



Focus on Parishes with Cllr Freddie van Mierlo (Chalgrove and Watlington)

October 2023

Welcome to my monthly update, shared in the first week of every month.

Upcoming meetings:

- 3rd October: Nettlebed Parish Council
- 5th October: Chalgrove Parish Council
- 10th October: Watlington Parish Council
- 11th October: Little Milton Parish Council
- 13th October: Extraordinary Full Council, Oxford

***** OCC NEWS*****

Change in political control: The ruling Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance collapsed following the withdrawal of the Labour Party. This followed multiple failures of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services (Liz Brighthouse), and her refusal to take responsibility around children's education and SEND provision. A minority administration has been formed with new cabinet members announced (see below)

New SEND improvement cabinet position: The new minority Lib-Dem-Green administration has created a specific cabinet position dedicated to SEND improvement. Cllr Kate Gregory (Thame & Chinnor) has been appointed to this position. A priority [SEND action plan](#) is being drawn up. Experienced former teacher and school governor, Cllr John Howson, has also been appointed to the Childrens portfolio (see below).

Cabinet reshuffle: Cabinet positions are now as follows,

- Leader: Liz Leffman
- Deputy Leader and Climate Change delivery & Environment: Pete Sudbury
- Children, Education & Young People's Services: John Howson
- SEND Improvement: Kate Gregory

- Community & Corporate Services: Neil Fawcett
- Transport Network Management: Andrew Gant
- Infrastructure & Development: Judy Roberts
- Finance: Dan Levy
- Adult Social Care: Tim Bearder
- Public Health, Inequalities & Community Safety: Nathan Ley

Freight strategy: The Atkins study into area weight restrictions has been [published](#). Two further studies will be pursued into area weight restrictions covering Henley-on-Thames and the Windrush Valley. The study outlines a process for all villages and towns to request further work to reduce HGVs on inappropriate roads. The process will be published on OCC's website for parishes and towns to apply to.

20mph policy robustly defended: As the government seeks to intervene in the responsibilities of local councils, cabinet member Andrew Gant has [robustly defended](#) Oxfordshire's pioneering 20mph policy.

New countywide air quality website launched for Oxfordshire: A new Oxfordshire air quality website has launched – providing air quality guidance and resources across the county. The website oxonair.uk, which has been created in partnership between Oxfordshire County Council and district councils, aims to integrate all relevant air quality-related information in Oxfordshire under one single platform.

Permission granted for release of land for new Oxford United stadium: Oxfordshire County Council's cabinet has agreed to the release of a parcel of land at 'the triangle' north of Oxford near Kidlington. This will now be on a leasehold basis. Oxford United Football Club (OUFC) will be required to meet a series of conditions and secure planning permission from Cherwell District Council.

Pothole innovation trials: Results from a [maintenance trial](#) in Berrick Salome suggest a recycling-based technique reduces carbon by 71% and speeds up the scheme by 60%. 'In-situ cold recycling' reuses the existing surfacing material and saves hundreds of tonnes of carbon.



Boundary review: The Electoral Commission has issued its draft recommended changes to boundaries of County Council divisions, which would be in use for 2025 local elections. The Commission agrees with the recommendation of OCC to increase the number of councillors from 63 to 69, in line with population growth. A consultation will be open from 3 October to 11 December. <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/>

*****NEWS IN BRIEF*****

Highways works: Check this OCC website showing [upcoming highways repairs](#)

HIF1 Road: The secretary of state will now take the decision on new road and active travel infrastructure from A34 / Didcot to Golden Balls Roundabout

Benson relief road: Approval given to enter agreement with construction company

Remembrance Sunday: Invitations to the chair of the council to attend wreath laying can be sent to chairofthecouncil@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Smoking cessation: Support is being [offered during 'Stoptober'](#)

OCC wins bid for EV charging street lamps: OCC one of 6 authorities to [win funding](#)

Period poverty: Motion passed to supply menstruation products in OCC buildings

Speedwatch: Information shared by TVP – available for interested parishes

*******PARISH ROUND-UP*******

Not all parishes are covered – below is a selection of the main updates.

Chalgrove

- **Restricted Byway:** Consultation on proposed extinguishment closes 10 October
- **11 Bus:** Oxford Bus company are reviewing the timetable due to persistent late arrival of 08.35 to Oxford from Watlington (due to Icknield service).

Cuxham

- **Railing repair:** Damaged railings repaired after chasing up with officers

Lewknor

- **Manor Close:** SODC does not believe there is a planning enforcement issue. The issue will need to be referred back to OCC.
- **Postcombe traffic calming:** A site-visit was held with OCC officers and TVP to discuss speeding in Postcombe. An action plan was agreed with Lewknor PC.

Pishill with Stonor

- **HGVs:** Signage to deter HGVs from restricted byway have been ordered and will be delivered shortly.
- **Speed surveys:** Surveys have been commission by OCC in 3 locations.

Watlington

- **Red Kite View to Cuxham Road path:** Bloor have now provided a scheme acceptable to OCC. The scheme will pass to lawyers for sign off.
- **Watlington Relief Road:** Planning application expected towards end of October. Cllr Judy Roberts takes over from Cllr Duncan Enright as cabinet member responsible.
- **HGVs:** OCC provided a letter to parish councils confirming Watlington Area Weight Restrictions will not be amended or removed.