

APPENDIX 1

Public Questions for CEB, 11/9/2013.

From Mr Nigel Gibson.

Agenda Item 10, Affordable Housing and Planning Obligations

Question 1: Can you please confirm the number of people currently on the Housing Register, reported as 4,700 in a recent edition of the Oxford Mail?

Reply: As of 6th September 2013 there are 4,789 households on the housing register.

Question 2: Can you supply the numbers of people in each of the five housing bands that comprise the Housing Register?

Reply:

Band 1: 58
Band 2: 403
Band 3: 1312
Band 4: 90
Band 5: 2926

Question 3: There seems to be a continual emphasis, focus and drive on increasing the amount of social housing; can you please explain why you believe there is such a demand for housing in Oxford that you need to afford spending on new housing such a priority?

Reply: The city has in recent years experienced a booming housing market with rising house prices, comparable to London. This has led to open-market housing becoming more difficult to obtain and expensive, and has limited the supply of affordable housing. According to Cities Outlook 2013, Oxford has overtaken London as the UK's least affordable city in terms of housing. The average house price in Oxford is £380,000 while the average salary is £25,800. Average Oxford house prices are now nearly fifteen times higher than average annual incomes. Owner-occupied housing is increasingly out of the reach of people on lower incomes. Oxford is also the least affordable city in the UK for private rented housing.

This has caused problems for existing residents wanting to relocate within their local community, and for younger people wanting to buy in Oxford. There are severe pressures on the housing stock, with concentrations of homes in multiple occupation and many homeless and other vulnerable people. The lack of housing, especially affordable housing, can also make it difficult for employers to retain and recruit staff.

The City Council therefore has provision of new housing, and particular affordable housing, as one of its top priorities, due to the clear impacts that the housing

problem is having on local communities and the local economy. The City Council's approach and further justification is set out in the Corporate Plan.

Agenda Item 12, Finance, Performance and Risk Quarter 1 Performance

Question 4: What proportion of the reported percentage recycling rate (target amended to 44% and 45% in this meeting) is actually non-recyclable, ie has been placed (for whatever reason) in the incorrect bins?

Reply: Each month, a percentage of the domestic and trade recyclate collected and taken to the recycling plant is contaminated with waste that cannot be recycled and as a result it is sent to an energy from waste plant. The main reason for such contamination is due to items being placed in the incorrect bin.

The table below features both the tonnage and % of recycled and contaminated material for the first quarter of 2013. The average is an impressive 3.09%, a huge decrease compared to the first quarter in 2012 which was 1.27% higher at 4.36%.

	Quarter 1 2013		
	April	May	June
Tonnes for recycling (commingled)	1192.62 (97.16%)	1352.73 (96.65%)	1255.51 (96.91%)
Tonnes rejected to landfill (contamination)	34.86 (2.84%)	46.89 (3.35%)	40.03 (3.09%)

Question 5: What is the actual value of waste (in terms of tonnes or other similar metric, not a ratio), in total, and split between recyclable and non-recyclable, disposed for by or on behalf of the Council for each of the last three years?

Reply: The table below shows both the total tonnage of refuse (landfill) waste and recyclate material for the previous three years.

Year	Refuse (tonnes)	Recyclate (commingled & compost – tonnes)	Total (tonnes)
2010-2011	32,906,64	21,280,57	54,187,21
2011-2012	31,235,95	22,184,31	53,420,26
2012-2013	30,840,01	23,099,14	53,939,15

The figures reveal that there has been a year on year decrease in refuse waste by an average of 1033.32 tonnes while recyclate has continued to increase at an average rate of 909.29 tonnes per year.

Question 6: Following on from the previous question, what is the target reduction in total waste from these actual figures for the next two years?

Reply: There are many variables associated with compiling a total waste figure, not least the annual changes in the number of households and the changes to the number of different items that can be recycled. The only weight measured target involves the number of kilograms of residual waste (non-recyclate) collected per household which is targeted to reduce by a total of 3.38% over the next two years.

Question 7: Budget Monitoring Report Para 15 lists “Mitigating” Actions, including no 3, Additional car park income of £50,000. Can you please explain where this additional income came from, and if it was indeed planned as a mitigation against anticipated overspend in other areas?

Reply: The increased car park income of £50k represents 0.6% of total car parking income and is an unbudgeted ‘mitigation’ against the budget pressures which have arisen this year in Direct Services. There is no specific reason for the increased income with the variation being within the normal tolerance of what would be expected.

This page is intentionally left blank