

Vale of White Horse Council Motions – May 2019 to Present

Date	Motion	Substantive Actions Required	Progress
17 July 2019	<p>Council notes that, given all possible routes through the government’s chosen corridor, the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway will have a direct impact on communities, businesses, and the environment across the Vale of White Horse District. This council should therefore agree a position on this matter.</p> <p>Council notes with concern the lack of public consultation and lack of clarity from Government on proposals about whether an Expressway is the most effective way to enhance connectivity within the Oxford to Cambridge Arc and before Corridor B was chosen.</p> <p>Council notes that published evidence on similar road building schemes, such as widening the M25, led to increased car use without any benefit in terms of congestion or journey time after a few years.</p> <p>Council notes that the increased carbon emissions, damage to our countryside and biodiversity associated with road building would be significant.</p> <p>Council notes our recent declaration of a Climate Emergency and our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint through our policies, decisions and actions. The Expressway will have a serious negative impact on the achievement of climate change targets at a time when all public bodies are being actively encouraged to improve air quality and contribute to significant carbon reductions.</p> <p>Therefore, Council resolves to oppose the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway as proposed.</p> <p>Council requests that the Leader of the council, and members of the Cabinet, make our opposition to the road building scheme clear at relevant partnership meetings.</p> <p>Council requests that the Leader of the council write to the district’s two Members of Parliament and to the Minister for Transport to make clear this council’s position as set out above and to request that the following action be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That the Expressway proposal be abandoned; - That the estimated £3-7billion cost of the scheme to be invested instead into completing and enhancing phase three of the East-West Rail link and to local government to enhance cycle infrastructure and public transport; - That all new transport schemes proposed by Department for Transport be subject to full public consultation and environmental assessments be published from the beginning; - That the government prioritise rail and sustainable active travel when developing policy and awarding grant funding for infrastructure. 	<p>Vale are opposed to the Oxford Cambridge expressway as proposed</p> <p>The Leader of the Council will write to the Minister for Transport, Ed Vaizey and Layla Moran.</p>	<p>Letters sent and relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones, to ensure that engagement with partners reflects this position.</p>

<p>17 July 2019</p>	<p>Council notes the inspector's Report of the Examination of Vale's Local Plan Part 2, dated 25 June 2019. In his report, the inspector lists the four objectives of LPP2, one of which is to set out policies and locations for new housing to meet the unmet need of Oxford City.</p> <p>Council notes that the inspector (in para 26) reminds us that the Oxfordshire Growth Board agreed a 'working assumption' that Oxford City's unmet need was 15,000 homes, of which Vale should supply 2200 homes over the plan period. He says (in para 28) that this 'working assumption' is to be 'confirmed or adjusted' through the examination of Oxford's Local Plan and the preparation of Oxfordshire's Joint Statutory Spatial Plan, which is currently in its early stages. He reminds us again (in para 92) that the additional housing requirement is a 'working assumption rather than definitive and warrants some caution in allocating sites in the LPP2'. There is no guidance or explanation of what this would mean in practice.</p> <p>Council notes that Oxford City has submitted its Local Plan for examination, but the inspector has found some issues that require more work before it is ready to be examined in public hearings; he discusses the issues in his letter to that council (undated, but to be found on Oxford City's Local Plan examination website page). Inspector is concerned that the housing figures are based on figures in the 2014 SHMA, which are based on 2011 ONS population and household projections that 'are now a few years old' (page 2). He also points out there may have been double counting. Therefore, the housing need figure is questionable. This housing need figure 'could have a bearing on the level of unmet need which would have to be accommodated by neighbouring local authorities'.</p> <p>Council notes that LPP2 allocates 1200 homes at Dalton Barracks, for Oxford's unmet need. Dalton Barracks and the neighbouring village of Shippon are to be removed from the Green Belt for future housing development.</p> <p>Council notes that para 137 of the NPPF requires Green Belt boundaries to only be modified under exceptional circumstances. The inspector for Vale LPP2 says (in para 29) that the housing required for Oxford's unmet need must be close to Oxford, and much of it is to be social rented housing. The inspector says (in para 55) that the number of houses to meet Oxford's unmet need, and the fact that they must be near Oxford, demonstrates there are exceptional circumstances to justify the removal of Dalton Barracks and Shippon from the Green Belt.</p> <p>Council notes that CPRE wrote to the planning Inspectorate in May 2019 to object to the order in which Oxfordshire's Local Plans are being examined, citing rules in NPPF</p> <p>It is this council's opinion that in order for Vale's Local Plan to be sound, the exact, evidenced number of houses that Oxford requires in order to meet its real need should be determined before Vale includes them in Vale's Local Plan Part 2. Oxford's assessment of its housing need must include evidence that Oxford City has done all it can to accommodate its own need, including evidence that the use of land for employment sites over housing sites is justified and lawful. There must be a public examination of the Oxford City Local Plan to definitely identify the unmet need (if any) to precede any adoption of neighbouring authorities' Local Plans to accommodate it. Until this is done, there are no exceptional circumstances to allow removal of Dalton Barracks and Shippon from the Green Belt.</p>	<p>The Leader of the Council will write to the Secretary of State, Ed Vaizey and Layla Moran regarding Local Plan Part 2 and Oxford's unmet need</p>	<p>Letters Sent and relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones, to ensure that engagement with partners reflects this position.</p>
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	<p>Council therefore requests the Leader of the council to write to the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Let the Minister know that Vale is assessing its options with regard to the Local Plan Part 2 and of council's opinion as stated. b. Point out that in Oxfordshire the various Local Plans are not independent of each other. That fact should have been considered in the examination process by ensuring Local Plans that are part of another authority's evidence, as is Oxford City's Local Plan, are examined first. Current examination procedures are deficient. c. Point out that the Duty to Cooperate should include Oxford City's duty to have a clear evidenced housing target before asking its neighbours to help meet its need. This Duty to Cooperate should run both ways. d. Ask for the Minister's advice about how we should 'confirm or adjust' our Local Plan Part 2 once Oxford's unmet need is established, if our local plan is already adopted. e. Ask the Minister to explain to us how this Local Plan Part 2 can be considered sound and legal when the housing figures used are based solely on a 'working assumption' of Oxford's unmet need, the Plan allocates housing development in the Green Belt in clear contravention of para 137 of the NPPF, and the Plan removes Dalton Barracks and Shippon from the Green Belt without the exceptional circumstances that the regulations require. <p>And to write to our two local Members of Parliament, explaining the situation and asking them for their support.</p>		
17 July 2019	<p>Council resolves to remove the current 'vision' of the council "taking care of your interests throughout the Vale with Enterprise, Energy and Efficiency" and develop a new vision statement that better reflects this council's priorities as part of the work on our new corporate plan.</p>		<p>A new vision statement has been created by Cabinet as part of the Corporate Plan 2020-24 development and will be communicated as part of that process. Officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones of the removal of the previous vision.</p>

<p>9 October 2019</p>	<p>Council notes that a hierarchy of organisations has grown up which influence regional development, some more accountable than others. These are collectively making increasing incursions into the decision-making abilities of elected local councils and placing significant growth demands on our districts.</p> <p>These organisations or bodies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England's Economic Heartland • The Oxford-Cambridge Arc Region • The Oxfordshire Growth Board (and associated Oxfordshire 2050 Joint Statutory Spatial Plan) • OxLEP (and the Local Industrial Strategy) <p>Council notes that officers and members attend meetings related to these bodies, and welcomes the opportunity for regional collaboration, as many of us share the same concerns, but wishes to update its formal position to assist those representing our district.</p> <p>This Council believes that development within our district must balance the needs of people and their communities, the environment and the local economy. Specifically, it should contribute to this Council's (and the Government's) commitment to carbon neutrality.</p> <p>It should be based on genuine consultation and demonstrable public support.</p> <p>It should ensure that infrastructure, both strategic and local, is in place to support development, with the aim of building communities, not just houses.</p> <p>This Council supports the following approaches in relation to regional economic growth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planned development should demonstrate how it will help our economy move towards its zero-carbon target 2. Housing targets should be based on an up-to-date objective assessment of need 3. Planned housing should reflect the needs of the local community, offering a range of sizes and tenures including genuinely affordable housing to buy, and rent at affordable and social rates 4. Housing developments should be sited near to existing or proposed public, mass and active transport facilities, not based on ever increasing road traffic 5. Seek greater developer contributions to expand rail capacity and bus services and cycle paths 6. All housebuilding and other development should meet zero-carbon standards or better. 7. Strategic planning should reduce the need to travel by building homes near to employment sites 8. The priority for transport investment should be in the rail network (e.g. an electrified East-West rail, electrification of the Didcot-Oxford line, re-opening of Grove Station), improved bus (and similar) services, and substantial investment in 'active travel' – including cycle and pedestrian infrastructure - within and between settlements 9. Opposition to the proposed Oxford-Cambridge Expressway 		<p>All relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones, to ensure that engagement with partners reflects this position.</p>
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9 October 2019	<p>The Vale of White Horse District Council welcomes the progress made on climate change in as much as Environmental, Social and Governance issues are now recognised as a risk to the Oxfordshire Local Government Pension Scheme. However, it would now like matters to be taken further.</p> <p>Council requests that the Leader writes to the Chair of the Oxfordshire Pensions Committee asking them to consider as part of its new investment strategy for the Brunel Partnership investing in a passive low carbon fund, now that one is available, and that generates similar financial returns to the wider investment market.</p>	Letter from the Leader of the Council to the Oxfordshire Pension Fund	Letter sent and relevant officers who engage with the Pension Fund briefed.

<p>9 October 2019</p>	<p>Council notes that Non-UK EU nationals are part of our shared communities. They are our husbands, wives, parents, friends and colleagues. They are an integral part of our vibrant and thriving district and local economy.</p> <p>Since 2016 EU nationals were promised again and again that "there will be no change for EU citizens already lawfully resident in the UK and [...] will be treated no less favourably as they are at present". After three years of living in limbo, their homes and livelihoods are yet again being threatened by the further uncertainty brought about by the prospect of a chaotic no-deal Brexit.</p> <p>Council recognises that some businesses in the Vale report that the uncertainty around Brexit is making it harder for them to recruit and retain staff who are non-UK EU nationals.</p> <p>Council notes that much work has been undertaken, and significant cost to the public purse, by this council and other public bodies to ensure it can maintain access to key services, should Brexit happen.</p> <p>But, according to the Home Office's June statistics, only a third of non-UK EU nationals had applied for Settled Status and many of them had been granted the inferior Pre-Settled. There is no way of knowing exactly how many EU nationals need to apply, leaving vulnerable non-UK EU nationals at risk of becoming unlawful residents. Lack of clarity regarding differentiating between EU citizens arriving before and after the UK's exit from the EU could lead to discrimination in the labour market and may prevent many from accessing the services that they are entitled to.</p> <p>Therefore, Council asks that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Officers prepare a report to the Leader (to be shared with all members) on what more the Council may be able to do to mitigate adverse impacts on the rights of non-UK EU nationals (including but not limited to, informing landlords and employers about immigration status and therefore avoid potential discrimination against non-UK EU nationals) 2. The Leader of the Council writes to the Home Secretary to ask that the current European Settlement Scheme is clarified by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Providing a clear deadline for application to the EUSS in case of no-deal exit from the EU b. Providing physical proof of settled status that can be used to access services c. Confirming that there will be no changes to the rights of settled non-UK EU citizens that they currently have by ratifying the Immigration Bill as primary legislation before the exit day 	<p>Report to the Leader of the Council</p> <p>Letter to the Secretary of State</p>	<p>An open letter from the Leader of the Council to EU residents was published on the Vale of White Horse website and sent to all EU citizens in the district giving them advice on how to apply for settled status. There were 2662 letters sent.</p> <p>An officer group is in place to monitor Brexit activity and discuss any additional mitigating actions that may arise from service area risk registers.</p> <p>There is a dedicated website page for the EU Settlement Scheme - http://www.white-horsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/community-advice-and-support/brexit-%E2%80%93-advice-residents/brexit-advice-eu-national</p>
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<p>9 October 2019</p>	<p>Council notes that the re-routing arrangements for scheduled closures of the A34 in southern Oxfordshire are creating a totally intolerable blight on the lives of many of the residents of Wantage, Charlton Ward and further afield. These closures, which typically operate between 10pm and 6am, re-route traffic on to the A338 and the A417. In the 3 months to the end of October 2019 closures will have occurred on 25 occasions. Council further notes that the consequence of these arrangements is to divert very high volumes of traffic, much of it heavy commercial, from a Designated Primary Route to minor roads, occasionally single lane, not considered suitable for heavy traffic in built up residential areas. Residents of impacted houses report that this creates intolerable noise, sleep deprivation and vibration and structural damage to properties, as many of their homes are only a matter of feet away from the highway. Council is also aware that the diversions create significant road safety issues and that damage has occurred to Infrastructure and other vehicles.</p> <p>Council is aware that alternatives exist, including re-routing via a designated Primary Route or introducing a contraflow system on the A34 itself. Furthermore, Council is concerned that any future re-routing scheme may be ineffective due to increased use of satellite navigation systems which could risk the use of rat runs.</p> <p>Therefore, Council requests that the Scrutiny Committee consider including this matter in their work programme, noting that Scrutiny has the power to invite parties such as Highways England, OCC, Thames Valley Police, Kier Group plc and Wantage Traffic Diversion Group to attend any such meeting.</p>	<p>Scrutiny Committee should consider adding this matter to its work programme.</p>	<p>Scrutiny Committee has added this issue to their work programme</p>
<p>18 December 2019</p>	<p>In the context of the Climate Emergency, this Council welcomes the Government's review of fracking and its potential environmental impacts. Council urges Government to move towards a position of banning fracking altogether. Quite apart from the many environmental concerns, developing yet one more carbon-based fuel flies in the face of our ambition to strive for carbon neutrality.</p> <p>Council notes that onshore wind is the lowest cost low-carbon technology currently available, yet the Westmill Wind Farm at Watchfield remains the only onshore wind farm in the whole of the Vale of White Horse. This situation is being exacerbated by the Government making their 'Contracts for Difference' funding available for offshore wind farms but excluding onshore.</p> <p>Council notes that, while Government has looked on solar energy production more favourably, there remains huge untapped potential within the Vale to generate energy through Solar PV.</p> <p>Council therefore commits to exploring planning policies which positively encourage all renewable sources of energy including onshore wind farms as part of the next Vale Local Plan and Oxfordshire Plan 2050.</p>	<p>Council commits to exploring planning policies which positively encourage all renewable sources of energy including onshore wind farms as part of the next Vale Local Plan and Oxfordshire Plan 2050</p>	<p>Relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones, to ensure that engagement with partners reflects this position and Cabinet Member for Planning retains a focus on this in their regular meetings with officers – as do our Economic Development Team in discussions with OxLEP and others</p>

<p>18 December 2019</p>	<p>Council notes the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism is the most widely accepted and recognized definition of anti-Jewish racism. It states that: Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.</p> <p>Council notes the All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims (APPG) definition of Islamophobia: Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.</p> <p>Council notes that by using these definitions it helps understand, identify, and tackle antisemitism and Islamophobia. Council holds the right to freedom of speech and freedom of religion are fundamental but freedom of speech is not freedom to demonise, scapegoat and discriminate.</p> <p>Council resolves to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - condemn all hate crimes and deplores the rise in hate crimes against members of the Jewish and Muslim communities in Britain - condemn all inflammatory rhetoric in political discourse: including antisemitic and Islamophobic tropes used by politicians and public servants. - adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism in full and without amendment - adopt the APPG definition of Islamophobia in full and without amendment. - ask officers to update this council's equality policies to this effect 	<p>Adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism in full and without amendment</p> <p>Adopt the APPG definition of Islamophobia in full and without amendment.</p> <p>Ask officers to update this council's equality policies to this effect</p>	<p>Motion forwarded to the Council's Equality Officer.</p> <p>Council policies being reviewed and updated.</p>
<p>18 December 2019</p>	<p>Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Believes that young people should be allowed a say over their future. 2. Recognises that 16 and 17 year olds are knowledgeable and passionate about the world in which they live and are as capable of engaging in the democratic system as any other citizen. 3. Notes that there is currently an unequal situation across the United Kingdom, with 16 and 17 year olds having voting rights in Scotland and Wales that are not available to them in England and Northern Ireland. 4. Supports the need for greater engagement with young people, leading to greater involvement of young people in the decisions that affect their community. 5. Believes that lowering the voting age to 16, combined with strong citizenship education, would empower young people to better engage in society and influence decisions that will define their future. 6. Believes that people aged 16 and 17, who can consent to medical treatment, work full-time, pay taxes, get married or enter a civil partnership and join the armed forces, should also have the right to vote. 7. Recognises and supports the ongoing 'Votes at 16' campaign by the British Youth Council, the UK Youth Parliament and other youth organisations, supported by thousands of young people across the UK. 8. Calls for 16 and 17 year olds to have the right in all elections and referendums across the UK. <p>Council therefore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requests that the Leader write to relevant Ministers and local MPs: expressing this Council's support for the Votes at 16 campaign; calling for the extension of the franchise to 16- and 17-year olds in all elections and referendums across the UK; - and asks the ERO/ RO to consider participating in any pilot scheme. 	<p>That the Leader write to relevant Ministers and local MPs: expressing this Council's support for the Votes at 16 campaign; calling for the extension of the franchise to 16- and 17-year olds in all elections and referendums across the UK</p> <p>Asks the ERO/ RO to consider participating in any pilot scheme</p>	<p>Letters sent and relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones, to ensure that engagement with partners reflects this position.</p>

<p>18 December 2019</p>	<p>Council notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that confidence and trust in both Parliament, the UK's democratic system and politicians has been falling for some time. - that the House of Commons and council chambers have long been unrepresentative of the votes cast by the electorate of the United Kingdom. - that the UK's First Past the Post voting system curtails voter choice, makes millions of votes ineffective, and leaves millions feeling unrepresented. <p>Council believes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that these factors have contributed to dangerous levels of distrust and disillusionment with our democratic process - that democracy is distorted and failed by the fact that, due to this system, barely half of voters now feel able to cast their vote for their preferred candidate or Party. - that it is essential that faith is restored in our democratic system and that the public see Parliament as fairly reflecting their views. - that our First Past the Post voting system is a significant barrier to restoring this faith and all but guarantees that the balance of opinion among the electorate is not reflected in Parliament and our council chambers. - that a system of Proportional Representation in which seats match votes at all levels, including councils, and in which all votes count equally, would help to rebuild public trust by ensuring that political views are represented. <p>Therefore:</p> <p>Council requests that the leader write to the relevant government minister and our two local MPs setting out our position and requesting that all elections be run using a form of Proportional Representation in which all votes count equally and seats match votes.</p>	<p>That the leader writes to the relevant government minister and our two local MPs setting out our position and requesting that all elections be run using a form of Proportional Representation in which all votes count equally and seats match votes.</p>	<p>Letters sent and relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones of the Councils position.</p>
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<p>18 December 2019</p>	<p>"In March 2017 this council voted to support 'Better Oxfordshire'; a proposal to create a unitary authority.</p> <p>The unitary authority outlined in the 'Better Oxfordshire' submission was for a single authority based on the current County Council boundary. Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council also took formal decisions to support the submission of this proposal.</p> <p>The proposal was sent to the Secretary of State for approval, however, no further action has been taken. The proposal was submitted under legislative provisions containing a sunset clause, which expired in March 2019, meaning that at this time the proposal is not under active consideration.</p> <p>However, over the past six months, Robert Jenrick MP, in his role as Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, has spoken publicly about an approach that could mean the end of smaller District Councils. He has also committed to a new push for devolution and raised the potential for further local government reorganisation. Additionally, these themes feature in all the main political parties' General Election manifestos.</p> <p>In light of the above, with a new Council administration, and the significant financial uncertainty this council faces due to the delayed spending review, Council now wishes to clarify its position in relation to local governance models for Oxfordshire.</p> <p>Council therefore confirms that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises that much of the financial and economic data and analysis that underpinned the 'Better Oxfordshire' submission is now out of date; • Remains open to considering a new unitary proposal in principle, assuming it is able to secure appropriate local public support. A new unitary proposal may be based on a whole Oxfordshire basis as with the original unitary proposal or may differ, i.e. comprising different boundaries better representing local communities; and • Restates its opposition to a "combined authority" based on the Oxfordshire County boundary or a Mayoral lead authority model of devolution. <p>Council asks officers to ensure that any future unitary proposal impacting the Vale of White Horse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addresses the significant financial challenge faced by local government, as evidenced within in our Medium Term Financial Plan and those of other Oxfordshire Councils; • reflects a logical geography, • delivers increased value for money; and • creates a Council of an appropriate size, that can think and act strategically whilst ensuring meaningful decision making is brought closer to communities <p>Council requests that:</p>	<p>Officers make contact with the MHCLG to explore the approach the new Secretary of State will take to any proposals for unitary based reorganisation</p> <p>A report on this matter is brought to full council, by the Chief Executive and Leader, outlining their understanding of the new Government's intentions by Summer 2020</p> <p>Officers bring forward proposals for the Vale of White Horse to consider a formal merger with South Oxfordshire District Council, with the same total number of District Councillors, creating a single district council based on their combined geography with increased financial resilience.</p>	<p>An SMT briefing paper was reviewed on 5 December 2019. It outlined the process and considerations for a merger proposal and provided some case studies from other Councils. MHCLG officials indicate that these criteria may change in the forthcoming White Paper.</p> <p>Visits to East Suffolk and Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils were also made by the Acting Deputy Chief Executive – Partnerships, in January 2020 to discuss experiences of merging and attempting to merge.</p> <p>MHCLG officials have been contacted and a meeting between all Oxfordshire</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• officers make contact with the MHCLG to explore the approach the new Secretary of State will take to any proposals for unitary based reorganisation;• a report on this matter is brought to full council, by the Chief Executive and Leader, outlining their understanding of the new Government's intentions by Summer 2020; and• officers bring forward proposals for the Vale of White Horse to consider a formal merger with South Oxfordshire District Council, with the same total number of District Councillors, creating a single district council based on their combined geography with increased financial resilience.	<p>Leaders, CEs and officials held.</p> <p>A joint letter is to be sent by all Oxfordshire Leaders and OxLEP Chair to the SoSs MHCLG and BEIS requesting a meeting regarding options that may be possible within the forthcoming Local Recovery and Devolution White Paper.</p> <p>Outside of this process, MHCLG officials advise that individual requests or suggestions for structural change will not be considered at this time.</p> <p>A paper and report will be brought forward as soon as possible following any meeting that is held with the SoS or MoS and/or once the Local Recovery and Devolution White Paper is published,</p>
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			<p>whichever is the sooner.</p> <p>Relevant officers are briefed on the Councils position and are engaging with partners and Government to make them aware of Vale's views regarding some of the outcomes any Unitary proposal should achieve.</p>
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<p>12 February 2020</p>	<p>Council notes the risks associated with modern life are significantly different from those of 1847 when the Town Police Clauses Act was passed, and even from those of the 1970s when the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 came into force. Clearly, the legislation has not kept pace with developments, in particular with the way we use technology, apps, and mobile phones. It is difficult to facilitate a regulatory system when the legislation is based on the use of horse-drawn carriages and landline phones.</p> <p>There is also a lack of consistency across the legislation. For example, the law requires a person who takes bookings for private hire vehicles to be licensed but there is no similar requirement for someone who does the same for hackney carriages. This lack, apart from the potential for sensitive personal information to fall into the wrong hands, can make it very difficult to investigate allegations of improper conduct by drivers of hackney carriages. This could undermine public confidence in the licensing regime. In addition, it provides a mechanism for private hire operators who have lost their licence to continue in business. They simply move to only “operating” hackney carriages, and no controls can be placed on them at all.</p> <p>Examples of recent local issues include hackney carriage ‘operators’ who have pressured drivers to work excessively long hours with no proper breaks, and those who do not maintain their vehicles properly and continually present vehicles to testing stations which fail the test. The overriding aim of any licensing authority when carrying out its functions relating to the licensing of hackney or private hire drivers, vehicle proprietors, and operators is the protection of the public.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire district councils and the county council share information under a Joint Operating Framework, and there is a national register of revoked and refused licences operated by the National Anti-Fraud Network. However, this does not address situations where drivers have allowed their licence to lapse pending enforcement action at one local authority and apply to another authority without declaring that enforcement action or the previous licences held. Local authority prosecutions are not currently detailed on enhanced DBS disclosures and there are recent local examples of the councils only finding out about such prosecutions by chance and after the licence has been granted.</p> <p>Council therefore requests that the Leader of the council write to the district’s two Members of Parliament and to the Minister for Transport to request that the following action be taken:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Government should move forward without delay on the three key measures recommended to achieve a safe service for passengers in the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Task and Finish Group report, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The introduction of a national taxi licensing database; - Some form of cross border enforcement for local authorities; - National minimum standards for licenses. 2. The Government should provide an update in respect of how they propose to deal with cross-border working; 	<p>Letters from the Leader of the Council to the Minister and the two local MPs</p>	<p>Letters sent and relevant officers advised and updated via team meetings and one to ones, to ensure that engagement with partners reflects this position.</p>
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	3. The Government should legislate to require any person taking bookings for more than one vehicle to be licensed as an operator, with national standards for the information recorded by licensed operators in respect of bookings".		
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