

SODC District Councillors' Report

11 November 2019

Cllr Jo Robb, Cllr Lorraine Hillier

South Oxfordshire's Local Plan 2034

Following the Secretary of State's intervention on 9 October, Council was unable to take a decision on the Local Plan 2034 at the Full Council meeting on 10 October. Accordingly, the Local Plan 2034 is now in abeyance and carries no weight in planning decisions.

Officers from SODC have had a series of meetings with officers from MHCLG and we now understand that a decision on the draft Local Plan will not be made until after the general election on 12 December.

Last month, OCC signed off on the £218m Housing Infrastructure Fund money, funds that are earmarked for road upgrades in the Didcot area. The decision on whether to release the funds is now with Homes England.

Climate Emergency

The previous Council administration declared a climate emergency in April. Following this, the new administration established a cross-party Climate Emergency Advisory Committee, chaired by Cllr Sue Roberts, with the aim of devising and implementing an ambitious and wide-ranging response to this crisis.

Council unanimously approved a motion to aim to reduce the Council's own carbon emissions to net zero by 2025 and the District's emissions to net zero by 2030.

Officers, working alongside members of the CEAC, are in the process of compiling a comprehensive and ambitious work programme detailing areas for change in seven broad categories:

- Council business
- Partnership
- Housing
- Infrastructure
- Transport
- Biodiversity
- Behaviour change

A key area of focus in point 7 is engaging with community groups and engaging stakeholders in the decision-making process. Parish Councils will be a central part of this consultative process.

Councillor Grants

We have been delighted at the uptake for our individual grants. These pots of money can help in so many ways around our parishes. We are helping fund a community bus service, a club room kitchen, village hall defibrillator, SID machine, Bus stop accessibility and a tree planting scheme.

We have had such a response that we have had to think carefully how to distribute this so that all who have applied can benefit. In some cases we have not been able to grant quite the amounts requested, but hopefully sufficient to make these projects happen. We both feel strongly that these grants are hugely beneficial to our communities.

Capital Grants Scheme

The Capital Grants Scheme is now open and larger sums of money are available for projects which support community facilities and initiatives, that improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life for residents and which contribute towards the council's

You can apply online. The closing date for applications will be **midday on Monday 2 December 2019** and decisions will be made by end of March 2020.

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/community-advice-and-support/grants-and-community-loans/capital-grants>

Homelessness & rough sleeping consultation

The draft Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 has been published online. The Council is seeking views on the aims and objectives within this document and welcome all contributions with the purpose of preventing or relieving homelessness. The deadline for completing the survey is 5pm on Monday 25th November 2019. Responses can be made as individuals, organisations, business or Councillors.

Extra help from the waste team

Residents across South Oxfordshire who have signed up for the brown bin collections can put out TWICE as much garden waste during garden waste weeks this month. Week commencing 18th November residents may leave the extra garden waste out in bin liners or sacks beside the brown bins on the usual collection days. The recycled garden waste goes to local farms for compost.