

**REPORT TO THE FARINGDON DIVISION – Buckland with Gainfield, Buscot, Coleshill, Eaton Hastings, Faringdon, Gt Coxwell, Lt Coxwell, Littleworth APRIL 2018
FROM CLLR Judith Heathcoat**

GENERAL OCC REPORT

GOVERNMENT MINISTER SIGNS £215M GROWTH DEAL FOR OXFORDSHIRE

Housing Minister Dominic Raab visited Heyford Park near Bicester last month to sign a deal to deliver a £215m investment in transport infrastructure and affordable housing in Oxfordshire. The Minister met Councillor Yvonne Constance, the county council's Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy. The deal was signed by all six members of the Oxfordshire Growth Board: Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council. March also saw the Oxfordshire Growth Board announce the first year of projects to be funded by an initial release of £30m for infrastructure projects as part of the Deal agreement. Government road money is for major improvements and cannot be used for day-to-day maintenance, but the investment will help to improve the overall standard of the road network. I attend these meetings.

HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (HIF)

On 21 March the Government announced 44 bids which have made it through to stage 2 of its Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to fund major infrastructure projects. Two of the three HIF bids submitted by OCC last autumn on behalf of Oxfordshire made it through and will now progress to a co-development stage:

Didcot Garden Town – £171m is sought for transport improvements including a Didcot Science Bridge and A4130 dual carriageway, a new river crossing at Culham and Clifton Hampden Bypass. This would support the delivery of over 22,000 homes in Didcot, Culham, Harwell and Berinsfield. Additionally, up to £70m of cycle and other sustainable transport improvements are proposed for inclusion in the bid plan.

West Oxfordshire Garden Village – £135m is sought for further upgrades to the A40, building on existing schemes and based on the approved A40 Long Term Strategy including development of the Rapid Transit network and additional highway capacity on A40 transport corridor. This would support the delivery of over 10,000 homes in Witney & Carterton, and around Eynsham.

Detailed business plans will now be developed for the £300 million of transport infrastructure investment behind these two bids. The Growth Board partners expect to hear this autumn whether or not the two bids going through have ultimately succeeded.

LIVE WELL OXFORDSHIRE WEBSITE CAMPAIGN

The OCC Adult Social Care Team is running a campaign to raise awareness of its *Live Well Oxfordshire* website. *Live Well Oxfordshire* brings together over 2,000 services and activities in one easy to search online directory – from residential care homes and care services that help people stay living at home, to transport services to get them out and about and new hobbies to enjoy. Residents can find useful information and advice on a range of subjects – all aimed at giving them greater choice and control over the support and services they, or a loved one, need. Details here: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/livewell

POTHOLE FUND BOOSTED TO REPAIR ROADS AFTER WINTER DAMAGE

Central Government has announced that local roads badly affected by recent winter weather will benefit from a further £100 million to help repair any potholes and other storm damage, Transport Secretary Chris Grayling announced on 26 March. Nationally, this money will help repair almost 2 million potholes as well as help protect the roads from any future severe weather. This is on top of the £75 million in government funding already given to councils from the Pothole Action Fund this year, as well as the additional £46 million boost for highways authorities announced just before Christmas. Around 7 million potholes across the UK will be filled due to this money, announced in the 2016 Budget. Oxfordshire's share of these funds comes to nearly £3m.

FORMER COUNTY COUNCIL DEPUTY LEADER DIES

Statement from the leader of the county council, Councillor Ian Hudspeth:

"It was with great sadness that we have learned that Rodney Rose, the deputy leader of Oxfordshire County Council until last year, died last month. I will miss him greatly as a friend and colleague. I worked closely with Rodney for many years. He was a tireless and dedicated local councillor representing

Charlbury and Wychwood. As a long-serving member of the Cabinet, he had wide-ranging responsibilities for council services. He was a tireless champion of Oxfordshire's fire and rescue service. He represented the county council on several major projects that will benefit Oxfordshire, including the east-west rail scheme and the planned flood alleviation scheme around west Oxford. These will be his legacy as a public servant. On behalf of everyone at Oxfordshire County Council who knew and worked with him, I send his family our deepest condolences.

I had known "Rodders" as he was affectionately known since 1997 when we were both elected to the County Council at the same time.

SPECIFIC REPORT FOR MY DIVISION

COUNCILLOR PRIORITY FUND as announced in last month's report, all Oxfordshire County Councillors now have a £15k budget to allocate to highways or community projects within their parishes. The process for submitting applications will be decided at Cabinet on 17th April 2018. I will then advise the town and parish councils how they can make applications.

As the Cabinet Member responsible for Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service I attend the monthly Strategic Leadership Team meetings – held at the county's fire stations - the agenda is diverse in content: One subject that is exercising us currently is that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary will be inspecting OFRS in line with the Policing and Crime Act 2017 later this year. Much collaborative work is being undertaken currently (again in line with the Act), with OFRS and Thames Valley Police this ensures that there is a synergy between police and fire to the benefit of the residents. The Thames Valley Fire Control Committee (the shared fire control room for Berkshire/Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes/Oxfordshire fire services) and The Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group have met this last month both of which I chair.

I have had two visits this last month to meet young people who are Fire Cadets – Kidlington OFRS HQ, and The Slade fire station in Cowley. These young people are so enthusiastic - one group performed a perfect fire drill and the second group spent time questioning the Chief Fire Officer and myself on our respective roles.

I am leading on two cross party reviews –one on the development of the new Corporate Plan and the second on a Governance Review. The Corporate Plan will format the strategic direction of the Council going forward and will be placed on our website and hard copy for all to read, and the Governance Review is examining the Council's Governance structure. Both the Corporate Plan and the Governance Review will affect my Division.

I have attended this last month a wide selection of meetings, the Growth Board which is mentioned in the first paragraph of this report, Informal Cabinet, Remuneration Panel. Leaders' Meeting (all Leaders of Cherwell, West Oxon, South and Vale, City and the County), attend.

I have spent 3 days in Newcastle/Gateshead at the annual LGA Fire Conference – there was an interesting cross section of speakers. The Grenfell Tower was on the agenda and Dame Judith Hackett spoken fluently and knowledgeably. There will I believe, be an impact on local authorities, the fire service and central government when her report is finally published.

I have been invited to the presentation by the Faringdon Rotary, ex Round Table 41 Club where another defibrillator was installed in the town, this time at the Faringdon Fire Station. The Faringdon Defibrillator Committee were represented together with the First Responder, Malcolm Gee.

I have attended my Parish Council meetings throughout the month and as always I will finish my report by saying that I hold a surgery in the Faringdon Library from 1000-1130 on the first Saturday of each month, my telephone number is 01367 241468 and my email is Judith.heathcoat@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

Judith

Judith Heathcoat
County Councillor – Faringdon Division
Deputy Leader of Oxfordshire County Council
April 2018