

District Councillor's Report

MARCH 2019

Councillor Grants

Last year I received 2 requests for Councillor Grants. Both I've approved: -

- FISH volunteer centre £2,500 for promotion work.
- Harpsden phone box library £500

Government Funding

In last Tuesday's spring statement, it was announced our bid for funding from the government's Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) has been approved. The two councils were part of a £218 million bid approved by government.

This will provide funding for the following four transport schemes in South Oxfordshire: -

- A Didcot Science Bridge on the A4130 – going over the railway line and Didcot A Power station site and joining the A4130 Northern Perimeter Road
- Improvements to the A4130 from the Milton Interchange by making it a dual carriageway
- A new river crossing at Culham
- A Clifton Hampden bypass.

The new river crossing at Culham will allow us to regenerate Berinsfield as this was the major stopper to this project due to expected increase in traffic volumes.

The government also announced £81 million of investment in state-of-the-art laser technology at Harwell. This will go towards a national "Extreme Photonics Application Centre". The Government have also set aside £60 million to ensure the JET programme at Culham Science Centre continues to receive the funding it needs to continue its ground-breaking research into fusion energy.

Better Broadband

On Friday 15th both David Bartholomew and I attended the celebration for the 600th Superfast broadband cabinet in Chinnor. David in his capacity as OCC Cabinet member for Finance and myself as Cabinet member for Development and Regeneration. The two departments responsible for funding delivery of broadband in South Oxfordshire.

South and Vale Business Awards

On Friday 15th I opened our first South and Vale Business awards at Williams F1 conference centre in Grove. There were some amazing businesses awarded. In South Oxfordshire Bremont were joint winners of the Large Business of the Year award, a prize they shared with Reaction Engines from Abingdon.

HR Wallingford won the Established Innovation Award and Howbury Park won the Business Space of the year award.

Oxfordshire Special Needs school quiz.

On Monday 18th I went to support Bishopwood school who were completing in the Oxfordshire Special Needs Schools quiz. This quiz is run by trading standards and teaches the children a number of safety points. Although they didn't win they were very close until the last round. All the children who took part received a backpack with an Easter egg and a number of colouring books and pens. I must admit the questions were very challenging and I'm glad we weren't asked to answer some of the more difficult ones. Maybe next year. This was the 20th year of this competition and Bishopwood have won it twice in the past.

PopUp Business School coming to Berinsfield

Help us to spread the word - we are sponsoring the PopUp Business School which is coming to Berinsfield to give local residents a chance to start up their own business.

From Monday 29 April, the five day workshop is free to anyone with a business idea. Sessions include: how to market a new or existing idea or business, how to use social media to get new customers, and about the legal and tax obligations that they need to complete.

If you know someone that could benefit from attending the course please encourage them to visit popupbusinessschool.co.uk/berinsfield