

REPORT TO SHIPLAKE PARISH COUNCIL MARCH 2021 FROM CLLR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW

GENERAL OCC REPORT

FRONTLINE SERVICES GIVEN PROTECTION WITH NEW INVESTMENTS

Details of OCC Budget proposals were given in last month's report. All 63 county councillors met on February 9th to debate the proposals which were then passed with minimal amendment. The council is dedicated to investing in services that will have positive long-term impact for local communities. The budget reflects this, with more than £25m of additional funding included. Some of this funding has been previously agreed, but £9.5m of this is new for 2021/22 to help meet additional demands, including within adult social care. A total of £19.6m of savings will also take place in total across all services although £14.6m of these savings were already planned and are centred on the transformation of services to make them more efficient while protecting the frontline. A 1.99 per cent rise in basic council tax will take place from April plus an extra one per cent which would be required to be spent on adult social care under national rules, making a total of 2.99%.

STAY AT HOME AND DRIVE COVID CASES DOWN

Oxfordshire residents, together with the nation, are being advised to continue to stay at home and follow the existing COVID-19 rules, which will begin to gradually ease from 8 March as part of the government's roadmap to bring England out of lockdown. The number of COVID cases across the county is continuing to fall, but the week-on-week reduction is now much smaller than it was earlier this month. For the week ending 19 February, the number of cases across Oxfordshire fell by just 5% compared to a drop of 40% in the previous week

RAPID SYMPTOM-FREE TESTING AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC-FACING WORKERS

OCC is working in partnership with the city and district councils to provide regular rapid testing for people without COVID-19 symptoms who work and volunteer outside the home. The free tests are for people who do not have access to workplace testing through their employer. This includes the self-employed and people who work for small businesses, for example taxi drivers, independent retailers, and tradespeople such as plumbers and electricians. People can [book a free test](#) online and go to one of three locations:

- Spiceball Leisure Centre in Banbury (OX16 2BW)
- The Beacon in Wantage (OX12 9BX)
- King's Centre in Oxford (OX2 0ES)

The tests take just 15 minutes using lateral flow devices and involve taking a swab of the back of the throat and inside the nose. The swab is then given to trained staff at the test centre who process the test on-site. Results are given within an hour by text message or by email. Anyone who tests positive is told to self-isolate and follow the national guidance. They are provided with detailed [advice and support on self-isolation](#).

NEW PARTNERSHIP HELPS CHAMPION THE CLIMATE CAUSE

Plans to turn Oxfordshire into a zero-carbon county by 2050 will benefit from the announcement of a new link-up which will champion the cause of sustainable and low-carbon business. OCC has joined Oxfordshire Greentech (OG) as its local authority innovation partner. Business network OG was set up in 2019 to bring together a wide range of commercial interests, academia and other organisations to encourage innovation, collaboration and knowledge transfer as a response to the climate emergency. Details [here](#).

SPECIFIC OCC REPORT FOR SHIPLAKE

FURTHER EXTENSION OF FOOTPATH ON PLOUGH LANE

The PC has established ownership of the verge outside The Coach House. However, a further extension of the footpath is likely to be prohibitively expensive, given that a retaining wall would be required. I would need confirmation the PC would cover the cost if I am to progress this matter.

STEEL GATE POSTS ON MILL LANE (FERRY LANE) NEAR 'THE DEN'

OCC is in the process of taking enforcement action for the removal of the posts.

STREETLIGHTS ON A4155

An informal poll on the village website indicated an overwhelming desire for the lights to be turned off until the site is occupied (there was only one resident who wanted them left on). Officers are to discuss the matter with Taylor Wimpey.

SPECIFIC SODC REPORT FOR SHIPLAKE

P20/S2808/DIS: THAMES FARM

Taylor Wimpey now propose to pipe the surface water towards Henley rather than into the Lashbrook. This might solve the problem for Shiplake but has provoked a backlash from Henley residents.

THAMES FARM: FENCING

The moth-balled site has been shielded with close-clad fencing. This is temporary and not a replacement for tree replanting.

P21/S0506/FUL & P21/S0590/DIS: LAND NEXT TO TOWER HOUSE

The applicant seeks approval of new footpath arrangements. Given the footpath is such a critical element of this proposal and the Retirement Villages development next door, I have asked officers whether this change can be appropriately dealt with under a Discharge of Conditions or whether a new application is required, particularly in view of the Inspector's 'condition 9'. Furthermore, if the footpath arrangements are changed, I struggle to see how the Retirement Villages footpath can be built without intrusive and substantial access to this site.