

To: Council
Date: 29 April 2019
Title of Report: Questions on Notice from members of Council and responses from the Board Members and Leader (republished with the minutes including supplementary questions and answers)

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 was 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

The Constitution states that questions must be directed to the Lord Mayor, a City Executive Board member or a committee chair. A City Executive Board member can nominate another City Executive Board member to reply.

Board member for Culture and City Centre

1. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Clarkson – Covered Market

Question	Written Response
Is the City Council considering offering a reduction in rents to Covered Market traders, to reflect the inevitable disruption to their takings as a result of the major building works undertaken by Jesus College in Market Street?	There are no immediate plans. There has been no evidence to suggest a fall in sales. Foot traffic continues to be monitored and weekly numbers into the covered market continue to rise week on week.

2. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Clarkson – Covered Market visibility

Question	Written Response
The extension to the Covered Market into Market Street was successfully piloted over four years ago. Can the Board Member advise how this can be taken forward, even in a reduced form, to minimise the loss of visibility currently being suffered by the Covered Market?	This is no longer possible on Market Street. We will be discussing with traders whether there is an appetite to hold a pilot elsewhere in the city.

3. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Clarkson – reinvigorate the City Centre

Question	Written Response
Following a recent survey which showed that there are now 68 vacant units in the City Centre, a substantial increase on last year, and that footfall is down in Cornmarket since the opening of the Westgate, Will the portfolio holder acknowledge the impact that the tripling of the retail area in the expanded Westgate has had on existing traders and set out a plan of action to reinvigorate our City Centre?	We provided a report to Scrutiny on this matter in December, stating that there were a range of factors at play. The situation is fluid. All centres are facing huge structural change and economic factors, and whilst Oxford is doing relatively well, is not immune. Westgate has undoubtedly had a displacement effect, but this is also leading to new investment in new areas, such as with Northgate House, and other new investments. We are working alongside business, landlords, and the city centre taskforce to develop a vision and a plan that helps shape the evolving role of our city centre. A clear action plan will follow. Yet, this is about the city council working with a range of stakeholders, rather than acting in isolation. All stakeholders have a role to play here.

4. From Councillor Roz Smith to Councillor Clarkson – Fees for events in parks

Question	Written Response
<p>It is recognised that local charities do much to provide some wonderful events for Oxford residents in local parks and open spaces.</p> <p>These events can take a huge amount of volunteer time and effort to put on, whilst keeping costs to a minimum.</p> <p>Could the board member explain the reasoning behind the additional fees for ' set-up and set-down', and the vehicle fees?</p>	<p>OCC has always charged event organisers for the use of its land for events and we provide a significant discounted rate for charity groups and community groups. We encourage local event organisers to organise events in our venues and green spaces in order to increase the local economic and social impact. We also have a free-events policy for event organisers to apply for who are wishing to stage events in our parks in our priority areas.</p> <p>OCC have always charged for event set-up and set-down dates - for larger scale events the set-up dates are often longer than the event dates itself. We charge rental for the entire occupancy duration of the venue which is standard practice for all land-owners to do throughout the UK (regardless of local authority or private landowner).</p> <p>We have introduced a new vehicle permit fee from 1 April 2019 in response to complaints from members of the public to reduce the negative impact that vehicles can have on our parks and green spaces and help improve onsite safety. In addition this will help us to meet our income target which supports the delivery of Council events such as Christmas Light Festival.</p> <p>We benchmark our Fees & Charges bi-annually and cross reference throughout the year with all other key UK Local Authorities to ensure we are always maintaining best practice and in-line with other key Local Authorities.</p>
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
<p>Does the Board Member think it appropriate that each vehicle which is required to transport equipment for an event is charged £50 to access the site – in addition to the site hire cost?</p>	<p>The main reason for the charge is because too many vehicles were using the parks, and causing damage: a charitable event can cause as much damage as a fee-paying event.. I will discuss with officers how we ensure a reasonable and fair application of the policy on charging.</p>

5. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Clarkson – May morning arrangements

Question	Written Response
<p>Could the leader outline the crowd management arrangements for May morning?</p> <p>How will cyclist know not to take their bikes across Magdalen Bridge (as they risk not being able to make it back over).</p>	<p>Magdalen bridge will be closed to drivers from 2.00am on May Morning and will reopen as soon as the public have dispersed, which should be around 9.00am, but earlier if safe to do so. The 2018 crowd management system will remain in place this year, with one-way channels created to enable the crowd to flow during and immediately after the event; people wanting to cross the bridge on foot will need to ‘keep left’ but bicycles - ridden and pushed - will not be allowed to cross the bridge during the event. The closure to traffic and cyclists is in place to preserve the safety of the many thousands of people that gather on the bridge. The crowd is densely packed and the channels that have been created to maintain flow will only safely accommodate pedestrians wishing to cross. There will also be designated gathering areas for wheelchair users, families with young children and those with buggies in the car park of Magdalen College School and in Rose Lane.</p> <p>Advance warning of road closures and the crowd management system including the information regarding bikes has been circulated via the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local cycling groups (the same list as last year which was very effective in spreading the word) • Social media • Press releases • Student newspapers • Council website • Daily information site https://www.dailyinfo.co.uk/mayday • Letter to residents surrounding the road closure areas <p>We understand the County Council will also inform via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VMS at major arteries into the city and County Highways road network information http://www.oxfordshirevoyager.com/network/network.aspx <p>We have extended the footprint of the event further up the High Street and towards East Oxford which has enabled us to provide more advance signage of the road closures which is supported by well-informed staffing on the road closure points able to provide information on alternative routes and the rationale for the closure.</p>

Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
Will there be managed access so that wheelchairs and buggies can get onto and across the bridge?	They will be able to cross the bridge during the event: although I do not have details to hand I will make sure these are communicated to the public before the event. (see https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20035/events/559/morning_in_oxford/2)

Board member for Customer Focused Services

6. From Councillor Harris to Councillor Chapman – Oxford Direct Services work

Question	Written Response
Is the Board member satisfied with current arrangements for Oxford Direct Services to do work for Oxfordshire Council?	<p>Yes, I'm satisfied with the current arrangements for Oxford Direct Services to undertake work for Oxfordshire County Council. Highway work in the City is undertaken under either the Section 42¹ arrangement for the minor roads (which has been in place for a period in excess of 25 years) and Section 101² for the principal roads. The arrangement for maintenance of the principal roads has only been in place since last September and is progressing well with regular reviews involving both organisations. I am confident that the work carried out is of a good quality and provides value for money. The County Council provides the limited funding for maintaining the network so this has to be prioritised in terms of what actually gets done reflecting the sums available.</p> <p>¹Highways Act 1980 ²Local Government Act 1972</p>

7. From Councillor Harris to Councillor Chapman – Oxford Direct Services contract

Question	Written Response
<p>Can the Board member explain why Oxford Direct Services were unable to act as contractor for re-surfacing of the Oxford Canal between Aristotle Lane and Elizabeth Jennings Way after being initially identified as suitable?</p>	<p>Oxfordshire County Council was responsible for the procurement process, which was part of a wider Growth Deal funding bid to bring improvements to sustainable transport routes in the city.</p> <p>Initial advice that Oxford Direct Services could be awarded the contract without open competition was subsequently proved to be incorrect. It was then decided by the County Council that the best way to move the project forward was to put in place a grant-fund approach with the Canal & River Trust, using their own retained contractors.</p> <p>The Canal & River Trust works contract has been subject to an Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) tender process which demonstrates best value for money together with possessing with the right skills and experience in delivering such schemes.</p>
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
<p>What was the rationale for delegating this work to the Canal & River Trust – was this the quickest way forward?</p>	<p>This is a County Council contract: I expect that although Oxford Direct Services were prepared to take on the contract, this is specialised work and I expect that the Canal & River Trust would have demonstrated that their contractor had the required specialist expertise.</p>

8. From Councillor Goddard to Councillor Chapman – emissions from City Council vehicles

Question	Written Response
<p>What provision does the City have for monitoring and limiting polluting emissions from its own fleet of vehicles, and what plans exist for further limiting such emissions as vehicles in the fleet are replaced?</p>	<p>Oxford City Council has a policy to ensure that all vehicles comply with the prevailing Euro Emissions Standards from new. The current fleet is largely comprised of Euro 5 and 6 Standard (6 being the current standard) or Hybrid/Electric vehicles. The fleet replacement policy includes an obligation to explore alternative fuelled vehicle options as new technologies come to market with a commitment to move towards a zero emission fleet at the earliest opportunity.</p>

9. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Turner – Social value weighting

Question	Written Response
Now that CEB has agreed to the recommendation from Scrutiny to include a consideration of social value (currently weighted at 5%) in its procurement decisions, how will this be tracked?	The requirement for a minimum of 5% weighting on all tenders is now included within all templates, and will be included in the Constitution in the next draft from legal services. There is a requirement of all OCC companies to send the procurement team a copy of all written contracts (currently required for spends over £100k), these are added to a full register of these contracts. Any social value improvements within the contracts will be added to the contract register so we can keep a full record, which can then be reported on.

10. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Turner – social housing receipts from the Westgate

Question	Written Response
What is the current situation regarding the social housing receipts from the Westgate flats? What money has been received and is more expected?	Question 10 and 11 relate to the same issue. I can confirm that a section 106 affordable housing contribution has been received in respect of the flats at Westgate in the sum of £3.9 million and the money is awaiting allocation against the funding of spend on affordable housing schemes within the Councils Housing Capital Programme.
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
Is this in fact 15% of the sale price of the Westgate's 59 flats?	I will ask for a written reply setting out the calculation.

11. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Turner – social housing receipts from the Westgate 2

Question	Written Response
<p>A s.106 agreement was reached with the Westgate developer, which required the developer to pay the City Council 15% of the sale value of the 59 market-value flats as an off-site contribution to affordable housing.</p> <p>The value of the contribution was estimated in 2014 at £3m. Can the Board Member advise the actual s.106 figure received by the City?</p>	<p>Question 10 and 11 relate to the same issue.</p> <p>I can confirm that a section 106 affordable housing contribution has been received in respect of the flats at Westgate in the sum of £3.9 million and the money is awaiting allocation against the funding of spend on affordable housing schemes within the Councils Housing Capital Programme.</p>
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
<p>Have all of the Westgate's 59 flats now been sold?</p>	<p>Again, I will ask for a written answer. However, in addition to the £3.9m in affordable housing contribution the city has benefited from a new retail centre and the council from a new income stream.</p>

12. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Turner – commercial occupancy rates

Question	Written Response
<p>Can the Board Member indicate what proportion of units within the city's commercial portfolio is occupied – for both units within the city and district centres?</p> <p>Can the Board Member provide figures for general commercial occupancy within the city boundaries?</p>	<p>Oxford City Council owns 66 retail units that we directly lease to retailers on occupational leases: of these 94% are occupied.</p> <p>The City Council owns the freehold on a further 30 retail units, which are on 100-year+ leases, and the freehold on the Westgate Centre, which is leased to Westgate Oxford for 250 years. The City Council does not directly lease these units to retailers and traders.</p> <p>Additionally, of the Covered market units 91% are occupied.</p> <p>In the City Centre there are 516 retail units with 86% occupancy. This includes Westgate where the occupancy is 91%.</p>

13. From Councillor Roz Smith to Councillor Turner – Project management team

Question	Written Response
Could the Board member inform the council how many of the five new project management posts have been filled?	Two posts have been filled in the Programme Management Office (PMO). Recruitment to the Development Team has been delayed until the appointment of the Director of Development. Three posts will initially be filled through interim resource to enable flexibility for the new director with appointments to occur within in 4-6 months.
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
How many posts were advertised externally and how will the interim posts be advertised and filled?	Recruitment to all but the most senior levels is delegated to officers, and councillors should not become involved in this. The Council will follow its agreed recruitment policies.

Board member for Healthy Oxford

In the absence of the portfolio holder, supplementary questions were taken by Councillors Hollingsworth and Brown.

14. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Upton – dockless bike companies

Question	Written Response
Ofo and Pony bikes have been withdrawn from London streets. Can the Board Member advise which dockless bike companies are still functioning in Oxford, and what steps are being taken to limit the number of bikes managed by each company?	Mobike and Pony Bike are still operating in Oxford. Each operator has signed up to the voluntary code of conduct which allows 500 bikes in the city centre (defined as the Carfax and Holywell wards) and 250 elsewhere in the city.
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
The original code of conduct on these bikes referred to 200 bikes for each company. Why the large increase and do the figures refer to the total number or to each company?	I will ask for a written answer.

15. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Upton – bike hangars

Question	Written Response
<p>Bike hangars are being supplied for safe storage of bikes in Camden and other London boroughs.</p> <p>Can the Board Member advise whether the use of bike hangars will be trialled in Oxford, particularly in areas where there is no indoor provision for residents' bikes?</p>	<p>Having seen bike hangars on a recent trip to mini-Holland I am keen to see them installed in Oxford. Installing bike hangers in the vast majority of locations will require the removal of on-street parking bays. This will require the costly process of changing the Traffic Regulation Order involving consultation with local residents who may not agree to the removal of parking bays.</p> <p>I have recently reviewed with officers opportunities to expand cycle parking in the city centre and we intend to pursue the idea of converting car-parking spaces to bike-parking with the County Council.</p>
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
<p>Do you agree it would be useful to have a combination of cycle stands and hangars, and to encourage the use of both? Can we encourage residents to have these on their streets?</p>	<p>Yes: we must have a lot more, more secure, bike racks across the city. We have been looking for new sites and to add more storage across the city both for residents and for visitors.</p>

16. From Councillor Landell Mills to Councillor Upton – new cycleways

Question	Written Response
<p>At the start of this financial year the city council stated that working with the county council they would support five new cycleway initiatives funded by the Growth Board, including re surfacing the canal towpath and a cycleway from Eynsham.</p> <p>Both initiatives have failed to progress this year.</p> <p>Is there any good news the city council can report in creating any new cycleways over the last financial year?</p>	<p>The provision of cycleways on the public highway is obviously a highway authority matter dealt with by the County Council. However, we remain active in campaigning and offering support to improve the cycle network in and around the city.</p> <p>The Councillor is correct that the Growth Deal funding will deliver some important additions to the city's cycling and pedestrian routes. £4.6 million is to be invested over the 5 years of the deal. Although this programme is not fully developed as yet, the Year One programme includes 8 infrastructure schemes which will deliver improvements to cycling and pedestrian routes in Oxford. Some of the first year schemes are with SKANSKA to deliver and some with Oxford Direct Services. Though later in the year than originally anticipated I can confirm that ODS has commenced work on improving Cuckoo Lane (from Franklin Rd to Pullens Lane) and improvement work on the junction of</p>

	<p>Newman Road and Oxford Road will be starting soon. £350k has already been spent on extending the Thames towpath surfacing as part of the Riverside Routes project, and money has been allocated in the Year One programme for improvement of the canal towpath surface from Aristotle Lane to Elizabeth Jennings Way. For the latter, this takes the form of a grant to the Canal & River Trust who have commissioned their own contractor for this very specialised work (installing a path on sensitive sites beside water).</p> <p>Beyond the Growth Deal, we are in discussion with the County Council and other partners to gain support for development of proposals for a network of cycleways in and around Oxford along the lines of the Cambridge Greenways project.</p> <p>Council may also like to know that I recently met with the Minister responsible for transport, Jesse Norman MP, having asked for a meeting with him to discuss the need for investment in cycling infrastructure in Oxford. I invited Councillor Ian Hudspeth to join me. As it happens the meeting coincided with the disappointing news that the County Council had been forced to withdraw the cycle path from Eynsham to Oxford along the B4044 from the package of measures in their bid to the Housing Infrastructure Fund for improvements to the A40. The financial rules were set up in such a way that the scheme would not meet the HIF criteria. We were both able to make our views on this disappointing lack of joined-up government known.</p>
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
<p>Will the proposal for the cycle path from Eynsham to Oxford along the B4044 be revived?</p>	<p>This is a question for the County Council, but I understand they are looking at alternative means of funding this. We strongly support the project, but it is outside our boundaries. It does not make sense to have to remove the sustainable transport element from the bid to make it acceptable for submission.</p>

17. From Councillor Roz Smith to Councillor Upton – London Road cycle way

Question	Written Response
<p>Residents have raised the issue of the poor placement bus shelters within shared cycle and pedestrian off road sections of the London Road.</p> <p>Will the Board member consider using some of the £250k allocated for cycle schemes to see relocation of bus shelters thereby allowing more logical cycle movement past them?</p>	<p>We envisage this fund being used strategically to lever in match funding from other sources (Oxfordshire County Council, our two universities, government grants, charitable trusts) for cycling projects that would otherwise not happen or would be done in an inferior way over the next 4 years.</p> <p>I thank the City Councillor for Quarry and Risinghurst for raising this issue but note that she is also the County Councillor for Headington and Quarry. At another time I would be interested to hear what progress she has made in dealing with this issue with the authority who installed the bus shelters.</p> <p>The location of bus shelters would have been considered as part of the safety audit when the initial shared off-road cycle and pedestrian sections were created on London Road. I don't intend to allocate any funding to move bus shelters however I will ask officers to review the current arrangements from a safety perspective. If Cllr Smith could send me further information about the residents' concerns we will discuss it with the County.</p>
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
<p>The location of the bus shelters was taken into account in the safety audit and (<i>I understand</i>) County officers did approach the city council about changing the location of some of the shelters but were told by city council officers that this couldn't be done because they were locked into a contract with Clearchannel (<i>suppliers of the shelters</i>).</p> <p>Do you agree that some common sense is needed to provide a better solution to off-road cycling on London Road, and we should be more forceful in making this happen?</p>	<p>I will ask for a written answer on the specifics.</p> <p>On a general point, persuasion, collaboration and co-operation between the two authorities on these joint projects is always the more productive route.</p>

18. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Upton – cycle to work scheme

Question	Written Response
<p>Following the announcement made by GoCycle – at the eBike Summit in Oxford – that it will become the first organisation to pay its staff 40p per mile to cycle to work on conventional or electric bikes, will the portfolio holder consider what more can be done for the City’s own staff?</p>	<p>The Council offers as part of its employee benefits package a salary sacrifice scheme that enables staff to purchase a bicycle on a tax-efficient basis. There are showers in St Aldate’s Chambers for staff to use after cycling.</p> <p>The Council does not provide financial support for any member of staff to travel from home to work, as this is a taxable benefit under HMRC regulations for the employees concerned. However, the Council does use HMRC approved, i.e. non-profit generating, mileage rates for staff who use their bicycle for business travel. (The current rate is 20 pence/mile).</p> <p>The City Council has a number of conventional and electric bicycles as a bookable resource for staff to use during the working day.</p> <p>The Council also provides a range of subsidies to encourage staff to use park and ride facilities, as well as providing interest-free season ticket loans for rail users.</p>
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
<p>What’s the usage of the staff bikes and e-bikes, and would they be available for use by councillors?</p>	<p>I will ask for a written answer.</p>

19. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Upton – Cancer screening services

Question	Written Response
<p>Could you please provide an update on the situation regarding the privatisation of cancer screening services at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust which I am sure will be of concern to many in this Council Chamber.</p> <p>My understanding is that plans for the Churchill Hospital have been revised but that the privatisation is still possible subject to review by Government?</p> <p><i>(This question was submitted to Cllr Susanna Pressel, who is on HOSC</i></p>	<p>To clarify, I am not a member of Oxfordshire County Council’s Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) but I do sit on the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board. However, I was one of several speakers at the recent HOSC meeting who asked for the decision to award a contract for the PET/CT scanners used for cancer screening at the Churchill Hospital to a private company to be reversed.</p> <p>Cllr Pressel (as the OCC representative on the committee) spoke and voted against the proposed privatisation and in favour of referring the decision (taken by NHS England) back to the Secretary of State for Health to be reviewed. This was agreed unanimously by</p>

<i>as this Council's appointee, but is answered here by Cllr Upton who sits on the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board.)</i>	<p>the HOSC.</p> <p>This seems particularly appropriate given the insane situation that, after a partial compromise meaning the scanner will stay at the Churchill, the private company plans to sub-contract the service provision at the hospital back to the Churchill Hospital itself.</p> <p>My understanding is that the next steps are with the Secretary of State.</p>
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
Is there merit in setting out this Council's views to the Secretary of State?	We have made representations to the HOSC who have taken steps outlined above. I can ask the portfolio holder to write to the Secretary of State setting out our views.

Board member for Housing (Building better homes)

20. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Rowley – HRA borrowing cap

Question	Written Response
Given that the HRA borrowing cap has now been lifted by Government, why are the Council not borrowing to build 100% social housing on sites it owns – such as the former Murco Petrol Station on Between Towns Road (where slightly less than half the homes – according to the report to East Area Planning on 2nd April 2019 - are going to be socially rented)?	<p>Between Towns Road is part of the agreed development programme for the Council's housing company, Oxford City Housing Ltd (OCHL) and is an integral part of their business plan. The scheme will deliver 38 new homes with 19 (50%) being affordable (18 social rent and 1 shared ownership)</p> <p>Officers are currently examining the opportunities the lifting of the HRA borrowing cap offers in terms of the delivery of more affordable housing and the inter-relationship with OCHL and will be bringing a report on the matter to May CEB.</p>

21. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Rowley – Affordable housing delivery

Question	Written Response
Figures presented to the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Committee on 21 March 2019, in response to a member request for data on affordable housing	The availability of suitable development sites in the City is more limited than in other districts. There are additional constraints in that some large land owners who are not wanting to bring forward sites for development in the short to medium term. The Council continues to work proactively with our Housing

<p>delivery, showed Oxford City Council in a very poor light.</p> <p>Of the 1,211 units of affordable housing units delivered in Oxfordshire in 2017/18 only 45 (less than 4%) were delivered in Oxford. The estimated figures to date for 2018/19 were only slightly better with Oxford seen to be providing just 87 out of 1,217 units (7% of the total). In 2017/18, Oxford fell short of its target for affordable housing delivery and is predicted to do so again in 2018/19.</p> <p>Can the portfolio holder provide any commentary to explain this relatively poor performance?</p>	<p>Association partners to bring forward sites and a number are either in delivery or planning stage currently. There are a number of recent private development sites that have involved a number of constraints or objections which have taken time to resolve and obtain a successful planning approval. The Council now operates a more collaborative approach to the pre planning application process thus speeding up overall delivery</p> <p>The Council has established its own housing company with a current development programme of almost 600 units. The first social rented homes at Barton Park are now being handed over and a number of other development sites are well advanced with construction contracts signed and planning permissions obtained.</p> <p>The Council has met its 18/19 Growth Deal commitments for the signing of build contracts to deliver affordable housing thus accessing Homes England grant.</p> <p>Oxford's housing needs are different from those of surrounding areas and 'affordable' housing as defined by the Government is not affordable for many people in the City. Oxford is the only one of the five housing authorities that is currently building social rented housing. The "affordable housing" in the other districts follows the national government definition. In addition, we have even contributed to other districts' targets by buying and building homes for our local provision in other districts (South Oxfordshire and Cherwell)."</p>
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22. From Councillor Henwood to Councillor Rowley– carbon neutral developments

Question	Written Response
<p>The motion (<i>to acknowledge a climate emergency at January's full council</i>) also means that City Council's own planning applications should reflect and endorse this motion.</p> <p>Can I have reassurance for Cowley residents that the proposed development site on Between-Towns-Road (former Murco site), will be carbon neutral, or offset</p>	<p>The Council is pushing forward with its ambitions around carbon neutrality and has set a challenging target for developers in 2030. It would be wrong to expect developers to be meeting that target immediately, over a decade earlier, as sustainable solutions will need to be developed over time taking into account other changes that are proposed such as the ban on gas boilers in new homes from 2025.</p> <p>Nonetheless, the development on the former Murco site at Between Towns Road will be exceeding current building standards by a fabric first approach to the construction providing higher levels of insulation than required making a significant contribution to lower bills for residents. This is alongside PV cells on the roof in</p>

<p>the carbon used in the build elsewhere in Oxford City?</p>	<p>line with policy and an electric car club vehicle for the use of residents. Indeed, the proposal to make this scheme almost car-free will have a significant impact on its carbon footprint and is something that should be considered on more schemes in the city.</p>
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Board member for Planning and Transport

23. From Councillor Henwood to Councillor Hollingsworth – Local Plan carbon neutrality

Question	Written Response
<p>The motion to acknowledge a climate emergency was unanimously backed at January’s full council.</p> <p>In light of the motion can the portfolio holder reassure council that the current draft of the Oxford Local plan will facilitate the climate emergency declaration’s’ aim of reducing or off-setting our carbon emissions’ ?</p>	<p>The Local Plan that was submitted to the Secretary of State following Full Council approval contains some of the most ambitious and far-reaching policies on carbon neutrality of any Local Plan in the country. These policies, developed with our Environmental Sustainability team, show Oxford as one of the first planning authorities outside London to push for these higher standards.</p> <p>Those policies have to be assessed against the requirements of the NPPF and other Government policies as part of the public enquiry process which every Local Plan must be subjected to, in particular the requirement that policies should be viable and do not prevent much needed housing development from happening. The Council is submitting robust evidence to demonstrate that they do not impact on viability and deliverability. If they are approved by the inspector we will have a set of policies which we can use to enforce standards on new developments.</p> <p>Specifically Policy RE1 in the submitted Local Plan goes beyond national standards that already represent a 19% improvement in carbon reductions over and above 2013 Building Regulations. The Oxford Local Plan 2036 seeks a 40% reduction in carbon emissions over and above Building Regulations (2013) and will continue to require a 40% improvement even if the Building Regulations are improved. From 2026 this requirement raises to at least 50%, and from 2030 the requirement is for Zero Carbon.</p>

24. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hollingsworth – Local Plan zero carbon homes

Question	Written Response
<p>The draft Oxford Local Plan 2036 agreed by CEB only requires new homes to be zero carbon from April 2030. How is this consistent with the recent declaration of a climate emergency?</p>	<p>The Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of The Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State following Full Council approval, and contains some of the most ambitious and far-reaching policies on carbon neutrality of any Local Plan in the country. Those policies have to be assessed against the requirements of the NPPF and other Government policies as part of the public enquiry process which every Local Plan must be subjected to. This includes the NPPF requirement that the policies in a Local Plan must be deliverable, and must not prevent the delivery of required new housing.</p> <p>Should the Local Plan fail to deliver the housing targets it will become out of date; in that circumstance the NPPF policy of a presumption in favour of sustainable development will be engaged, in effect granted planning permission for development automatically without any need to comply with other Local Plan policies, on social housing or on carbon standards.</p> <p>The declaration of a Climate Emergency by this Council, while very welcome, will not make approval or otherwise by a planning inspector at public enquiry of our proposed policies any more or less likely. What would make a difference is a change to the NPPF, which will have to be done by Government.</p>
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
<p>Given the cost and availability of land, and the relatively low % cost of building compared to land, would imposing a zero-carbon requirement on new-build housing have any negative impact on our housing delivery?</p>	<p>At the moment there is an additional cost in building to zero-carbon standards which reduces the viability of sites: with marginal sites possibly to the point where the developer argues the site cannot be delivered or for reducing the affordable housing provision. This will slow delivery of both market and affordable housing now. It is likely that the costs will come down over the next few years, and new-builds will tend towards being lower to zero carbon. So we have chosen policies which are neither too weak nor too robust. We have to deliver housing, and low carbon housing, but we cannot do one at the expense of the other.</p>

25. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Hollingsworth – SHMA re-estimates and housing targets

Question	Written Response
<p>I am aware that an independent expert report has concluded that Oxford's figure of 1.356 dwellings per annum (dpa) to meet all affordable housing need is a substantial over-estimate and that the 2014 SHMA [Strategic Housing Market Assessment] requirement of 1400dpa was "an outlier which should be disregarded".</p> <p>It also says that Oxford's 2018 SHMA Update gives an objectively assessed housing need (OAN) for the city of 776dpa. I have also seen a final draft of the SHMA Update (provided under an FoI request) that originally stated that the OAN is 776dpa and includes a comment from a city planning officer that says that 776dpa is the OAN. However, the reference to OAN was omitted in the published document.</p> <p>In the light of this, could the Council confirm that the 2018 SHMA Update gives an objectively assessed need of 776dpa and explain why it is insisting on a housing target of 1,400 dwellings per annum?</p>	<p>This question covers extremely similar ground to that asked by Cllr Gant at Council on 28 January 2019 and I would refer the Councillor Gant to my previous response.</p> <p>The answer is also set out in the Housing background paper accompanying the Local Plan. The document reference is BGP.3. For ease the full explanation has been set out below.</p> <p>CALCULATING OXFORD'S HOUSING NEED TO 2036</p> <p>Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2014)</p> <p>A SHMA was published in 2014 for the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area, to cover the period 2011 to 2031. Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2014) remains the latest, cooperatively produced and agreed assessment of housing need for the period 2011-2031 for the whole of the strategic housing market area, which has been taken forward within the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire SHMA 2014 identified 3 scenarios that informed the final OAN. These are set out at Table 87 and 90 of the SHMA 2014. These were a demographic scenario, economic scenario and an affordable housing needs scenario.</p> <p>The affordable housing needs scenario was based on the likely delivery as a proportion of mixed market and affordable housing developments, given the probable percentage of affordable housing to be delivered by market housing led developments in accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance [This remains part of the Planning Practice Guidance accompanying the NPPF (2019) within Housing and Economic Needs Assessment, Paragraph: 024 Reference ID: 2a-024-20190220, Revision date: 20 02 2019].</p> <p>For Oxford it was assumed that affordable housing delivery would equate to 50% of total housing delivery. This led to a figure of 2,058 homes per annum. This was not the OAN conclusion but a scenario to inform the OAN based on the above assumptions.</p> <p>The OAN conclusions considered these scenarios alongside what was considered to be achievable. The 2014 SHMA looked at what was deliverable and concluded that an approximate 2% growth rate was the appropriate and deliverable indicator for making adjustments towards</p>

<p>[reports referenced]</p>	<p>meeting affordable housing need.</p> <p>The affordable housing issues were (and still are) so significant that it justified doing as much as could be considered deliverable in meeting affordable housing need. In the case of Oxford it was considered that 2% growth rate would achieve this and in a “policy off” basis could be considered achievable.</p> <p>Given the difficulty with being precise this was adapted into an OAN range for Oxford of 1,200 to 1,600 homes per annum with a midpoint of 1,400 homes per annum.</p> <p>Although the OAN range in the SHMA 2014 aimed to meet affordable housing need in full, the uplift that was considered achievable (1,400 dpa) did not achieve the aim at that point in time. This is explained at paragraph 9.59 of the SHMA 2014.</p> <p>Oxford SHMA roll forward (2018)</p> <p>The Oxford Local Plan needs to make provision for housing land supply for a period of 15 years post adoption to meet the requirements of the NPPF (2019).</p> <p>Due to the complexities of working within a housing market area (Oxfordshire), which includes 5 different district councils, all at slightly different stages of plan preparation, resulting in different plan periods, the City Council commissioned an addendum-style report to supplement the 2014 SHMA to roll-forward to 2036 Oxford’s housing need calculation. To be clear, this does not replace the 2014 SHMA as it was not commissioned jointly and only looks at Oxford City to cover the Oxford Local Plan period to 2036.</p> <p>The SHMA roll-forward has used the same methodology as the previous SHMA, but has used the most up-to-date household forecasts and has re-calculated the implications of economic growth and affordable housing need.</p> <p>The 2018 update alters the demographic, economic and affordable housing inputs for the various scenarios contained within the previous Table 87 and 90 of the SHMA and then applies the inputs in the same way as the 2014 SHMA for the period 2016 to 2036.</p>
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This results in the following comparable scenarios for Oxford:

	Demographic led scenario	Committed economic growth scenario	Affordable housing need scenario (based on delivery of 50% affordable housing)	Achievable housing need level based on approximately 2.0% per annum growth rate
Oxford City – 2011-2031 (Oxfordshire SHMA 2014)	755 dpa (Table 87)	700 dpa (Table 90)	2,058 dpa (Table 90)	1,200-1,600 dpa with 1,400 midpoint (Table 90)
Oxford City - 2016 to 2036 (Oxford SHMA 2018 update report)	543 – 554 dpa (Table 17 and 18)	527-555 dpa (Table 24 and 25)	1,356 dpa (Para 9.46)	1,356 dpa (Para. 9.53)

As set out in the 2018 update at paragraph 9.53 the growth rate is still considered by GL Hearn to be an achievable policy off position for Oxford given the buoyancy of the local market and the investment taking place in Oxfordshire. The difference now is that it delivers the full affordable housing need.

The 2018 update also includes a new scenario using the calculation of housing need based on the Government's standard methodology set out in 'Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places: Consultation Proposals' (2017) that used the 2016 household projections. This methodology has since been amended to use the 2014 household projections in the NPPF (2019). The 2018 update at 2.16 also included a scenario that used the method as now adopted in the NPPF (2019). This showed that the minimum housing need using the standard method is 746dpa.

The conclusion of the SHMA roll-forward is that Oxford has a housing need of 1,356 dwellings per annum 2016 to 2036 and that a housing requirement of 1,400 dwellings per annum was justified by the evidence.

Planning for a higher housing need figure than the minimum standard method

Paragraph 60 of the NPPF (2019) allows for alternative

	<p>approaches above the standard approach to calculating housing requirements where justified by exceptional circumstances. The Planning Practice Guidance that supports the NPPF (2019) provides clarity on the process and relevant considerations in determining whether exceptional circumstances exist. The PPG makes it clear that the assessment as to whether actual housing need is higher than the standard method will need to be assessed prior to, and separate from, considering how much of the overall need can be accommodated. It then provides a series of non-exclusive circumstances where figures higher than that derived from the standard method need to be considered [Housing and Economic Needs Assessment, Paragraph: 010 Reference ID:2a-010-20190220, Revision date: 20/ 02 2019].</p> <p>It is considered that exceptional circumstances justify the use of an alternative approach, as allowed for in the NPPF (paragraph 60). In particular all Oxfordshire Councils in this current round of local plans are working to deliver the housing need identified in the 2014 SHMA of 100,000 homes and it is important that Oxford's Plan is consistent with the plans prepared and made by other Councils, and that the preparation and adoption of the Plan is not delayed.</p> <p>Moreover, Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal (March 2018) commits the Oxfordshire authorities to plan for and support the delivery of the 100,000 homes identified by the SHMA by 2031. The assumption built into the overall figure of 100,000 homes was that 1,400 dwellings per annum were identified as required in Oxford to 2031 together with the needs identified for other authorities. It is clear that Oxfordshire has funding in place through the Growth Deal and other funds to promote and facilitate this identified growth and deliver the identified homes.</p>
<p>Supplementary Question</p>	<p>Verbal Response</p>
<p>Could you confirm that the Oxford SHMA roll-forward is based on the consultant GL Hearn's report 'Oxford City OAN update' which states an OAN of 776 dwellings per annum giving a strong basis for planning positively?</p> <p>Why has the council not accepted the advice of its own consultant?</p>	<p>This is not the entirety of the advice in the report. The figure in the Local Plan is based on the assessment social housing need, not the more generalised OAN figure which differs from this.</p> <p>The basis on which Local Plan is proceeding, and the basis on which the overall housing numbers are derived, is the <u>social</u> housing need.</p>

26. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Hollingsworth – numbers of new homes

Question	Written Response
Can the Board Member confirm the number of new homes granted permission in the city up to 1 April (given that the target for the calendar year 2018 was 300, but only 151 had been given permission by December 2018)?	Figures are monitored by financial year. The figures for the monitoring year 2018/19 are in the process of being collated by officers, who have advised that the interim finding is that the target of 300 has been exceeded. However the final figure only can be reported once the interim findings have been confirmed.
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
If there is currently an issue with finding suitable sites in the city, do we need to allocate sites in the new Local Plan?	Yes we do, and we have allocated new sites in the draft of the Local Plan.

27. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Hollingsworth – activity in the Green Belt

Question	Written Response
<p>In 2014 Councillor Seamons, then Board Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration, said that Oxford would require less than 1% of the Oxford Green Belt to be given over to housing.</p> <p>Can the current Board Member advise what percentage of the Oxford Green Belt is now being given over for housing and other economic uses either by Oxford City, by other City landowners or by the surrounding districts?</p>	<p>The total area of sites proposed for release from the Green Belt in the various Local Plans (some of which have not yet been subject to public examination or formally adopted, meaning that the figures should be treated as provisional) of the five District Councils is 1373.22ha hectares, which is 2.05% of the 66,868ha total area of the Oxford Green Belt [The Oxford Green Belt – Key Facts (2016), CPRE Oxfordshire]. These releases, proposed or confirmed, are for a variety of uses and not solely for Oxford's unmet housing need.</p>

28. From Councillor Gotch to Councillor Hollingsworth – reduce city centre parking

Question	Written Response
When is Oxford going to emulate Nottingham and reduce numbers of parking spaces in the city centre, and start charging for workplace parking spaces — the proceeds to go towards better public transport?	<p>The numbers of private and public car parking spaces in the centre has been reduced over many years, from the instigation of the Balance Transport Strategy 50 years ago onwards, and that continues to be the objective of the City Council's planning and transport policies. The City Council recently closed the majority of the spaces at the Oxpens car park as part of a planned reduction in overall public off-street car parking spaces in the city centre.</p> <p>The Oxford Local Plan 2036 also contains policies to</p>

	<p>reduce parking standards on new developments and contains policies to encourage car free development in appropriate locations.</p> <p>Any Workplace Parking Levy would have to be introduced and charged by Oxfordshire County Council. The two Councils have been working very closely together to assess the costs, benefits and practicalities of a range of different approaches to traffic reduction, including a Workplace Parking Levy, and I expect to see the results of that work by the end of this year.</p> <p>I'm not aware of the level of city centre car parking space reduction in Nottingham, but it is worth noting that since the introduction of the Workplace Parking Levy in that city there has been no significant reduction in traffic levels. That suggests that while the Levy might be raising funds to subsidise the tram in Nottingham, it is not yet reducing overall traffic levels.</p>
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
The improvements in public transport in Nottingham have led to a one-third increase in usage. Would this be a factor to consider?	That's an interesting point. Before introducing a levy you need to be sure of your aims that the levy will achieve these. Traffic levels in Nottingham have not reduced: if our aim is principally reduced traffic, we may need a different approach.

Board member for Safer, Greener Oxford

29. From Councillor Henwood to Councillor Hayes – speed awareness

Question	Written Response
<p>On January 26th, I organised 3 speed watches in the Cowley area: on Beauchamp Lane, Bartholomew Road and Hollow Way. Of the 39 vehicles caught speeding, 3 were Oxford City licensed taxis.</p> <p>Can the portfolio holder kindly write to our licensed taxi drivers informing them of the dangers of speeding in residential areas such as Cowley, and introduce a review and amend system for repeat offenders?</p>	<p>We will send a reminder to all taxi and private hire drivers to comply with speed limits in residential areas through contacting the operators.</p> <p>There is already a Policy in place for dealing with licensed drivers who have committed speeding offences. Depending on the nature and gravity of the offence the sanctions range from a written warning to affecting a drivers suitability to hold a licence.</p>

30. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hayes – Environmental Sustainability Team

Question	Written Response
<p>There is some excellent work being carried out by our Environmental Sustainability Team. I believe it would be helpful for members to know more about it so that we can celebrate and promote it.</p> <p>Would the portfolio holder please update us on the size of the team, the different responsibilities within it, and (so far as is possible) some of the more significant pieces of work currently being undertaken?</p>	<p>The Environmental Sustainability service has total of 18 members of staff; a mix of fulltime and part time FTE. The service is made up of 3 teams. The Environmental Quality Team provide statutory advice and delivers projects on air quality, land quality, biodiversity, flooding, drainage and trees. In addition it host the post of Waterway Coordinator. The Energy and Natural Resources Team which delivers the councils carbon management plan, undertakes energy billing for the council and works on housing energy efficiency measures across the Council’s estate. The Sustainable City Team which focuses on partnership work and project delivery including electric vehicle charging, Oxford Green week and Low Carbon Oxford. The Service Manager acts as ‘client’ for waste and recycling services and is the lead officer from Oxford City Council for the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme.</p> <p>Notable projects currently being led by the Environmental Sustainability Team includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero Emission Zone in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council • Energy Superhub Oxford • Heat Network Feasibility • Bus retrofit programme • Local Energy Oxfordshire • Oxford Green Week/Big Green Day Out <p>All of this work is set out in press releases from the Council which are sent to all members of the Council. The Service Manager has also offered to brief Cllr Wolff on the work of the team and answer any specific questions.</p>

31. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hayes – Sustainability Strategy

Question	Written Response
<p>I believe that a replacement Sustainability Strategy is under preparation with adoption by the Council anticipated in early 2019. The Strategy on the Council's website dates from 2011. When might Council be presented with a revised strategy that reflects the priorities of a climate emergency?</p>	<p>The aim is for the strategy to come forward later this year. Specifically, officers are awaiting an update of advice the UK Government from the Committee on Climate Change which is scheduled for next month.</p>

32. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hayes – Electric vehicles and transport planning

Question	Written Response
<p>The recent series of City events on electric vehicles have been most informative.</p> <p>Can the portfolio holder indicate how the learnings from these events will impact on the formulation of the City's transport planning and, in particular, the ultra-low emission zone that the City is leading on?</p>	<p>The City Council has recently hosted a number of 'EV Business Breakfasts' aimed at assisting local businesses in the transition to zero emission transport. The learning we gain from local business on barriers and opportunities in relation to this transition is feeding into our development of the Zero Emission Zone.</p>

33. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hayes – Castle Mill stream boaters

Question	Written Response
<p>Will the Portfolio Holder join me in promoting their petition to allow those boaters who live on the stream (one has lived there for 19 years) to continue to do so unhindered assuming they do so peacefully and in negotiation with the land-owner</p> <p>https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-castle-mill-stream</p>	<p>The City Council does not support the petition to allow continued moorings on land owned by Network Rail on the Castle Mill Stream.</p> <p>Our priority is to ensure Network Rail takes immediate steps to bring its land back into its permitted use and to end what has become a cycle of illegal mooring, with serious safety incidents including deaths, fires, anti-social behaviour and criminality, not least the blight on the local area.</p> <p>While we acknowledge that the five individuals with boats illegally moored on the stream are not themselves involved in this activity, the continued mooring here is not in line with the permitted use of the land and hinders progress towards a sustainable solution. It also serves as an attraction to others, leading to the incidents and issues experienced.</p> <p>We support the development of residential moorings in</p>

	<p>this area, with the right infrastructure, services and a proper management process. We will continue to work with the partners involved, subject to all planning processes and the requirements of statutory partners such as the Environment Agency.</p> <p>Every effort to provide the resident boaters with support, advice on housing options, benefits and grants, and to assist with practical solutions has been made.</p>
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34. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hayes – Castle Mill stream boaters 2

Question	Written Response
<p>Does the portfolio holder support the right of boaters at Castle Mill Stream to buy and provide managed moorings on this stream which, as I sure he knows, runs alongside the canal in Jericho?</p>	<p>The City Council does not support that there is a right for boaters moored illegally on land owned by Network Rail to buy that land or to establish moorings.</p> <p>The level of design and planning, significant infrastructure investment required and the need for a long-term sustainable management solution is not something that we believe the five boat-owners involved can deliver and there are more appropriate partners to work with in developing this as a potential solution.</p> <p>We support the development of residential moorings in this area, with the right infrastructure, services and a proper management process. We will continue to work with the partners involved, subject to all planning processes and the requirements of statutory partners such as the Environment Agency.</p>

Board member for Supporting Local Communities

No questions.

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

35. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Linda Smith – Jericho Boatyard development*

Question	Written Response
Can the Board Member advise on the current state of the planning application 14/01441/FUL in respect of the Jericho Boatyard, which was approved in 2015? (permission issued April 2016)	The approved application for the redevelopment lapsed on 19 April 2019. Since the permission was granted the applicant has held a number of discussions with the community associations about delivering some of the community aspects of the proposal. They are currently having pre-application discussions with officers following these discussions and expect to submit a new application in due course.
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
The 2016 planning permission had 48 conditions including a number related to community improvements. Will these be carried over to a new permission?	I will give a written answer

*taken by Deputy Leader as relates to the planning portfolio holder's disclosable pecuniary interests.

36. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Linda Smith – Floyds Row

Question	Written Response
Once open to clients, is Floyds Row going to eliminate the need for rough sleepers to turn up at a particular time and register every night for winter accommodation - the main criticism levelled at the current SWEP* provision? *Severe Weather Emergency Protocol	The new Engagement & Assessment Centre at Floyds Row, will deliver a range of services including a winter-round emergency winter shelter which will operate on a nightly basis between October and March. Operational plans are still to be confirmed in consultation with Service Providers and potential service users, however our intention is that the service at Floyds Row will be straightforward and easy to access. It is likely that there will be a 'window' of time during which people can present to access the service. The timeframe is likely to be less restricted than currently however there will still be a need to balance access to the service with the need for users of the service to be able to sleep undisturbed.

	<p>Clients using the winter shelter may still need to register each night – rather than being able to reserve a bed - to ensure that demand for the service can be managed and that bed spaces are not reserved for clients who do not use them. Data from SWEF shows that take-up during winter 2018/19 was highly varied with between 7 and 29 individuals using the service on any given night.</p>
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Leader of the Council, Board Member for Economic Development and Partnerships

37. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Brown – open sourcing Council data

Question	Written Response
<p>Is the Leader aware of the initiative by the Open Data Institute in Leeds which is working with local Councils to help them open source their data (with a strict privacy code) so that citizens and other third party's can build applications that generate insights from the data (one example being an app which identifies your nearest restaurant and provides its 'scores on the door' rating using data from Leeds City Council)?</p> <p>Will the portfolio holder consider the steps necessary to open source Oxford City Council's data?</p>	<p>Data for 'Scores on the Doors', as used by ODI Leeds, was actually made available by the Food Standards Agency. This dataset is also used within the Council's mobile app under the 'Eating Out' section, giving Oxford residents easy access to information on their local restaurants.</p> <p>ODI Leeds is an independent body, funded by 15 sponsoring organisations, entirely separate from the local authority. It has 9 staff and associate developers working solely on data projects within the Leeds area. Oxford City Council is not therefore an equivalent body and does not have the capacity and resources to devote to open data work.</p> <p>The Smart Oxford partnership, comprising the County and City Councils and other local organisations, has an ambition to develop open data sets and make these available to third parties to develop their own applications. An open data platform was initially funded by Oxfordshire County Council to further this, but its annual cost of £10,000 could not be justified given the current financial climate.</p> <p>Despite this there are 33 datasets already released as open data available at www.oxopendata.uk A new platform is planned during 2019/20 to replace this temporary site.</p> <p>As part of the City Council's proposed Customer, Digital and Technology Strategy (2019-2021, currently in final draft) there is a commitment to improving collaboration and the sharing and use of data where possible.</p>

38. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Brown – Citizens Assembly on the Climate Emergency

Question	Written Response
<p>What is the situation regarding the planning of, and funding for, a Citizens Assembly on the Climate Emergency as agreed by Council on 28th January 2019?</p>	<p>Work is already under way to set up a Citizens Assembly on the climate emergency. No additional provision was made in the 2019-20 budget for this.</p> <p>Officers have reviewed the approach taken in the UK-wide citizens' assemblies for Brexit and social care, the Irish citizens, assembly on abortion and the Northern Ireland citizens' assembly on social care in the Province. Officers have also held discussions with independent organisations such as the Oxford Democracy Café about the appropriate way to run a citizens assembly in Oxford.</p> <p>At the end of 2018 a decision was taken to set up a panel of Oxford residents to enable a cost effective mechanism for regular consultations with an identified representative group of citizens. MORI has been appointed to create and administer the Citizens Panel, which will comprise nearly 1,000 Oxford citizens to ensure it is fully representative.</p> <p>The citizens' assembly will be drawn directly from the Panel – with MORI providing recruitment and facilitation of the Assembly itself. This approach is consistent with the principle that a citizens' assembly should be “a body of randomly selected citizens who meet to learn about, discuss and make recommendations on an issue through a process of structured deliberation.” It will also serve to minimise costs and ensure the Citizens Assembly can be brought forward in a timely way.</p> <p>We anticipate the Assembly can be in place to meet in September 2019.</p> <p>As work progresses we will update further.</p>

39. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Brown – report from the Growth Board

Question	Written Response
<p>The Growth Board agreed that each voting member, as leader of the respective councils, would be responsible for reporting back in detail and on a regular basis on the decisions and activities of the growth board to his/her council, thus ensuring the</p>	<p>This was agreed in response to a helpful recommendation from the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel.</p> <p>Council will note the update report on the Growth Board on today's agenda. Further update reports will be brought to council when there are key issues to raise.</p> <p>This council has also received reports on the Growth Board's work where they involve a decision for the</p>

<p>required level of accountability and openness.</p> <p>The mechanism for doing this was delegated by the Board to each leader.</p> <p>Could the Leader describe the detailed process adopted for fulfilling this commitment at Oxford City Council, and brief council on decisions taken by the Board since the last meeting of this council?</p>	<p>Council. This was the case in approving the Housing and Growth Deal and in approving the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 documents including the recent first stage consultation.</p> <p>I have also used my Leader's announcements to make sure Council is aware of key developments and will continue to do so.</p> <p>Growth Board Papers are published on the Growth Board website and I have asked officers to circulate information on how to access these.</p> <p>If members would find it useful to have a member briefing session to update on the deal, that can also be arranged.</p>
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40. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Brown – OxCam expressway

Question	Written Response
<p>What action is the City Council taking to influence other councils and the National Infrastructure Commission to stop the development of the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway?</p>	<p>I have spoken to the leaders of the other Labour councils in the Arc and both Milton Keynes and Cambridge are opposing the Expressway as it is currently described. I have expressed the position agreed by this council and raised the issue consistently at the Growth Board and at the last meeting with Leaders of the Arc. These meetings are attended by key personnel from the relevant government departments and quangos.</p>

41. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Brown – assisting local traders

Question	Written Response
<p>Oxford City Council frequently expresses its desire to assist local retailers and small businesses. It is good news that the Gloucester Green market is increasing its trading days.</p> <p>What plans does the Board Member have to promote traders in the city, some of whom have the additional concern of the ZEZ to contend with?</p>	<p>We support our traders in a number of ways;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting the covered market - Sign-posting to business support - Working with organisations such as Independent Oxford on pop up schemes - Supporting city centre events - working to enhance the street scene. - More flexible leases, where appropriate - Supporting new developments, with different retail offers, to come forward such as Northgate House. <p>We altered the ZEZ proposals after extensive consultation with businesses, including the Covered Market Traders Association and have sought all</p>

	<p>opportunities to mitigate the impact for businesses, whilst recognising the long-term economic benefits it will bring.</p> <p>As we develop a wider action plan for the city centre, we will look for a range of ways to support the trading environment and the businesses that operate in it.</p>
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42. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Brown – position on People’s vote

Question	Written Response
Has the Leader replied to the letter from Layla Moran MP of December 2018 asking her to clarify her personal position on the desirability of a People’s Vote on remaining in the EU?	I have written to Ms Moran to set out the position of the council.
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
Ms Moran asked if you would clarify your own view was, in response to the letter setting out the Council’s view. Can I infer that you have not responded to this follow-up letter?	Correct- I have not responded to this.

43. From Councillor Garden to Councillor Brown – Election participation

Question	Written Response
How prepared is this council to ensure that the forthcoming Euro elections are the most successful ever in terms of participation?	<p>The city council has been preparing for some time for the possible eventuality of a European election.</p> <p>In addition to the normal preparations, all EU citizens (who are not British, Irish, Cypriot and Maltese) have to complete an application if they wish to vote in the European elections in the UK. All 11,300 forms were despatched 10 days ago. Further promotion is being done via social media, e-mailing (where we hold an e-mail) and engagement work via the students’ unions and colleges/universities. This has already resulted in positive feedback.</p> <p>The elections are being conducted by the (Local) Returning Officer, under the guidance of the Regional Returning Officer, based in Southampton.</p>
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
How are we encouraging registrations from EU nationals, UK nationals and new and student voters?	The Council has promoted this through information on social media, in leaflets, our letters, and the press. Please also encourage those you meet and contact to register as councillors have a responsibility to promote democratic engagement.

44. From Councillor Garden to Councillor Brown – Election participation by EU nationals

Question	Written Response
<p>Voting is a fundamental part of a well-functioning democracy and it is therefore in the interest of local councils to encourage high voter turnout through engagement and informative communications. Voter apathy is not a new problem for the UK or local councils.</p> <p>For example, during the 2014 European elections, eligible (EU) citizens' voting fell in the UK to 327,833 from the previous level of 1,043,629 in 2009 because they did not fully understand the voting process.</p> <p>Despite assurances by the Electoral Commission to simplify the procedure for registering to vote in the European elections in the UK (2019) there is a risk that many will again be turned away at polling stations, as they were then, unless properly informed.</p> <p>This council recognises the good work done by our officers and acknowledges the communications already made available to the public. However, the details of the two-stage process for European citizens registering to vote in the European elections, 23 May, is not fully explained on our council website at present.</p> <p>Can this council give assurances that all communication to residents eligible to vote will contain clear instructions of the process, along with the necessary deadlines, to ensure that those who would like to vote can do so?</p> <p>References:</p> <p>https://neweuropeans.net/article/2697/vote-denied-2019-why-hundreds-thousands-eu27-citizens-uk-may-not-be-allowed-vote</p> <p>https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmpolcon/232/23207.htm#a2</p>	<p>The Council sent all non UK 11,300 EU citizens the form they need to apply to vote in the UK, on 5th April. Our letter contained full details on the choices for this group of EU citizens (to vote here by application or in their home country).</p> <p>We have used press releases and will continue to do so as the deadlines approach. We are also using our social media accounts to spread the word about the extra step non UK EU citizens need to take if they wish to vote in the UK on 23rd May.</p> <p>We will be emailing all those non UK EU citizens for whom we hold an e-mail address to again reinforce the message, with links to forms online so that if they've mislaid the form we sent they can print another one.</p> <p>The Council's website explains the process on its specific EP elections page here:</p> <p>https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20046/elections_and_voting/1319/european_parliamentary_elections_-_23_may_2019</p>
Supplementary Question	Verbal Response
<p>Is there any work with schools, colleges and the universities?</p>	<p>I will check on this.</p>