

## **District Councillors Report to Parish Councils**

### **Watchfield & Shrivenham Ward**

**February/Early March 2020**

#### **Vale of White Horse District Council**

Full Council met on 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> February. The meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> was primarily to agree the Budget for 2020/21 and the Capital programme to 2024/25. It was necessary to meet again on 19<sup>th</sup> in order to agree the Council Tax for the forthcoming year.

**The budget** included an investment of over £100k of initiatives to tackle the climate emergency. In total the base budget will increase by £600k. A number of savings were identified and these included the reduction of two Environmental Health Officer posts and to cease the out of hours service. In addition the Planning Department will no longer provide hard copy plans to town and parish councils. This is in response to the climate change proposal to reduce printing costs. It is proposed that T&PC's download from the website. However, if Towns & Parish Councils wish to have printed plans these will be provided at a small charge to cover printing and posting costs. For major developments the Vale will offer the documents on memory sticks in case there are any issues with access from the website. For larger developments the developer will be asked to provide sufficient copies.

**The Council Tax** was agreed at the meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> February. For the financial year 2020/21 the Vale element of the Council Tax will increase by £5. For full details of the new rates for individual Towns and Parish's please go to the Vale website.

**Climate Emergency Advisory Committee** – The Committee met on 28th January and will next meet on 30th March. The Chair of this Committee is the Vale's representative on Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Steering Group.

There was an open exhibition at Milton Park recently displaying the design and build of the new **Council Offices at Crowmarsh Gifford**. This new build is to replace the one that was subject to an arson attack on 15th January 2015. The Vale of White Horse District Council shares accommodation with South Oxfordshire and will continue to do so in the new offices.

**Civil Parking Enforcement** – There has been a slight delay with the Feasibility Report but it is hoped that this will be published in the next few weeks. In the meantime Thames Valley Police will be carrying out more parking enforcement in the South and Vale area.

**Planning Appeals** – There are currently three planning appeals from the Ward with the Planning Inspectorate. These appeals tend to take some time but we will advise once determined.

**Planning Applications and current developments** – There have been a number of planning applications for the Ward submitted to the Vale in recent weeks. These will of course go through the normal processes and consulted upon. The developments in Longcot and Shrivenham are ongoing. There was concern about a speculative inquiry for land off Station Road in Shrivenham. Elaine wrote to the Head of Planning who has responded and gives some comfort to Shrivenham residents.

**Planning Consultation** – A public consultation has been launched for people to comment on a draft Statement of Community Involvement. This Statement will form part of the Development Plan. The consultation runs until 5pm on 9th April. More details on [whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sci](http://whitehorsedc.gov.uk/sci)

**Shrivenham Neighbourhood Plan** – The referendum for Shrivenham's Neighbourhood Plan will be held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March. The work involved in preparing Neighbourhood Plans cannot be underestimated. Details of the plan can be found on the Vale's website.

**Sustainable Shrivenham** – Pleased to report that the Vale recycling team will be supporting the Sustainable Shrivenham event at the Memorial Hall on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March.

**Watchfield s106 funding** – Delighted that Watchfield has received more than £250k from developers to improve community facilities in the village.

**Defence Academy** – The Station Commander has arranged for the Local Liaison Group to meet on 17<sup>th</sup> March. Representatives from the County and District Councils, Parish Councils, Schools and the Police will be attending.

**South Oxfordshire's Local Plan** – The latest situation with the Plan is that SODc's Cabinet will be considering a report on 5<sup>th</sup> March to decide on the way forward. The recommendations are that Cabinet recommends to Council to a) note the update on the submitted Local Plan 2034 and related matters set out in the report b) leave the submitted Local Plan 2034 at examination and confirms this position to the secretary of state for Housing, Communities and Local Government. We will report back once a decision has been confirmed.

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

Simon Howell – 01793 784491 – [simon.howell@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:simon.howell@whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

Elaine Ware – 01793 783026 – [elaine.ware@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:elaine.ware@whitehorsedc.gov.uk)