

Title:	District Cllrs Report	
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Joint Local Plan update:

Following two hugely successful public consultations, which saw South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District councils receive a Highly Commended award at the Planning Resource Awards 2024, the councils have now set out the next steps for their Joint Local Plan (JLP). Over the past three years, the councils have been working positively on a plan that meets the needs for homes and infrastructure for the districts' communities and delivers on the councils' commitment to tackling the climate emergency and recovery of nature. There has so far been a hugely positive response from local communities and businesses to the proposals and now the councils are nearly ready to submit the joint plan to be examined – anticipating it being ready to submit in December 2024, four months earlier than previously thought. Within weeks, the councils will publish the proposed Joint Local Plan, along with the relevant supporting documents and the evidence the plan is based on. The public will have a 6-week opportunity to comment on whether they think the plan meets all the relevant technical requirements.

Councillor David Rouane, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council, said: “Huge thanks are due to everyone who took the time to get involved in our previous two Joint Local Plan consultations. The JLP is one of the most important documents we deliver as a council and has a lasting impact on our community.

“We are now striving to submit it as soon as possible as we recognise the importance of ensuring that any development is properly planned. Look out for when we publish in a few weeks' time when there will be a further opportunity to comment, albeit at a more technical level at this stage.”

Councillor Andy Foulsham, Cabinet Member for Policy and Programmes at Vale of White Horse District Council, said:

“I'd like to thank everyone who has taken the time over the past three years to take part in this process and give us their thoughts on what matters to them, and their views and opinions on our proposals. The value of this extensive feedback means the plan truly reflects our community's needs, so we sincerely thank everyone who gave up their time to review our plans and share their thoughts.

“I'm pleased we are now in a position to bring our submission forward, with an ambitious target of the end of this year.”

A new round of the Revenue grant scheme is now open.

The Revenue Grant Scheme, run by South Oxfordshire District Council, aims to help voluntary and community organisations build and support thriving communities and improve the quality of life of people across South Oxfordshire. The council offers in principle funding for two years and has a provisional budget of £667,992 to allocate. This is subject to annual approval by the council when setting its budget.

As well as covering essential operational costs, this funding can also be used to help voluntary sector organisations become more financially sustainable and have a long-lasting impact in the communities they support. For example, organisations may consider using this funding to support training staff in new skills or to invest in new income streams to help diversify their fundraising.

Previous recipients include Didcot Train and River Thame Conservation Trust who are two of twenty-one organisations who were awarded grant funding last year and have used the funds to make a difference in their community and to the lives of people living in the district. The closing date for applications is midday 1 November 2024.

The services and activities must be able to demonstrate direct benefits to meet a clearly identified need for South Oxfordshire residents. They must contribute towards at least one of the council's externally focussed emerging Corporate Plan priorities.

- Action on climate change and nature recovery
- Inclusion, accessibility and accountability
- Thriving and healthy communities
- Homes and infrastructure that meet local need

More information about the grant scheme can be found on our website southoxon.gov.uk/grants or organisations can contact the council's Community Enablement team on 01235 422405 or grants@southandvale.gov.uk.

Communications Team

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Healthy Streets initiative

[Healthy Streets Assessments](#) is an evidence-based approach to creating more sustainable urban spaces and the assessments have been designed to cater to and meet basic human needs on the street. This is looking at the streets with a new mindset to embed public health into transport, public realm and planning. 10 'indicators' have been identified and are as follows:

- Everyone feels welcome
- Easy to cross
- Shade and shelter
- Places to stop and rest
- Not too noisy
- People choose to walk and cycle
- People feel safe
- Things to see and do
- People feel relaxed
- Clean air

All of which are evidence-based indicators of how "healthy" a street is. They are being rolled out internationally by Lucy Saunders, the director who is a health practitioner and has developed this to help planners, officers in local authorities and everyone with an involvement in these works to take a new look at our streets.

Traditionally, these assessments are completed with information that isn't generally available to the public, e.g., ATC counts, and is quite a lengthy process, but Lucy has developed a "user-friendly" version designed to be completed on your phone that anyone can access. There's a "Feeling Survey" and a "Measurement Survey" so you can pick a point on a street and assess how it makes you feel as a human being standing there. Then the measurements have parameters related to the indicators that can be easily assessed, e.g., how many cycle parking spaces. All of this gets consolidated into a PDF report that can be shared and provides quantitative evidence of the need for improvements. I'm hoping to encourage residents to use this on their streets and that these results can inform the LCWIP decision making – if multiple people report a point where it's not easy to cross on the same street, this is an evidence-based reason for needing this. It can be used for any thing too, not just this LCWIP. I'm keen to give this a go and would welcome any results from yourselves or your community!

There is a free online introduction to it that's run by Lucy herself that's 30 mins – you can book it here: [Free intro to new online Healthy Streets tools Tickets, Multiple Dates | Eventbrite](#) and access the surveys here: [Home - Healthy Streets](#)

You don't need an account initially; you can have 3 "free" reports before needing to log in! Even so, to make an account is free and so should only require an email address and number. "

Funding available for community projects:

Community groups in South Oxfordshire are invited to apply for funding in the new round of Community Grants. The grant opened for applications Wednesday 14 August and each South Oxfordshire District councillor has a budget of £5,000 which they can award to projects in their ward. Those eligible to apply include town councils, parish councils, parish meetings, not for profit preschools and PTAs and local not for profit organisations. In the last round of funding £165,546 was awarded to 90 projects supporting a range of charities and not for profit organisations.

Previous successful applicants include:

- Nuffield Parish Council who used their funding on a playground refurbishment
- Inner Wheel Club in Thame who were awarded funding toward the Thame & District Senior Citizens Tea Party.
- Chalgrove Table Tennis Club used their funding for a new table.
- Brightwell Baldwin Parish Meeting were awarded funding so they could buy a Defibrillator.

Wallingford Boat Club received £1,250 to use towards a boat refurbishment. Judy Collins, Parent Volunteer for fundraising at Wallingford Boat Club said: "This grant has enabled the junior rowing squad, comprising of over a hundred 13-18 year olds, access to an additional competitive racing boat over the lifetime of the refurbished boat, which will be at least 10 years."

Cllr Georgina Heritage Cabinet member for Communities said: "I'm so pleased that we are once again able to offer this funding to community organisations across the district.

"Our councillors live and often work alongside these groups and see every day the difference that they make to our residents and the environment.

"I encourage organisations to find out more on our website and speak to their local councillor about how funding could support their project."

The minimum grant that can be applied for is £250 and the maximum is £5,000 for each councillor. Applicants can apply to a maximum of five wards.

Applicants are asked to consider the Council's key priorities and how their projects would support them for example; protect and restore our natural world and improve economic and community wellbeing.

The deadline for applications is midday Friday **29 November 2024**.