

Title:	District Councillor’s Report for:	
Chinnor District:	Aston Rowant, Chinnor, Sydenham and Towersey	
District Cllrs:	Ed Sadler ed.sadler@southoxon.gov.uk +44 7482 602398	Ali Gordon-Creed Ali.Gordon-Creed@southoxon.gov.uk +44 7770 935579
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Dear Councillors

We are both delighted by the recent result of the appeal hearing in Chinnor. Parish Cllrs in Chinnor and Sydenham worked extremely hard and were well prepared for the hearing, which in our view brought about the right outcome for Chinnor. Hopefully this result will send a very clear message to speculators and developers.

We are also very pleased to report on the adoption of the Chinnor Neighbourhood plan. A quorum of 10 District Councillors were requested to attend a Special Council meeting on the 17th November, to approve the new plan. The Adoption of the Plan will give Chinnor parish special protection under national planning policy.

Repeat fly-tipper prosecuted after failing to learn lesson

A woman caught fly-tipping for the second time has been ordered to pay more than £2,500 after dumping household rubbish in Garsington. Taise Ronchi, 40, of Farm Close, Kidlington, attended Oxford Magistrates’ Court on Friday 3 November where she pleaded guilty to the unlawful deposit of waste. Magistrates heard how, in November 2020, Ms Ronchi was contracted to clean a property in Iffley and had been paid to take some rubbish to Redbridge Recycling Centre. When she got there, she found the centre was shut however, rather than keeping it in her car and taking it to the recycling centre the following day, she decided to leave the cardboard and two bags of rubbish against a residential street wall in Poplar Close.

A resident witnessed the offence taking place and reported it to South Oxfordshire District Council. Evidence at the scene linked Taise Ronchi with the offence and she initially admitted responsibility for the waste. Ms Ronchi had already received a fixed penalty notice for a previous fly-tipping offence in 2017 and would therefore have known that it was wrong to dump the rubbish. However, she then failed to cooperate further and subsequently left the country in 2021. Ms Ronchi then failed to attend a hearing in May 2022 and a warrant was issued for her arrest. Upon her return to the UK, Ms Ronchi was then arrested in October 2023 before finally appearing in court. Taking her early guilty plea into consideration, Magistrates fined Ms Ronchi £1,292 and also ordered her to pay a victim surcharge of £129 and £1,097 costs.

Cllr Sue Cooper, Cabinet Member for Environment, at South Oxfordshire District Council said: “Individuals who fly-tip show a total disregard for the community and the environment. Dumping rubbish in a residential street is illegal and is also incredibly disrespectful to the people living there. We won’t hesitate to prosecute anyone responsible, especially repeat offenders who clearly haven’t learnt their lesson.”

If you see a fly-tip, or witness someone dumping rubbish, please report it via southoxon.gov.uk/flytipping or 03000 610610.

Over £440,000 awarded to support swimming pools in South and Vale

Swimming pools across South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse have been awarded a total of £441,542. The award will help ensure residents continue to have access to good swimming facilities across the two districts. Recent research has shown swimming positively contributes to physical and mental wellbeing, to individual and community development, and helps to reduce the burden to the health and social care system.*

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils successfully secured this funding through Sport England to help finance the running of six of its Better UK swimming facilities. The funding is part of the government's Phase 1: Swimming Pool Support Fund (SPSF). Day to day the centres are managed by the council's leisure contractor GLL. There has been huge increase in costs to manage the pools over the last few years due to the rising energy costs and other financial pressures because of the Covid-19 pandemic and GLL will use this additional revenue to help finance the maintenance of the indoor swimming pools at leisure centres in South Oxfordshire and the Vale.

Cllr Debra Dewhurst Cabinet Member for Leisure Centres and Community Buildings at Vale of White Horse District Council said: "We are so pleased to have been awarded this funding from Sport England as it will help us to continue to maintain and run the swimming facilities across the Vale. "Our swimming pools are very popular and it's important that we do all we can to keep them open and available to use for the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors to the area."

Cllr Maggie Filipova-Rivers Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing at South Oxfordshire District Councils said: "The rise in energy costs has had a huge impact on our budgets for the leisure centres. We are proud to have retained this important service at a time that many around the country are closing. "I would like to thank our dedicated officers that have worked hard to secure this much needed funding to enable us, in partnership with GLL, to help our leisure centres to continue to recover and to make sure that the pools are there for our residents to use whether it's for fitness or for fun!"

A total of £20 million was available for organisations to apply for in Phase 1 of the Swimming Pool Support Fund from Sport England and nearly 200 leisure centres have been supported by the fund. Applicants were required to provide evidence of increased cost pressures, leaving them most vulnerable to closure or significant service reduction. South Oxfordshire Better UK swimming pools have been awarded £285,465 and £156,077 will be going to the Vale of White Horse facilities.

Kevin Williams, GLL Partnership Manager for South Oxfordshire and Vale of the White Horse said: "Swimming pool operators across the UK have been the victims of a 'perfect storm' with spiralling utility costs, global chlorine shortages and the aftereffects of the Covid pandemic, combining to create significant financial pressures. Some pools have been forced to close. "The funding that has been awarded to six pools across South Oxfordshire and Vale of the White Horse is a huge boost and will help secure their future. It'll mean residents will be able to continue to enjoy the numerous health and social benefits that swimming and pool-based activities offer."

The councils are now in the process of applying for funding for the Phase 2 of the Swimming Pool Support Fund which will be used to improve the energy efficiency of its Better Leisure facilities across the two districts.

Preparation underway for next stage of Joint Local Plan

Innovative new planning policies to help two Oxfordshire districts reach their full potential and address challenges they face, are on the local agenda – and you'll soon be able to have your say. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils are preparing to launch a second round of consultation early next year to develop their new Joint Local Plan to 2041. The Joint Local Plan will help the councils determine planning applications, set out how and where new housing developments should take place, set standards for developments such as carbon and energy efficiency requirements, and guide what infrastructure is needed across the districts. The next public consultation will ask for people's thoughts on proposed approaches across various policy areas, from reducing carbon emissions and nature recovery, to protecting and enhancing local heritage, meeting community infrastructure and transport needs, affordable housing, jobs and economic opportunities, and more. New policy areas which previous local plans haven't covered include policies to protect valued landscapes, tranquil places and dark skies.

Backed by extensive feedback gathered in 2022, as well as a suite of new studies and the latest industry research, the councils are proposing to reduce the number of new houses needed each year, improve minimum standards for water and energy efficiency, increase biodiversity and the number of affordable houses developments need to deliver, and more. The first Joint Local Plan consultation received over 2,500 responses through a new interactive platform, for which the councils were announced a finalist in a national award for creating an interactive, digital-first approach in planning. This innovation will continue in the new consultation, where the councils will be using a new digital engagement platform for people to read easy-to-understand summaries and share their feedback, or delve into the details of the draft policies. This will be as well as holding events and providing paper copies in libraries for those who prefer to get involved in more traditional formats.

Councillor Anne-Marie Simpson, Cabinet Member for Planning at South Oxfordshire District Council, said: "We engaged with residents and business from the very start of our Joint Local Plan journey, and I'm excited to share our progress and get your thoughts through our next consultation. "These proposed approaches and policies make sure we're not just rolling policies forward but truly leveraging the exciting opportunities on the horizon and addressing key challenges. For example, we're proposing to raise standards of carbon, water and energy efficiency for developers to help our districts become carbon neutral and do more to tackle climate change. I look forward to sharing our plans in more detail soon and hearing your thoughts on our proposals."

Councillor Andy Foulsham, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Policy and Programmes at Vale of White Horse District Council, said: "The two councils working together to produce a joint plan means we can get more value out of our taxpayers' money to help address challenges faced across both districts, including climate change, traffic and affordable housing, and more. "I'm excited to continue the excellent work from our first consultation and use your feedback to deliver a Joint Local Plan that truly reflects the needs of our districts. We'll be sharing information through our councils' websites and social media channels so keep an eye out for announcements in the new year."

The next consultation is scheduled to launch to the public in January 2024, subject to review by both councils' cabinets. A preview of the Joint Local Plan consultation materials is available on both the [South Oxfordshire District Council website](#) and the [Vale of White Horse District Council website](#).