

## **County Councillor Andy Graham Report November/December 2022**

### **Meetings Attended**

**7<sup>th</sup> Nov Woodstock Relief in Need**

**10<sup>th</sup> Nov Bladon PC**

**18<sup>th</sup> Nov Home to school Transport Working Group**

**21<sup>st</sup> Nov Site visit Banbury Road Improvements**

**28<sup>th</sup> Nov Bladon public Meeting Botley West Solar**

### **Meetings Coming up**

**6<sup>th</sup> December Mullins Museum**

**7<sup>th</sup> Dec Stonesfield PC**

**12<sup>th</sup> Dec Uplands Planning and Development Control**

**Steeple Barton PC**

**13<sup>th</sup> Dec County Council**

**Woodstock TC**

**14<sup>th</sup> Dec Combe PC**

**16<sup>th</sup> Dec South East Councils Executive**

**19<sup>th</sup> Dec Tackley Parish**

**20<sup>th</sup> Dec A44 Corridor Strategy debrief**

### **County Matters:**

#### **Oxford traffic filters special: Q&A**

The Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance has taken a bold step to reduce congestion in and around Oxford with [traffic filters](#). It's an issue many residents want to know more about – so below are a few common questions about the plan.

### ***What are traffic filters?***

During the times they are operating, traffic filters prohibit private motor vehicles without a filter pass from going through them. Oxfordshire County Council has approved a plan to introduce six filters across Oxford, including at St Cross Road, Thames Street, Hythe Bridge Street, St Clements, Marston Ferry Road, and Hollow Way.

### ***Why is Oxfordshire County Council doing this?***

Car use in Oxford has doubled in the last 20 years and is likely to get considerably worse with further housing developments. Road space has not doubled, resulting in high levels of congestion and bus routes becoming unsustainable. Traffic filters are a congestion measure, aimed at reducing the number of private car journeys to free up space for buses. The benefits will include faster bus journeys and faster journeys for anyone using a filter pass.

### ***Does this stop me from driving to Oxford?***

No. Everywhere you can currently reach by car in Oxford can still be reached by private motor vehicle. Households outside the city will also get up to 50 filter passes per year (25 per person/vehicle) to go through the filters with their private car. Exemptions also exist for e.g., blue badge holders and carers.

### ***Can I still drive to the Westgate or John Radcliffe hospital?***

Yes. Everywhere in Oxford will still be accessible by car. For example, residents that currently drive to and park at the Westgate via Abingdon Road, would need to continue on the ring road and approach via Botley Road. In most cases journey times are likely to only take an additional 5-15 minutes. The filters will make using the Redbridge park and ride much more attractive due to faster buses from Redbridge into the centre.

### ***When will this happen?***

Due to the closure of Botley Road in 2023 for work by Network Rail, the measure won't come into place until January 2024.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Adult social care in the news:** The Lib Dem led administration continues to make adult social care and children's services a priority, where over half of county expenditure takes place. The Oxfordshire Way – a new approach by the council's adult social care team – aims to support people to live well and independently, within their own communities, for as long as possible. Oxfordshire County Council is providing funding for a ['Community Catalyst'](#) programme to support local residents to set up care companies or centres and provide care in the community. A 2022-3 [Live Well](#)

[Oxfordshire Care Guide](#) has also been published with lots of great information on how to find community support and access adult social care. Free copies of the guide: 0345 050 7666.

**Education commission launched:** OCC has launched an independent 'Education Commission', tasked with improving educational outcomes for all children and young people. A key goal of the commission will be to look at reducing the gap in educational attainment for disadvantaged children and children with special educational needs and disabilities. The commission will speak to all interested parties about what a world class education system might look like for Oxfordshire and what needs to change. The commission will be independently chaired and made up of members representing educational settings, establishments, and key stakeholder groups across Oxfordshire.

**Budget setting process kicked off:** The process of setting OCC's annual budget has been kicked off with a public consultation. Within the context of rising inflation and rising demand for OCC's services (e.g. adult social care, SEND), the administration is seeking to create a balanced and fair budget that protects our most vulnerable residents. Since the government has not provided funding to meet the costs of inflation, OCC has been required to make savings of £44m of real-terms savings. However, the administration has sought to protect budgets impacting vulnerable residents, with particular emphasis on children with special education needs and disability. The [consultation](#) closes on 19 December.

**Plan to rationalise OCC property portfolio:** Oxfordshire County Council owns a whopping 905 sites around the county, including 13 offices. Led by finance cabinet member Cllr Calum Miller, OCC is being instructed to [rationalise](#) its property portfolio to realise savings by giving up leased buildings and deliver on climate goals

**Andy Graham 6<sup>th</sup> December**