

To: Council
Date: 28 January 2019
Title of Report: Questions on Notice from members of Council and responses from the Board Members and Leader

Introduction

1. Questions submitted by members of Council to the Board members and Leader of the Council, by the deadline in the Constitution are listed below in the order they will be taken at the meeting.
2. Responses are included where available.
3. Questioners can ask one supplementary question of the councillor answering the original question.
4. This report will be republished after the Council meeting to include supplementary questions and responses as part of the minutes pack.
5. Unfamiliar terms may be briefly explained in footnotes.

Questions and responses

Board member for Culture and City Centre

1. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Clarkson – Tourist Tax

Question	Written Response
<p>A number of local authorities in areas popular with visitors are reported to be lobbying government to consider a “Tourist tax” to help improve the experience of both tourists and residents. Should Oxford be joining those calls?</p>	
<p>Supplementary Question</p>	<p>Verbal Response</p>

2. From Councillor Landell-Mills to Councillor Clarkson – Gloucester Green

Question	Written Response
Can the portfolio holder advise the City Council have any proposals to improve the character and quality of the Gloucester Green environment for use during the daytime and night-time?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

3. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Clarkson – Town Hall accessibility audit

Question	Written Response
Further to my question at the last council meeting, is the accessibility audit of the Town Hall complete?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

Board member for Customer Focused Services

4. From Councillor Goddard to Councillor Chapman – trees on highway

Question	Written Response
The council has indicated that it is allocated about £18k from the County Council to manage (survey, maintain and replace) 6,000 trees on Section 42 land. This figure would appear to be inadequate even for the routine surveying and maintenance of that number of trees. The council has confirmed that there are no plans to replace 'missing' trees in Blenheim Drive, specifically; could it be confirmed whether removed trees on any Section 42 land are being or have been replaced in the last 3 years?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

5. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Chapman – Shotover

Question	Written Response
<p>Cycling in Shotover recently, I noticed that a significant amount of litter had collected at the lower end (adjacent to the ring road) and that the old second world war roadway which forms the cycle route is deteriorating badly in parts.</p> <p>How frequently is Shotover cleared of litter and are there any plans to patch up the old roadway?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

6. From Councillor Gotch to Councillor Brown Chapman – legal advice at meetings

Question	Written Response
<p>Is the presence of the monitoring officer at all City committee meetings a legal necessity — has the law changed?</p> <p>Could a substantial saving be made if monitoring officers were present only at selected meetings?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

Board member for Finance and Asset Management and non-statutory Deputy Leader

No questions

Board member for Healthy Oxford

7. From Councillor Roz Smith to Councillor Upton – Quarry Sports Building

Question	Written Response
<p>Could I please have a breakdown of the costs for the Quarry Sports Building, including costs for Architects, consultants, consultations, materials, removal of old building etc?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

8. From Councillor Roz Smith to Councillor Upton – Quarry Rovers ground

Question	Written Response
Who made the decision for allowing the installation of hoarding along a property border with City Council owned land at Margaret Road playing field area thereby denying the promised installation of an outside cage for Quarry Rovers football equipment?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

Board member for Housing (Building better homes)

9. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Rowley – council tenants

Question	Written Response
Is it true that the Council is considering introducing a rule making it difficult for its tenants to take in lodgers under the age of 50?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

10. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Rowley – Council letting agency

Question	Written Response
<p>In February 2016, Cllr Rowley will recall that Council passed a Green motion (as amended by Cllr Rowley) which included the following:</p> <p><i>Council asks the City Executive Board in the longer term to take into consideration:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Setting up a new letting agency owned and operated by the Council</i> 2. <i>Operating this letting agency according to best practice by:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) <i>charging no fees to tenants</i> (b) <i>offering longer tenancies where appropriate</i> (c) <i>publishing and promoting fair rent</i> 	

<p><i>levels</i></p> <p><i>This letting agency should look at the feasibility of voluntary agreements involving "third-generation" rent controls (inflation-related rent stabilisation) coupled with strong contractual rights (including first refusal rights on the next tenancy and flexibility for landlords wishing to occupy/sell and so on)</i></p> <p><i>3. The Council may also consider offering accreditation to other agencies wishing to operate under this standard.</i></p> <p>Was Council's request ever carried out? If so, can the Portfolio Holder provide a copy of the feasibility work undertaken or the appropriate officer report?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

11. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Rowley – private rentals

Question	Written Response
<p>Following an alert issued by the Mayday Trust concerning clauses in loan agreements which prevent renting to those in receipt of DSS payments, can the portfolio holder brief Members on what efforts the Council is making to tackle the unacceptable practice by some businesses and individuals in Oxford who refuse to rent to those in receipt of DSS payments?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

12. From Councillor Gotch to Councillor Rowley – Elsfield Way and Warren Crescent

Question	Written Response
<p>Elsfield Way, owned by the City, received planning consent for 17 dwellings 5 years ago, yet construction has not started . Why the delay? And why will the finished flats and houses not be 100% affordable on a City owned site?</p> <p>Similarly, Warren Crescent received</p>	

<p>consent 4 years ago for 10 affordable houses on a City owned site, yet no start has been made.</p> <p>Do these inordinate delays explain why the City has built no affordable dwellings for the past 2 years?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

Board member for Planning and Transport

13. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Hollingsworth – planning consultees

Question	Written Response
<p>Does the Board Member agree with me that if members of this authority are being asked to rely on the advice of statutory consultees in making quasi-judicial decisions on planning committees, we need to be able to reassure ourselves that that advice has been professionally prepared and taken all relevant factors sufficiently into account?</p> <p>Could he confirm whether there is a format or protocol covering how such advice should be presented?</p> <p>If not, should there be?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

14. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Hollingsworth – Barton footbridge

Question	Written Response
<p>The Annual Monitoring Report 2017/18 refers to a specific target for Barton: “Provision of a new footbridge across the A40...” in order to “Reduce the sense of isolation from the rest of the city”, saying this benefit is “To be delivered as part of the Barton Park development”.</p> <p>Why has it not been?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

15. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Hollingsworth – Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

Question	Written Response
<p>The 2014 SHMA gives a figure for Oxford’s housing need of 1400 dwellings per annum (dpa). The Government’s new standard methodology gives a substantially lower figure of 746dpa. This council is continuing to use the SHMA figure in its calculations, for reasons which have been discussed before. However, the same consultants who prepared the 2014 SHMA undertook an update in 2018, which uses what they describe as a “more evolved understanding” of certain elements, and gives a figure of 776dpa.</p> <p>How is this council factoring the 2018 SHMA update, and the most recent government guidance on its methodology for calculating OAN, into its calculations?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

16. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hollingsworth – Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) numbers

Question	Written Response
<p>Which housing numbers will be used in the final local plan and why? Those originally derived from the SHMA or the more recent Objectively Assessed Needs numbers?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

17. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Hollingsworth – Local Plan consultation

Question	Written Response
<p>The Regulation 19 consultation on Oxford’s Local Plan was extended to finish on December 28, 2018. Given that this was obviously directly after Christmas, meaning that several groups and individuals had difficulty meeting the deadline because they and their colleagues were away, does the Board Member think that in hindsight there</p>	

might have been a case for extending the extension by a further week?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

18. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Hollingsworth – Central Conservation Area

Question	Written Response
The lodging of a planning application in respect of 4 Osney Lane, a Victorian end of terrace, has concentrated attention on the inexplicable omission of the Victorian streets east of Hollybush Row from the Central (City and University) Conservation Area. Can the Board Member confirm that the appraisal currently underway will include considering the incorporation of this important remaining area of Oxford's industrial heritage?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

19. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Hollingsworth - Oxford Dance Forum

Question	Written Response
Is the Board Member aware that the Oxford Dance Forum, a collective of dance professionals, is having real difficulties in finding spaces suitable for dance in Oxford? Better spaces for dance would allow dance to reach a wider audience and increase the uptake of dance within the community. Will the Board Member confirm that the reconversion of premises (policies E1 and V2 in the draft Local Plan) in this case for dance spaces, will be encouraged by this Council?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

20. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Hollingsworth - Oxford Flood Alleviation

Question	Written Response
<p>The current proposals for the Oxford Flood Alleviation Channel fail to include a dedicated cycle path or pedestrian footpath along the main flood relief channel. Our MP, Layla Moran, was advised that questions of land ownership complicated this issue.</p> <p>Can the Board Member advise whether the Environment Agency and City Council are in continuing negotiations to secure this strip of land, which will result in great health and leisure benefits to the City's residents?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

21. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Hollingsworth - Building work affecting Residents and Homes in Wolvercote

Question	Written Response
<p>Is the Board Member aware that residents along Godstow Road are being subjected to a constant stream of HGV traffic, often till 11 pm, on what is already a busy bus route. Residents are reporting vibrations to their homes, particularly when lorries and buses cross the bridge to and from Lower Wolvercote?</p> <p>Can the Board Member advise what action the Council is taking to (a) fix the hours between which HGVs can access the Wolvercote Paper Mill construction site, and (b) liaise with Network Rail over the current condition and future monitoring of the bridge, and (c) advise residents through their local councillors of the City officer to whom they should report cracks/other deterioration to their properties?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

22. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hollingsworth – Gibbs Crescent

Question	Written Response
A2 Dominion has said it wants to replace the Gibbs Crescent flats (where the explosion happened last year) and Simon House with blocks of new flats. Given that both these sites were originally providing social housing and hostel accommodation will the portfolio holder do what he can to ensure that any new housing on this site remains a mix of social and affordable housing?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

23. From Councillor Landell-Mills to Councillor Hollingsworth – Westgate traffic congestion

Question	Written Response
Can the portfolio holder advise whether the City Council is in discussion with Westgate operators as to how the tail back from the Westgate car park, which is blocking traffic on the Oxpens Road and resulting in increased congestion and pollution, might be addressed?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

24. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hollingsworth – Seacourt extension

Question	Written Response
What is the current status of the Seacourt Park and Ride extension?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

25. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Hollingsworth - Meadow Lane car park

Question	Written Response
The Council recently re-surfaced Meadow Lane car park (in a flood area) in what appears to be a non-permeable surface. Can the portfolio holder confirm this? If so, it appears that our practices are at	

odds with our own planning policies. Could the portfolio holder offer any comment on this?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

26. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hollingsworth – Oxpens Meadow

Question	Written Response
When will the temporary plastic surface on Oxpens Meadow be removed and when will the meadow be restored to its pre-existing condition?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

27. From Councillor Landell-Mills to Councillor Hollingsworth– park and ride

Question	Written Response
Can the portfolio holder advise what the City Council is doing directly and indirectly to encourage motorists to use the Park and Ride car parks and take the bus into the city centre?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

28. From Councillor Landell-Mills to Councillor Hollingsworth – train use

Question	Written Response
Can the portfolio holder advise what the City Council is doing directly and indirectly to encourage motorists to leave their cars at Oxford Parkway and take the train into the city centre?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

Board member for Safer, Greener Oxford

29. From Councillor Landell-Mills to Councillor Hayes – planting along highways

Question	Written Response
Can the portfolio holder advise on what if any tree, hedge and shrub planting is proposed by the City Council in the soft estate along the main highways into Oxford to mitigate the impact of NOx and other pollutants and beautify the main roads into town?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

30. From Councillor Landell-Mills to Councillor Hayes – planting to combat NOx

Question	Written Response
Has the portfolio holder considered offering to supply and plant, free of charge, trees and hedging to home-owners and businesses with land along Oxford's main highways, which would help to tackle the impact of NOx and other pollutants, and beautify the city?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

31. From Councillor Landell-Mills to Councillor Hayes – Zero Emissions Zone

Question	Written Response
In light of the sensible changes to the ZEZ vehicle criteria is the term Zero Emissions Zone something of a misnomer and might Ultra Low Emissions Zone be a more accurate description?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

32. From Councillor Landell-Mills to Councillor Hayes – Westgate car park and Zero Emissions Zone

Question	Written Response
Does the portfolio holder think that allowing the Westgate car park to remain outside the ZEZ until the last stage in 2030 provides retailers within the Westgate an unfair competitive advantage over retailers elsewhere in the city centre?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

33. From Councillor Landell-Mills to Councillor Hayes – St Clements

Question	Written Response
Can the portfolio holder advise if the City Council have any specific proposals to address low air quality in St Clements, which has the worst air quality in the city, but is outside the ZEZ?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

34. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hayes – Earth Day

Question	Written Response
<p>April 22nd 2020 will mark the 50th anniversary of Earth Day – which will be celebrated around the world. As the preparation for this event will fall within this forthcoming budget year, will the Portfolio Holder consider setting aside some funds so we can mark the occasion in Oxford?</p> <p><i>(Note: Council has previously celebrated Earth Day by flying the Earth Day flag from the Town Hall).</i></p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

35. From Councillor Goddard to Councillor Hayes - on-street charging points

Question	Written Response
Can the Councillor update Council on plans to supply more on-street charging points for electric vehicles? In particular, is it intended that surplus capacity from	

streetlight circuits (now that large numbers of streetlights have been changed to low-current-draining LED) might be put to this use?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

36. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hayes – taxis and ZEZ

Question	Written Response
Can the portfolio elaborate on the support available to taxi drivers, in advance of the Zero Emission Zone implementation, who are told that they need to invest in low or zero emission vehicles?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

37. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hayes – taxi drivers

Question	Written Response
What options are there for licenced hackney carriage drivers who are not members of COLTA who wish to present alternative views to Council?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

Board member for Supporting Local Communities

38. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Simm – teachers mortgage scheme

Question	Written Response
Could the Board Member give council an update on uptake of the council's Mortgage scheme for teachers?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

39. From Councillor Roz Smith to Councillor Simm – publication costs

Question	Written Response
What was the cost of producing and printing 'Oxford City Council's Strategy for Children and Young People' as a high-spec glossy publication, compared to a simpler text version adopted by many councils for similar documents? How many copies were produced?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

Deputy Leader of the Council; Board member for Leisure and Tackling Homelessness and Improving the Private Rented Sector

40. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Linda Smith - Oxford Half Marathon

Question	Written Response
Is the Board Member aware that a date has been fixed for the Oxford Half Marathon 2019 without any consultation with Residents in the affected Wards or with their City and County councillors?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

41. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Linda Smith - Oxford Half Marathon 2

Question	Written Response
Does the Board Member share our concern that Virgin Sport are using our 'Oxford' brand with little or no benefit to the city, and considerable inconvenience year after year to local residents and visitors? Will the Board Member ask for a cost benefit analysis, fundamental to any business decision, to be prepared as a matter of urgency?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

42. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Linda Smith - No Local Connection

Question	Written Response
Following the recommendations made by the No Local Connection Scrutiny Review Group, can the portfolio holder update Council on the progress with amending the Operational Guidelines to incorporate, in particular, the recommendation that 6 months' rough sleeping in Oxford entitles you to a local connection?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

43. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Linda Smith - Rough sleepers SWEP protocol

Question	Written Response
<p>Rough Sleepers are less resilient to severe weather because of health issues caused or made worse by homelessness.</p> <p>Would the Board Member agree that the SWEP requirement of a met forecast of 3 days at zero temperature?</p> <p>(there is a discretion but it is not clear how or when it can be used) should be reduced to a met forecast of ONE night only at FOUR degrees Celsius?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

44. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Linda Smith - Rough sleepers accommodation

Question	Written Response
Will the Board Member commit officer time and funding to the provision of safe, non-dormitory accommodation for especially vulnerable groups: women, LGBT+ and young (under 25) Rough Sleepers?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

45. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Linda Smith - Rough Sleepers Initiative fund

Question	Written Response
Will the Board Member ensure that the City Council makes an early bid to MHCLG for further funding from the Rough Sleepers Initiative fund, since the initial £1,014,000 was ear-marked only for the period 2018-20?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

Leader of the Council, Board Member for Economic Development and Partnerships

46. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hollingsworth – OXWED and Oxpens

Question	Written Response
<p>What progress has been made in selecting an OxWed development partner?</p> <p>Can the Portfolio Holder indicate if the development partner is pushing for more parking on the site (as compared to the limited parking on the published outline scheme)?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

47. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Brown - combined authority

Question	Written Response
<p>During the discussion on potential local government reorganisation some years ago, the City Executive Board promoted a Combined Authority as its preferred model. The emerging Cambs/Peterborough CA was regularly held up as an example.</p> <p>In 2017 estimates of the running costs of the Cambs/Peterborough CA were c. £850K p.a. The actual figure has turned out to be £7.6m, and the Mayor has</p>	

apologised. Does the Board stand by its endorsement of the model?	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

48. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Brown - letters re People's Vote

Question	Written Response
<p>At its meeting on 23 July 2018, council asked the Leader to write on its behalf to Oxford's MPs with the adopted motion in support of a "People's Vote" on the Brexit deal. The Leader wrote to our MPs on 20 November 2018, and received a reply from Layla Moran MP on 7 December and from Anneliese Dodds MP on 18 December.</p> <p>The Leader circulated the reply from Ms Dodds to all members, but not the reply from Ms Moran.</p> <p>Why?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response

49. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Brown - "People's Vote"

Question	Written Response
<p>In her reply, Ms Moran warmly welcomed this council's endorsement of a "People's Vote", and asked you to clarify your own position given that you did not vote for the motion.</p> <p>What answer did she receive?</p>	
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response