



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL**  
**At the Village Hall at 20:00 Thursday, September 8, 2022**

**Members Present**

Chair	Jim Donahue
Vice-Chair	Diana Smith
Members	Nick Brazil Katherine Higley Carrie Leadbeater-Hart Frances Parkes Diana Smith

**Officers Present:**

Clerk, RFO	Jane Yamamoto
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**Public and Press:** 2 residents

The meeting started at 20:00.

- 1        **Protocol Following the Death of HM Queen Elizabeth II** 20:00  
Cllr Donahue requested that the council observe two minutes of silence at the commencement of the meeting in honour of the sad news that Queen Elizabeth II had died shortly before the start of the meeting.  
The Clerk read out the relevant parts of the protocol concerning steps to be taken in the event of the death of a senior member of the Royal Family.  
The Clerk and Cllr Leadbeater-Hart will contact Rev Leach to liaise and to coordinate about a book of condolence, laying of flowers and services. As defined in the protocol, the Chairman will write a statement on the village website and Facebook communicating what will be available locally for those mourning the death of the Queen.
- 2        **Apologies for absence & Mission Statement** 20:05  
Cllr Dragonetti provided his apologies and Cllrs Leadbeater-Hart and O'Grady provided their apologies for leaving the meeting early.
- 3        **Declaration of Interests** 20:10  
There were no declarations.
- 4        **Public Forum** - an opportunity for members of the public to express their point of view on any item on the agenda.  
There were no members of the public wishing to make any comments.
- 5        **Chairman's Announcements** 20:20  
The Polish Memorial Gardens Opening event held in August was a well-attended and well-organised event on a beautiful summer's day to open the village's newest Open Space.
  - It was formally opened with the ribbon being cut by Cllr Higley's grandmother, Mrs Maria Kowal, who was a WWII refugee based in the camp and now lives in Reading. Relatives of a number of other former residents of Combe Park Camp and camps in the area were

also present, highlighting that these Gardens represent a unique memorial to an important part of the country's history.

- The cross was blessed by both a Catholic Polish Priest from Reading, Fr. Richard Maniak, and our own Rev. James Leach.
- The event was largely organised by Anna Szczeponek, the only remaining Polish descendant from the Camp that has continuously lived in Manor Road, and who is also acting as the Green Team Guardian for the Open Space.
- Sally Woolhouse and Charles Cotgreave also helped to organise it and Sally spoke of the objectives of the gardens for biodiversity and a peaceful place for relaxation.
- We recently became aware that Alexa, the former Green Team Lead, was successful in securing a Lottery Fund grant, with support of the Whitchurch Society, so further improvements will be forthcoming, including high quality historical display plaques.
- The event was concluded with tea and cakes with a number of volunteers helping.
- We should formally thank Sally, Charles and Anna for their efforts to make this event such as success.

Residents Issues:

- Hillside Laurel – Ian Hogg completed work to cut this back 8th September. The issue can be closed.
- Security of the Village Green Car Park gate – A resident raised the issue of the missing lock on the Village Green car park gate. A new secure lock has now been purchased and the combination communicated to the Village Green WG members. Residents requiring access to the gate should contact the Clerk for the combination.

6 To approve minutes of the meeting of July 14, 2022.

**Resolution:** The Council voted to approve the minutes.

7 Planning Applications – to discuss and agree Council's response to the following:

20:25

7.1 P22/S2593/HH

Uplands, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7HH

Replacement of derelict greenhouse with enclosed cricket net.

**Resolution:** The Council voted to support this application.

7.2 P22/S2767/LB

Coombeside Cottage, High Street, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7EY

Reinstate part of an internal wall to form a shower room. Reinstate part of an internal wall in the lounge. Remove a window & door from a 1970/80's rear extension & replace with bi-fold doors. Replace the roof of the rear extension with a warm roof. Remove floor tiles to existing kitchen & replace with timber flooring.

**Resolution:** The Council voted to support this application.

7.3 P22/S1324/FUL

Coombe Park, Coombe Park Road, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7EX

The erection of a replacement dwelling and associated works (as per existing and proposed uses across the site clarified by amended plans and supporting information submitted 27 April 2022 and as amended by landscape management and maintenance plan received 29 June 2022 and as amplified by Historic England Report received 08 July 2022)

**Resolution:** The Council voted to submit no comments and that the council will defer to the SODC Landscape Officer.

7.4 P22/S2830/HH

The Coach House, Duchess Close, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7EN

Renovation and extension of existing house: demolition of existing small single storey rear extension; new insulation to the fabric; replacement of the roof with slightly increased roof height; additional windows and rooflights; replacement of existing windows and doors; and a new two storey extension to the rear.

**Resolution:** The Council voted to object on the grounds of overlooking on other properties and the outside appearance was not in keeping with the Conversation Area. The Council will defer to the Conservation Officer with respect to the size and appearance.

7.5 P22/S2809HH

The Coach House, Duchess Close, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7EN

Renovation and extension of existing house: new insulation to the fabric; replacement of the roof with slightly increased roof height; additional windows and rooflights; replacement of existing windows and doors; and a new Orangery extension to the front.

**Resolution:** The Council voted to object on the grounds of overlooking on other properties and the outside appearance was not in keeping with the Conversation Area. The Council will defer to the Conservation Officer with respect to the size and appearance

8 To receive reports from the representatives of Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council 20:40

8.1 SODC District Councillor Report – Cllr Dragonetti (Attachment 1)

8.2 SODC County Councillors Reports – Cllr Bulmer (Attachment 2, 3)

9 **Finance:** 20:45

9.1 To approve the payment schedule for August and September:

Payment	Amount
Staff expenditure (August 2022)	£471.80 BACS
Staff expenditure (September 2022)	£471.80
Scofell (August invoice)	£720.24 BACS
Scofell (September invoice)	£720.24
OPFA (annual membership)	£45.00
Leslie Maynerd (MOWS plants)	£60.23
Herald Graphics (Q2 Bulletin)	£397 BACS
ROSPA Play Safety	£96.60

**Resolution:** The Council voted to approve the payments for August and September.

10.0 Village Green update - Cllr Parkes – motions seconded by Cllr Donahue 20:50

1. Update on incidents of trespassing with the neighbouring paddock and changes to football goals.
2. Motion to procure permanent warning signs.
3. Motion to appoint new Parish Council representative and Chairman of the Village Green WG.
4. Motion to apply for grant to support improved fencing between the Village Green and neighbouring paddock.

10.1 Cllr Donahue provided an update on the background, stating that he and Cllr Parkes have had ongoing discussions in the past two months with the owners of the paddock next to the Village Green along with representatives from the Football Club and Cricket Club, with the objective of addressing concerns over trespassing in the paddock and the welfare of the horses.

- The owners have raised concerns about nuisance to their horses from footballs and youth going to retrieve the balls, as well as trespassing.

- We have also become aware that at least one of the horses is very young and active and should be considered dangerous to anyone approaching it within the paddock.
- A number of changes that have now been made to address these concerns:
  - The east and west facing goals that have been the main cause of the stray balls and youth trespassing in the paddock have been removed. The backstop net by the west goal is no longer needed and has also been removed.
  - The north football goal remains and there is now a temporary goal to be used on the south end of the football field, but to be secured behind the pavilion and only made available to the FC members and residents requiring access for match-play.
  - The changes have been agreed with members of the FC and CC as well as owners of the neighbouring paddock.
  - This re-orientation of the goals has significantly reduced the amount of balls going into the neighbouring paddock and helped to de-escalate tensions.
- The owners of the paddock seem to be genuinely pleased with the changes and have now removed several large 'Keep Out' signs that were on the fence. They would like to work with us on options to replace and improve both the temporary and permanent fencing between the two fields.
- The owners had also raised concerns to our MP John Howell and the Thames Valley Police. Given the recent changes that we have made to reduce the impact of football, Cllr Donahue has been able to respond to both with the concrete steps we have taken to address the concerns, and they both seem satisfied with this.

There are still some follow-on actions the Parish Council are discussing with the owners, including the motions raised for approval:

- Installation of a permanent metal sign warning users to avoid trespassing in the paddock to ensure the message is clear to users of the Village Green.
- Making a contribution towards an improved fence along the entire length of the field, through use of an OCC grant.
- Recommending Cllr Frances Parkes to become the new Chairman of the Village Green Working Group. Alex Hilton will replace Alistair Aitcheson as the FC representative of the WG. We should send a thank you Alistair expressing our gratitude for all that he has done for football in our community over the years.

- 10.2 **Resolution:** Motion to procure permanent warning signs was approved. Action 187: Cllr Parkes to seek quotes for a permanent metal sign.
- 10.3 **Resolution:** The Council approved the appointment of Cllr Parkes as the Chair of the Village Green Working Group.
- 10.4 **Resolution:** The Motion to apply for grant to support improved fencing between the Village Green and neighbouring paddock. Action 188: Cllr Donahue to work with the Clerk to apply for the OCC grant.
- 11 Motion to approve the Playground Survey (Attachment 4) – Cllrs Leadbeater-Hart and O’Grady 21:00  
**Resolution:** The Council voted to approve the motion.
- 12 Review Parish Council comments on draft agreement with the Cricket Club for upgraded Pavilion 21:15  
 – Cllr Donahue

- 12.1 Cllr Donahue has sent the Cricket Club the link to the SODC capital grants that they hope to be successful.  
There were a number of questions about the document provided by the Cricket Club that require a detailed discussion. It was agreed that an Extraordinary Meeting would be scheduled to discuss the response to the draft Heads of Terms document with the Cricket Club. Action 189: Cllr Donahue to arrange an Extraordinary meeting to discuss with the Cricket Club.
- 13 Benches for Ruth Popper Playground update – Cllr Higley
- 13.1 Cllr Higley confirmed that a District Councillor Grant had been submitted with the Clerk’s help. The Clerk will report back when a response had been provided.
- 14 Help with Broadband Mobile costs – Cllr Parkes 21:30
- 14.1 Cllr Parkes advised about Social Tariffs and that residents can apply for cheaper broadband. Cllr Parkes will contact the editor of the Village Website and the Bulletin to post additional information.
- 15 Playground Inspection Report – Cllr Donahue 21:40
- 15.1 The Clerk confirmed that a resident had been given the routine checklist provided by the annual inspector. Cllr Higley and the Clerk agreed to work together on reviewing the weekly checklist and any short-term repairs. Any longer-term repairs that have been identified by the annual report and/or the weekly checklist will be forwarded to Cllrs Leadbeater-Hart and O’Grady for the refurbishment of the playground.
- 16 To review progress on any open actions from previous Parish Council meetings and agree any revision of actions on the action list. 21:50
- 17 To confirm the date and time of the next meeting on Thursday, October 13, 2022 at 20:00.
- 18 Confidential discussion for thank you notes from the Parish Council  
Thank you notes will be sent to: Alistair Aitchison, Christian Denning, Alex Hilton, Neil Huntington, Aelethea Hill. Sally Woolhouse, Anna Szaeponek.
- 19 Meeting closed. 22:00

## Attachment 1

### **Report to Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council September 2022 Household Support**

The funding from the government for this is now exhausted, except for the 1/3<sup>rd</sup> that was put aside for pensioners. Any pensioners struggling to pay their household bills are encouraged to get in touch with the Community Support Team who can guide them through the application process; applications close on 30 September.

#### **Councillor Grant Scheme**

The deadline for this has passed, but there is another round of funding on its way. There is also the Capital Grant Scheme, where funding of up to £75,000 is available for projects that help improve peoples quality of life, with a minimum of £1000 and up to 50% of total costs. Applications are open until midday of 21 October, information on the SODC website.

[www.Southoxon.gov.uk/grants](http://www.Southoxon.gov.uk/grants)

#### **Oxfordshire 2050**

The Oxfordshire Plan 2050, a County-wide plan for growth and development, has collapsed after the Districts and City failed to reach agreement on housing numbers. Three “growth” scenarios were proposed by independent consultants: the Standard Method, “business as usual” which reflected current high rates of housing growth and a “transformational” scenario. Oxford City was seeking housing numbers in excess of those projected under the “transformational” scenario while South and Vale and West Oxfordshire wanted to see growth in line with the Standard Method for calculating housing need and a focus on absorbing and providing for the high levels of housing growth that have already been committed in existing local plans.

Some £2.5m of government money was spent on the 2050 Plan but these funds were earmarked specifically for Oxfordshire 2050 so could not have been spent elsewhere. The key County-wide groups including: the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Climate Group, the Affordable Housing Group, the Infrastructure Group and the Local Nature Partnership will continue to operate. Much of the work previously done under Oxfordshire 2050 will now simply be absorbed by local authorities in the drafting of their own Local Plans (including South & Vale’s Joint Local Plan).

#### **Councils Withdraw from Ox-Cam Arc Project**

South and Vale leaders have agreed that they do not support proposals for a pan-regional development and growth partnership across the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. Cllr David Rouane, leader of SODC, wrote to Cllr Barry Wood confirming that South Oxfordshire will not be involved in the continuation of the Arc, a scheme that at one stage mooted a million new houses and an Expressway between the two cities.

#### **Protecting our Rivers: Bathing Water for Wallingford**

Volunteers have been conducting water quality testing at eight sites along the River Thames from Abingdon Bridge to Nosworthy Way in Wallingford, as part of the Wallingford Bathing Water partnership project led by Thames21 and funded by South Oxfordshire District Council. The test results will form part of an evidence base to support an application to DEFRA for Bathing Water Status at Wallingford Beach, a well-known swimming area that has been enjoyed by local residents and visitors for generations.

Should the application for Bathing Water Status be successful, the Environment Agency would be required to test the water in and around the bathing area for faecal bacteria and to make the results of these tests public. Bathing Water designation also requires the sewage undertaker (Thames Water) to treat effluent to “human health” standards thus giving greater powers to bring about improvements to treatment works that impact the bathing area.

If you have any photos of Wallingford Beach this summer, please send them to us – they could prove useful in establishing that the Beach is widely used and popular (one of the criteria set by DEFRA for Bathing Water Status). And please be sure to complete the consultation survey and help Wallingford to become only the third stretch of river in the country to be designated as a Bathing Water: [Wallingford Beach Bathing Waters project - Thames21](#)

#### **Moving On**

The Council is going to be based at Abbey House in Abingdon from 3<sup>rd</sup> October. When I have been to 135 Milton Park in recent months it very empty of staff, so while Abingdon is a less convenient location than Didcot, let alone Crowmarsh, it is a sensible move. As so much is done remotely, I don't think that there will be much disruption for the public.

### **Investment in new system**

Following on from the investment in a replacement accounting system, SODC has gone on to invest in a CRM or Customer Relationship System. Until now, communications with the public was conducted along functional lines. For example, when there were problems with the garden waste collection system last year, the only record of who had a garden waste bin was held in the accounting system, and for many residents this was only a postal address, as that was all that was needed for sending the bill. The new system will facilitate better communication via modern methods, email, text etc.

### **Oxford Travel Scheme**

There is a consultation process going on for a travel scheme in Oxford with the objective of making travel there more sustainable, involving restrictions on entering the centre through ANPR ( number plate recognition) One of the aims is through the reduction in congestion to improve bus time keeping and movement.

### **Taxi Tariffs**

This is coming into effect from the end of this month

Peter Dragonetti

## Attachment 2

### **REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS AUGUST 2022 FROM CLLR KEVIN BULMER**

#### **GENERAL OCC REPORT**

##### **HUGE COST OF ENDING PARTNERSHIP WITH CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL**

A decision was taken by the LibDem/Green/Labour coalition in February to end the partnership between OCC and Cherwell District Council. Councillors have now been updated on the process of separating services, and the cost to OCC resulting from the change is a staggering £800,000, despite assurances given in February that there would be no cost. Given that context, there is clearly a strong possibility the final figure could be higher than £800,000. Another consequence of the separation was the immediate departure of the previous Chief Executive, so OCC is being run by an Interim Chief Executive for an unknown period of time.

##### **OXFORD LTNS COULD PREVENT AMBULANCES FROM REACHING PATIENTS ON TIME**

The issue of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) in Oxford continues to stimulate extensive public protest. The controversial measures, which use giant plant pots and bollards to partially close off side roads, were experimental but have been made permanent by Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green councillors in charge of the county. Direct action by unhappy residents continues, with great repair expense to OCC. Worryingly, a paramedic has claimed the LTNs could result in ambulances being unable to reach patients in time; media report here: <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/20296036.oxford-ltns-prevent-ambulances-reaching-patients-time-says-paramedic/>

##### **A 'GREEN' PLAN DISTRIBUTED IN A VERY UNGREEN WAY**

In July, OCC printed and posted a 500-page report for every councillor (and some officers) about how it can be more environmentally-friendly as a council. This faux-pas attracted wide media attention and derision. Conservatives said printed copies should have only been supplied to only those who requested them, as most councillors prefer the online version, avoiding the need for wasteful and expensive printing and delivery.

##### **UPDATE ON 20MPH SPEED LIMITS**

Data from the Cuxham trial show that the introduction of a 20mph limit has resulted in a very small average speed reduction of between 3 and 4 mph. Over 50% of traffic exceeds the 20mph limit. Given this data, some may question the wisdom of OCC spending £8m on a sign-changing exercise, indeed Thames Valley Police issued this statement on 20th July:

*"With regards to the introduction of 20mph limits across the county... Thames Valley Police fully support the Department for Transport guidance, which as you will be aware, clearly states that such limits should be self-enforcing as there is clear evidence to show that sign only schemes do not result in effective speed reductions."*

##### **OCC CAN USE CAMERAS TO ENFORCE TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS IN OXFORDSHIRE**

OCC has obtained government permission to use cameras to enforce traffic regulations, including stopping in yellow box junctions, illegal turns, and vehicle restrictions. Automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras will be fitted around specific locations in Oxfordshire. While these measures have been welcomed by some, concern has been expressed by civil liberty groups, trade associations and motoring organisations. These cameras are NOT available to enforce new 20mph limits.

##### **EXIT FROM 'FIXMYSTREET'**

Residents are no longer able to report fly-tipping via FixMyStreet and are instead being redirected to the relevant district council website. The Conservative opposition is questioning why this retrograde step has been taken.

##### **DRAG QUEEN STORY TIME CLASSES FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN HAVE SPARKED FURY**



Drag queen story time classes for primary school children in council libraries have sparked fury from parents over the 'sexualised' appearance of men dressed as women. OCC – which was forced to withdraw its 'trans toolkit' for schools after a legal challenge – has defended the upcoming drag sessions in its libraries as "appropriate and well-suited for the advertised age groups". Police were called to a similar event in Reading as protesters expressed disapproval.

### **LIBDEMS ATTEMPT MOVE A MOTION ON FUEL SUBSIDIES & VAT**

The LibDems put forward a motion to Full Council in July stating Government should:

- Subsidise bus and train travel
- Urgently review the energy cap regime
- Provide immediate financial support for consumers of heating oil / bottled gas and solid fuels / prepayment meters.
- Immediately reduce VAT to 17.5%

The motion was not debated due to lack of time, but Conservatives would have pointed out that whatever the merits or not of the proposal, the administration is once again wasting council resources trying to get involved in central government issues way beyond its remit. Councillors are not junior MPs and should focus on local matters. It is believed the motion is a 'round robin' issued by LibDem HQ as almost identically worded motions have been debated at other LibDem councils.

### **CONSERVATIVES WILL TRY TO REVERSE IMPOSITION OF VEGAN MEALS**

Conservative Councillor Yvonne Constance will ask members at a full meeting of the council in September to reinstate meat and dairy on to the menu and to support local producers. This follows the decision to move to a vegan offer earlier this year and the subsequent controversy surrounding the provenance of the vegan dishes. Cllr Constance will tell colleagues: "Given the privileged position in which this Council finds itself and the potentially damaging effects of its motion dated 14 December, this Council resolves to offer locally produced menus at Council-catered events, including meat, dairy and vegan options, or to make alternative provisions for members, staff and attendees to facilitate personal choice." Cllr David Bartholomew, who is seconding Cllr Constance's motion, will say: "We are not opposed to vegan food, but we do want to help our local producers and serve local food rather than flying in mangoes from abroad. And we want there to be a choice. It is not right to impose personal dietary opinions on others. We are happy to be educated about veganism, but people still must be allowed to make their own choice as to what they do or do not want to eat."

### **COST OF GENDER-NEUTRAL TOILETS**

At a Locality meeting in July, the OCC's Property Director confirmed that OCC has 905 sites, and that as a result of a Cabinet decision, each of these would have to be assessed in terms of gender-neutral toilet requirements. Ignoring the cost of any actual work required, just this assessment could cost in excess of £90,000 if each individual assessment cost £100. If the actual work costs £1000 per site on average, then the total cost would be in the region of £1m.

### **OTHER MATTER**

- 1) Pleased to attend South Stoke PC meeting to answer Q on the 20mph speed limit, remember if you've specific OCC matters you need help on always happy to attend meetings (PC or outside those times).
- 2) Still have a small amount of grant monies left if theres a scheme needing some support.
- 3) The biggest issue currently for me is occ administration ignoring the results of consultation if they don't agree with what they want. While its true there not a referendum it seems undemocratic and rather authoritarian to just press ahead with something the majority have said " no thanks", slippery slope. Makes all the money & resources spent wasted.

**REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS SEPTEMBER 2022  
FROM CLLR KEVIN BULMER  
GENERAL OCC REPORT**

The Conservative Opposition remains concerned that the LibDem/Green/Labour coalition running the county council continues to pursue ideological objectives way beyond the remit of the council, the core functions of which are: adult & children's social care; education & learning; and highways.

**PROTESTS AGAINST DRAG QUEEN STORY TIME FOR CHILDREN AT LIBRAIRIES**



As previously reported, the planned drag queen story time classes for primary school children in council libraries sparked fury from many parents. The events took place during August provoking demonstrations and counter-demonstrations with a heavy police presence. Without going into the detail of the debate, Conservatives are asking voters who switched their vote to the LibDems if this is the type of thing they want the council to get involved in, or whether it should focus on the fundamentals of running local government.

**LIBDEMS ATTEMPT TO MOVE A MOTION TO CUT VAT**

The LibDems put forward a motion to Full Council in July stating Government should immediately introduce various subsidies and cut VAT to 17.5%. The motion was not debated due to lack of time, but is believed to be coming back to Full Council in September. Conservatives have pointed out that whatever the merits or not of the proposal, the administration is once again wasting council resources trying to get involved in central government issues way beyond the council's remit. Councillors are not junior MPs and they should focus on local matters. It is believed the motion has been centrally generated by LibDem HQ as almost identically worded motions have been debated at other LibDem councils.

**LIBDEM/GREEN/LABOUR ADMINISTRATION RAMPS UP VEGANISM CAMPAIGN**

The administration continues to push its vegan agenda under the guise of climate action. A new website promoted by Oxfordshire councils called Climate Action Oxfordshire features links to the Vegan Society. Pressure group the Countryside Alliance has responded by stating that the vegan policies which OCC has adopted should be dropped because they undermine British farmers. The alliance is urging councillors to withdraw from the

campaign which encourages residents to give up meat and adopt a plant-based diet. It argues that in order to make an environmental choice, it is more important for consumers to know where food comes from and how it is produced. At the OCC Full Council meeting in September, Conservatives will again try to reverse the imposition of vegan meals at council meetings. Conservative Councillor Yvonne Constance will ask members to reinstate meat and dairy on to the menu and to support local producers. She will move that: "This Council resolves to offer locally produced menus at Council-catered events, including meat, dairy and vegan options, or to make alternative provisions for members, staff and attendees to facilitate personal choice." Cllr David Bartholomew, who is seconding the motion, will say: "We are not opposed to vegan food, but we want to serve local food rather than flying in mangoes from abroad. And we want there to be a choice. It is not right to impose ideological dietary opinions on others."

## **KENT COUNCIL FINDS 20MPH ZONES DO NOT PROMPT LESS CAR USE**

The introduction of a 20mph speed limit zone did not encourage people to ditch their cars, an independent report for Kent County Council has found. The local authority implemented the lower speeds in Faversham and Tonbridge as a trial in September 2020 in an effort to encourage more cycling and walking in the market towns. However, the recent report from transport consultants Agilysys said:

*"Car usage remained virtually unchanged following the introduction of the 20mph limits".*

Conservatives are going to ask the administration whether this new information will have any impact on OCC's plans to spend £8m changing signs from 30mph to 20mph in Oxfordshire. As reported last month, data from the Cuxham trial in Oxfordshire showed that the introduction of a 20mph limit resulted in a very small average speed reduction of between 3 and 4 mph, with over 50% of traffic exceeding the 20mph limit. Thames Valley Police issued this statement on 20th July:

*"With regards to the introduction of 20mph limits across the county... Thames Valley Police fully support the Department for Transport guidance, which as you will be aware, clearly states that such limits should be self-enforcing as there is clear evidence to show that sign only schemes do not result in effective speed reductions."*

## **COST OF GENDER-NEUTRAL TOILETS**

Subsequent to the Cabinet decision to further investigate the provision of gender-neutral toilets in all council buildings, OCC's Property Director confirmed that OCC has 905 sites and that each of these would have to be assessed. Ignoring the cost of any actual work required, just this assessment could cost in excess of £90,000 if each individual assessment cost £100. If the actual work costs £1000 per site on average, then the total cost would be in the region of £1m.

## **HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE DRAFT CENTRAL OXFORDSHIRE TRAVEL PLAN**

OCC has launched a consultation on its draft Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan, which focuses on potential ways of taxing motorists to reduce car use in and around the city of Oxford. Residents and parish councils can respond to the survey on Let's Talk Oxfordshire:

<https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/central-oxfordshire-travel-plan>

Meanwhile, opponents of the hugely divisive Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme in Oxford have launched a legal bid to overturn the council's decision.

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

**Address:** Councillor Kevin Bulmer, County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

**Email/Tel:** [kevin.bulmer@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.bulmer@oxfordshire.gov.uk). 07803005680

*Twitter:Kevin Bulmer @bulmer\_kevin*



## WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

### VILLAGE SURVEY ON POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS TO MANOR ROAD PLAYGROUND

Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council is interested in your views on the Manor Road playground.

Substantial repair works are needed to the ‘wet pour’ surfacing underneath the various pieces of equipment and recent surveys show that some of the well-loved equipment is beginning to show signs of wear and corrosion. Whilst necessary repair works will be carried out, this also presents an opportunity to make changes to the playground and provides scope for any improvements our village would like to see.

We would be very grateful if you could spend a couple of minutes filling out the following questionnaire. Should there be a majority of opinion from the village to see more than repair of the existing, we would also like to welcome interest from volunteers to join a working group to take forward any improvements. Please inform Jane Yamamoto if you would like to take part, on

*parishclerk.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com*

Please respond by 15<sup>th</sup> October. Hand-written answers can be delivered to:

- Church Cottages, Mill Drive
- Hawthorn Cottage, High Street
- 11 Hillside, Hardwick Road

#### QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. Are you a:

child / parent / grandparent / other ? *(please circle)*

2. How often do you use the playground in Manor Road:

every week / every month / occasionally / never ? *(please circle)*

3. How would you rate the playground in general (1 low to 10 high)? *(please circle)*

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

4. Why have you given this rating?

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5. Would you like to see the playground changed/improved?



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If 'No', thank you for your response. If 'Yes', please rate each of the existing apparatus on the scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high):

**MULTIPLAY**

Rating:



**SWINGS  
BABY/NORMAL**

Rating:



**CLIMBING  
FRAME**

Rating:



**SPRING  
RIDERS**

Rating:



**TALL SLIDE**

Rating:



**TODDLER  
MULTIPLAY**

Rating:



Are there any other pieces of equipment you would like to see?

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Any other comments?

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Thank you for your time. We look forward to hearing the views of everyone in the village in order to understand how best to look after our playground.

Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council

*This survey is anonymous and therefore there will be no use of personal data.*