

SODC Councillor's Monthly Report September 2018

Demolition under way at Crowmarsh. Demolition commenced in August of the former joint South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council offices which were fire damaged a few years ago. Specialist contractors have been on site since July carrying out preparatory works and excavators are now being used to dismantle the building. The site is expected to be cleared within the next three months. Designs are underway for new head-quarters on the site for both councils.

Exploring options for on-street parking enforcement. Both councils are exploring whether to take over on-street parking enforcement in their respective districts. We are contacting Oxfordshire County Council (the highways authority), which is responsible for formally applying for powers and then delegating civil parking enforcement responsibilities, to find out whether this could be possible. We are also carrying out work to look at the business case involved in taking over enforcement, including costs and projected income. We need to seek formal agreement from the county to apply to the Department of Transport to delegate civil parking enforcement powers to our councils. If county agree, and our councils decide to take over responsibility, we would then need to carry out a full review of the existing car parking orders and yellow lines. This process which is welcomed by Thames Valley Police has been prompted by the lack of police enforcement of parking regulations in our towns due to their lack of resources.

New Volunteering Grants £25,000 available now to assist. Following our commitment to increasing volunteering across the district we've just launched a new grant scheme to remove some of the costs people can face when looking to volunteer.

Organisations can apply for funding for a range of volunteering costs from travel, refreshments and driver insurance costs to gaining coaching or umpiring qualifications. Please help spread the word about this new scheme to local voluntary, community or social enterprise groups operating across South Oxfordshire. It really has the potential to open the doors to new volunteers and increase volunteering. It is only intended for new schemes. For further information see www.southoxon.gov/volunteering

Councillor's Grant Scheme. As per last year I have £5000 for local grants

Basic rules of the scheme

- Projects must benefit the community in the councillor's ward area
- The minimum grant is £250 and the maximum £5,000 for each councillor (budget permitting)
- We can fund up to 100 per cent of the total cost of a project (budget permitting)
- The total project cost for applications for capital projects is £10,000 or less (one-off revenue projects have no such maximum)
- If successful, you must complete the project within 12 months of our grant award decision

Who is eligible?

- Town and parish councils and parish meetings (unless they operate a grant scheme of their own or budget for giving grants/donations in their annual budget)
- Local constituted 'not for profit' organisations whose primary purpose is to benefit the residents of South Oxfordshire.

Who is not eligible?

- Other local authorities/public sector bodies (for example Oxfordshire County Council, NHS trusts)
- Groups who raise funds on behalf of or will improve/create facilities that will predominately benefit an ineligible organisation (like PTAs delivering projects to benefit their school)
- Individuals (this includes making any payments to individuals on behalf of community groups)
- Profit-based businesses (private businesses)
- Political and lobbying groups
- Organisations who give grants or fund other not-for-profit organisations
- Nationwide organisations

For further details please see the SODC website. Please make applications ASAP.

Oxford to Cambridge Expressway. As I write this report we are still awaiting the Government statement on their preferred route which has been delayed a number of times. I feel this non-democratic process is quite shameful with no public involvement in the process.

SODC Local Plan (2033). The Local plan timetable is for the proposals to go to the SODC Scrutiny Committee followed by a Cabinet meeting both in November of this year. The final details of the proposed Local plan will be decided upon at a full meeting of SODC Council in December of this year. There will then be a six weeks consultation in January and February and the report will be then be sent to the Planning Inspectorate before the end of March 2019 together with public comments on it. This deadline is key as it is predicated on the Growth Board commitments to Government from which Government infrastructure money is dependent. It is expected that the Examination in Public by the Planning Inspectorate will take place in May, June or July of 2019. As previously reported following the Full Council's decision to review the Local Plan we have been reviewing 15 possible strategic allocation sites, including the current strategic sites; previously considered but also not progressed sites; and some more recently submitted sites. The sites include:

- Current proposed sites: Culham, Wheatley, Berinsfield and Chalgrove Airfield.
- Previously considered (but not progressed) sites: Thornhill, Wick Farm, Lower Elsfield, Grenoble Road, Northfields, Harrington and land at Great Western Park.
- Additional sites submitted by developers: land at Emmer Green, Reading, Reading Golf Club, Playhatch at Reading, land off Thame Road, North Weston.

I am pleased to say that the assessment of sites is in my opinion being done in much greater depth than was previously done.

David Turner
3rd September 2018