young people inform our decision making and shape our services. Cabinet has also agreed (as of April 2024) a mission statement relating to future generations: “We affirm the fundamental importance of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs. We will take a nationally leading role in putting intergenerational fairness at the heart of our decision-making.”</p> <p>Supporting this commitment is a work programme which focuses on two key areas: i) youth engagement with local democracy; and ii) enhancing youth engagement. Examples of recent and planned activity are provided below.</p> <p>Encompassing young people in our democratic structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are planning a Future Generations Week between 18 and 24 November 2024, which aligns with UK Parliament Week. The programme will be co-produced with children and young people and will include sounding boards for primary and secondary age children and a debate in the council chamber. • We are looking at how we can actively involve young people in the work of council committees. <p>Enhancing youth engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We supported young people to participate in a Future Generations in Policy Making event at the Blavatnik School of Government in May 2024. • As part of the council’s annual budget and business planning consultation and engagement programme, 64 secondary school-aged children took part in two

	<p>sounding board events and two focus groups in June and July 2024. The activities enabled them to take part in citizenship conversations, learn about how the council and local politics work, and to share their service and budget priorities through individual and group discussions and using our online budget simulator.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s Services is developing a participation and engagement strategy, a sub strategy to the council’s corporate consultation and engagement strategy 2022-2025. The strategy sets out how children, young people and families can participate in a range of different opportunities to influence decisions and outcomes that affect them within children’s services, including through groups, forums, boards and co-production. • The council is scoping its first citizens’ assembly focusing on travel and transport. Planned for early 2025, children and young people will be recruited to participate alongside adults. Citizens’ assemblies are deliberative processes that bring together people from all walks of life to focus on a specific topic and reach collective recommendations for decision makers to respond to. • We have also run a range of dedicated focus groups and engagement activities for children and young people as part of our wider consultation and engagement activity. <p>Finally, I would like to confirm that we have a very active Future Generations champion in Cllr Charlie Hicks. Rather than making this the Chair’s remit, I would suggest asking Cllr Hicks to consider further ways of engaging effectively with young people.</p>
<p>5. COUNCILLOR SALLY POVOLOTSKY</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member for SEND Improvement please publish the registered tribunal data for the last 8 years (since 2016) to this chamber and explain the rise in tribunals and the time delay from</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR KATE GREGORY, CABINET MEMBER FOR SEND IMPROVEMENT</p> <p>Thank you for this question about this very important matter. Like other English local authorities, Oxfordshire has experienced significant challenges in the SEND system. The national system implemented from 2014, was recently described by the ISOS partnership as ‘broken’ (July 2024). The national increase in appeal tribunals is</p>

appeal registered to appeal conceded/heard/withdrawn and the number of tribunal rulings OCC have appealed to the upper tribunal?

reflective of this broken system and the position in Oxfordshire mirrors this. We have seen a significant rise in Tribunal appeals since 2016. The national figures show a rise of 24% in the number of appeals lodged in 2022-2023, which is four times the number lodged in 2014-15 when the SEND reforms were first introduced. Oxfordshire's increase in tribunals from 2022 to 2023 was 26%.

The rise in tribunal appeal numbers is driven locally and nationally by a number of factors. For Oxfordshire, the increase in requests for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) alongside an increasing statutory school aged population, has led to an increase in appeals. We are aware that one of the issues driving the increase is a lack of special school places in the state and independent sectors and hence our drive to deliver over 300 additional special places by 2028. We were delighted to open Bloxham School alongside Gallery Multi-Academy Trust in January 2023 which will cater for 120 pupils with ASD/MLD need. Planning is also underway for our new special school in Didcot which will provide for 120 pupils with SEMH/ASD needs.

We recognise that parents and carers have the right to appeal to Tribunal if they are not satisfied with outcome. In line with the national picture, there has been a substantial increase in the number of appeals and the proportion of EHCPs that go to appeal.

The table below shows the figures for appeals since 2016 (This table is reproduced in larger print at the end of the document.)

	Number of appeals	Hearings	Withdrawn	Conceded	Partly Agreed/Allowed	Agreed/Allowed	Dismissed	Other (please state)	Total number of Statements/ EHCPs
2016	27	8	13	4	N/A	8	0	2	2,420
2017	50	8	27	4	N/A	6	2	11	2,755
2018	67	12	17	14	N/A	11	1	24	3,076
2019	66	4	25	19	N/A	4	1	17	3,554
2020	92	21	9	31	1	16	4	31	3,380
2021	193	29	3	78	22	6	1	83	4,070
2022	276	20	11	159	14	4	2	86	4,914
2023	347	29	8	178	21	4	4	132	6,160
								Other = struck out, transferred or still active)	
	2024 January to July only								
	217	12	4	63	3	9	0	138	
									Current total - 6,934

Against a backdrop of increasing requests for EHCPs, in Oxfordshire, the proportion of appeals as a percentage of all EHCPs has risen from 1% in 2016 to 5.6% in 2022 and 2023. The figures for the final 2 years suggesting that, maybe, the proportion is beginning to plateau.

We are aware that nationally the majority of appeals are upheld by the Tribunal court, with over 93% of parents having their case agreed by the Court in full or in part. We are aware that this route is stressful and can be expensive for parents and is not a step that they take lightly.

At the local authority, we face challenges in capacity of accessing other resource from across the public sector system which may lead to lack of access to expert advice (such as speech and language assessments) being provided to the local authority. This can further delay assessments and lead parents to sourcing private, alternative advice.

Once an appeal is registered by parents/carers, SENDIST (the Tribunal court) will set a timetable for dates. Given the significant volume of appeals now facing the court, this can now take over a year since the original registration. The local authority

and parents have no choice but to work to the timetable as set out by the Court. Once registered, the local authority will make a decision as to whether to defend or concede its decision. During this time further evidence may be collected and parents may decide to withdraw their appeal, in the majority of cases this is because a suitable resolution has been reached.

As the figures above show, the rate of concessions has risen from 15% of appeals in 2016 to 51% of appeals in 2023. However, for the year to date, concessions have declined to 29% of appeals. We have not during this time appealed any rulings to the upper tribunal. There are very specific rules about when an appeal can be made.

Our work as a local area partnership (across the Council and the Health sector) is focused on transforming outcomes for children and young people so that parents do not need feel they need to appeal. This work includes working with mainstream schools to support inclusion through our enhanced pathway work, our approach to restorative practice and supporting our special schools to work with mainstream colleagues. All these actions combined with our investment in new school places will help us continue to support children and young people with SEND and their families. We plan to roll out an EHCNA guidance document for settings which describes information to submit to support robust decision making. The impact of this is that there is an increase in the number of EHCNA request that progress to an assessment.

We have a significant recruitment and retention campaign in place for Educational Psychologists, and nationally there are a shortage of EP's making this a hard to recruit to post. We are also onboarding more agency EPs to support us in meeting statutory timeframes. The timeliness of assessments is impacted by the 38 week school year and delays can occur because of school holidays making parts of the year more difficult to gather information.

We are regularly monitored by the Department for Education on our progress to tackle the challenges we face in Oxfordshire to achieve the very best outcomes for

	<p>all our children and young people. We recognise that more progress needs to be made but also that we can already see the 'green shoots' of improvement.</p>
<p>6. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Because vehicles can no longer drive under the railway bridge in Botley Road (though someone did try), Abbey Road and especially Mill Street are often full of cars dropping people off and picking them up – or just turning round, because they didn't realise they couldn't get through.</p> <p>They often park dangerously and drive fast. This is unpleasant for the residents, who are already suffering the effects of living in a 24-hour building site. What can be done to help them?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>With regards to parking enforcement in the Botley Road, Abbey Road and especially Mill Street these are priority areas for the Enforcement Officers. The Council has asked the enforcement contractor to ensure that an officer is present in the area during the peak hours when drop off and pick-ups take place.</p> <p>Dangerous driving or speed can only be enforced by the Police, and this will need to be raised with them. Officers will also make the Police aware of your concerns.</p>
<p>7. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>Thames Water is sporadically working on Osney Bridge. They claim to be trying to mend their water main. One of the two narrow traffic lanes over the bridge has been coned off for many months. Why were they told that it was fine for TW staff to park their cars in this lane? I thought we were trying to discourage commuters from driving into the City?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>This is required for them to attend site and allow them to bring equipment, carry out inspections, and manage traffic management.</p>

<p>8. COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL</p> <p>We have been asking for years for Localities to be able to send recommendations to Cabinet. The Peer Review said this should happen. Why is it still not happening?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NEIL FAWCETT, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES</p> <p>During the review of Locality Meetings, chaired by my predecessor in this Cabinet role (Cllr Phillips) an all-member survey was undertaken as part of the review. The results from this survey showed that only a minority of respondents wanted to make fundamental changes to the locality meetings. The working group, comprising Locality Chairs and senior officers, agreed that there was no desire to introduce new powers or responsibilities, particularly those that might duplicate the role of overview and scrutiny committees.</p> <p>That being said, there are existing provisions within the Constitution under Cabinet Procedure Rules (Part 4) and the Protocol on Councillors' Rights and Responsibilities (Part 9) which already enable councillors to raise issues to Cabinet, with the endorsement of a cabinet member:</p> <p>Part 4.2 paragraph 2.5: "Any member of the Council may make a request through a member of the Cabinet that an item be placed before the Cabinet. If the Cabinet Member endorses the request and so notifies the Proper Officer, that Officer will arrange for the Cabinet to consider in the context of the Forward Plan arrangements to make consideration of that item. When any such item is considered by the Cabinet the agenda for the meeting will give the name of the Councillor who asked for the item to be considered. The individual member shall be invited to attend and speak at the meeting during consideration by the Cabinet of that item."</p> <p>On behalf of the Cabinet, all of whom attend a locality, we will be happy to receive any written requests that have been discussed and agreed in the meeting.</p>
<p>9. COUNCILLOR ANDREW COLES</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR PETE SUDBURY, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS</p>

<p>Councillor Sudbury will be aware of the flood drainage ditch in Woodford Way, in my division, which is one of the few in Oxfordshire which falls to the county council to maintain. Last year I repeatedly expressed my concerns, through our localities meetings, about its current state. It is overgrown with vegetation, looks very unsightly, is often littered with rubbish and sometimes abandoned shopping trollies etc. I have repeatedly questioned whether it is fit for purpose. Could Councillor Sudbury update me please on what plans the council has to address these concerns and reassure residents as to its current state and condition, bearing in mind Witney is particularly vulnerable to flooding, especially in the winter months?</p>	<p>The Area Operations team are aware of the work required to the ditch on Woodford way and although there has been some delay with this work, for which we apologise. I can confirm that arrangements are in hand for this vegetation clearance to be undertaken during September.</p>
<p>10. COUNCILLOR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At your decisions meeting on July 18th you approved £0.5million expenditure to develop the Workplace Parking Tax. 2. A Team Leader for the project has been/is being recruited at a salary of c.£50k per annum. 3. The Leader has said that the tax will go ahead. 	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</p> <p>In July I approved the procurement of technical transport consultancy support required for the development of a WPL, delegated the award of the contract to the Director of Economy and Place, and authorised officers to progress the development of the WPL including the undertaking of the required future public consultation. The funding for these activities is part of the £2.488m approved as part of the budget in February – it is not new funding.</p> <p>It is not possible to carry out a public consultation on a WPL without first developing and assessing the proposals, for which technical support is required.</p> <p>The council advertised recently for a 2 years fixed term Technical Lead - Oxford Workplace Parking Levy to lead the development of the WPL working alongside other OCC colleagues, consultants and other appointed specialists to develop</p>

<p>Given these three points, what is the purpose of the proposed public consultation on the tax?</p>	<p>proposals from concept to consultation, including ongoing liaison with employers affected by the scheme and other external stakeholders. The postholder would not be involved in the operation of the WPL. If the implementation of a WPL is approved in future, operational staff would be recruited to administer the scheme.</p> <p>The Work Place Parking Levy programme assumes a Cabinet decision on its implementation during 2026. Only a decision to develop the Work Place Parking levy has been made.</p> <p>To be clear recommendations to Cabinet will be informed by technical work, public consultation and engagement with affected employers. It is also important to note that the final decision on a WPL rests with the Secretary of State for Transport, so the council will only be able to implement the scheme if the Secretary of State approves it.</p> <p>The purpose of the public consultation on the Workplace Parking Levy is to gather feedback and input from employers, the public, and other stakeholders to inform the development of the WPL and the local and national decision-making process. The consultation is a legal requirement, and an integral part of the scheme development. People's feedback allows us to refine our proposals and assess the potential impacts of the Workplace Parking Levy.</p>
<p>11. COUNCILLOR GLYNIS PHILLIPS</p> <p>At the last Council meeting on 9th July, you advised that there would be a meeting of officers in July 'to discuss likely timeframes for the implementation of speed enforcement measures at the Barton Park junction'. Would the Cabinet member advise when these speed enforcement measures will be</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Officers met on site with representatives of Thames Valley Police and a supplier of enforcement equipment in August and are carrying out further technical appraisal work. Subject to the outcome, funding from the Vision Zero programme will be allocated for the installation of the equipment, with Thames Valley Police then managing its operation. Timescales will be dependent on a number of factors but with the expectation – should the suitability of the site be confirmed – that installation would be carried out in the first half of 2025.</p>

<p>installed? And are safety barriers at the pedestrian crossing points being actively considered?</p>	<p>Preliminary work on the installation of safety barriers for pedestrians has been carried out but this did identify a number of constraints and current work is focussed on the installation of the red light and speed cameras.</p>
<p>12. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON</p> <p>At the end of July the Leader wrote to the Home Secretary Yvette Cooper reminding her of this council's strong objections to proposals to re-open Campfield House Immigration Detention Centre in Kidlington. This was a follow up to the passing of my motion in October 2022 when the leader wrote to the former Home Secretary expressing our opposition to the plans. Following the new government's cancellation of the Rwanda Resettlement Scheme it was hoped that the plans for Campfield would also be cancelled since the scheme was cited as one of the principal reasons for the re-opening. However since the Leader's letter to Ms Cooper was sent, the government has surprisingly announced its intention to continue with plans to reopen the centre. Does the leader agree with me that this is a hugely retrograde move, especially given that Oxford is looking to become a City of Sanctuary, and that not only is it going to have little impact on dealing with the backlog of asylum claims, it could also jeopardise inward investment into an area designated as a centre of innovation and technology?"</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</p> <p>Yes, I agree that this is indeed a hugely retrograde step by the Home Secretary, and I very much regret her decision for all the reasons that Cllr Middleton gives. Calum Miller, the MP in whose constituency Campfield House is situated, has also voiced his objections which I agree with and fully support.</p>

<p>13. COUNCILLOR IAN MIDDLETON</p> <p>Members from all groups have expressed concerns about a lack of feedback about issues affecting their divisions. I've also had similar complaints from District and Parish Councillors. There have been repeated acknowledgements of these shortcomings by the administration with promises to improve communication, especially on E&P projects and other key decisions, yet the problem persists. I have personally experienced this on more than one occasion and was recently told by a senior officer that they did not believe it was "necessary" to inform me of a significant and controversial development directly affecting my division before an announcement was made to the media. Could the Cabinet Member for Community and Corporate Services confirm that these failures of communication are going to be urgently addressed and provide assurances that officers will be made aware of the importance of informing members about decisions and events directly affecting their divisions before such information is released to the media?"</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR NEIL FAWCETT, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES</p> <p>I would like to thank Cllr Middleton for raising the question of communications to members. It's very important that local members are kept informed about issues affecting their division and will ask that all officers are reminded of the importance of doing so.</p> <p>I have also had my own experience of such situations and understand how frustrating it can be.</p> <p>It may not always be possible to brief local members in advance of communications being issued, but that should be very much the exception.</p> <p>We are also committed to improving communications with our district, town and parish councils. We recently signed up to the Oxfordshire Councils Charter, which is aimed at improving ways of working across all tiers of local government in the county.</p>
<p>14. COUNCILLOR BRAD BAINES</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member please explain why the principal inspection report for Donnington Bridge was not submitted for ten months after the original</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal inspections are generally carried out every 6 years and allow a detailed assessment of all parts of a bridge. The purpose of these inspections

<p>inspection in May 2023, and whether he has confidence that similar delays and emergency intervention will not befall other bridges in the County?</p>	<p>is to ensure any potential issues are identified and addressed promptly to maintain the safety and integrity of the bridge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an operational activity and it is not required for me to have sight of these. • Following the report, further work was carried out by our teams and a subsequent risk update was provided and approved by the client on 15th August 2024 which identified the need to install the weight restriction. • More detailed, specialist and intrusive testing is required, and this work is being commissioned with a view to determine what works will be required at the earliest opportunity. • We have many structures across Oxfordshire, and we continue to inspect them in line with our asset strategy. It is only when these inspections are carried out, we will be clear as to the extent of any works required. • I would like to assure you that decisions to impose restrictions of this kind are not taken lightly, and always on the basis of expert advice and recommendation • The primary outcome of the decision is to protect the users of the bridge and protect the asset from any further unnecessary stress and damage.
<p>15. COUNCILLOR BRAD BAINES</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member confirm when he was first informed of the findings and consequences of the principal inspection report for Donnington Bridge submitted to the Council on 28/03/2024?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR ANDREW GANT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT</p> <p>I can confirm that I was informed by our Head of Service for Highway Maintenance, that there was a need to impose a weight restriction on Friday 16th August 2024.</p>

	<p>(Officers had been working hard to understand the risk report received by the client team on 15th August following on from an extensive analysis of the findings of the information supplied by our contractors.)</p>
<p>16. COUNCILLOR BRAD BAINES</p> <p>Since the Botley Road is set to be closed for a further indefinite period whilst Network Rail upgrade the Botley Railway Bridge, with the Leader speculating that the delay could last another year, does the Cabinet Member consider it to be legally and judiciously appropriate for an updated Cabinet decision to be taken on the proposed traffic filter scheme, given that the original decision may be taken three years prior to implementation and the changed circumstances since then?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</p> <p>I have sought officer advice and see no reason to revisit the November 2022 Cabinet decision on the trial traffic filters.</p> <p>There is no automatic requirement for all decisions made by the council to be revisited solely due to the passing of time.</p> <p>The council considers that the original justification for trialling traffic filters – that motorised traffic in Oxford needs to be reduced to facilitate efficient bus operation, safer cycle routes, more liveable streets and reduced congestion and pollution – will remain valid once Botley Road reopens. The traffic filters are to be introduced as a trial, with the expectation that the scheme may be adjusted in response to monitoring and consultation feedback during the trial. Cabinet was made aware of the imminent closure of Botley Road in the report, which also contained an officer recommendation that the trial only starts after the Botley Road re-opens, and so in this regard, the circumstances remain unchanged.</p> <p>Furthermore, the November 2022 Cabinet decision delegates authority to officers (in consultation with the relevant Cabinet member) to make minor changes to the scheme before it comes into force in case tweaks are needed.</p>
<p>17. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER</p> <p>Parents and learner drivers right across Oxfordshire continue to struggle to book driving</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</p> <p>The County Council has no control over matters of this nature.</p>

<p>tests in the county with many having to travel hours away or spend hours searching for a cancellation. Is there anything that the county council can do to assist with improving this service in Oxfordshire?</p>	
<p>18. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER</p> <p>The new £51million park and ride at Eynsham has now been completed but as yet there is no access into the site. Can she confirm when the access will be constructed and also confirm how much the site is costing each week whilst it remains closed?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</p> <p>The Eynsham park and ride was funded by a ring-fenced and non-inflation indexed grant award, which had obtained all the relevant consents and approvals to allow it to proceed to construction. Any delays to its commencement would have resulted in the inflationary pressures impacting on the affordability of the scheme.</p> <p>Completing the park and ride site ahead of the bus lanes which required more complicated approval, has saved millions of pounds in inflation and construction costs. This was a conscious decision, taken at a time when costs were rising rapidly across all industries.</p> <p>Delays caused by funding pressures, including inflation, has meant that the wider A40 improvements scheme has needed to be redesigned. The revised scheme will deliver a connection for the park and ride, bus lanes and walking and cycling infrastructure along the A40. We are discussing this revised scheme with Homes England and DfT and hope to progress with its delivery later this year.</p> <p>Following the completion of the permanent landscaping at the Eynsham park and ride, I can inform the council that ongoing maintenance of the site is being provided as part of the existing delivery contractor. It is important to note that the council is not incurring any additional costs on this maintenance, as it is covered by the construction contract.</p> <p>To clarify, the total project cost of the park and ride did not cost £51m. From the projected £51m total cost for the wider Science Transit (ST2) scheme, around £32m</p>

	<p>was allocated for the delivery of the park and ride, with the remaining going on the delivery of the eastbound bus lane. This eastbound bus lane now forms part of the proposed new A40 improvement scheme.</p> <p>Regarding the opening of the park and ride facility, the park and ride will be opened when the necessary infrastructure to connect it to the A40 is delivered. This connection and the bus lanes serving the park and ride are scheduled to be constructed under the revised A40 improvements scheme, which is currently under discussions with Homes England and the Department for Transport. Our discussions with them are nearing completion.</p> <p>Subject to the successful conclusion of these discussions, we plan to hold a public engagement on the plans in later in the year. This will kickstart the delivery phase of the scheme, with a projected completion date of the relevant infrastructure to allow the park and ride to operating being in 2027.</p>
<p>19. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER</p> <p>Work to improve the Cotswold Railway Line seems to have slowed down. Please can the cabinet member provide an update on the Cotswold Line improvements and when we can expect the car park at Hanborough Station to be expanded and if the Hanborough Subgroup has now been established?</p>	<p>COUNCILLOR JUDY ROBERTS, CABINET MEMBER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</p> <p>The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) engaged with the previous Government earlier this year, meeting with the-then Rail Minister and had extensive follow-on discussion with DfT Civil Servants, rail industry colleagues and consultants from SLC Rail (who support the work of the Task Force). A further discussion with the Rail Minister – to seek support and funding for project development – was scheduled for 10 June, but due to the General Election being called during that period, had to be rescheduled.</p> <p>The NCLTF invited MPs along to a Parliamentary event on 4 September to update line of route MPs (most newly elected). This was hosted by Lord Faulkner and NCLTF members, including Councillor Liz Leffman and John Disley (Head of Transport Policy). This included discussion about the substantial amount of new</p>

residential development proposed in the vicinity of Worcestershire Parkway station. The NCLTF encompasses five counties and a number of sub-regional transport board areas, with a very substantial amount of planned development, and enhanced rail services are critical to delivering improved connectivity in the most sustainable way

Our new OxRail 2040: Plan for Rail strategy will set out the need for full double-tracking from Oxford, through to Worcester. We will also propose 25kv AC overhead electrification from Oxford to Hanborough railway station (Didcot-Banbury via Oxford proposed for wiring). Hanborough station will be developed as a two-platform station, connected by a footbridge and ideally as a Tier 2 'Mobility Hub' to serve a wider area of West Oxfordshire

We are in discussion with GWR/Network Rail and West Oxfordshire District Council about the scope to expand the existing station car park and any formation of a 'Hanborough station sub-group' is dependent on progress with the wider NCLTF ambitions. Such a group would probably be led by Place Planning and involve local Members, Blenheim Palace and West Oxfordshire Community Transport and is likely to be formed later next year.

	Number of appeals	Hearings	Withdrawn	Conceded	Partly Agreed/Allowed	Agreed/Allowed	Dismissed	Other (please state)	Ttal number of Statements/ EHCPs
2016	27	8	13	4	N/A	8	0	2	2,420
2017	50	8	27	4	N/A	6	2	11	2,755
2018	67	12	17	14	N/A	11	1	24	3,076
2019	66	4	25	19	N/A	4	1	17	3,554
2020	92	21	9	31	1	16	4	31	3,380
2021	193	29	3	78	22	6	1	83	4,070
2022	276	20	11	159	14	4	2	86	4,914
2023	347	29	8	178	21	4	4	132	6,160
								Other = struck out, transferred or still active)	
	2024 January to July only								
	217	12	4	63	3	9	0	138	
									Current total - 6,934