

SODC Councillor's Monthly Report April 2020

Coronavirus Crisis.

Waste service update (Tuesday 31st March). Most collections are running as normal.

However:

- We have had to suspend our kerbside small electricals and textiles recycling service because the centres that would normally accept these items are currently unable to take them for processing. We ask people to keep these items until the service has resumed. Do **not** put them in the general rubbish or recycling bins because of the fire risk to bin trucks.
- We must remind people that gatherings like community litter picks should no longer be taking place until the government guidelines allow, and until our waste contractor is able to cope with the extra waste collection.

The waste team's well-tested service disruption plan is now in place.

Our waste contractor, Biffa, has suffered some staff shortages due to illness and self-isolation but is managing this by redeploying staff and using agency drivers.

However, with new crew members unfamiliar with the routes and in some cases fewer staff, it's likely that on occasions, crews might not be able to complete all of their daily rounds and so some bins might not be emptied on their usual collection day. We empty 200,000 bins every week and so even a moderate level of disruption to our usual staffing can cause delays.

- The advice for residents is as follows: if the bins in your street are not emptied, please leave them out for up to three days (including weekends) and we'll try to catch up. If still not emptied, bring them back in and we will empty them on the next planned collection day.
- We are working with Biffa to prioritise critical waste services. To help us with this plan we have suspended some non-essential services, including new bulky waste bookings, new garden waste subscriptions and investigating abandoned vehicles.
- We urge people to sort their waste carefully - food in food waste bins (you can put extra food waste in liners on top of your food waste bin) rubbish in black bins and clean, dry, loose recycling in their green recycling bins.
- We're also recommending residents wash their hands before and after taking the bins out to practice good hygiene for themselves and our bin crews.

We will prioritise food, rubbish and clinical waste collections and some elements of street cleansing, including emptying litter bins. We may have to suspend garden waste services so we can focus on essential waste collections, as other councils have, if this is the case, we will let everyone know through our social media sites and council websites.

Shielding our most vulnerable. Our most vulnerable residents across Oxfordshire will have recently received correspondence from the NHS, identifying them as high risk and advising them to strictly self-isolate for 12 weeks.

We know this long-term restriction may cause additional concerns for those without any nearby support and we want to make sure any shielded resident, who doesn't know where to turn, are not handling these additional worries alone.

Local authorities across Oxfordshire have worked with the local Voluntary and Community Sector, to develop a simple point of contact for those who have been told by government that they have been identified as extremely vulnerable, and who have no support network and would otherwise be completely isolated.

From tomorrow this new, dedicated line will provide our extremely vulnerable residents access to a central team who will be able to offer advice on a range of issues and will be operational from 8:30am to 8:00pm Monday to Friday, and 9:00am - 5:00pm Saturday and Sunday.

If you or someone you know has been identified as extremely vulnerable by the NHS and have no support network, please contact the dedicated team on 01865 89 78 20 or email shield@oxfordshire.gov.uk. If you live in Oxford City, you can also phone 01865 24 98 11 between 8:00am and 5:00pm or visit www.oxford.gov.uk/CommunityAssistance

For those residents who are not in a high-risk category but still in need of support, there are a number of initiatives taking place across the county. You can visit [Oxfordshire All In](#) or [Oxford Together](#) for more information on community support near you.

In South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse, anyone that is not considered high risk and does not have a support network around them to help, will be able to call their dedicated support line from 27 March at 9:00am on 01235 422600 or email communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk

The County, City and District Councils in Oxfordshire are all working hard to maintain frontline council services, so for any queries related to everyday council service please check out the County, City or relevant District website. For more advice and information on Covid-19, please visit [Public Health England](#).

SODC Councillor's emergency £2000 budget for volunteers. I emailed you yesterday details of my budget for your comments and thoughts. Please respond to me as appropriate to your communities' needs.

SODC Local Plan. Following the direction from Robert Jenrick MP at the Cabinet meeting and subsequent Full Council meeting on 5th March we were left with no choice but to let the existing plan go to the Planning Inspectorate for examination at the EIP (Examination in Public) where we will argue the case for the changes to the Local Plan that want to see namely a reduction in the number of homes, less use of Green Belt and very importantly to us locally the removal of Chalgrove Airfield from the Local Plan. The target set us is to approve the Local Plan following the Planning Inspectorate decision by the end of 2020. Given the current Coronavirus situation it is now not clear if this is possible given the public participation which should take place during an Examination in Public.

David Turner
SODC Councillor (Chalgrove Ward)
31st March 2020