

REPORT TO SHIPLAKE PARISH COUNCIL OCT 2021

FROM CLLR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW

GENERAL OCC REPORT

THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S FIRST MOTION TO FULL COUNCIL

Oxfordshire residents may be interested to learn about the first motion brought to Full Council on 14th September by the new administration. Up until then, people managing committee meetings were given the courtesy of being addressed in the manner they requested: chairman, madam chairman, chair or whatever. The motion brought by the ruling group to Full Council sought to proscribe all form of address other than 'chair' and to have the constitution re-written accordingly. Despite some of the most vociferous opponents being women, after nearly an hour's debate, the ruling group forced this motion through. I question whether residents think the time and money spent on this debate was worthwhile, whether it should have been the administration's top priority motion, and whether such a restriction on speech is desirable.

ROAD CLOSURE DETAILS FOR AJ BELL WOMEN'S TOUR CYCLING RACE

Road closure details have been announced for the Oxfordshire stage of the AJ Bell Women's Tour professional cycling race – between Bicester, Oxford, Abingdon, and Banbury – on Monday 4 October 2021. Road restrictions will be in place at the start point on Bicester's Sheep Street and Market Square involving closures, prohibitions of waiting, disabled person parking and loading, and the imposing of one-way traffic. Local diversions and information signs will be used to indicate the route. There will then be rolling road closures from approximately 11am at the race start area in Bicester, controlled by police and route marshals, that will then continue along the route. They will involve highways and junctions with access roads onto the route, closing for short periods while the race passes through. The length of closure depends on how dispersed the riders are. Road closure locations along the route – between Bicester, Oxford, Abingdon, and Banbury – are listed in full at:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/business/licences-and-permits/public-event-planning>

'WISHLIST' FOR SPECIFIC DONATIONS TO HELP AFGHAN REFUGEES

People in Oxfordshire are being asked to make donations of very specific items to help Afghan people currently being looked after in the county after their recent arrival in the UK following events in their home country. As is the case throughout the country Oxfordshire is playing host to a number of Afghan people in temporary accommodation as a prelude to them moving into more stable accommodation once central Government has allocated families and individuals to appropriate homes either locally or elsewhere. The people of the county have been very generous in contributing an array of items that have been welcomed by those in temporary accommodation and those who initially arrived in the country at RAF Brize Norton before being transported elsewhere. Soft toys, sanitary items and clothing have proved very useful. Earlier in September the county council announced that it would work with district and city council partners and the charity Asylum Welcome to publish an Amazon wishlist should any further very specific items be needed in due course. That list is being hosted by Asylum Welcome and has now been published and can be found at [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk). Items that are being requested include various items of clothing and shoes, sanitary products and headphones. The page will make clear when donations have been received to a level that means no more are required.

SCHOOL FLU VACCINATIONS BEGIN

More than 100,000 primary and secondary school children in Oxfordshire will be offered the opportunity to be immunised against influenza this autumn in an expanded health protection campaign. The programme started on September 22 with the Oxfordshire School-aged Immunisation Team from Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust giving quick and painless nasal spray vaccinations to consented pupils from reception classes to year 11. Schools are contacting parents, guardians and carers to ensure consent is provided. Any consented children who miss out on the day of immunisation at their school, either through sickness or absence, will be able to get their influenza vaccine at catch up clinics. Around 50,000 children – 73% of reception to year 7 pupils – were immunised last year. The 2021 influenza campaign now includes secondary school children up to year 11. This includes children educated at home and children who attend special schools. Preschool children over two years old will be offered the immunisation by their GP surgery. More information on vaccinations in non-school places can be obtained by emailing: flu.schoolnurses@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk.

OXFORD CITY RESIDENTS BENEFIT FROM CYCLE SCHEMES

Oxford City's cyclists and rental e-scooter riders can look forward to a safer, purpose-built series of new rapid cycle routes across Oxford known as 'Quickways' as part of the next phase of the county's investment in its active travel infrastructure. The proposals for the schemes for Oxford result from a major funding award from the government's Active Travel Fund to upgrade infrastructure to increase levels of walking, cycling and use of rented e-scooters. I am supporting residents in rural areas and trying to get the administration's attention focused on villages and towns which have struggled to obtain such generous funding.

SPECIFIC OCC REPORT FOR SHIPLAKE

CONDITION OF ROAD AT MILL LANE (LOWER PART – ALSO KNOWN AS FERRY LANE)

Over the summer, SODC's waste contractor Biffa had been refusing to collect waste from residents as Biffa said the road gets blocked and the edges are crumbling, this is despite the repair works done last year. I arranged for OCC Highways to inspect the site again and they are claiming the issue is parking, not the state of the road. The waste issue has been resolved by the introduction of smaller collection vehicles.

FOOTPATH ALONGSIDE THE A4155 LINKING LOWER SHIPLAKE TO SHIPLAKE CROSS

I asked for an update on costs. An indicative budget, subject to survey, has been given as £53k for a gravel path or £58k for a Tarmac path. There could also be an additional £5-10k for traffic management and material testing..

POSSIBLE PLANNING BREACH/HIGHWAYS ENCROACHMENT AT MILL ROAD

I was asked to investigate possible Highways infringements at the pair of semi-detached houses with garages fronting Mill Road built on the site of the former Sydney Harrison house. OCC Highways have inspected the site and deemed the works to be acceptable.

IRON RAILINGS AT 'THE CHESTNUTS'

A resident has erected iron railings on Highways land at 'The Chestnuts' and has been instructed by OCC to move them. This has now taken place.

GENERAL SODC REPORT

TRANSGENDER RIGHTS MOTION DECEMBER 2020

As a result of a corporate complaint, the SODC Head of Legal Services was asked to investigate a motion on transgender rights passed by the council in December 2020. The Head of Legal services reported back to Full Council on October 7th and stated that the motion was political, aspirational, without legal effect and lacked definition of some legal terms. This confirms the view of the Conservative Group that the administration repeatedly brings forward motions for debate that while often worthy, are beyond the remit of the council and hence a waste of councillors' time and council-taxpayers' money.

NEW CORPORATE HQ IN DIDCOT

At the Full Council meeting on October 7th, Council was asked to approve the budget and borrowings for a new corporate headquarters in Didcot. The objective of the administration is to construct a building bigger than that needed by the council in order to rent-out the surplus office space to produce an income stream. The Conservative Group opposed this proposal on the basis that the council was effectively entering into speculative property investment using borrowed money at a time when future demand for office accommodation is highly uncertain due to changes brought about by 'Working From Home'. The Conservative Group believes that there may already be other existing buildings in Oxfordshire that could be re-purposed under the Government philosophy of 'one Government Estate' but in any case, if a new building is built, it should not include the surplus, speculative, space.

SPECIFIC SODC REPORT FOR SHIPLAKE

RETIREMENT VILLAGE DISCHARGE OF CONDITIONS

The applicant has submitted three separate 'Discharge of conditions' applications. I have advised the PC that although they are not official consultees, they should be proactive and scrutinise these closely as some aspects are simply wrong, while others will have a big impact on the village.

P21/S4102/RM: RETIREMENT VILLAGE RESERVED MATTERS

A full 'Reserved Matters' application has now been submitted. The PC is an official consultee in respect of this and very close scrutiny of the complex application is required. For example, the 'Landscape Masterplan' shows a break in the woodland shielding the site and the construction of a pavilion to overlook the wider landscape. This conflicts with many residents' views that the site should be shielded as much as possible. Another example is the possible impact of light pollution which should also be carefully considered.

P20/S2808/DIS: THAMES FARM

As previously reported, Taylor Wimpey has submitted a revised drainage proposal to SODC. This involves pumping the surface water from the site along the A4155 to a discharge point near Sheephouse Lane. OCC and SODC are expected to respond to this within the next few days, Taylor Wimpey has now also submitted its ground compacting/grouting proposals as part of this 'discharge' application. The SODC view is that a separate full planning application is required for this aspect.