

# Oxfordshire County Council

# Parish Briefing

## Budget Special

### **£218M SECURED FOR MAJOR TRANSPORT LINKS IN DIDCOT GARDEN TOWN**

OCC, working in close partnership with South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse district councils, was awarded the funding to support the creation of thousands of new jobs and houses, including affordable homes. The successful outcome of the bid was announced by Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond, in the Spring Statement and is part of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF) programme. The package of measures has previously been identified in Local Plans to provide the infrastructure that helps delivers homes. The main schemes for developing Didcot are:

- A4130 widening from A34 Milton Interchange towards Didcot;
- A new "Science Bridge" over the A4130, Great Western Railway Line and Milton Road into the former Didcot A Power Station site;
- A new Culham to Didcot river crossing between the A415 and A4130;
- A Clifton Hampden bypass

All schemes include improved segregated walking and cycling routes which will give people real travel choice. The lack of suitable crossings over the railway line and river coupled with the success of the Science Vale area has resulted in heavy congestion. Construction is currently programmed for mid-2021 and completion is expected by March 2024.

### **COUNTY COUNCIL BACKS JOINT STRATEGIC SPATIAL PLAN**

OCC supports the aspirations of the [Oxfordshire Plan 2050](#), which was out to consultation until 26 March 2019. As part of the Housing and Growth Deal that the six Oxfordshire councils signed with the government, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will consider issues such as housing and infrastructure while also keeping and enhancing Oxfordshire's heritage and natural environment. The plan will also promote public transport, cycling and walking and will make healthy living and wellbeing a priority. The aspirations for Oxfordshire 2050 described in the consultation document also include supporting economic growth, improving housing availability and increasing transport connectivity across the county. In its submission to the consultation OCC's response included:

- Greater emphasis on the need for an increase in sustainable modes of travel, and to enhance messages around public health and the environment
- Highlight the need for charging points for electric vehicles into all premises together with full fibre broadband
- Focus on the need to ensure that cycling and walking levels and traffic reduction are radically improved

There will be another round of consultation in the summer, which will cover: place-shaping principles, policy options including levels of housing and employment growth, and broad locations for new development.

## **DELIVERING AN OLDER PEOPLE'S STRATEGY FOR OXFORDSHIRE**

A strategy setting out how agencies will work together to deliver a positive future for the county's older population has been approved. ['Living Longer, Living Better: Oxfordshire's Older People's Strategy'](#) was produced in 2018 following the redesign of the Health and Wellbeing Board. It was developed by OCC and Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group. Residents, health and charity organisations, professionals, businesses, the public sector and community groups were engaged in the strategy to ensure it represented the views and aspirations of the population. It includes four themes which emerged during the co-production phase: being physically and emotionally healthy; being part of a strong and dynamic community; housing, homes and the environment; and access to information and care. The draft strategy went out for wider public consultation between December 2018 and February 2019 and received 236 individual responses. Overall, there was strong agreement with the vision, priorities and outcomes. Following approval by the council's Cabinet and the Health and Wellbeing Board, planning is now under way on delivering the strategy.

## **COUNCIL SETS OUT PLANS FOR OXFORDSHIRE'S HOME CARE**

A review that explored options for the future of home care in Oxfordshire has concluded OCC should not provide its own in-house service but should create a new partnership model. The council purchases home care for adults from the independent market – although this accounts for less than 50% of the total home care places provided in the county. The rest is purchased by self-funders. During the 2016/17 period a number of home care providers exited the market and this prompted councillors to ask for a review of the system including an assessment of whether the council should provide its own service. In addition to creating a new model of partnership with the independent market the report also concluded that the council should develop alternative models of home care and improving outcomes for people receiving rehabilitation and reviewing arrangements for contingencies.

## **OXFORDSHIRE TO GET BOOST FROM WOMEN'S CYCLE RACE**

Oxfordshire can expect economic and health benefits from hosting a stage of the prestigious OVO Energy [Women's Tour professional cycling race](#) on Wednesday, June 12. A stage of the high-profile British cycling event has been secured by the county council and five districts in a three-year deal with race organisers SweetSpot. In a comparable stage in last year's race in Warwickshire, additional local expenditure linked directly to the event totalled £2m by around 100,000 spectators. Nearly two-thirds (63%) came from outside the county and 67% of spectators said they were inspired to cycle more often. This year's stage will start in South Oxfordshire and end at Blenheim Palace. Details of the exact route, which will also pass through the Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire, will be revealed in the coming weeks. About 100 professional riders will weave their way through towns, villages and rural areas and race highlights will be screened on ITV4. The race itself starts in Suffolk on 10 June, and takes riders across the country in six stages.

## JOINT COUNCIL CRACKDOWN ON BLUE BADGE FRAUD

OCC, in partnership with Oxford City Council's anti-fraud team and Cherwell District Council, recently undertook an on-street operation to detect and prevent abuse of the Blue Badge scheme in Oxfordshire last week. During the operation, it was estimated that 1,000 Blue Badges were checked across Oxfordshire, with 21 seized. In Oxford, 600 were checked and 12 seized. Blue Badge misuse is a criminal offence and can result in a fine of up to £1,000 and a criminal record. A Penalty Charge Notice will also be issued to anyone misusing a disabled parking bay. Many Oxfordshire residents rely on their Blue Badge to remain mobile and independent, enabling them to access goods and services that many of us take for granted. Inappropriate use of disabled parking bays can result in Blue Badge holders missing medical appointments, not being able to get out to buy food, or get to work. Every parking space really does matter.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Kind regards



**Steve Harrod**  
County Councillor  
*Chalgrove & Watlington Division*  
Cabinet Member for Children & Families  
**Oxfordshire County Council**  
M: 07944 077 209  
T: 01844 278 068  
E: [steve.harrod@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:steve.harrod@oxfordshire.gov.uk)