

SODC Councillor's Monthly Report November 2021

Reminder Cllr. Community Grant Scheme. The 2021/22 Councillor's Community Grant Scheme will re-open for bids on Monday 22nd November. I have £5000 to allocate. The scheme is open to community groups and Parish Councils. Details are on the SODC website. Please get your bids in as soon as possible before the funds are allocated.

Grant schemes open this Autumn. Please spread the word about the following grants available this Autumn for the District's voluntary and community sector:

Revenue grant scheme is now open for applications to apply for core funding and support to help diversify income streams. Funding is available for two years and is open to local constituted voluntary sector organisations. Closes noon 26 November 2021.

Capital grant scheme opens 1 November and closes at noon 17 December 2021 for grants of up to £75,000 (max 50% of their total project cost). Voluntary and community sector organisations and town & parish councils are eligible to apply.

Second round of Councillor Community grants opens 22 November for wards with budget remaining. Round two closes noon on 4 February (2022)

Further information on all these grants can be found on the South website or contact the Community Enablement Team who are happy to answer any questions and guide applicants through the submission process.

Garden waste. The Garden paid for waste scheme is now fully operational again and the Council thanks you for your patience in our difficulties caused by a shortage of heavy vehicle drivers. To compensate all contracts with residents have been extended by three months.

Mill Lane Ditch. The ditch on the west side of Mill Lane is now under construction and it is hoped that it will help alleviate flooding in this area of Chalgrove. The £149,000 scheme is funded by SODC, OCC & the Environment Agency.

Homes England Chalgrove Airfield Project Update Statement (November 2021). Homes England is working with stakeholders on the vision for Chalgrove Airfield to address any concerns that have been raised. We are positively engaged with the Civil Aviation Authority, Environment Agency and Oxfordshire County Council, and we are working towards agreeing a revised strategy for the scheme in 2022. As part of the revised strategy, we will bring forward a comprehensive and detailed package of works – including the delivery of new roads and junction improvements at Stadhampton / Chiselhampton and Cuxham - that will meet the requirements of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan and create early benefits for the local community and key stakeholders. Homes England remains committed to the development at Chalgrove Airfield, which will address the immediate housing needs and bring significant investment to the wider area. We will provide further updates in early 2022, including the proposed phasing of the development.

Local Covid-19 rates.

By the end of October Covid cases had risen 44 per cent in a fortnight in Oxfordshire. In the South and the Vale it is the same picture as rates have risen from around 255 to 505.6 per 100,000 residents in South and from 277 to 521.4 in Vale in the previous two weeks. The County Council has issued a press release to ask people to be cautious and continue to get

tested and to voluntarily wear a mask in situations where social distancing is not possible. We are amplifying our health partners' messages on encouraging people to take up the offers of both the flu vaccine jab and the covid booster. NHS advice on the flu vaccine is on their website.

First anniversary of South and Vale's Tracing service. The Oxfordshire local contact tracing service (OxLoCT) launched a year ago this month. The service – made up of staff from District, City and the County Councils - aims to trace contacts of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 initially via phone and texts, and then, if necessary, by visiting their known addresses. These are people who the national Test and Trace service have been unable to reach after their positive test. During the past year the Oxfordshire service has successfully contacted, advised to isolate and offered support to nearly 7,000 Oxfordshire residents who have tested positive for COVID-19. The work of this contact tracing service has broken countless chains of transmission and has helped slow the spread of the outbreak across the county. To date, officers from South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' Environmental Protection Team have completed a total of 745 visits across our two areas.

Household waste recycling centres set for refresh in November. People planning to use Oxfordshire's household waste recycling centres (HWRCs) next month are being warned about a series of short closures to enable essential work to be carried out. For safety reasons, Oxfordshire County Council will be shutting each of its centres for two days – although never at the same time – to allow for deep cleaning and essential maintenance to take place. The closing dates of centres in/near South and Vale are:

Drayton, near Abingdon: Tuesday 9 and Wednesday 10 November

Oakley Wood, near Wallingford: Tuesday 16 and Wednesday 17 November

Redbridge, Oxford: Thursday 18 and Friday 19 November

Stanford, near Farringdon: Thursday 11 and Friday 12 November.

More information can be found on the Oxfordshire County Council website, including details of the nearest alternative site during the closures.

Coming in 2022 - changes to how we enforce parking in our car parks. Next year we will be making some minor changes to how we enforce parking in our car parks. This will include changes to the way in which people can appeal a parking fine, and the introduction of two set levels of fine, one for more serious offences like parking in a disabled bay without a badge, and a lower level for less serious misdemeanours like overstaying your time.

Before we introduce these changes, we need to alter our respective district wide parking orders. In November, we'll publish a public notice to inform people how we intend to change the orders - they will then have 21 days to submit any comments. Changing a parking order is quite a long process and we will then need to alter the signage in all our car parks – as a result, the changes won't come into effect until 1 April 2022.

We need to change our parking orders so that they match the Traffic Management Act 2004 legislation that will be operating across Oxfordshire following the move to Civil Parking Enforcement from 1 November. Enforcement in district council car parks will continue to be carried out by Saba. This will remain separate from on-street enforcement, which will be carried out by Oxfordshire County Council.

Afghan refugee update. Many of you will be aware that the subject of resettling Afghan families has been in the news this week with reports that some families could be in hotels for up to a year. We were contacted by the BBC to find out the latest in our districts and issued the following response:

With the support of partner agencies and private landlords, South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council have agreed to each resettle four Afghan families in their respective districts. The families that have been resettled so far, are receiving specialist support to help them successfully adjust to their new environment.

David Turner
SODC Councillor (Chalgrove Ward)
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