

**GENERAL OCC REPORT**

**DAMNING OFSTED/CQC REPORT ON CHILDREN'S SEND SERVICES**

Oxfordshire's local area partnership (LAP) has apologised to families and committed to significant change to improve support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) following an inspection of services by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission in July. Inspectors identified that there are widespread systemic failings across the local area partnership leading to significant concerns about the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND, which must be urgently addressed. The LAP is made up of Oxfordshire County Council and NHS Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) Integrated Care Board (ICB) who are jointly responsible for the planning and commissioning of services (across education, health and social care) for children and young people with SEND in Oxfordshire. The partnership also includes Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Angry parents called for the OCC Cabinet Member for Children's Services to resign, but this has now been overtaken by events (see below). The Conservative Opposition has called a special meeting of Full Council to debate the issue. This will take place on October 13<sup>th</sup>.

**COALITION RUNNING OCC COLLAPSES AND COUNCILLOR RESIGNS LABOUR WHIP**

The Fair Deal Alliance of Liberal Democrats, Labour, and Green parties, which had run the council since 2021, was shattered in September when Labour pulled out of the coalition. Following the turmoil, senior Labour figures have claimed there were difficulties from the very start of the coalition and that a 'long sequence of events' had shaken the party's faith in the alliance. The Oxford Mail has reported that Council leader Liz Leffman dismissed Labour's claims as "self-justifying nonsense" and said the party "could have broken the agreement at any stage" if it was uncomfortable with the alliance. The Mail added that in an email to Labour members on Tuesday, Cllr Michael O'Connor, the secretary of the Oxfordshire County Labour Group, explained the reasons for the party's dramatic departure. He said "Over the last two years, our efforts to transform services and improve outcomes for residents have been persistently watered down by the Liberal Democrats and the Green party. From day one, the Liberal Democrats have been plagued by infighting. Cllr Leffman has been repeatedly challenged from within her own party, resulting in weak and indecisive leadership. A lack of any political agenda means that council time has been prioritised for political posturing." County Councillor Damian Haywood has resigned from the Labour Party over the issue and will sit as an independent.

**NEW CABINET**

The Liberal Democrats and Greens have announced they will try and run the council as a minority administration. The make-up of the new Cabinet has yet to be announced.

**OXFORD LTNS AFFECTING 'TEACHER RECRUITMENT' – REPORT**

Oxford's low traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs) are among the factors making it difficult to recruit and retain teachers, a report has found. The Oxfordshire Education Commission said the scheme, along with other transport issues and the cost of living and housing, was "fuelling recruitment and retention issues in Oxfordshire." Teacher vacancies in the county are more than double the national average, according to Department for Education figures.

## **GOVERNMENT AWARDS OCC £250,000 FOR 'SMART STREET POSTS' SCHEME**

The Government has awarded OCC £250,000 funding to test smart street posts that can house electric vehicle (EV) charging hubs, boost wireless coverage (including 5G), monitor air quality and display public information. The money is coming from the Government's Smart Infrastructure Pilots Programme (SIPP) and the amount awarded will be matched by the authority itself to create a total investment of £500,000.

## **EXTENDED TIMETABLE FOR CLOSURE OF OXFORD'S BOTLEY ROAD**

Network Rail has informed OCC that it will no longer be able to reopen Oxford's Botley Road at the end of October 2023, as previously planned. Due to complications experienced during its £161 million redevelopment of Oxford Station, Network Rail has requested that Botley Road remain closed to through traffic until the project is completed in October 2024. The original plan was to reopen the road at the end of next month when utility diversion work was due to be completed, and then close it again to through traffic from March - October 2024 for highway work and the replacement of Botley railway bridge. However, Network Rail has not been able to keep to this schedule due to problems caused by the discovery of an inverted brick arch under the surface, which stretches beneath the railway bridge.

## **RELEASE OF £1.55M DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR EXPANDED ZERO EMISSION ZONE**

At the Cabinet meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September, Cabinet agreed to progress to the second phase of the expanded Oxford City Zero Emissions Zone Scheme project – detailed work needs to be undertaken to forecast the scheme's potential benefits, impacts and scheme design. The approved budget for the development work £1.55m. The actual implementation of the scheme has been delayed by the Botley Road closure referred to above and there are calls from the Conservative Opposition to scrap the scheme, or at least put it on hold.

## **SECONDARY SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS OPENS IN OXFORDSHIRE**

Parents and carers can now apply for their Year 6 child to attend a secondary school for September 2024. Applications should be submitted online by 31 October 2023 at [oxfordshire.gov.uk/secondaryadmissions](https://oxfordshire.gov.uk/secondaryadmissions)

Parents and carers will be contacted with the result of their application on national offer day, 1 March 2024.

## **UPDATE ON RAAC IN A SMALL NUMBER OF ACADEMIES IN OXFORDSHIRE**

OCC has confirmed that none of the schools it runs is affected by the current RAAC ([Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete](#)) issue that has been prominent in the national news. Only one Oxfordshire secondary school is a local authority maintained school and around half of primary schools in the county are now academies. These schools are therefore run independently of the council and managed by the Regional Schools Director/Department for Education. OCC has been kept informed by a small number of academies in the county who do have RAAC issues but who have each come up with arrangements to ensure that children continue to be educated.

## **OXFORD UNITED STADIUM BID TO PROCEED**

Proposals for council-owned land to be leased to Oxford United FC to build a new stadium near Kidlington have been approved by Cabinet. The club now has to submit a planning application to Cherwell District Council

Add your parish specific report here.



## **District Councillor Report for East Challow Parish Council October 11<sup>th</sup> 2023**

### **Community bus service**

An e-survey has just been sent out to the Parish websites/newsletters etc. to gauge opinion, likely use and preferred destinations. OCC are also now exploring a reinstatement of a limited service of the old 57 route covering our villages west of Wantage and this has been put out to tender. Fingers crossed. In addition, at the recent meeting of Childrey Parish Council, Andrew Holding of the Wantage and Grove Station Supporters Group presented a good case for a Taxishare scheme which might also be supported by OCC and would start at Childrey include the Letcombes and East Challow. He is following this up, including exploring a key issue of whether it might be possible to use bus passes. I will keep you updated on both these issues but some good news is coming for the restoration of a community bust service.

### **Wantage Hospital**

I have updated you on the continuing discussions about the future of Wantage Hospital. There is now an opportunity for the public to have a discussion with the NHS (Oxford Health NHS Trust and The BOB [West Berks, Oxfordshire and Bucks] ICS [Integrated Care System]). There will be public engagement events at The Beacon on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 12.30-14.00 and Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 15.00-16.30. Please attend if you want to have an input.

### **Roads, drains and weeds!**

We are expecting a visit from Andrew Gant, the county councillor with responsibility for highways, to this ward in the next few weeks. Apart from the state of the roads generally and several roads specifically, I am anxious to talk to hm about (i) the road drainage in several villages, and (ii) the gradual encroachment of weeds along the roadsides and pavements in most of our villages. It will be important to speak to Andrew Gant because Highways have responded to me about the encroachment of weeds on the highways (including the pavement) with the advice "Please put it on FixMyStreet"!!!!!!

### **Plans for Abingdon reservoir continue despite local objections (from VOWHDC Communications)**

Plans for an expanded controversial reservoir near Abingdon have again been criticised by local communities, with Vale of White Horse District Council urging water providers to consider alternative solutions.

The council has reaffirmed its objections to the reservoir in a formal letter to Thames Water following submission of their revised Draft Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) to government. The alliance of the six water companies in the Southeast (Water Resources Southeast or WRSE) also submitted its revised draft Water Resources South East regional plan to government at the same time.

The draft WRMP not only progresses plans for the reservoir, known as the South East Strategic Reservoir Option (SESRO), but proposed to increase the capacity by 50% from 100Mm<sup>3</sup> to 150Mm<sup>3</sup>!!! Meanwhile, the proposed Severn to Thames Water transfer has been downgraded as an option.

The council argues that the plans fail to consider fully the long-term impacts to the local community and the environment, both during a decade of construction and the irreparable damage to the countryside.

A reservoir would also come at the expense of significant carbon emissions which the council argues would impact the district's ability to become carbon neutral by 2045.

Clearly. The Vale and County Council continue their objections.

The revised draft Water Resources Management Plan will now be reviewed by Government and, if endorsed, will be finalised and published in 2024.

Thames Water will continue with the development of their SESRO project, focusing on environmental data collection and ground investigation surveys over the coming months, with engagement and updates to stakeholders to be held in Autumn this year.

**Cllr Dr Paul Barrow**

**Ridgeway Ward**

**Vale of White Horse District Council**

**October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2023**

<b>Title</b>	Finance 2023/2024 & 2024/2025
<b>Authors</b>	Responsible Financial Officer
<b>Meeting</b>	East Challow Parish Council Meeting – 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2023

## 10. Finance 2023-2024

### 10.1. To note Barclays have closed our account, sending a cheque for the outstanding balance.

Barclays stated that they has been in contact to verify contact details and no information had been forthcoming, therefore the account was closed and a cheque was sent for the outstanding balance.

### 10.2. To approve not closing the Co-operative account yet and use the cheque from the account closure of the Barclays account as the opening balance at Unity Trust.

Prior decision of the council was to close the Co-operative account, and keep Barclays, due to the current issues, propose keeping co-operative until a new bank can be identified as suitable. To use the balance cheque from Barclays as the opening balance for the Unity Trust Account.

### 10.3. To approve the payments lists for October 2023

Total Staff Costs October: **£786.03**

All other October Payments:

Voucher No	Date	Supplier	Description	Payment Ref	Net	VAT	Total
62	11/10/2023	IONOS	Website	Direct Debit	15.00	3.00	18.00
61	15/10/2023	Information Commissioners Office	ICO Registration	Standing Order	35.00	0.00	35.00
60	11/10/2023	SSE Southern electric	Electricity - Pavilion	403075	158.12	7.89	166.01
59	11/10/2023	Adam Wise (Wise Garden Maintenance)	Grounds Maintenance	403074	870.00	0.00	870.00
58	11/10/2023	Jeremy Hanham (Jeremy Hanham)	Grounds Maintenance	403073	1040.00	0.00	1040.00
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>2118.12</b>	<b>10.89</b>	<b>2129.01</b>

### 10.4. To note the receipts lists for September 2023.

Voucher 7; £20,000 precept received from Vale of White Horse District Council.

**10.5. To note the reconciled bank accounts for 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023 (latest bank statements)**

	<b>Bank Reconciliation at 25/09/2023</b>		
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2023		77,462.85
	<b>ADD</b> Receipts 01/04/2023 - 25/09/2023		43,374.14
			120,836.99
	<b>SUBTRACT</b> Payments 01/04/2023 - 25/09/2023		27,604.12
<b>A</b>	<b>Cash in Hand 25/09/2023</b> (per Cash Book)		<b>93,232.87</b>
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash	25/09/2023	0.00
	Barclays	25/09/2023	0.00
	Cooperative	25/09/2023	71,799.52
	Unity Trust	25/09/2023	0.00
			<b>71,799.52</b>
	Less unrepresented payments		4,370.34
			67,429.18
	Plus unrepresented receipts		25,803.69
<b>B</b>	<b>Adjusted Bank Balance</b>		<b>93,232.87</b>
	<b>A = B Checks out OK</b>		

**10.6. To complete the quarterly budget review and approve proposed updates.**

(see Next Page)

**11. Finance 2024-2025**

**11.1. To approve budget for 2024-2025 and approve precept request of £43,950.**

See budget as detailed on next page.

**11.2. To approve updating the account for the precept to be paid in to, to the Unity Trust Account, if open when the paperwork is completed.**

Self-Explanatory.

PROPOSED UPDATES to FY 2023-2024							PROPOSED FY 2024-2025	
		Receipts		Payments		Current Balance	Receipts	Payments
		Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Budget	Budget
1000	<b>INCOME / RECEIPTS</b>							
1010	Precept	40000.00	40000.00				43950.47	
1020	Grants							
1030	CIL	33499.33	0.00					
1040	Cemeteries	500.00	115.00				500.00	
1050	Allotment Fees	250.00					250.00	
1060	Grass Cutting Contribution	1161.53	1161.53				1161.53	
1070	Community Events		12.92				50.00	
1080	VAT							
		£ 75,410.86	£ 41,289.45	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 45,912.00	£ -
	<b>EXPENDITURE / PAYMENTS</b>							
2000	<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>							
2010	Audit Costs			715.00	715.00			715.00
2020	Bank Charges			20.00				60.00
2030	Chairman's Allowance			350.00				350.00
2040	Elections			200.00	200.00			
2050	Expenses - WFH			312.00	95.33			312.00
2060	Expenses - Postage Copies & Printing			500.00	206.78			500.00
2070	Hall Hire			50.00	50.00			
2080	Insurance			915.00	914.63			1000.00
2090	IT Support & Software			1000.00				1000.00
2100	Office Equipment			3000.00	215.00			500.00
2110	Staff Costs (All Staff & HMRC)			8500.00	3835.05			8000.00
2120	Subscriptions (OALC, SLCC, OSS)			600.00	333.00			600.00
2130	Training			1000.00	0.00			1000.00
2140	Website			250.00	90.00	£ -		2000.00
		£ -	£ -	£ 17,412.00	£ 6,654.79		£ -	£ 16,037.00
3000	<b>VILLAGE MAINTENANCE</b>							
3010	Car Park			0.00				0.00
3020	Defibrillator			200.00	94.57			200.00
3030	Expenses - Handyman			100.00				100.00
3040	Green Oak Posts			750.00				
3050	Maintenance (Grass, Hedges, Trees & Litter)			20000.00	10056.99			23000.00
3060	Play Area - Maintenance and Inspection			675.00	138.00	£ -		675.00
		£ -	£ -	£ 21,725.00	£ 10,289.56		£ -	£ 23,975.00
4000	<b>RECREATION GROUND AND PAVILION</b>							
4010	Electricity - Pavilion			500.00	281.94			1000.00
4020	Maintenance - Recreation			200.00		£ -		200.00
		£ -	£ -	£ 700.00	£ 281.94		£ -	£ 1,200.00
5000	<b>CEMETERIES</b>							
5010	Maintenance - Cemeteries			200.00		£ -		200.00
		£ -	£ -	£ 200.00	£ -		£ -	£ 200.00
6000	<b>ALLOTMENTS</b>							
6010	Maintenance			200.00				200.00
6020	Planned Projects (from EMRs)			5500.00	5500.00			
6030	Water - Allotments			300.00	115.00	£ -		300.00
		£ -	£ -	£ 6,000.00	£ 5,615.00		£ -	£ 500.00
7000	<b>OTHER PROJECTS &amp; GRANTS</b>							
7010	Grants (Including S137)			700.00	250.00			700.00
7020	In year projects			800.00	2028.78			800.00
7030	Village Hall Grant (S137)			2000.00	1000.00	£ -		2500.00
		£ -	£ -	£ 3,500.00	£ 3,278.78		£ -	£ 4,000.00
8000	<b>NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN</b>							
8010	Neighbourhood Plan			0.00	0.00	£ -		0.00
		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -		£ -	£ -
		£ 75,410.86	£ 41,289.45	£ 49,537.00	£ 26,120.07	£ -	£ 45,912.00	£ 45,912.00

Less Income (No CIL) £ 7,625.47 <-- Spend from EMR

Less Income (No CIL) £ -

		Start of Year	Transfer	Planned Spend	Receipts	End of Year	Planned Transfers	End of Year
100	Operating Reserve	£ -	£ 20,000.00			£ 20,000.00		£ 20,000.00
		£ -				£ -		£ -
150	Office Equipment & Software	£ -	£ 3,500.00	£ 3,000.00		£ 500.00		£ 500.00
200	New Pavilion Project	£ -	£ 5,274.88			£ 5,274.88		£ 5,274.88
250	Additional Staff Costs, inc Training	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ 399.16		£ 4,600.84		£ 4,600.84
300	Football Pitch and Pavilion Repair	£ 3,921.00				£ 3,921.00		£ 3,921.00
350		£ 2,007.31		£ 2,007.31		£ -		£ -
400		£ 2,219.00		£ 2,219.00		£ -		£ -
450	Recreation Improvements	£ 1,009.00				£ 1,009.00		£ 1,009.00
		£ -				£ -		£ -
500	Cemetery Improvements	£ 2,576.06				£ 2,576.06		£ 2,576.06
550	Neighbourhood Plan	£ -				£ -		£ -
600	Election Costs	£ 1,650.00	£ 350.00			£ 2,000.00		£ 2,000.00
650	CIL	£ 32,040.29			£ 33,499.33	£ 65,539.62		£ 65,539.62
		£ 45,422.66	£ 34,124.88	£ 7,625.47	£ 33,499.33	£ 105,421.40		£ 105,421.40



<b>Title</b>	Training
<b>Authors</b>	Responsible Financial Officer
<b>Meeting</b>	East Challow Parish Council Meeting – 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2023

**Courses for New Clerk, should they wish to attend.**

ACCURATE AGENDAS AND EFFECTIVE MINUTES – online – Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023 £60 (OALC)

DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE ACTION PLANS – online – Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January £50 (OALC)

PREPARING FOR YEAR END AND AUDIT- online – Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February £30 (OALC)

INTRODUCTION TO LOCAL COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION (ILCA) – online – Various £120 (SLCC)

**Courses for Councillors:**

MANAGING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE – online – Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September £30 (OALC)

COUNCILLOR FUNDAMENTALS – online – Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November £55 (OALC)

FINANCE FOR COUNCILLORS – online – Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February £30 (OALC)

**Suitable For Both Clerk and Councillors:**

PLANNING - HOW LOCAL COUNCILS FIT INTO THE PLANNING SYSTEM, EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO PLANNING APPLICATIONS – in person WITNEY – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November £55 (OALC)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – in person DIDCOT – Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January £110 (OALC)

## Correspondence 1

<b>Title</b>	Water At the Cemetery
<b>Authors</b>	Member of Public
<b>Meeting</b>	East Challow Parish Council Meeting – 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2023

Several years ago we mentioned the need for a water supply for the cemetery to be put in. Our son has been buried there for seven years next month and there is still no supply unless you walk all the way round to the lych gate to collect and carry water back or bring your own in containers