

REPORT TO SHIPLAKE PARISH COUNCIL JAN 2025

FROM CLLR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW

GENERAL OCC REPORT

OCC BUDGET 2025/26 CONSULTATION

A public consultation on the substance of the 2025/26 budget has now closed. The final proposals will be published this month and will then go forward to Full Council in February, together with Opposition amendments.

HIF1 PLANNING INQUIRY COSTS £29M

The result of the public inquiry into plans for a £269million road scheme (HIF1) has been announced. The proposals include creating a dual carriageway on the A4130 from the A34 Milton Interchange towards Didcot, new bridges and a Clifton Hampden bypass. In July 2023, [Michael Gove called in the planning application](#) after OCC applied to itself for planning permission but the OCC planning committee refused it – despite recommendations from officers that it should be approved. Local government minister Matthew Pennycook has now approved the application. The costs associated with both the CPO and Planning Public Inquiries are estimated to be around £1m. This figure does not include the inspector costs, which are not yet known. The inflationary increase of the construction works due to the delay in commencement is estimated to be 15%, which equates to approximately £28m.

OCC AIMS TO GO BEYOND NET ZERO BY REMOVING CARBON EMISSIONS

OCC has become the first local authority in the UK to set a target of going beyond net zero when it comes to carbon emissions. The council's Cabinet has committed itself to extending the current carbon neutral target for its own estate and move into carbon dioxide removal. The cost of this initiative to the Council Tax payer is £110,000 (including 'carbon offsets'). Critics claim residents are being short-changed by the council going way beyond its remit and mistakenly positioning itself as a climate change leader, and that it should get back to basics and deliver better services to residents.

PIZZA, POLITICS AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

More than 40 young people from across the county came together in November to talk politics and enjoy some pizza, as part of OCC's Future Generations Fortnight. The session was open to all in Oxfordshire aged 11 to 18. It aimed to help them get an understanding of local democracy and encourage them to get involved in politics.

SUPPORT FOR OXFORDSHIRE FARMERS

An Opposition motion in support of Oxfordshire farmers was passed at Full Council on 10 December. The Leader will now write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ask that introduction of the family farm taxes be reconsidered for the sake of environmental protection and food security.

OXFORD TRAFFIC MEASURES TO BE QUESTIONED

A motion as amended by the Opposition was passed at Full Council on 10 December that called for the establishment of a resident & business group to be set up to consider the impact of the proposed traffic measures that could cost Oxfordshire motorists £57m over five years.

SPECIFIC OCC REPORT FOR SHIPLAKE

IMPENDING APPLICATION FOR 25 HOUSES ON NEW ROAD

OCC officers have advised that New Road is unadopted and appears to be unregistered. This means that there will be difficulties in forming an access onto the lane and indeed a limited prospect of a developer being able to make improvements to the lane (such as installing passing places, footway etc). Further comments will be forthcoming if an application is received.

TEMPORARY EMERGENCY FOOTPATH CLOSURE OF FOOTPATH-7 (GRID SU77947873)

OCC closed Footpath 7 in November 2023 as the surface had collapsed. After several missed deadlines, repairs were finally completed by Network Rail and the EA by towards the end of 2024. The path has at last been reopened but the repairs appear to be inadequate and new sink holes have formed. OCC officers have fenced off part of the area and have contacted Network Rail concerning further remedial work.

FMS REF 6420011: DAMAGED VAS SIGN ON PLOUGH LANE

The reinstallation should have taken place last Friday (10th).

FOOTPATH ALONGSIDE A4155 FROM MEMORIAL AVENUE TO PLOUGH LANE

I had a site visit with an officer on Friday 22nd November and a plan has been produced which has been circulated to the PC. I am awaiting a cost estimate.

A4155 CROSSING POINT NEAR HIGHLANDS HOUSE

As previously reported, officers have advised that as the Section 278 works are not 'completed' in accordance with the legal agreement and will not be until such a time as the on-site drainage matters are resolved and re-constructed, Taylor Wimpey (TW) remains responsible for the S278 works that have already been carried out. The Stage 3 Road Safety Audit had identified possible issues with the crossing point and the officers' plan was to ask TW to carry out speed surveys prior to first occupation. However, due to all of the site delays, and that other developments on that side of the road are building out, they will now write to TW to ask them to carry out the speed surveys, clear vegetation in the visibility splay and report accordingly on the speed survey information. I am awaiting an update. It is unclear who is responsible for the ditch fencing and verge clearing that occurred last week.

THAMES FARM DAMAGED FENCING

I wrote to Taylor Wimpey (TW) in December stating I was very concerned that the Thames Farm site which TW has described as dangerous due to sinkholes had been unsecured for over two weeks due to storm damage. Furthermore, the broken fence panels were obstructing the pavement and most of the warning signs were no longer visible. After two attempts, the repairs were completed before Christmas.

