

Councillor Andy Graham – January 2025 report

OCC NEWS

Budget setting: OCC has analysed funding announcements by the government and proposed a balanced budget for 2025/6, with a recommendation for a 4.99% rise in council tax (with 2% ringfenced for social care). The budget setting process will determine revenue (day-to-day) spending, as well as the future of capital projects like the Watlington Relief Road. On 28th January, the cabinet will sign off its final proposals, which are then voted on at full council on 11th February by all councillors.

Devolution: OCC has responded to the government's White Paper on devolution and local government reorganisation. The government is seeking to abolish district councils in favour of unitary councils and create groupings of unitary authorities (which can come with a mayor). Oxfordshire County Council is the lead authority in the process for our area and has expressed to the government a wish to be included in the first wave of changes. There are clear advantages to this, including avoiding a prolonged period of uncertainty. OCC's response focuses on what geography the strategic authority should take, expressing an interest in forming a Thames Valley authority. Options being suggested for unitarization include an Oxfordshire wide unitary authority, or multiple unitary authorities within Oxfordshire.

Local elections 2025: OCC's letter to the government's White Paper, includes a preference for local elections to the county council scheduled to take place in May to go ahead as planned.

NEWS IN BRIEF CQC Inspection:

The Care Quality Commission is currently inspecting OCC's adult social care. New year's honours:

Fire Chief Rob MacDougall has been awarded King's Fire Service

Medal Cycle training: Primary schools can request bike training for children through OCC

Defibs: The British Heart Foundation has a scheme to apply for a free defibrillator

PARISH ROUND-UP

Woodstock

Doctors Surgery Steering group membership: Callum Miller MP, Blenheim Estates, Doctors Surgery, ICB, WODC, OCC

Update: The first meeting took place on December with all representatives present with Callum Miller agreed chair. The areas of the discussion covered issues raised at the public meeting which led to covering specification, location and funding. The actions of the meeting are covered below in summary.

Actions

- Blenheim will instruct Osmond Tricks on Friday 13th December to start a PID on both Banbury Road and East of Park View sites. This will take 4-5 weeks. Blenheim will pay for this. It will be a joint instruction between Blenheim and the Drs. ICB and WODC will also speak to them.
- Blenheim and the Drs will provide the brief, which will be circulated to all around the table.
- This group will meet again in mid-February to view the proposed PID.
- ICB and the Drs will provide documentation and figures around the population modelling.
- ICB and WODC will discuss a s106 funding figures in terms of what is currently in the kitty and what is forthcoming.
- Blenheim will provide an estimate on the commercial value, other potential usage and where the surgery sits in terms of other uses of the site. Roger is keen to understand from the Councils what their priorities would be in terms of other uses of the site e.g. social care provision. The GPs would also appreciate a sense of what this means for them. The next meeting will take place in February.

The Feathers

Scaffolding and other associated works will be completed by 31st January and OCC officers have agreed to date and the temporary refrigerator will be removed as a result. An inspection will take place the week after to ensure compliance. This follows my engagement with residents expressing their concerns.

Flooding in Cadogen Park

I attended a meeting with residents and can give assurance that a further investigation will take place next month to diagnose the source of the recurring problem there as well as a cleaning of the drains and jetting is done.

Bladon

Flooding issues on Grove Road.

Following the recent and recurring flooding on Grove Road, and following a site visit with WODC and Blenheim Estates, it has been agreed by Blenheim to carry out bunding on

their land nearest Eagle Lodge to contain the rainwater from their land to mitigate the flooding impact on Grove Road and to further investigate other areas where properties have flooded in that vicinity.

Stonesfield

Have supported from the councillor Priority Fund a contribution toward the new scout hut project for the village.

Road resurfacing has been carried out in stretches of Pond Hill.

Wootton- A contribution towards providing a bus shelter from my councillor fund towards Wootton parish council's provision sited opposite Judds Garage has been earmarked.