

To: Council
Date: 25 November 2019
Title of Report: Questions on Notice from members of Council and responses from the Cabinet Members and Leader republished to include supplementary questions and answers given at the meeting

Introduction

1. Questions submitted by members of Council to the Cabinet 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 are 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

Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing

1. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Rowley – Loans for out of area school travel

Question

Some families on benefits are moved out of Oxford e.g. to Didcot, but their children want to continue attending their existing schools in Oxford. Currently these parents suffer from the poverty

Written Response

Before making an offer of permanent or temporary housing consideration will be given to whether a property is considered suitable for their family's housing requirements. A number of factors will be considered, which can include, where their children go to school, what transport a family has available & the customer's financial circumstances – particularly if they are to be housed outside of City.

<p>1. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Rowley – Loans for out of area school travel</p>	
<p>premium i.e. having to buy weekly tickets at much greater cost than annual tickets.</p> <p>Will the Council provide loans, repayable over a year, to parents of these school children for the purchase of annual season tickets, or better still pay for such children's travelling costs'?</p>	<p>Permanent social housing is normally allocated through Choice-Based Lettings so most customers will be able to choose whether to move outside of the City or not.</p> <p>For the ten HRA properties in Didcot, the tenants bid on the properties through the Council's CBL scheme because they wanted to live in Didcot. Around half were existing tenants of the Council who wanted to move to be closer to family or work etc. This is the same for the Council's existing tenants of housing stock in Abingdon and Kidlington.</p> <p>Where OCC has been unable to prevent a family from becoming homeless they may require temporary accommodation. In some cases if it is accepted a family needs to be in Oxford but there is nothing suitable available – they will only be placed out of the area for a short-time until a suitable property in Oxford becomes available & then moved back. So this should minimise the financial cost and impact on the children's schooling.</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council provides assistances for children to get to school and in summary the policy states: <i>"If a child is in receipt of free travel and the family changes address the child's parent needs to inform the School Admissions Team. The child's eligibility for free travel will then be reassessed against the Home to School Travel and Transport Policy. The parent will then be notified in writing if the child is still eligible for free travel."</i></p>
<p>Supplementary question</p> <p>How many children living in <u>temporary</u> (not permanent) accommodation outside Oxford but remaining at their city school are affected each year?</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member look at the numbers affected, the costs, and whether we can award a grant?</p>	<p>Verbal response</p> <p>I can try to find the number of children placed in temporary accommodation outside Oxford, but the council may not have information on school placements. The County Council deals with school transport and provides travel grants. If you know of any cases where children do not have a practical way of getting to school, please contact me.</p>

2. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Rowley – Energy efficiency standards for council housing stock

Question	Written Response
<p>What renewable energy, insulation (windows, doors, walls, floors, ceilings) and air tightness standards or targets are currently set when improving the energy efficiency of Council housing?</p>	<p>Building on years of data collection primarily using our own data, updates from programmes of improvement works and Energy Performance Certificates, we are at the data validation stage of an assessment of how the housing stock is performing for energy efficiency. We have recently completed a whole stock modelling exercise which indicates that overall the bulk of the housing stock is performing well with 93.6% returning and Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D or above which demonstrates that the vast majority of our stock performs at average or above with regard to energy efficiency.</p> <p>The Council has given priority to investment projects to improve energy efficiency with extensive programmes of cavity wall and solid wall insulation installations and also solar PV installation programmes. There is a continuing programme of heating upgrades and loft insulation to set minimum standards for our homes</p> <p>Our aim currently is to get all of the buildings to a D in their EPC where this is feasible. However, following the Citizens Assembly there will be further consideration of additional investment to achieve improved energy efficiency and carbon reduction.</p>

Cabinet Member for Culture and City Centre

3. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Clarkson – Holding a ‘Lyra Day’

Question	Written Response
<p>Will the Portfolio holder investigate the possibility of establishing a ‘Lyra Day’ in addition to, or instead of, ‘Alice Day’ following the televising of the His Dark Materials trilogy, based on the novels by Philip Pullman, who was awarded the Freedom of the City on January 24th 2007?</p>	<p>Events such as Alice Day are reliant on significant external funding e.g. from the Arts Council, Trusts and Foundations. Alice Day is run by the Story Museum, not the City Council. We could make this suggestion to them, but it would depend on their interest, capacity and ability to raise the funding required.</p>

4. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Clarkson – Friendship link with Neve Shalom/Waha as-Salam

Question

Now that the council has the capacity to manage multiple twinning links, can Council now resurrect the friendship link with Neve Shalom/Waha as-Salam that was agreed by Council following a proposal by former Cllr Mike Woodin, but mothballed because there wasn't the staff capacity at the time.

Written Response

Oxford's twin cities rose from 5 to 8 during 2018-19. Oxford already has a lot more twin cities per head of population in comparison to other cities. London has 10 twin cities and Cambridge has 2 for example.

Whilst officer capacity has been increased from 4 days a week to 5, clearly the resource is already stretched to launch, accommodate, help fundraise for and look after the new links we have recently made.

A small group of councillors have held informal discussions with a member of Oxford University with a view to strengthening links between Oxford and Beersheba in Israel. Ben Gurion University in Beersheba already has links with Oxford University.

The Cabinet approved the following process for developing any future twin city links at their meeting on 7 March 2019:

"Any additional international requests are considered on the following basis:

- *The proposed twin city has a University of international renown that already has links with Oxford*
- *The proposed twin city is committed to immutable principles of individual liberty, democracy, respect for Human Rights and equality under the law*
- *A suitable voluntary link group is available to drive ongoing activity with the twin city*
- *There should be an agreed period during which a Friendship Agreement would be made to monitor the link's ability to deliver sustainable activity in the longer term prior to signing a full twinning agreement*

The decision will need to be reviewed alongside the resource implication and only signed once a budget is in place and the Cabinet has taken the decision"

Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management; non-statutory Deputy Leader

No questions

Cabinet Member for Healthy Oxford

No questions

Cabinet Member for Planning and Sustainable Transport

5. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hollingsworth – Follow up to Waltham Forest’s presentations

Question	Written Response
<p>Does the Portfolio holder have any plans to actively follow up the series of ‘mini-Holland’ presentations from Waltham Forest, and if so, what are they?</p>	<p>The Connecting Oxford proposals, which were already well advanced, propose many of the things that Waltham Forest have done to tackle the negative impacts of traffic. Most of the powers to implement the ‘mini-Holland’ approach rest with the County Council, but the City Council will continue to support and encourage similar schemes in Oxford.</p> <p>I am aware of a community groups building support for this kind of approach in Florence Park, and of course the recent closure of Walton Street has created a much more pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment in that part of the city.</p> <p>The key message from schemes across the world is that in order to create streets that are cleaner, quieter and above all more human, it is essential to dramatically reduce the volume and the priority for car traffic. That is what the Connecting Oxford proposals aim to do, and as such they are the essential pre-requisite for taking forward schemes such as those in Waltham Forest.</p>

6. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hollingsworth – Westgate traffic congestion

Question	Written Response
<p>There are numerous reports of City Centre congestion as a result of car drivers queueing up to use the Westgate. This is impacting on the reliability of bus services. Given that it was the City Council that gave planning permission for this car park and gave control over the parking charges to the Westgate Partnership it needs to take</p>	<p>Traffic congestion across the city is unacceptably high, which is why the City and County Councils have put forward the Connecting Oxford proposals, which aim to reduce traffic levels significantly across the city.</p> <p>The Council is also expanding the capacity of the park and ride system, which will help to offer public transport alternatives to driving to the Westgate. The County Council has put a</p>

6. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hollingsworth – Westgate traffic congestion	
responsibility for the consequences. What is the portfolio holder doing to rectify the situation?	system of signs around the city telling shoppers when the car park at the Westgate is full; given that many drivers seem to disregard them, more needs to be done to ensure that that message gets through.

7. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hollingsworth – Local Plan policy RE1	
Question Policy RE1 of the City Council's submitted Local Plan 2036 (concerning minimum build standards) is not specifically mentioned in the planning inspectors' paper ' <i>Inspectors' Matters and Issues</i> ' of 15th October, although <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in their earlier query Inspectors' initial questions and comments to Oxford City Council of May 2019 the inspectors suggested they had concerns about the impact of our proposed higher standards on our 'development targets', which presumably include housing delivery. And : our ability to deliver housing remains amongst the inspectors' concerns expressed in the 15th October paper. Does the portfolio holder have any reason to believe that the inspectors have been satisfied with the further evidence submitted by the Council regarding the feasibility of policy RE1, and therefore consider it sound?	Written Response No. The absence of a policy from the Matters and Issues for the Local Plan hearings means only that the Inspectors believe that they sufficient evidence already to reach a decision on that policy. It is not possible to infer what that decision will be. The Councillor, like all of us, will have to wait until the Inspectors issue their report, which we expect to be in the spring of next year.

8. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hollingsworth – Passivhaus standards	
Question Is it within the Council's legal powers to offer developers 'discounts' on Community Infrastructure Levy and/or Section 106 payments if they 'go the extra mile' and build to Passivhaus standards? Is this a policy he would consider developing?	Written Response It is not possible to do this. The CIL regulations and guidance are clear under the circumstances relief can be offered and this is not one. There is an "exceptional circumstances relief", which the Council introduced in June 2019. However, as set out in national guidance, this allows us to consider claims for relief on chargeable developments on a case by case basis, provided the conditions set out in regulation 55 (as amended by the 2013 and 2014 Regulations) are met. This includes:

8. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hollingsworth – Passivhaus standards

- a section 106 agreement must exist in relation to the planning permission permitting the chargeable development; and
- the charging authority must consider that paying the full levy would have an unacceptable impact on the development's viability and
- the relief must not constitute a notifiable State aid.

This therefore does not allow a discount and only allows for the full charge to be removed in place of a S106 agreement. As set out in the policy and the regulations it must be based on an assessment carried out by an independent person of the economic viability of the chargeable development. The viability of the scheme would need to be assessed against our adopted development plan policies and demonstrated by an independent viability expert to not be viable against those policies, not against additional costs that fall outside them.

It does not allow for us to apply additional costs beyond that of the development plan on an ad hoc basis.

Section 106 agreements deal with the provision of affordable housing contributions and with predominantly site specific measures that are necessary to mitigate the impact of development in order to make the development acceptable in planning terms. There is not a way to let off or discount these obligations in order to allow for something that would not be required by the development plan to make it acceptable in planning terms.

9. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Hollingsworth – Connecting Oxford

Question

Can the Cabinet Member explain why the recent document "Connecting Oxford" proposes a workplace parking levy in half of the city and not the other half? Isn't this immediately open to charges that it is being applied unequally and unfairly?

Written Response

The proposals in the Connecting Oxford public consultation document have been produced jointly by Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council, and as such reflect where there is common ground between the two authorities on specific elements of the plan. So for example, the City Council view is that a congestion charge is not a preferred way forward because it is expensive to set up and administer and is socially regressive – and that is why it was not included as part of the main proposals put forward in the Connecting Oxford documents.

9. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Hollingsworth – Connecting Oxford

	<p>Therefore while my personal opinion is that a working place parking levy that extends across the entire area of the city within the ring road would be workable, equitable and desirable, the proposals as put forward reflected a concern expressed by our partners that the levy should be raised only in the areas where direct benefits in the form of new subsidised bus routes were proposed.</p> <p>Officers are currently working through the very substantial number of responses, many of which make the same point as the questioner. It will be up to the two authorities to reflect on those responses, and consider what changes should be made to the scheme as it goes forward. It will be incumbent on those of us who believe in applying the levy across the whole city to make a compelling case to do just that, and I will be endeavouring to do so at every opportunity.</p>
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10. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Hollingsworth – SODC Local Plan

Question	Written Response
<p>Has any member formally acting on behalf of Oxford City Council, or any officer authorised to represent the Council, spoken with MHCLG officials, ministers or the Secretary of State regarding the holding direction that currently applies to South Oxfordshire District Council and what was the subject matter of those discussions'</p>	<p>No member or officer from Oxford City Council has spoken to any officials, ministers or the Secretary of State regarding the holding direction, formally or otherwise. The Leader of the Council made clear in a public statement her opposition to the action taken by the Secretary of State.</p>

11. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Hollingsworth – Housing numbers

Question	Written Response
<p>In a recent report to the Audit and Governance Committee (23 October 2019), Officers raised two Service risks from Amber to Red (p10 of the agenda, para 15), in response to what the report identifies as a “possible review of the housing numbers in the [draft] Local Plan”, “changes to the NPPF” and “the need for evidence</p>	<p>I remain unequivocally clear that I believe that the Council’s position is sound, and its evidence base robust, as do our officers. That position and evidence base has been repeatedly tested at Local Plan hearings across Oxfordshire, and in every case it has been found to be sound, and I am confident that it will be found sound again at the hearings into the City’s Local Plan.</p> <p>At the time of drafting the report to the Audit</p>

11. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Hollingsworth – Housing numbers

to support the Council’s position”.
 The Cabinet Member has always been unequivocally clear that he believes that the Council’s position is sound and its evidence base robust. This assessment of risk appears to suggest that the Council is now less certain of that. Is that correct?

and Governance Committee officers were aware that the inspectors had not yet finalised the dates of the Hearings in Public on the Local Plan, and that the potential for delay, however remote, posed an increased risk that should be recorded. Subsequently the dates have been fixed, and the focus of the inspectors on a reasonably limited number of core policy areas indicates that that risk has been reduced, and would today be reported accordingly.

Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Customer Focused Services

12. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Chapman – Improving visibility for CCTV on Cowley Road

Question

During August, neighbourhood police in East Oxford made repeated requests to a local councillor and cabinet member for the improvement of natural surveillance of the stretch of Cowley Road between Leon Close and Leopold Street, where low-hanging branches and car parking obstruct both street lighting and the sightlines of CCTV and the general public. These requests were repeatedly refused, and more recently ignored. Street drinking and drug dealing cause persistent nuisance here. Women frequently cross the Cowley Road to avoid walking along that stretch. Recently a man was kicked to death on the pavement here (out of sight of CCTV) and earlier in the year the perpetrators of a murder on Southfield Road are believed to have used restaurants here before and after their crime but in the absence of CCTV footage this could not be confirmed. Drug dealers are well aware of places that are out of CCTV coverage. A previous near-fatal knifing related to the drugs trade further up the Cowley Road also took place out of CCTV visibility a couple of years ago.

Officers have researched alternative sites for CCTV but nothing has come of it: the estimate was in excess of £11,000. But dealing with the visibility issues would anyway render this unnecessary.

Lower branches of trees in Gloucester Green have

Written Response

It is certainly not the Council’s intention to obstruct the police in their duties or encourage anti-social behaviour anywhere in the city.

My meetings with senior police indicate the very opposite – how well Council officers and police teams are working together.

As evidence of this, the Council are looking into changing the locations of all three of the current cameras to give better coverage along the Cowley Road. The current locations, although useful, are no longer considered optimal locations.

Visibility issues will be reviewed during any reinstallation, and if tree pruning is considered necessary, arrangements will be made to carry it out in an appropriate manner.

12. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Chapman – Improving visibility for CCTV on Cowley Road	
<p>been pruned for crime prevention reasons, where there is no additional obstruction of sightlines by parked cars.</p> <p>Is it the Council's intention to obstruct the police in their duties and encourage antisocial behaviour by deliberately creating dangerous places? If not, will the portfolio holder take up the case, meet with police and take action as requested?</p>	
<p>Supplementary question</p> <p>Would the Cabinet Member be willing to draw the council officers' and police officers' attention to the issues with this very specific section of road?</p>	<p>Verbal response</p> <p>Yes: I have done this and the answer sets out the actions.</p>

13. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Chapman – Encouraging street culture	
<p>Question</p> <p>Will the portfolio holder consider withholding, for the first year, the City Council's demand for an additional licence fee for cafes and restaurants to have tables on the pavement for businesses in areas identified as having problems such as street clutter (with waste and recycling), street drinking, drug dealing and associated violent or threatening behaviour) to encourage a better, more open and LESS cluttered street environment with more street life and less antisocial behaviour?</p>	<p>Written Response</p> <p>There is already a considerable reduction of 55% in licence fees for street cafés outside the city centre which was introduced several years ago to encourage more street cafes. I feel this is pitched at the right level as there are administrative costs the Council bears.</p> <p>For a business owner there are other more significant matters than the fee to consider when introducing a street café, such as securing approval from the Highways Authority & obtaining Planning Permission. Reducing the fee further is therefore not any kind of guarantee that more street cafes will emerge.</p>
<p>Supplementary question</p> <p>Does the discount apply for just the first year? Are these annual costs, or one-off costs which could be deferred by a year.</p>	<p>Verbal response</p> <p>Yes. But the obstacles are not just the cost of the licence from us, but also the time and cost to obtain necessary highways and planning approvals.</p>

14. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Chapman – PSPO costs

Question

I welcome the recent decision to cancel the Public Space Protection Order. Can the Cabinet Member tell me how much council money has been spent setting up the PSPO, and how much has been spent maintaining it since it came in to force?

Written Response

The aim of the PSPOs was to deter anti-social behaviour from the city centre – including aggressive begging, illegal street trading, busking and inappropriate use of public toilets – and this has happened since their introduction.

In February the City Centre PSPO came to an end, but other powers to tackle anti-social behaviour in Oxford city centre – including Community Protection Notices, and the city-wide dog control and alcohol PSPOs – remain in place.

Now, after nearly ten months without a PSPO setting standards, the City Council’s Community Safety officers and Thames Valley Police agree that the impact of the Order is still being felt and many of the anti-social behaviours have not returned. It is not therefore necessary to renew the City centre PSPOs.

Initial costs of £500 were incurred in 2015. This was to install signs around the City Centre to inform people about the PSPO – which is a requirement under the PSPO legislation.

No further expenditure has been incurred since then as the PSPO does not require maintenance.

15. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Chapman – Joint city police drugs taskforce

Question

Can the portfolio holder provide any updates on the work of the joint city police drugs taskforce?

Written Response

The Public Spaces Drugs Task Force has had a change of personnel within both the Police and the Council. Crime prevention activities, police disruption of drug dealers and patrols continue in hot spot areas with very positive results. Activities in East Oxford have continued to target county lines drugs operations and local organised crime groups.

The Council continues to play a full part in this successful initiative which is tackling open drug dealing and drug taking in Oxford.

16. From Councillor Goddard to Councillor Chapman – Cycling in Cornmarket and Queen Street	
<p>Question</p> <p>Is the Cabinet Member aware that the PSPO covering cycling in Cornmarket and Queen Street between 10am and 6pm expired in January 2019, and are they content that this should be the case?</p>	<p>Written Response</p> <p>The Cabinet Member is very aware of the expiry of the City Centre PSPO, details of which can be found on the City Council's website.</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council's Traffic Management Order governing cycling is still in place in Queen Street and Cornmarket Street.</p> <p>The County Council remains responsible for enforcement, but Oxford City Council officers support this by regularly stopping cyclists in Cornmarket Street to remind them that they are breaching the County Council's order.</p>
<p>Supplementary question</p> <p>Is the prohibition on cycling in Cornmarket and Queen Street between 10am and 6pm still in force? Do council officers still have power to require cyclists to dismount?</p>	<p>Verbal response</p> <p>Yes this is in force. However the signage is not as clear and obvious as it could be, so we need to make the rules more obvious. But they are in place and enforceable.</p>

17. From Councillor Altaf Khan to Councillor Chapman – Improving recycling rates from street litter	
<p>Question</p> <p>I welcome the decision by the Council to pilot a scheme to deal with the problem of used coffee cups. Can the Cabinet Member please outline other plans to improve recycling rates from street litter?</p>	<p>Written Response</p> <p>There are over 1000 litter bins across the city, therefore a cost effective solution is to pilot the introduction of new and improved street furniture in three locations to start in conjunction with the used coffee cup recycling scheme. This includes the City Centre, Headington and Summertown.</p> <p>The aim is to improve participation in general recycling of plastic bottles, cans, glass and paper through recycling stations in key locations with high footfall. This will make it easy and convenient for citizens to recycle on the go.</p> <p>ODS and Oxford City Council are working closely together to deliver this project, and our aim is to introduce this from February 2020. The recycling output from this initiative will be monitored to ensure</p>

17. From Councillor Altaf Khan to Councillor Chapman – Improving recycling rates from street litter	
	<p>that levels of contamination are not excessive.</p> <p>I would add that much better than recyclable coffee cups are re-useable ones, which often give the owner a reduction in the cost of their coffee or tea.</p> <p>We need to encourage their use across the city, especially with those companies who are not currently offering any financial incentive to those who have purchased them.</p>
<p>Supplementary question</p> <p>Are there any plans to extend the scheme by adding more locations or more items for recycling?</p>	<p>Verbal response</p> <p>We are looking at different options, and can provide more information about these.</p>

18. From Councillor Altaf Khan to Councillor Chapman – Central Headington highways work	
<p>Question</p> <p>There appears to be an increasing number of works to highways in central Headington. Residents are particularly concerned when these works happen out of hours and they have not been informed.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member please clarify what process is in place for communicating timings of up and coming works to councillors and to residents?</p>	<p>Written Response</p> <p>I'm not aware of any specific recent works in central Headington that were under the control of the City Council, under the highway arrangement with the County Council. Utility company operations and other larger schemes such as the Access to Headington works are controlled by the Network Management team at the County Council.</p> <p>If any highway work involves the City Council and ODS, residents receive a letter in advance advising of the likely disruption, the letter is shared with local councillors and they also receive copies of the temporary traffic regulation orders associated with the work.</p>

Cabinet Member for Supporting Local Communities

19. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Tidball – Oxford Hackspace

Question	Written Response
<p>Oxford Hackspace is a non-profit, volunteer-run, member-owned workshop community “for gentle people who love to make things and want to see a better world.”</p> <p>Will the portfolio holder agree to help the Oxford Hackspace look for more premises following the move out of Osney Lane in 2018?</p>	<p>Yes, we’re very happy to meet with Hackspace to explore if we can offer any assistance.</p>

Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford

20. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hayes – Vehicle emissions from Council’s fleet

Question	Written Response
<p>Despite showing an overall carbon reduction, the recent update to the Council’s carbon footprint results showed an increase in emissions from the Council’s vehicle fleet.</p> <p>What are the reasons for this and what is being done?</p>	<p>Oxford City Council has reduced its own carbon emissions by more than 900 tonnes in the last year. This reduction is the equivalent amount of CO₂ produced by a single car driving 2.9 million miles. These latest figures show the council has reduced carbon emissions by 10% in a single year and over 40% in the last four years. Since 2015, the Council has reduced its annual emissions by the equivalent amount of CO₂ produced by a single car driving 12.6 million miles every year.</p> <p>It is right to target areas of the City Council where possible improvements can be made, and I thank you for highlighting emissions from the vehicle fleet. Here’s why:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxford City Council has been insourcing and offering commercial services to local organisations. This income protects frontline priorities that deliver for the city’s people, at a time when we are seeing significant funding pressures. • historically we have operated a fleet of approximately 325-330 vehicles however with expansion in business we have been required to keep older vehicles onto

20. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hayes – Vehicle emissions from Council's fleet

fleet to support services. This means we are operating at a fleet of between 340-350, of which some are older vehicles with higher emissions.

What have we been doing to reduce our emissions from our fleet?

- Oxford City Council was one of the first organisations in the UK to receive 'Go Ultra Low Company' status in 2017, which recognises businesses that are embracing electric vehicles.
- We have 54 hybrid or electric vehicles, which is the highest in the county.
- In May the City Council also updated the Lord Mayor of Oxford's car with a zero emission capable MINI which saw a 52% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions in comparison to the previous Toyota Prius T4. We conveniently have a Lord Mayor who tends to use his bike to travel and I hope the next incumbent in that role can carry on this habit!

What are we planning to do?

- We currently have plans to electrify another 50-60 vehicles by end of 2020.
- The Energy Superhub Oxford Project will help to accelerate electric vehicle growth across Oxford, including within our own fleet through providing charging capacity from the world's largest hybrid battery system to City Council depots, as well as other key businesses in Oxford including local bus companies, taxi providers, and commercial fleet depots. Through the increased capacity, the City Council to procure new electric fleet vehicles including refuse collection trucks, sweepers, tippers and vans.
- We're exploring the possibility of financial assistance for new vehicles from the Salix revolving loan fund. Further opportunities are expected to arise to allow faster uptake of EVs from the ground breaking Energy Superhub Oxford (ESO) project, which the council plays a key role in.
- A combination of fleet reduction, vehicle size reduction, telematics improvements and replacement with electric vehicles will bring down the total fleet emissions.

21. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hayes – Electric bike public charging points

Question	Written Response
<p>Will the portfolio holder agree to look at the demand and feasibility for the installation of public charging points for electric bikes in the City Centre?</p>	<p>Thank you for your questions on eBikes and your interest in the subject, including through your attendance of the eBike Summit recently convened by Green TV in Oxford.</p> <p>Both City and County Councils are very aware of the importance of the need for electric bike charging points and we will work to ensure that they are reflected in policies on cycle parking in LTP5 and the City Council's planning documents wherever possible.</p> <p>Along with Cllr Upton, I recently participated in the eBike Summit that you reference above which brought together business leaders working in the sector, to explore how we advance full eBike mobility, including around charging points. Some of the learnings and meetings from that Summit are continuing to prove useful.</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council as the transport authority are responsible for cycling infrastructure in the city and I will continue to raise the issue with them, and would encourage you to do the same.</p>

22. From Councillor Wolff to Councillor Hayes – Electric bike sharing scheme

Question	Written Response
<p>Has the portfolio holder considered a City electric bike-sharing scheme?</p>	<p>Officers have meet with providers of electric bike sharing schemes to explore the possibility of them setting up on Oxford.</p>

23. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Hayes – Follow up to the Citizens' Assembly

Question	Written Response
<p>Is the Council proposing a follow up to the Citizens' Assembly, perhaps in the form of workshops or publicly accessible lectures on the effects of climate change?</p>	<p>The Citizen Assembly is one tool for engaging with the public. The broader issue of engaging with the public in Oxford is something that is on a continuum.</p> <p>The City Council will continue to work on regular engagement activities, publicise events across the city from partners and working with business. The Oxford Green Week is a key area of engagement on these issues.</p>

23. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Hayes – Follow up to the Citizens’ Assembly

Supplementary question

Can Councillors be set updates and advance notice of these events so that we can publicise these to our residents?

Verbal response

Yes: we will use our existing methods to notify councillors.

24. From Councillor Wade to Councillor Hayes – Follow up to the Citizens’ Assembly 2

Question

Are the recommendations of the Citizens’ Assembly, still awaited, going to be correlated with the ‘Fast Forward Oxfordshire’ report published by Oxford Friends of the Earth on 24 October? And how are the recommendations of both going to be fed into the Council’s forward strategy?

Written Response

The recent Friends of the Earth Report [Fast Forward Oxfordshire](#) is a helpful and practical contribution towards what work can be undertaken in the city to reduce carbon emissions and protect nature. Friends of the Earth also provided input into our recent Citizen’s Assembly but the breadth of the report was not presented to Assembly Members.

There is a rich source of partnership in the City and across the wider county that I look forward to working with Friends of the Earth and others to secure reduced emissions in Oxford and beyond as soon as is practically possible.

25. From Councillor Simmons to Councillor Linda Smith – Freephone number for the Outreach Services

<p>Question</p> <p>Will the portfolio holder ensure that a freephone number is provided for the Outreach Services (and advertised to service users) to allow rough sleepers to contact the service without incurring a cost?</p>	<p>Written Response</p> <p>The Council commissions St Mungo's to deliver an assertive outreach service for rough sleepers and single homeless people (OxSPOT). Outreach workers make contact with people on the street on a daily basis, and clients are also able to make contact with outreach workers at the multi-agency assessment hub at Bonn Square. The ready availability of face to face contact with outreach workers, should minimise the need for clients to have to make contact via phone.</p> <p>However, if they were to call and have little telephone credit, OxSPOT staff will offer to call the client back. Other agencies, such as Turning Point, will also support individuals to make a referral.</p> <p>People sleeping rough or at risk of doing so can call StreetLink on 0300 500 0914. St Mungo's manage the incoming calls, however the service itself is owned by Homeless Link. Although 0300 numbers are not classed as freephone numbers, you won't be charged any extra to call this dialling code. 0300 numbers should be charged at your usual network rate, whether you are calling from a landline or mobile phone. If you have free minutes included with your landline package or your mobile phone package, you can use these to call a 0300 phone number.</p> <p>In addition, Council officers will work with St Mungo's to scope the options for delivering a Freephone number.</p>
<p>Supplementary question</p> <p>The point is that some people have no phone credit at all to use. How do they access these services?</p>	<p>Verbal response</p> <p>I take the point: I have asked officers to work with St Mungo's to provide a Freephone number.</p>

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

26. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Brown – progress on Natural Capital motion

Question

At its meeting on 22 July 2019, Council agreed a motion which undertook certain actions in relation to assessing Natural Capital in our region, including work on a possible pilot study.

Will the Leader update Council on progress on the actions agreed in that motion?

Written Response

Officers have written to the Secretary of State, Theresa Villiers MP, on behalf of the Chief Executive of the Council to set our ambition to work on a pilot census in Oxford and our willingness to coordinate local activity in the county. We have received a response to this letter from Rebecca Pow MP, Parliamentary Undersecretary of State at Defra who have informed us that Defra officials will be informed of our offer and aim to pick this up following the election.

27. From Councillor Gant to Councillor Brown – SODC Local plan

Question

At the last full council meeting the Leader informed Council of her intention to address South Oxfordshire District Council at its meeting to discuss its Local Plan.

Does she support the actions of the Secretary of State in preventing her, and many others, from having that opportunity, and indeed in shutting down all discussion of the issue by SODC?

Will she join me in calling on the Secretary of State to lift his holding order immediately?

Written Response

I continue to share the disappointment of SODC councillors and residents that the Secretary of State has found it necessary to take this unprecedented step of interfering in a local plan process. As I said at the time I strongly believe that local planning should remain with locally elected councillors. As I have said I believe SODC will achieve far more on affordable housing and improving sustainability if it continues with its emerging plan than if it is starting again and relying on a 7 year old plan for the next 5 years or so until a new one is in place.

I hope a way forward can be found that allows local councillors in South Oxfordshire to continue to argue the case for more affordable housing and environmental standards within their current local plan process.

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