

### Members Questions & Responses for Council – 16 July 2025

Question	Raised By	Executive Member	Response
<p>I. The Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) that is planned for the Raleigh Crescent Recreation Area on Deer Park will rejuvenate the local area for young people. It will provide a new, vibrant, and welcoming space for young people, allowing them to enjoy themselves in the local area. Will the Executive Member confirm their support for this new MUGA and state the progress made so far.</p>	<p>Councillor Jane Doughty</p>	<p>Councillor Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Leisure and Carterton Area Strategy</p>	<p>The Executive Member fully supports the proposal for a MUGA to be installed on Raleigh Crescent Playing Field. It will complement existing play facilities on the site and will also replace the existing tarmac area and single basketball hoop which isn't fit for purpose, to provide a multi sport facility for the residents in the area.</p> <p>£180,000 from s106 has been allocated towards the project (this is based on Sport England's 2024 facility costings).</p> <p>There has already been some public consultation, led by Witney Town Council with regards to what residents would like to see included in this MUGA and plans are being developed to align this to resident's needs.</p> <p>Specifications are being developed, and this is currently being worked on and led by Witney Town Council and supported by WODC Leisure Team. This will be going to procurement in the very near future and it is</p>

			the intention that we use specialised procurement framework.
2. There are reports of poor maintenance and even pests (moths)/nuisance insects in the Hexagon Business Centre on the New Yatt Road. Can the Executive Member confirm how much the Council is paying on maintenance, cleaning and pest control?	Councillor Thomas Ashby	Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance	Thank you for your question. The building has been refurbished recently with no current maintenance issues. It is occupied by a tenant providing serviced offices. There is a pest control issue in respect of moths caused by nesting pigeons which is deemed the Council's responsibility as Landlord. A sum in the region of £3500 has been spent to date with further actions and costs being currently assessed.
3. There are issues with trees all over Witney, with the Tree Management currently is not fit for purpose. When will the Executive Member invite other members to support in the review of the Tree Management Policy	Councillor Thomas Ashby	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment	A Tree Officer was successfully recruited and started the role in May. He is currently undergoing his induction and training and is expected to be in a position to start working on the policy review in September. This is so he has time to get to know the district, the planning system, and the councils' responsibilities with its own tree stock. We will discuss the form and timings of the review ahead of September to timetable it.
4. Please can the Executive Member outline all progress that has been made so far on 3G Pitch Project for West Witney Sports and Social Club, and the	Councillor Thomas Ashby	Councillor Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Leisure and Carterton Area Strategy	The Leisure Team are working closely with Witney Town Council to develop both of these projects.

<p>Adventure Play Area Project for Windrush Place.</p>			<p>The 3G pitch project is being project managed by Witney Town Council and will be funded by s106 contributions, with a sum of £1,002,101 allocated to it.</p> <p>The Town Council has sought initial quotes in order to determine likely total project costs and the next stage will be to firm up the project specification in line with the Football Association and Sport England requirements / guidance, so the Town Council can then go out to tender.</p> <p>The Adventure Play Area Project, is also being funded by s106. Officers have undertaken site visits with Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association (OPFA) and Oxford Direct Services (ODS) regarding the project management of this specialist project. Although the site has a number of constraints including access and over head cables which need to be assessed around any potential land usage, in order to progress we need to determine a solution for these issues before specifications and designs are established.</p> <p>The next stage is we will commission OPFA or ODS to obtain some initial designs and costs, which can then go out for public consultation.</p>
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<p>5. With 450 homes planned for the Land North of the Burford Road, West of Dry Lane and potentially up-to 900 homes planned on the East of Dry Lane (running up to Kingfisher Meadow), Witney is about to grow significantly. Please can the Executive Member confirm what the Council is doing to ensure that all developers on these schemes work together to bring the best benefits to both Witney and Curbridge?</p> <p>Dry Lane will need significant upgrades, Witney is in desperate need of a new leisure centre, sports pitches, Doctors Surgeries and more, and Curbridge Parish Council have submitted a list of requirements the village needs – therefore, what is the Council doing to ensure that Witney and Curbridge get a fair deal?</p>	<p>Councillor Thomas Ashby</p>	<p>Councillor Hugo Ashton, Executive for Planning</p>	<p>The two sites mentioned are examples of the many sites being promoted by landowners/developers through the emerging Local Plan. At this point in time, no decisions have been made on which sites will be taken forward. The role of the Local Plan is to ensure that planned growth takes place in a co-ordinated manner and that the cumulative impact of development is properly taken into account. That is what we will be seeking to do as the Local Plan moves forward to its next stage of consultation when potential future development locations will be considered.</p>
<p>6. How much has WODC spent so far on LGR including "Two councils" print and digital media?</p>	<p>Cllr Michele Mead</p>	<p>Cllr Andy Graham, Leader of the Council</p>	<p>The costs of developing the two unitary LGR proposal are being shared across the five councils involved. Some of these costs being split between two councils, some between more, depending on the work commissioned. The council has received funding from</p>

			<p>Government to develop the LGR proposals (£95,015 for the two unitary proposal) and also put aside funding in the current budget. While spend is being monitored and logged, we have not yet received many invoices so cannot give figures on all confirmed spend for West Oxfordshire as an individual council. Some of the cost we can confirm so far is £1,687.70 on print for the engagement events, boards for the engagement events (which can be reused for other purposes), social media and general promotion.</p> <p>The work being undertaken is required to meet the government criteria. Also, given the magnitude of the impact of LGR on the residents and businesses of West Oxfordshire, it is only right that we put in the proper resource and effort to create the best possible options for this council and government to consider. We are working hard to deliver as much as possible of this work in-house, sharing resource across the councils involved. We are also working hard to give our engagement the due effort and consideration to ensure residents and businesses have a chance to feed into the proposal, both to meet government</p>
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			criteria, but also to make sure they have an opportunity to shape the proposal.
7. Will members get a free vote and opportunity to debate the merits of each of the three proposed new local government options in Oxfordshire?	Cllr Michele Mead	Cllr Andy Graham, Leader of the Council	<p>The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 set out the responsibilities of the Council that are reserved to full Council for decision and everything else is the responsibility of the Executive. Local Government Reorganisation is not one of the matters that is reserved to full Council meaning it is automatically the responsibility of the Executive.</p> <p>However, given the nature of LGR it proposed that O&amp;S and Full Council considers the report prior to the Executive. This will provide Council with the opportunity to discuss the merits of each of the proposed options and express a preferred option to the Executive for consideration, should it wish to do so.</p> <p>We are aligning our decision making with the other councils across the county.</p> <p>It is important to remember the decision on the structure implemented in Oxfordshire will ultimately be made by Government following a public consultation next year.</p>

8. Is the Council Chamber available for hire yet?	Cllr Michele Mead	Cllr Andy Graham, Leader of the Council	Yes, the Council Chamber / Community Space and Committee Rooms are all available for hire via the Council website - <a href="https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/about-the-council/booking-our-community-spaces/">https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/about-the-council/booking-our-community-spaces/</a>
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