

Questions by Members – Council – 24 July 2024

<u>Written Question</u>	<u>Written Answer</u>	<u>Verbal Supplementary Question</u>	<u>Verbal Supplementary Answer</u>
Q1. Councillor Thomas Ashby to Councillor Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects:			
How many hirings have we received for the new Council Chamber yet?	We are currently working on the marketing plan to ensure we will be in the best position to maximise the use of the facility.	N/A	N/A
Q2. Councillor Thomas Ashby to Councillor Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects:			
When will the plans be released for the new 3G Pitch in Witney?	A report regarding the new 3G pitch will be presented to the Executive on 11 September 2024.	N/A	N/A
Q3. Councillor Jane Doughty to Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance:			
What are the plans to fill the shops in Marriotts Walk?	The Council has appointed letting agents to market the available units who have live discussions with interested parties for all of the vacant units. The interest is from a mix of Local and National retail/ leisure operators' and announcements will be able to be made when the legal commitments with the tenants have been secured.	N/A	N/A
Q4. Councillor Adrian Walsh to Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance:			

<p>Will a structural survey be undertaken at Marriotts Walk to ensure the long-term viability of storing electric vehicles?</p>	<p>No immediate concern was raised regarding this on the Council's acquisition. Such a survey will be part of the Council's Asset Management strategy actions.</p>	<p>I'd like to ask if any measures have been put in place for the enhanced fire risk posed by electric vehicles, particularly the difficulty of putting them out?</p>	<p>I don't have an immediate response to that – We will provide a response.</p> <p>--</p> <p>Written response to Councillor Walsh, sent on 5 August 2024:</p> <p><i>“There has been recent Government Guidance regarding this matter and this will be taken into account in the next Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) due for the property later this year. Any recommendations from the FRA will be actioned.”</i></p>
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Q5. Councillor Thomas Ashby to Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment:

<p>Our grass verges are in a desperate state, making West Oxfordshire look untidy and dangerous in visibility splays. What plans does the Council have in place to coordinate, Towns / Parishes, District and County?</p>	<p>The maintenance of highway grass verges is the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council who are the Highway Authority.</p> <p>The maintenance of highway grass verges is the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council who are the Highway Authority.</p>	<p>Will the new Oxfordshire Council's Charter guarantee to solve these issues?</p>	<p><i>(answered by Councillor Andy Graham – Leader of the Council):</i></p> <p>Interesting Question. It's certainly something that they can't guarantee, but I certainly think it's a good forum in which those issues can be raised. But I kind of think it's important for us as a Council, to facilitate the options in order to actually get ahead of this particular issue that you've raised and that many people in the community have raised as well.</p> <p>So I can actually give you an assurance that officers and the lead member, are actually now working on a more collaborative approach that will actually be more effective than the current status quo, which really is ineffective and actually gives rise to the concerns that have been expressed, not only by you but by members of our community.</p>
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Q6. Councillor Ed James to Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance:			
Since taking over Marriotts Walk, what has the return on investment been to the District Council?	The return on investment was positive when compared with the forecasted level for the 1st Year post acquisition.	N/A	N/A
Q7. Councillor Adrian Walsh to Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council:			
Does the Leader support the new MPs view that Witney North's housing plans are moved to the land at Ducklington Farm?	I will be seeing the new MP for Witney next week and I will ask for his view.	We don't need to wait until next week to know what the MPs views are – They're clearly available in the public domain. What we want to know is what the Leader's view is.	That wasn't the question. I've given you the answer to the question, which was "Does the Leader support the new MPs view?", and that view is, as he's only been a MP for a few weeks, I'd be surprised if I'd have had chance to talk to him. But I have got a meeting with him, and therefore if it is his view, which is what the question alludes to, then I will actually give that view once I have spoken to him.
Q8. Councillor Nick Leverton to Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council:			
How much money has the Council spent on planning appeals?	£91,575 in 2022/23 £273,653 in 2023/24	Bearing in mind that the money against budget is 3x higher than we thought it actually would be, and we still don't have a 5-Year Housing Land Supply, can you confirm that the budget for appeals in 2025/26 will be a suitable amount to	As I had no notice of the question, I'll make sure you get a written answer. -- Written response to Councillor Leverton, sent on 5 August 2024: <i>"The budget for planning appeals, in the 2025/26 budget cycle, will be part of the annual budget setting review process which takes place every autumn. The budget figure set will take into account the longer-term</i>

		cover what is clearly the cost of doing business?	<i>trends and the performance against budget in recent years.”</i>
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Q9. Councillor Alex Wilson to Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council:

Can the Leader confirm that WODC will continue with bi-weekly bin collections?	There are no plans to not continue with the bi-weekly bin collections.	It was just a quick one to attain reassurance from the Leader that with the waste contract coming up for renewal, that even if an option was presented where it might go to three or four weekly, that it will remain bi-weekly.	When we have that discussion, we'll actually certainly be putting that in front of our remit, if you like, in terms of messaging and that the current view is it that bi-weekly actually works really well and we'd like to see that happen. But I think that we need to wait and see the outcome of those meetings to see if there's anything that would change that.
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