

## QUESTIONS

### **1. Question from Councillor Bob Johnston to Councillor Neil Fawcett, Cabinet Member for Strategic Partnerships and Place**

Could Cabinet Member Neil Fawcett update the Council and the public on the imminent roll out of the civic enforcement programme?

#### **Written response**

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) are planning to start Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) on-street on 1 November 2021. Details can be found on OCC website <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/new-parking-enforcement>. In addition, OCC are conducting a major communications campaign to get the message across to users and we are pushing the messages on social media (as attached). Throughout the process we have updated all councillors, town and parish councils and will continue to do so as we reach the start date.

When the scheme is introduced in November the initial approach will be advisory helping residents to get used to the new scheme and then enforcement officers will move to issuing penalty enforcement notices.

If councillors are aware of any places where enforcement of existing restrictions could create a serious problem, please report them using the form on the website. Please encourage town and parish councils to do the same.

The Vale of White Horse District Council is in the process of making minor amendments required to the car parking Orders to bring them in line with CPE. For example, the levels of fines will reduce slightly. This work will be completed early 2022 in the interim the Vale Council will continue to enforce our off-street pay and display car parks as we do at the moment.

Once enforcement starts there will be regular monitoring meetings of the scheme. We will be able to pick up on any problems that have been identified and raise any 'hot spots'.

As enforcement improves, and the inevitable knock on impact becomes clear, we expect to see more applications for new restrictions and/or residents parking zones. Again, it would be very useful if councillor and town and parish councils feed those requests in.

In the meantime I would like to thank all the officers who have worked so hard on this scheme against a tight timetable.

### **2. Question from Councillor Eric de la Harpe to Councillor Catherine Webber, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Environment**

Could the Cabinet Member summarise the new Tree Policy for residents and explain how it may apply in cases where Vale residents wish to plant trees on

land that is owned by South Oxfordshire District Council? In particular, the Rye Farm area on the south bank of the Thames at Abingdon.

### **Written response**

The Policy for the planting of trees on Council Land is a joint policy across both South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council. As you can imagine, one of the key benefits of having a joint policy of this nature is that it also allows for a common application form and process for residents. As a result, residents of either district will be in a position to submit an application to plant trees on Council land in either district, in accordance with the policy. So, for example, those who want to plant on Rye Farm will be able to submit one application form even if the area to be planted crosses both districts.

The purpose of this policy is to outline how South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse District Councils will protect, plant and manage trees on the land they own, and how the community will be supported with their tree planting initiatives. It is an overarching document, setting out principles for planting trees (using the guide for planting trees), supporting biodiversity, caring for and managing trees on council land and encouraging communities to get involved and to benefit from beautiful trees.... trees which benefit our bodily health by providing cleaner air to breathe by sequestering carbon, but also our mental health. These principles will be used as a benchmark for future plans and policies developed by the Councils and will inform current projects that involve trees.

### **3. Question from Councillor Elaine Ware to Councillor Emily Smith Leader of the Council**

Following your previous answers and follow up to the March motion that was passed, could you update us, and residents, on the status of discussions with the Swindon CCG and whether a meeting has been held yet? A very informative meeting was held with Oxfordshire CCG and that helped all members understand the intersection points and complexities of the interaction. Therefore, could you please provide figures of the number of residents registered for each of the CCG's that serve Vale, and what funding has been allocated in the last 5 years from S106 to each of those CCG's?

### **Written response**

Following the March motion to Council I wrote to the Director of Primary Care at Bath & North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG to request a meeting. I received a positive response to my letter from David Freeman, Chief Operating Officer at the CCG and a date has now been arranged for 2 November for meeting with him along with his colleagues; Dr Amanda Webb, the Locality Clinical Chair for Swindon & Shrivenham and Richard Smale, Director of Transformation at the CCG.

We don't currently have access to the number of residents registered for each of the CCGs that serve Vale. However the website

<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoibjQxMTI5NTFtYzlkNi00MzljLWWE0OGItNGVjM2QwNjAzZGQ0IiwidCI6IjUwZjYwNzFmLWJiZmUtNDAxYS04ODAzLTY3Mzc0OGU2MjllMjIi>

[mMiOjh9](#) shows number of patient by GP practice and can be broken down by CCG area, but unfortunately not by district. We know that overall Oxfordshire CCG has 783,330 on registered lists and Bath & North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG has 974,185 on registered lists. It is important to note that registered patients may live outside the Vale. Officers are working with the CCGs to see what further data can be made available.

In terms of funding, we have secured £344,091 in S106 contributions towards healthcare in Vale. Of that amount, £313,439 has been received by Vale and £185,585.18 has been allocated/spent to date on the following healthcare projects:

Botley medical centre £91,637.98  
Abingdon Surgery expansion - £20,000  
Wantage £38,858.11 – (Clinical rooms)  
Faringdon and Shrivenham creation of consulting rooms - £14,674.40  
Malthouse Surgery expansion - £20,414.69

It should be noted that CCG's cannot receive funds and these monies have been paid to either NHS Property owners or directly to GP's.

#### **4. Question from Councillor Elaine Ware to Councillor Judy Roberts Cabinet Member for Development and Infrastructure**

Has the Oxfordshire Community Land Trust received Register Provider Status for the Dean Court Affordable Housing Project?

##### **Written response**

The Oxfordshire Community Land Trust has been in contact with the Regulator of Social Housing to respond to stage two enquiries about becoming a Registered Provider. We understand they anticipate hearing in early October if they have met the eligibility conditions and the registration criteria to enable formal registration to take place.

#### **5. Question from Councillor Simon Howell to Councillor Crawford, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Assets**

Could the Cabinet Member advise Council of how many customers have cancelled their direct debits for the garden waste/brown bin service since the start of August, by each week to the end of September, and confirm how much lost annual income this equates to for the Council.

##### **Written response**

The total number of cancelled direct debits for the Council's Garden Waste scheme over the period in question was 223. The weekly breakdown is appended below. This amounts to 0.89% of our total 25,000 Garden Waste customers. Residents are not required to inform us of the reason for cancellation and it is

therefore not possible to know why direct debits were cancelled. However, over any 8 week period it is likely that a proportion of our residents will move away. Research\* shows that on average approximately 4.4% of people move house each year or 0.67% in an 8 week period and which, therefore, is the number the Council may reasonably expect to be cancelled for this reason.

The annualised net loss of income from 223 cancellations is slightly less than £3,000 when taking into account the reduced fees that the Council pays to our contractor for the service.

It may be also worth stressing that during this period this Council took the decision to hold in abeyance new customers wishing to join the service. These amounted to 143 prospective customers at the time of writing. The annualised net loss after taking into account these future customers – i.e. 223 less 143 = 80 - is less than £1,000.

<b>Week commencing</b>	<b>Number of cancellations</b>
02 August 2002	40
09 August 2002	47
16 August 2002	15
23 August 2002	33
30 August 2002	12
06 September 2002	22
13 September 2002	26
20 September 2002	20
27 September 2002	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>223</b>

\*<https://www.gravenhill.co.uk/blog/how-often-do-we-move-house-and-why>

#### **6. Question from Councillor Nathan Boyd to Councillor Thomas, Cabinet Member Community Engagement**

Land banking is a pitfall in our complex planning system where developers buy and store a pipeline of land and obtain planning permission for that land, with no immediate intention to build the homes that have been approved. Could the Cabinet Member for Planning advise the current number of homes to which planning has been granted yet construction has yet to be started?

#### **Written response**

As at 1 April 2021 there were 8,461 homes (residential (Class C3) and residential accommodation and care (Class C2)) with planning permission waiting to be built. These were made up of 4,521 homes with outline planning permission, 1,289 homes with full permission on sites where construction had not started, and 2,651 homes not yet completed on sites where construction had started.

**7. Question from Councillor Elaine Ware to Councillor Helen Pighills Cabinet Member for Healthy Communities**

A meeting was held in March this year to discuss the Leisure Needs for Wantage, Faringdon and the surrounding area. The issues raised at this meeting were to form part of the formal consultation to identify leisure needs throughout the area and use of S106 funds. It has now been over six months and there has been no further update. Would the Cabinet Member inform Council of the current status of this project and when will a formal consultation take place?

**Written response**

While community engagement and consultation is not strictly my portfolio I am happy to respond to the question. The formal consultation with sporting groups has taken place and the consultation with town/parish councils is in progress. In March 2021 sporting groups in and around Wantage, Faringdon and Grove were invited to complete a survey asking about their view of the current and future needs for leisure facilities in the area. At the same time, we were hoping to consult with the affected towns and parish councils, but several of them felt this was rushed and wanted to delay the meetings until they could discuss it formally with all their members. This week the Faringdon Town Council and Great Coxwell Parish Council participated in a feedback session. Grove Parish Council will have their feedback session on Tuesday 19th October. Officers are waiting for Wantage Town Council to confirm a suitable day and time for their feedback session - likely to be the week commencing 18 October. Once the town/parish feedback sessions are complete, the final report will be expected within 2 weeks. In the meantime, officers have been working on the details of each agreement pertaining to the Wessex Leisure Centre to ensure smooth operations once the needs assessment is complete.

**8. Question from Councillor Janet Shelley to Councillor Bethia Thomas Cabinet Member for Community Engagement**

In early March a project commenced on improving planning enforcement. To date there has been no update of progress on this significant and urgent project. Meanwhile Ward Members are receiving numerous complaints about the lack of service and that the backlog is the prime excuse for no action. Would the Cabinet Member provide an update on the current situation including details of the number of staff employed in the Enforcement Team and the number of outstanding actions as at 30 September 2021.

**Written response**

We provided an update in July on the progress of the planning enforcement review, where stage one had been completed and we were moving into stage two, the action plan. We shared the action plan and mission statement with group leaders. All priority one actions have commenced and some of priority two actions have started. As part of the priority actions we have undertaken IT

improvement, officer/councillor training on planning conditions and we are progressing the review of the Planning Enforcement Statement. A GDPR issue has delayed progress of the statement and our ability to undertake councillor consultation on a draft. However, we expect to be able to progress and report the statement to Cabinet, 3 December.

There are 16 actions, of which 2 have been completed, 12 are in progress and 2 have not yet started. There are 8 shared posts staff (7.36FTE) split 60:40 between South (4.36FTE) and Vale (3FTE).

**9. Question from Councillor Elaine Ware to Councillor Catherine Webber  
Cabinet Member Climate Emergency and Environment**

Could the Cabinet Member advise Council:

- a. Having previously advised Council of the waiting list due to administrative issues, how many residents are still on the waiting list for the Garden Waste Service
- b. How many new customers for Garden Waste have been taken on but are still waiting for brown bins to be delivered.
- c. How many existing customers have cancelled their subscription to this garden waste service since the start of August.

**Written response**

My colleague the Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets has already, in response to the earlier question, outlined that we have 143 customers waiting to join the garden waste service, and indicated that, out of a customer base of 25,000, 223 customers have cancelled their subscription since the start of August. In answer to part b) - How many new customers for Garden Waste have been taken on but are still waiting for brown bins to be delivered - there are currently 6 deliveries that have yet to be made.