

District Councillors Report to Parish Councils

Watchfield and Shrivenham Ward

September 2021

Vale of White Horse District Council

Covid – The return to some form of normality has in the main been a success. However, care must still be taken and any guidance followed. We must all be careful and follow the guidance. If there should be any changes the Vale will keep Town and Parish Councils informed. In the meantime we encourage you to keep a watching brief on the Vale's website – www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk

As many of the villages in our Ward are served by Swindon Health services it is noted that there has been a significant increase in the infection rate and the number of Covid patients being treated at Great Western Hospital. A number of the in-patients are in the 20-30 age group.

Garden Waste Service – The suspension of the garden waste service continues. There is no indication at the time of writing when any service will resume. A special Extraordinary Council meeting has been called by the Vale's Opposition party led by Simon to discuss the ongoing situation and determine a way forward. This meeting will allow members of the public to address the Council. The meeting is to be held at the Council's offices – 135 Milton Park Didcot on Tuesday 21 September at 7pm. If you wish to speak you are requested to register with Democratic Services by 5pm on Monday 20 September. Speakers are encouraged to attend remotely using Microsoft Teams.

Afghan Refugees – The Vale is working closely with the County Council and other Oxfordshire partners to assist with finding suitable accommodation, health, education and other services. The County Council is the lead organisation and they have indicated that at this time items are not currently needed. However, there are a number of national appeals that include the British Red Cross. Additionally, there is an Amazon Wishlist that has been set up for specific items. This would be activated if the need arises and information shared by the County Council's social media channels. Details may be found on the County Councils website.

Planning – Last month we mentioned another possible housing development in Shrivenham. A formal planning application has been submitted to the Vale for 26 "Affordable" dwellings on land at Townsend Road. This application has caused a great deal of concern and numerous objections have been sent to the Vale Planning department. Simon and Elaine have sent a response in support of the Parish Council and local objections as well as outlining other concerns that would impact on the village.

During the month of August and the first week of September 16 Planning applications have been registered for the Watchfield and Shrivenham Ward. Most are for extensions and some listed building amendments.

Oxfordshire Plan 2050 – Parish Councils are encouraged to respond to the consultation on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Reg 18. The consultation is online at oxfordshireopenthought.org The Plan will set out the framework for future planning decisions on housing and infrastructure needs and closes on 8 October.

Joint Local Plan 2041- Part of the new Joint Local Plan is a Joint Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). This document will set out who, how and when the Councils will engage with local communities as part of the planning process. The consultation is open until midnight on Wednesday 20 October. It is recommended to comment by using the online comment form.

The “Call for Land and Buildings Available for Change” is an invitation to landowners, developers, community groups and others to submit potential development sites for the councils to consider for inclusion in the new Joint Local Plan. The responses are due to be returned by Midnight on 30 September. The requirements are as follows:

*located in or partially in South or Vale administrative boundaries

*able to accommodate 5 or more homes if proposed for residential use

*able to accommodate 500sqm or more if proposed for economic development

*an area of at least 0.25 hectares where an alternative use is proposed (or when site capacity is unknown)

Note: The process does NOT grant planning permission to any sites submitted.

Climate Emergency Advisory Committee – The next two meetings of this Committee have been arranged for 4 October and 10 January 2022.

Electric Vehicles Work is continuing with the County Council regarding installation of charging points. It is anticipated that all will be completed by next March.

Civil Parking Enforcement – The County Council has confirmed that the new scheme will “go live” on 1 November. Under the new powers officers will be able to enforce the majority of restrictions where traffic orders and regulatory signs and lines are in place. It should be noted that problems such as pavement parking are not automatically enforceable unless there are formal restrictions in place. In order for the scheme to settle PCN’s (Penalty Charge Notices) will not be issued until January 2022.

White Horse Community Lottery – The lottery was launched on Monday 14 June. The Lottery now has its own website: www.whitehorselottery.co.uk which provides all the information required to participate. The first draw will take place on Saturday 18 September.

Consultations – There are a few consultations for people to have their say these include the following:

Oxford City Council’s consultation portal

Have your Say on the Ox-Cam Arc - Open until 12 October and accessed via placebuilder.io/futureofthearc

OCC

Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC'S) – Open until 27 September and accessed via the Oxfordshire County Council's website Let's Talk page

Swindon Borough Council Local Plan 2026 – SBC are reviewing its adopted local plan to extend the period to 2036 - Open until 16 September and accessed via swindon.gov.uk/localplanreview

Swindon BC is also refreshing its Local Transport Plan – Open until 17 September and accessed via swindon.gov.uk/local_transport_plan_refresh_consultation

Swindon Borough Council – New Eastern Villages

The effect from the major reconstruction work at the White Hart Roundabout cannot be underestimated. The works were originally estimated to last for 12 weeks. This has now been increased by a further four weeks (likely to now be mid December). Traffic will be able to use the junction to leave the A419 southbound to join the A420 eastbound or to leave the A420 westbound to join the A419 southbound only. Diversions will be signposted. Obviously these works have had an impact on traffic flow and villages have seen a significant increase in traffic, often speeding, attempting to avoid any possible queuing on the A420.

As mentioned in our August report Swindon's continuing roadworks have had a knock on effect to the construction of the new roundabout on the A420. This roundabout is to serve the residents of Cross Trees Park and existing residents of Shrivenham. It is now unlikely that the roundabout will be constructed until late summer 2022.

Swindon BC NEV Planning – Two major planning applications have been approved. North of the A420 to expand South Marston and deliver the new village of Rowborough. This outline application will provide 2380 homes. South of the A420 Great Stall East will provide 1550 homes, a new secondary school, a new primary school, a 1000 vehicle park & Ride site, a sports hub, a local centre and open space.

Although we don't normally hold surgeries we are always available to deal with any issues.

However, following the success of the event we held in Shrivenham on Saturday 24 July we have arranged another **Meet your Councillors event**. We shall be at Watchfield Village Hall on Saturday 18 September from 1030-Midday and look forward to residents joining us for a chat about any concerns they may have or just have a moan about things that irritate them. We will be joined by County Councillor Yvonne Constance and representatives from the Faringdon Neighbourhood Police Team.

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