

# NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting & Annual General Meeting & Ordinary Parish Meeting held in St Giles Church on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022

<b>Attendees</b>	Cllr. James Nettleton (JN) Cllr. Graham Howlett (GH) Cllr. Mike Black (MB) Cllr. Peter Ablett (PA) Cllr. Duncan Howlett (DH) Nikki Howlett (NH) (Resident) Colin Andrews (CA) (Resident) Eva Goble (EG) (Clerk)
<b>Apologies</b>	Cllr. David Turner (DT) (SODC) Cllr. Robin Bennett (RB) (OCC)

Ref	Item	Notes	Action
<b>AGM AND APM</b>		<b>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING &amp; ANNUAL PARISH MEETING</b>	
<b>22/22</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	The Chair (JN) opened the meeting at 19:30 and welcomed all present.	
<b>23/22</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	As above	
<b>24/22</b>	<b>2021 to 2022 Annual Reports</b>	<p><b>Report from Chair – James Nettleton (Appendix A)</b>                      Received with thanks to JN with no comments. CA suggested that the report should be published in Village Voice.</p> <p><b>Financial Report from RFO – James Nettleton (Appendix B)</b>                      RFO advised the precept should remain the same at £4,250 for the year. Year end accounts approved by all. JN to submit to auditor, MB will put on notice board and Clerk will upload to website.</p> <p><b>Reports from SODC – David Turner (Appendix C)</b>  <b>Summary Annual Report – David Turner (Appendix D)</b>  <b>May Report from OCC – Robin Bennett (Appendix E)</b>  <b>Annual Report – Robin Bennett (Appendix F)</b></p>	<b>JN MB Clerk</b>
<b>25/22</b>	<b>Open Forum &amp; Village Matters</b>	<p>GH proposed that the parish council should support the proposal for a reservoir at Steventon and that the PC write to SODC councillor David Turner. It was agreed that GH would contact DT. It was also agreed that this matter be discussed further at the next meeting.</p> <p>CA enquired why so few people come to the parish meetings. The date of this meeting was published in Village Voice and elsewhere to make residents aware that they were welcome to attend.</p>	<b>GH</b>
<b>26/22</b>	<b>Election of Officers</b>	JN asked if anyone would like to stand as Chair but all were happy for JN to continue. PA proposed and GH seconded that JN be reappointed as Chair and RFO. JN thanked everyone for their continued support. JN asked if anyone wanted to audit the PC accounts and paperwork in light of the recent local fraud case. All agreed this was unnecessary.	

27/22	Close	The AGM & APM meeting closed at 19:50.	
<b>ORDINARY PARISH MEETING commenced at 19:55</b>			
28/22	<b>Declarations and Register</b>	Declarations of acceptance of office and Register of members' interest all completed for the five Councillors.	<b>All</b>
29/22	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	None.	
30/22	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b>	Minutes of the meeting held on 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2022 were agreed by the Councillors who had been present, approved and signed by the Chairman.	
31/22	<b>Matters Arising (not on agenda)</b>	None.	
<b>32/22 Councillor &amp; Parish Reports</b>			
32a/22 DH/GH	<b>Community Liaison/Notice Board</b>	MB agreed to take over responsibility for keeping the parish notice board updated.	<b>MB</b>
32b/22 DH/GH	<b>Planning Applications</b>	No applications received.	
32c/22 PA/MB	<b>Church Revival</b>	No updates. JN advised that in due course a plan would need to be made about whether or not the church could remain open due to work that would be required in keeping the building safe.	
32d/22 MB/JN	<b>Event Co-ordination</b>	No updates. JN planning tennis tournament for September.	<b>JN</b>
32e/22 MB	<b>Website Management</b>	Updating of the new look website still in progress with information waiting to be uploaded by the website developer.	
32f/22 PA/MB	<b>Neighbourhood Plan</b>	No updates as still on hold.	
32g/22 MB/GH/	<b>New Highways/ Potholes</b>	The missing chevron on the A329 has not yet been replaced by Highways. MB to chase Highways for update.	<b>MB</b>
32h/22 JN	<b>Responsible Financial Officer</b>	All agreed that the invoice from Zurich insurance for £237.17 and clerk's pay of £547.04 be approved for payment.	
32i/22 DH	<b>Footpaths</b>	Nothing to discuss.	
33/22 AOB	<p>a) Residents' Questionnaire Presentation: It was agreed that MB be reimbursed for postage and other associated costs. Proposed by PA and seconded by DH. It was agreed that the analysis of the survey be uploaded on the website and also on WhatsApp. JN thanked MB and EG on behalf of the PC for their work involved in executing the survey.</p> <p>b) Flagpole installation: DH informed that a hole had been dug and filled with concrete for the flagpole to be erected. The work had been carried out very smoothly by Ian Fitchett and his digger. JN conveyed thanks from the PC to Ian.</p> <p>c) Millennium Stone Tree Project: The area has been tidied and the grass around the stone cut resulting in temporary loss of the daffodils. Tree planting is scheduled for September with the native crabapple the preferred choice. CA informed that the cost per tree has risen to £85. £1500 is the expected cost for the whole project. PA reminded the meeting that it may</p>		



## **Appendix A – Report from Chair**

### **Chairman's Report for 2021/22 Year:**

James Nettleton

This year has seen the beginning of the end of the Covid 19 pandemic. We have started to see a return to a normal life, albeit probably described as the 'new normal'.

Our new Parish Clerk Eva Goble has settled in and is proving a real asset to our parish. As I hope you are all aware meetings are now taking place back in the Church and I welcome all villagers to attend when able.

The pandemic has seen the slow down of the gravel extraction threat. Albeit the threat remains, revision deadlines have come and gone and we await with bated breath news of the councils next move. What is now referred to as PAGE 2020 remains in force with a strong team ready to counter any threat we may come to face.

I trust you have all seen the speed awareness device in action and that it has made an impact to drivers' speeds in the village.

After many years of reporting, complaining and various other methods of communication I am relieved to say that the veritable 'duck pond' of a hole on the far end of Holcombe Lane has now been filled in.

I hope you are now all regular visitors to our website where we post village updates and where local information can be found. You will find all the relevant parish council information on the site as well as up and coming events and contact details for all the councillors.

<http://www.newington.org.uk/>

We are having a Queen's Jubilee party in St Giles Church on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022 that I hope you will attend and I will also be lighting a Jubilee Beacon on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> at the top of the hill (to the south of Newington) in the evening.

# **Newington Parish Council**

## **Report by the Responsible Financial Officer for 2021/22**

### **Revenue Budget**

Newington Parish Council (NPC) precept has been increased by 6.25% (£250) to aid with increasing inflation costs, albeit below current inflation increases and predictions only the slight increase was deemed necessary.

During 2021/22 NPC received income totalling £5,028.69 which includes the annual precept to cover day to day activities and responsibilities of the Council. NPC once again stayed within the budget with expenditure for the year, with an underspend of £314.90. SIL payments of £988.69 were received.

### **Community Support**

During 2020/21 the Parish Council continued to support the local community with donations of £400 to the PCC who maintain the church which is used for the PC meetings. We do anticipate making a PAGE donation this coming year due to growing concerns about the gravel application being resurrected.

### **End of Year Position**

As at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 the Parish Council carried forward a balance of £6,442.95 and £547.17 of savings of which £202 is marked for specific grant worthy projects leaving £6,788.12 which leaves the council in a healthy position and in line with best practise that recommends the Council should not hold reserves greater than double the annual precept when you exclude the one off SIL payments.

James Nettleton  
Responsible Financial Officer  
Newington Parish Council  
May 2022

# Newington Parish Council

## Report by the Responsible Financial Officer for 2021/22

<u>Yr Ended March 2022 P&amp;L</u>		<u>2021/22 Actual</u>		<u>2022/ 23 Budget</u>
Income				
	Precept	4,000.00		4,250.00
	Allotments	40.00		40.00
	Interest			0.25
	SIL	988.69		
	Grants			
		<b>5,028.69</b>		<b>4,290.25</b>
Expenses				
	Clark	-2,211.41		-2,350.00
	HMRC/ Audit	-81.66		-400.00
	Insurance	-237.17		-474.17
	OALC			
	Audit			-120.00
	Donations	-400.00		-400.00
	Website/ Other	-565.55		-1,500.00
	Grant spending	-1,218.00		-400.00
	Speed Aware Dev			
		<b>-4,713.79</b>		<b>-5,644.17</b>
Net income and expenses		<b><u>314.90</u></b>		<b><u>-1,353.92</u></b>
Check:	Cash B/F	6,128.05		
	Net movement	314.90		
	2021 creditors	-400.00		
	2022 creditors	400.00		
	Cash C/F	<b>6,442.95</b>		
	2022 creditors	-400		Donation to PC

James Nettleton  
Responsible Financial Officer  
Newington Parish Council  
May 2022

## Appendix C – Report from SODC

### **SODC Councillor's Monthly Report May 2022**

**COVID SODC Councillor's Budget.** Each South Oxfordshire District Councillor was provided with a £2000 budget to assist volunteers helping people in COVID19 related problems. I have kept informed all Parish Councils and Parish meetings and other appropriate organisations of the grants available. From my budget I have provided the following:

- **Chalgrove Parish Council.** £500 towards food parcels etc for disadvantaged people.
- **CHATS (Chalgrove Transport Scheme).** Two grants one of £400 and another later one of £300 towards all the hygiene equipment required during Covid19 restrictions when transporting people to hospitals, doctor's surgeries and dentists, etc.
- **Chalgrove Brass Band COVID Protective instrument equipment** a grant of £90.

The scheme is now closed.

**My annual Councillors budget of £5000** towards community projects have been distributed as follows:

1. **Chalgrove/Watlington First Steps Children's Centres.** £2910 towards various projects.
2. **Berrick Salome Parish Council.** £800 towards a laptop computer to allow planning applications to be visible on a screen at their Parish Council meetings.
3. **Chalgrove Parish Council.** £1281 for a tennis practice wall on the recreation field.

A new scheme will commence late summer 2022. I will keep you informed when it opens for requests.

**Joint SODC & VoWH Local Plan.** Work is continuing on the next Local Plan which is an ongoing process which starts soon after the adoption of a Local Plan which you will recall SODC was forced into adopting by the then Secretary of State Robert Jenrick

**New planning application for 160 homes.** This is on the Watlington side of the 120 homes being still constructed by Miller Homes. You may recall that SODC turned down the Miller Homes application, but on appeal the Secretary of State gave it planning permission.

**Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy.** SODC has now provided charging points in car parks in Wallingford in line with the Countywide strategy with more to come in SODC owned car parks in the future.

**Cornerstone's summer of fun.** Visit Cornerstones website for details of theatre and music productions, art weeks, etc. <https://www.cornerstone-arts.org/>

**Experience the buzz when elite cycling returns to South Oxfordshire.** People across South Oxfordshire will be able to experience the buzz of one of Britain's biggest cycling events when The Women's Tour returns to South Oxfordshire on Saturday 11 June. Thousands of people are expected to line the route as about 100 professional riders race through the streets of Didcot, Wallingford and Crowmarsh. Details on the SODC website

**Leisure facilities.** All the SODC Leisure centres are now open and flourishing again following the closures instigated under previous COVID rules, but with precautions still operating.

#### **Update Homes for Ukraine scheme.**

**Accommodation.** The majority of the accommodation visits across the county have now either been carried out or booked in – the availability of hosts over Easter has played a part here. The number of properties being rejected for overcrowding or poor housing conditions remains very low in every district. There are a small number of partially approved properties that are waiting for improvements. The number of properties where guests have arrived before the accommodation visit takes place is also very low. We will continue to book in visits for new host properties that enter the system over the next few weeks.

**Community support.** As a partnership, we have been working with Asylum Welcome to ensure that both hosts and Ukrainians have access to a network of support – and that it is as safe and effective as possible. Asylum Welcome is keeping a track of all offers of community support across the county. To make best use of this significant response, together, we are proposing to expand the community liaison officer resource available in each district and the city to coordinate, advise and refer guests to the support that is available to them, including across housing, education and health.

**Schools.** School places are being found for Ukrainian children. Applications for school places from guests are being considered alongside all other applications but the county council is working hard to ensure that places are offered as close as possible to where guests are living. We recognise that schools provide significant wrap around support to all children and are often the first port of call for identifying welfare concerns, so we are encouraging hosts and guests to register the Ukrainian children in their care for school places as soon as possible once they have arrived in Oxfordshire. The County Council is also writing to all headteachers when schools return for the summer term, reminding them of their responsibility to provide free school meals for any Ukrainian children that are placed with them. Officers will contact any individual schools where issues are identified to resolve these quickly.

**Health.** The government has recently published some guidance to help primary health care professionals assess and address the health needs of Ukrainian guests. Councillors may find some of the insight shared within this guidance helpful in understanding more about our guests.

**Signposting.** A reminder, councillors can direct general Ukraine queries to:

- Website: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ukraine](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ukraine)
- Oxfordshire Ukraine helpline: +44 1865 966444 / 01865 966 444 (opening hours: 8.45am - 5pm, Monday to Friday. Closed weekends and bank holidays).

Email: [ukraineresponse@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

David Turner

South Oxfordshire District Councillor (Chalgrove Ward)

3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022

David Turner  
SODC Councillor (Chalgrove Ward)  
4<sup>th</sup> May 2021

## **SODC Councillor's Report April 2022**

### **Support for Ukraine Update**

Here is the link to the government's local sponsorship scheme Homes for Ukraine where individuals and organisations can register their interest to provide accommodation for Ukrainian refugees and find out more about the scheme.

We stand by the people of Ukraine in the face of the invasion by Russia and our thoughts are with everyone affected by this action.

We will help in any way we can, working too with our local partners, including resettling refugees locally.

### **Government support schemes**

Guidance on government support available to Ukrainian nationals and their family members. This includes the Ukraine Family Scheme, which allows family members of British nationals to come to or stay in the UK; and the Local Sponsorship Scheme for Ukraine, which enables people and organisations such as charities, businesses and community groups to sponsor Ukrainians who do not have established families in the country, so they are able to come to the UK.

### **Making a donation**

Many people in the county want to do whatever they can to help, and one way is to make a donation.

The best current route to donate and support is via the Disasters Emergencies Committee. The UK Government has said it will match fund up to £20m. DEC works with 15 charities including Oxfam, Christian Aid and Save the Children.

### **There are a number of other international charities you can support:**

The British Red Cross has launched a Ukraine Crisis Appeal to support the work of the Ukrainian Red Cross to fund food, water, first aid, medicines, warm clothes and shelter.

The UNHCR refugee agency is collecting monetary donations for humanitarian assistance, emergency shelter and relief items like blankets. It will also fund psychological support for refugees.

The UN's children's charity, UNICEF, is accepting donations to help ensure child health and protection services are sustained and families have clean water and food.

### **Giving safely**

If you're looking to donate to causes working in Ukraine and neighbouring countries, you should make a few simple checks before giving:

Check the charity's name and registration number at [www.gov.uk/checkcharity](http://www.gov.uk/checkcharity)

Make sure the charity is genuine before giving any financial information

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## **Appendix D – Summary Annual Report from SODC**

### **Newington Annual Parish Meeting 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**SODC Operational Issues in COVID.** At this time last year, I reported that since the SODC offices closing in March 2020 there have been very few staff operating from SODC's headquarters in Milton Park and that fortunately modern technology had enabled the Council to keep functioning with officers working from home using computers and telephones. There has now been a gradual return of staff to our offices in Milton Park with about 50 regularly being there with the rest still operating from home.

The Council has continued operating all the various schemes, particularly financial, that the Government has put in place to keep the economy functioning as best as it can. In my opinion the officers have been great in discharging all the duties of the Council as well as the extra duties given to them by National Government. The Government has agreed to fund the extra costs involved.

The Council has on a regular basis informed Parish and Town Councils and Parish meetings of the information surrounding COVID19. In addition to advice the Council has regularly updated Parish and Town Councils and Parish meetings on COVID statistics for South Oxfordshire with comparisons with other Oxfordshire Districts and National trends.

Each South Oxfordshire District Councillor was provided with a £2000 budget to assist volunteers helping people in COVID19 related problems. I have kept informed all Parish Councils and Parish meetings and other appropriate organisations of the grants available. From my budget I have provided the following:

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### **3. Chalgrove Parish Council.** £1281 for a tennis practice wall on the recreation field.

**Joint SODC & VoWH Local Plan.** Work is continuing on the next Local Plan which is an ongoing process which starts soon after the adoption of a Local Plan which you will recall SODC was forced into adopting by the then Secretary of State Robert Jenrick

**Chalgrove Airfield.** Homes England withdrew their application for 3000 homes on the airfield following a damning report from the Civil Aviation Authority about the safety of their proposals. They said that they would submit another plan late 2021/early 2022 probably involving land which they had purchased to the North of the airfield. We still await that submission which would have to go through the normal planning system.

**New planning application for 160 homes.** This is on the Watlington side of the 120 homes being still constructed by Miller Homes. You may recall that SODC turned down the Miller Homes application, but on appeal the Secretary of State gave it planning permission.

**Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy.** SODC has now provided charging points in car parks in Wallingford and Henley in line with the Countywide strategy with more to come in SODC owned car parks in the future. At present there is a delay in making them fully operational due to the worldwide shortage of electronic memory chips.

**Leisure facilities.** All the SODC Leisure centres are now open and flourishing again following the closures instigated under previous COVID rules, but with precautions still operating.

#### **Update Homes for Ukraine scheme.**

**Accommodation.** SODC is currently processing approximately 300 people who are refugees. The majority of the accommodation visits across the county have now either been carried out or booked in – the availability of hosts over Easter played a part here. The number of properties being rejected for overcrowding or poor housing conditions remains very low in the district. There are a small number of partially approved properties that are waiting for improvements. The number of properties where guests have arrived before the accommodation visit takes place is also very low. We will continue to book in visits for new host properties that enter the system over the next few weeks. There is frustration about the delays in the Visa issue process.

**Community support.** As a partnership, we have been working with Asylum Welcome to ensure that both hosts and Ukrainians have access to a network of support – and that it is as safe and effective as possible. Asylum Welcome is keeping a track of all offers of community support across the county. To make best use of this significant response, together, we are proposing to expand the community liaison officer resource available in the district and the city to coordinate, advise and refer guests to the support that is available to them, including across housing, education and health.

**Schools.** School places are being found for Ukrainian children. Applications for school places from guests are being considered alongside all other applications but the county council is working hard to ensure that places are offered as close as possible to where guests are living. We recognise that schools provide significant wrap around support to all children and are often the first port of call for identifying welfare concerns, so we are encouraging hosts and guests to register the Ukrainian children in their care for school places as soon as possible once they have arrived in Oxfordshire. The County Council is also writing to all headteachers when schools return for the summer term, reminding them of their responsibility to provide free school meals for any Ukrainian children that are placed with them. Officers will contact any individual schools where issues are identified to resolve these quickly.

**Health.** The government has recently published some guidance to help primary health care professionals assess and address the health needs of Ukrainian guests. Councillors may find some of the insight shared within this guidance helpful in understanding more about our guests.

**Signposting.** A reminder, councillors can direct general Ukraine queries to:

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- Oxfordshire Ukraine helpline: +44 1865 966444 / 01865 966 444 (opening hours: 8.45am - 5pm, Monday to Friday. Closed weekends and bank holidays).

Email: [ukraineresponse@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

David Turner

South Oxfordshire District Councillor (Chalgrove Ward)

19<sup>th</sup> May 2022

## **Appendix E – May Report from OCC**

May 2022 County Councillor Report – Cllr Robin Bennett  
[Robin.bennett@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Robin.bennett@Oxfordshire.gov.uk)

### **Homes for Ukraine**

The system is in full swing across Oxfordshire to support the government's Homes for Ukraine scheme. While we still have limited government guidance in some areas, in particular around grant payments, all partners across the county are working together to find solutions and put guests at the heart of any action required. The accommodation and safeguarding checks are progressing well, with the backlog of home checks almost completed, and with no significant concerns raised this week.

As previously mentioned, the £200 payments to our guests to help them with immediate costs while they settle in are being made by whoever makes the first physical contact with them as part of these checks. This week, we have worked to agree that moving forward we will usually issue this payment as a pre-loaded card rather than cash, which can be used online, in shops or at a cashpoint, just like a normal debit card. We are offering our guests a choice, so if they would prefer to receive this payment as cash, they are invited to let us know.

OCC have been working with Asylum Welcome to develop a proposal to expand the community liaison officer resource available in each district and the city. The purpose would be for this resource to coordinate, advise and refer guests to the support that is available to them, including across housing, education and health. This has now been agreed and recruitment to these posts has begun. OCC have continued to process school place applications and are also recruiting an additional admissions officer to manage demand and avoid administrative delays.

You may have seen that the Department for Work and Pensions has laid emergency regulations so those arriving in the UK from Ukraine, as a result of the Russian invasion, can access Universal Credit and jobs support immediately. Families can therefore claim for free school meals in the usual way under the usual eligibility criteria, which requires providing a national insurance number. To reassure councillors, in Oxfordshire, we are asking all schools to provide free school meals where appropriate and not wait to receive a national insurance number. We will continue to put the needs of children first.

A reminder, you can direct general Ukraine queries to:

- **Website:** [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ukraine](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ukraine)
- **Oxfordshire Ukraine helpline:** +44 1865 966444 / 01865 966 444 (opening hours: 8.45am – 5pm, Monday to Friday. Closed weekends and bank holidays).
- **Email:** [ukraineresponse@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

### **Gifts for Ukrainian children and donated 4x4 from the County Fire Service**

Thanks to the kindness and generosity of our fire and rescue colleagues, hundreds of teddies are on their way to Fire Aid to be given to Ukrainian children escaping the horrors of war in their country. The donations were collected by our teams at Didcot, Wheatley, Thame, Slade, Rewley Road, Faringdon, Burford, Bicester, Banbury, Kidlington, Deddington and Chipping Norton. We've also donated a decommissioned 4 x 4 vehicle that is currently on its way to support people in Ukraine. While it's still road-worthy, we've replaced the vehicle with a newer model and it's no longer needed by our fire and rescue service. Normally we auction used vehicles when they're replaced but this time we've donated it to support such an important cause.

### **New County council policy on Tree Planting**

A change in approach will help increase the number of trees in Oxfordshire after a new policy was approved. It will put the emphasis on a 'presumption in favour of trees' because of the host of benefits they provide to the climate, the environment and the places where people live.

We want to move away from simply maintaining and managing the trees on our land to actively encouraging and enabling more trees to be planted in both rural and urban settings. This can help tackle climate change and increase resilience to it, as well as improving people's quality of life – both now and in the future.

One requirement of the policy is to plant two new trees for every tree that has to be removed from county council land. It also promises to explore new tree planting opportunities and extra investment to carry it out, stricter guidelines for those wanting to remove existing trees and implement proactive care to prolong the lives of established trees.

The main climate benefits of trees, due to their ability to mitigate extremes of heat, cold, wind, rain, and drought, include:

- removing and storing carbon from the air
- reducing urban temperatures through canopy cover
- preventing flooding by reducing the pressure on drainage systems
- wind speed reduction
- cutting air pollution
- enhancing biodiversity
- supporting sustainable agriculture.

Their presence has also been shown to contribute directly to improved wellbeing and mental health, enhance street design and even reduce crime. Research has shown that public open space with trees tends to be used more than space without trees and this increases casual surveillance – deterring criminal activity.

The new policy will not compromise the council's ability to deal with trees which pose a danger to the public or to property.

The scope, scale, and business case for direct investment into a tree planting programme will be considered as the next step for key consideration as part of the 2023/24 annual budget setting process. Money to fund tree planting would also be sought from numerous national grants, sponsorship, carbon offsetting by businesses and developer contributions.

### **Climate Action Study and online tool**

We're working with our council partners across Oxfordshire to develop an online tool to help people take action against climate change in their own lives. The suggestions provided will be tailored to the lifestyle of individuals to make sure they're relevant (for example, only suggesting ideas to reduce car journeys for those people who have a car) with the aim to reduce residents' carbon emissions. As one of our strategic priorities, we'd be very grateful if you could please share the survey and help us gather as broad a range of responses as possible. The survey can be found here:

**[https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/climate-change/survey\\_tools/survey14869](https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/climate-change/survey_tools/survey14869)**

## **Appendix F – Annual Report from OCC**

<b>Title</b>	County Councillor's Report
<b>Author</b>	Cllr Robin Bennett Berinsfield & Garsington Division
<b>Date</b>	ANNUAL REPORT
<b>Contact</b>	<a href="mailto:robin.bennett@oxfordshire.gov.uk">robin.bennett@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a> 07979 646815

### **I will keep this report brief as it's my first year...the big news was the Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance taking control of the council in May 2021.**

The Alliance consists of Lib Dem, Labour and Green councillors, who between them now hold 40 out of the 63 seats on Oxfordshire County Council. I took part in discussions to agree the priorities for our four year term, which are as follows:

1. Tackling the Climate Emergency through rapid decarbonisation, proper accounting of carbon emissions and ambitious targets, as well as supporting climate resilience;
2. Tackling inequalities and providing opportunities for everyone in Oxfordshire to achieve their full potential;
3. Prioritisation of wellbeing – improved outcomes for residents and improved air quality and access to libraries, cultural facilities and the arts;
4. Review and reform of the social care system to prioritise end-users and carers with a focus on co-operative and community provision of social care, helping those who want to stay in their own homes;
5. Increased investment in an inclusive, integrated, county-wide active and sustainable travel network fit for the 21st Century to improve choice and reduce car journeys across the County;
6. Improved access to nature and green spaces for all communities, and landscape-scale nature recovery across the county;
7. Supporting all our children and young people to achieve improved health, wellbeing and educational outcomes; improved provision for children with additional needs; all decision-making to have regard to impact on young people and future generations;
8. The creation of a resilient local democracy where decisions are devolved to the lowest possible level and residents are meaningfully involved in the decisions that affect their lives;
9. Support for local employment and businesses, working with partners to make Oxfordshire a centre for green and sustainable technologies through a local 'Green New Deal'; we will use our purchasing power and contracts to maximise benefit to local employment and businesses.

### **Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council end formal partnership**

At the start of 2022, Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council brought their formal partnership arrangements to an end. The arrangement between the two councils, which took the

form of joint services under a single chief executive, had been in place since September 2018. The ending of the partnership meant that the former joint chief executive has returned to her post as CEO for Cherwell District Council. Stephen Chandler has stepped up as Interim CEO while a long-term solution is considered.

### **Proposal to move Oxford United FC to Stratfield Brake (Kidlington)**

Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet conducted a public engagement exercise on the proposal from Oxford United Football Club to develop a new 18,000 capacity football stadium with linked leisure and commercial facilities at Stratfield Brake in Kidlington (on land owned by the County Council), and discussions will continue into the new year.

### **Oxfordshire County Council Budget 2022-2023**

OCC passed the first budget of the Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance in February. We want to build on our strengths while confronting the challenges we face: addressing climate change, tackling inequality, strengthening the resilience of individuals and communities, fostering more social cohesion and common purpose.

We called on national government to respond to the challenges facing local government in a meaningful way through the autumn spending review. Unfortunately, they did not. Instead, in adult social care for example, they directed that local authorities should use council tax to meet rising costs. This represents a double-whammy for households at a time of real pressure on living costs.

We found that the sums provisioned for capital projects by the previous administration were inadequate. This is true of Kennington Bridge, where the £50million estimate accepted by the previous administration is now projected to be £87million. We had no choice but to provide £27million of the additional funding to allow this project to proceed.

The largest examples are the two Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) schemes. When the previous administration committed to government that it would deliver these schemes, it accepted the full financial liability for any additional costs arising. We now face disruptions to the supply chain, very significant inflation and labour shortages in the construction sector, through a combination of COVID and the policies related to the UK leaving the EU, which will inevitably affect the cost of these projects. We have asked officers to redouble their scrutiny of future capital projects.

Our budget proposal in December had more than double the number of responses received last year. Additional proposals as a result of the consultation included:

1. £500,000 to support the review into home-to-school transport to assist in transitioning to any new arrangements, with a particular focus on supporting more active travel and more sustainable transport opportunities.
2. We are offering tenants of the Council in community assets a one-year rent holiday to take account of financial pressures many community and voluntary organisations have faced during the pandemic
3. a strategic rail feasibility study to establish what it would take for new rail links to Cowley, Grove/ Wantage, North Cotswolds and West Oxfordshire.
4. Accelerating our work on active travel in the county: planning for new schemes and advising on opportunities to integrate active travel more fully in future proposals.
5. Replenishing the budget priorities reserve to allow for further investment in 2022-23 to (a) generate future savings for the Council budget; (b) make early interventions to improve the lives of children and young people; (c) accelerate our climate response.

We look forward to making substantial further progress in 2022-23 on our 9 priorities, while we also be directing substantial efforts and resources to support refugees from Ukraine and their hosts in the county, making sure the right support and safeguarding is in place.