

Public Questions to the City Executive Board

Questions from Chaka Artwell

1. Oxford has gained notoriety for failing to protect working class children from abuse. According to the United Nations, a Taser is classified as an instrument of torture and considering the fact that the human brain continues to develop until the age of twenty one, no tests have been carried out to determine the long-term effect on the brain for a child who has been Tasered. What Policy measures will the Councillors of Oxford City Council implement to protect the children of Oxford, who are at increased risk of being subjected to torture, via the increased deployment by Thames Valley Police of these 50,000 volts Taser weapons?

The City Council will formally ask Thames Valley Police to provide information on the use of Tasers on children in Oxford and we will ask the Oxford Community Safety Partnership to monitor and review their usage on an annual basis.

2. Students at Oxford University and Brookes University have reported a noticeable increase in students having mental health issues, and there is widespread use of Ritalin to treat children starting as young as 9 years; and also, the popularity among our teens of British grown “Skunk” which is also connected with mental health issues needs to be of great concern to us all. Can you please explain how this policy will address mental health issues in children? Is the Council concerned with the numbers of children in our primary and senior schools who are given the powerful psychotropic drug Ritalin? Would Oxford City Council adopt a policy of issuing public information notices specifically warning Parents and Teenagers of the adverse mental health damage and character changes which British grown “skunk” has on the still developing brain of teenagers?

The Report relates to the City Council Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. The City Council has a duty to refer and report concerns relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults it does not have the responsibility for assessment and treatment of mental health conditions.

The City Council supports Oxfordshire County Council Programme of Public Campaigns through our website and networks as appropriate.

3. What is Oxford City Council’s Policy concerning the Community Centres of Oxford City?

The City Council is committed to ensuring that Community Centres have robust management arrangements which ensure that they are able to provide valued services to their communities and meet the needs of local people.

The Community Centre Policy is still being developed and we are in the process of consulting with partners to establish the best methods to realise the full potential of the centres.

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