

## EAST HAGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DULY CONVENED AND HELD ON THURSDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2024

#### 1. ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST:

Present were Chairman I. Duff, Vice Chairman P. Dixon, Councillors C. Gover, R. Jaboor, N. Milner, D. Rickeard and C. Shaikh.

Apologies were received from District Councillor A-M Simpson.

In attendance was L. Lloyd (Clerk).

I. Duff indicated there is 1 vacancy for a parish councillor.

#### 2. PUBLIC FORUM AND QUESTIONS: None

#### 3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024:

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were approved by Council and signed by I. Duff.

#### 4. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS: I. Duff confirmed receipt of the District Councillor's Report, see attachment 2. The report contains advice on flooding, and it was agreed that L. Lloyd would forward to the flood group for information.

#### 5. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

- a) **Draft Budget and Precept – initial discussion:** I. Duff confirmed receipt of the draft budget which was circulated to councillors ahead of the meeting. Suggestions for non-CIL expenditure and consideration of reserves have been highlighted by the clerk. I. Duff noted that some of the general reserve could potentially be used to provide grants if required (for example if the VH needs support for the roofing project). There were no initial comments on the draft, so it was suggested that councillors discuss details ahead of the budget decision in January.
- b) **Online Meetings Response to OALC:** Councillors discussed the consultation, which focuses on whether members should be able to attend meetings online or vote by proxy. Views of individual councillors varied on the subject with both positive and negative aspects noted. It was agreed that as viewpoints differed on the subject, councillors should respond to the consultation individually.
- c) **Footpaths**
  - i) **Discussion on possible continuation of durable path surfacing for FP12 to Church Lane:** C. Shaikh reported that the new FP12 footpath surface blends in very well with the surroundings and it has been complimented by a number of residents since completion. SCS Oxon Ltd have quoted c.£16,000 to continue the path surfacing to join the gravel track alongside the Church. C. Gover noted that there have also been some negative comments about the more urban appearance of the footpath in contrast to the rural surroundings. C. Gover also confirmed that the drainage ditch in the field has not worked to reduce the surface water issues and it was agreed that this should be reviewed by the farmer first, ahead of approving any further footpath works. D. Rickeard confirmed that farm machinery accesses the eastern end of the field via the Church Lane end of FP12 and may damage a new path surface. Councillors agreed that prioritising additional footpaths within the parish, distinguishing between those which are integral to the village such as FP6 (Bakers Lane to North Croft), FP30 (Harwood Road to Main Road past the village hall) and FP8 (The Croft to Bakers Lane) compared to others which link to the wider rural footpath network and should be kept as greener routes.
  - ii) **Maintenance and enhancement of FP18:** D. Rickeard circulated a report ahead of the meeting to inform discussion:

Brambles and overhanging branches that encroach onto the path require regular trimming to ensure the path is accessible through the summer months – to be considered whether a contractor should carry out these works.

A large dense area of brambles has caused the path to divert onto the field leased by the Gales and needs more extensive cutting back to recover the true path line. This would require supervision to ensure it is done sensitively, but assistance has been offered with this aspect. Suggested planting of hawthorns along the field edge as it would help maintain the path line in the future.

The northern end of FP18 where it joins FP17 is prone to flooding as this and the adjacent field are low lying. Suggested solutions are either the addition of drainage pipes to link to existing field drains, or to build a causeway c. 20m long over the low-lying area. It was noted that perhaps George Gale could help with the potential field drainage solution.

## 6. ITEMS FOR DECISION:

- a) **To review contractor quotes for cutting the hedge at Butts Piece Allotments:** P. Dixon confirmed that he has obtained a second quote for comparison from a local contractor. This quote is more than double the price BGG quoted and as such it was agreed that the BGG quote offered value for money. Councillors agreed to instruct BGG to carry out the hedge cutting at a cost of £450.00.
- b) **Allotment Fees Review:** P. Dixon confirmed that the allotment budget has been reviewed and sent to the Allotment Management Committee. P. Dixon proposed an increase of 2p per square metre, which equates to 6% - councillors approved this increase which will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025. It was agreed that this increase was necessary to contribute towards the increasing costs for maintenance in the allotments, as noted in the budget.
- c) **Cemetery Drainage – To agree in principle the continuation of measures to mitigate flooding by the Cemetery Committee and the commitment to providing financial contribution towards the remedial works:** R. Jaboor circulated a report on the surface water flooding issues in the cemetery and the need for confirmed support from both Parish Councils to proceed with the proposed drainage scheme. It was agreed that improvements should be made if practical and financially viable. Councillors agreed in principle to proceed with the proposal and committed to providing a financial contribution to cover any shortfall after seeking potential grants that may be available. This commitment is based on the estimated figure of £20-30k. It was confirmed that any contributions made would be proportional to the Parish Council's ownership of the cemetery, with 75% apportioned to East Hagbourne and 25% to West Hagbourne, respectively.

## 7. ITEMS FOR REPORT:

- a) **Planning Applications:**

P24/S3457/CC 6 Great Mead Change of Use – I. Duff noted that OCC have contacted the Parish Council with a reminder to comment. It was agreed that L. Lloyd would respond confirming that the Parish Council has no further comments on the change of use proposal following the meetings held earlier this year.

P24/S2655/FUL 89 New Road – I. Duff confirmed that this application will be determined at a Planning Committee, following the Parish Council's objection to the overbearing nature of the proposed new build on the site. It is provisionally scheduled for the meeting on 8 January.
- b) **East Hagbourne Sport and Recreation Committee:** D. Rickeard confirmed that Steve Aplin has now been instructed to carry out the playground maintenance work, which is being paid for by EHSRC.
- c) **Cemetery Committee:** See item 6.c). Nothing additional to note.
- d) **Employment Committee:** C. Shaikh confirmed that the Employment Committee and L. Lloyd will be looking at pension options available in the next few weeks. L. Lloyd confirmed she has included a minimum employer pension contribution and pension administration costs in the 2025/26 budget.
- e) **Butts Piece Allotments:** P. Dixon confirmed that he has completed an application for the District Councillor's Grant Scheme to assist with the proposed renovation of the derelict area in the allotments.
- f) **Flood Management:** C. Shaikh confirmed that OCC have completed the relief channel dredging and bridge removal and reported that there is a considerable amount of silt left along the channel edge. During the recent flooding, the channel coped very well, although some vegetation has already grown in the channel as it is not subject to constant water flow. R. Jaboor mentioned a leaning tree at the southern end of Parsonage Lane (FP13) which is blocking the footway – L. Lloyd confirmed she has reported this on FixMyStreet.
- g) **Community Speedwatch:** R. Jaboor confirmed he had been contacted by Blewbury Parish Council for information on the 20 Limits team. There still has not been an official traffic order for the new 20mph speed limit in East Hagbourne. Concern has been raised over a lack of repeater roundels on Blewbury Road. It was agreed that L. Lloyd would contact the 20 Limits team to ask about the roundels and the traffic order. C. Shaikh queried the process for installation of VAR, and it was confirmed that approval for pole location and installation must be completed by OCC.
- h) **Housing development adjacent to the village hall:** I. Duff confirmed that there is no longer any Deanfield presence on site, and their contractors, Agetur, are now levelling the site, tarmacking the roads, landscaping and will be installing the playground in January.
- i) **Hagbourne Village Hall Committee:** D. Rickeard confirmed that Cllr. A. Wilmshurst from West Hagbourne Parish Council has joined the Village Hall Committee to assist with the roof. D. Rickeard is reviewing the committee roles and is keen to recruit volunteers to share the responsibilities. The anticipated cost for the roof and insulation works have escalated to c.£300k, with further investigation and comparative quotes required. The committee have recently learned that their application to SODC's CIL Grant Fund has been provisionally approved to the sum of £200k which is excellent news. A lot of work will need to be done in the next couple of months, and there may still be a request to the Parish Council to assist with funding.
- j) **Hagbourne Oaks Project:** D. Rickeard confirmed that the planting of 5 oak, 12 silver birch, 1 crab apple and 2 hawthorn trees was completed in mid-November, using open weave guards to prevent overheating in the summer. Growth will be monitored, and the current supports may need strengthening as the trees emerge from the top of the guards.
- k) **Public Art Project:** I. Duff confirmed that the steering group now consists of five councillors, 3 MOPs, a SOHA representative and South and Vale's Arts Development Officer, Abigail Brown. The next meeting will be held in mid-January with 13 January being the preferred date.
- l) **Matters raised at the Chairman's Surgery and OALC Councillor's Forum:**

I. Duff reported on the following from the November Chairman's Surgery (there has not been an OALC Councillor's Forum since the last Parish Council meeting):

Concerns that the 20mph sign on New Road is not very visible

Request received for VAS (vehicle activated signs)

Dogs barking on the new estate – Complaints have been received from residents of Harwood Road and the new estate. I. Duff has raised this with the Housing Association contact.

Positive feedback received for the SGN contractors' efforts with resident communication.

C. Gover queried when the Post Box on Main Road is going to be reinstated as it is currently taped up. It was agreed that this should be checked with the Post Office.

## 8. Correspondence:

I. Duff confirmed that a candidate is currently being trained as the potential new Postmaster.

N. Milner reported concerns from Main Road residents over the possibility of damage to their cars during grass cutting. One solution to this could be for residents to habitually park on the opposite side of Main Road; this is currently under discussion as part of N. Milner's investigation into Main Road Parking and Traffic Management.

Zebra crossing visibility – I. Duff confirmed that he had spoken with a resident who was concerned about the visibility at the zebra crossing on Main Road. Cllrs C. Gover, N. Milner, and the clerk confirmed that this is an issue, particularly for those waiting on the village hall side of the crossing at night, even though there is lighting in situ. It was agreed that L. Lloyd will raise this with OCC to establish what possibilities there are to improve the crossing safety at this location.

Grass cutting at Rymans Crescent 4<sup>th</sup> December – I. Duff reported on the grass cutting that happened on 4<sup>th</sup> December, which included the destruction of the wildflower area on SOHA land. This was a completely unexpected and shocking incident and was not requested by the Parish Council and was explicitly not in their cutting schedule. L. Lloyd has been in touch with BGG who have confirmed they made a mistake. However, further information has been requested to better understand how this happened, ahead of responding to emails received from HUGS and SOHA. D. Rickeard suggested that perhaps a simpler approach without once a year cutting requests could be an option as the schedule is complicated. However, this was countered by N. Milner who felt it is important to have some degree of flexibility without any concern over misinterpreted instruction.

A suggestion was received proposing a new notice board at the front of St Andrews Crescent. It was agreed that noticeboard provision in general within the Parish should be reviewed.

Didcot (South) 20mph consultation – It was noted that the proposal will leave several main routes including Jubilee Way as 30mph. This fits in well with the decision to start the 20mph limit at Rymans Crescent on New Road and it was agreed that L. Lloyd would submit a comment to confirm this. The consultation ends on 13<sup>th</sup> December.

## 9. Finance:

### a) Expenditure and receipts since the last meeting and account balances:

#### a) Payments

since last meeting:

**NB: Payments pending are shown in yellow and are not included in the account balance shown in c)**

Payee	Item	Auth	Amount	VAT	Total	Date
J Williams Garden Services	INV JWGS Cemetery Bin Path	D Rickeard / C Gover	£855.00	£0.00	£855.00	15/11/2024
HUGS	Expenses - Yellow Rattle Seed - Cemetery Wildflower Meadow	D Rickeard / C Gover	£36.25	£7.25	£43.50	15/11/2024
Dark White Digital	INV 001677 November web hosting	D Rickeard / C Gover	£30.00	£0.00	£30.00	15/11/2024
Shield Maintenance Ltd	INV 8143 Dog Bin and Waste bin emptying October 2024	D Rickeard / C Gover	£125.66	£25.13	£150.79	15/11/2024
BGG Garden & Tree Care	INV 949.24 Cemetery Cut October 2024	D Rickeard / C Gover	£70.00	£14.00	£84.00	15/11/2024
EHSRC	INV 241004 Community room Hire 17 October 2024	D Rickeard / C Gover	£25.00	£0.00	£25.00	15/11/2024
Grundon Waste Management	PSI-1171867 Cemetery bin collection October	DD	£63.96	£12.79	£76.75	20/11/2024
SCS Oxon Ltd	INV SB581 Balance for FP12 and FP15 works	D Rickeard / C Gover	£8,985.00	£1,797.00	£10,782.00	26/11/2024
Laura Lloyd	November Salary including 50% April-October backpay	D Rickeard / C Gover	£974.76	£0.00	£974.76	30/11/2024
Unity Trust Bank	T2 Account Service Charge	Automatic Payment	£8.55	£0.00	£8.55	30/11/2024
Dark White Digital	INV 001706 December web hosting		£30.00	£0.00	£30.00	

Shield Maintenance Ltd	INV 8250 Dog Bin and Waste bin emptying November 2024		£125.66	£25.13	£150.79	
EHSRC	INV 241104 Community room hire 14 November 2024		£25.00	£0.00	£25.00	
David Rickeard	Hagbourne Oaks Expenses		£164.48	£16.48	£180.96	
Laura Lloyd	December Salary including 50% April-October backpay		£974.76	£0.00	£974.76	
Hagbourne Parochial Charities	Butts Piece January lease payment 2024/25 (DUE 01/01/2025)		£447.43	£0.00	£447.43	

**b) Receipts since last meeting:**

From	Item	Amount	Date
R Slater	EROB CM083	£180.00	15/11/2024
DVTG	Refund of grant monies following dissolution of DVTG	£335.44	27/11/2024
Redwood Bank	35 day notice account interest November	£223.74	30/11/2024
Nationwide	Instant Access Savings account interest - November	£133.36	30/11/2024
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£872.54</b>	

**c) Accumulated Account Balances (reconciled online 04/12/2024)**

Unity Trust Bank - T1 current account	£113,758.67
Unity Trust Bank - Instant access account	£57,888.53
Redwood Bank - 35 Day Notice Savings Account	£85,000.00
Nationwide - Instant Access Business Savings Account	£81,263.78
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£337,910.98</u></b>

**d) The Special Project Balances (as of 04/12/2024) are:**

Community Infrastructure Levy Fund	Received 28/04/23 so requires spending by 27/04/28	£43,620.62
	Received 27/10/23 so requires spending by 26/10/28	£106,843.63
	Received 26/04/24 so requires spending by 25/04/29	£4,165.09
	Received 24/10/24 so requires spending by 25/10/29	£115,173.81
	<b>Total CIL money</b>	<b>£269,803.15</b>
Community Projects Reserve Fund		£4,712.91
Planned Development Support Fund		£5,303.15
Cemetery		£14,502.58
	<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£294,321.79</u></b>

**e) General Reserve (as of 04/12/2024)** £43,589.19

**b) Review and approval of pending payments:** The Council reviewed the pending payments noting that they all have minuted/regular payment approval this month. L. Lloyd noted that she has also received invoices from Hagbourne Village Hall for hall hire (£18.00) and car park electricity (£44.88) and will include these in the payment run.

**c) Interim Internal Audit:** I. Duff confirmed that the Interim Audit Report was circulated to councillors earlier that day, so not all councillors had a chance to read the report ahead of the meeting. PATAS confirmed that the Parish Council is being run very well, and the report included the following recommendations:

- **Minutes: Recommendation:** Council may wish to consider sequential numbering of its minutes.  
**Consideration:** Councillors agreed that the current numbering method which includes the date should be continued.
- **Procedure for payment of invoices: Recommendation:** Council may wish to consider adopting an Internal Control Statement that sets out the procedure to ensure accurate continuity in the future.

- Consideration:** Current procedure is adequate at the present time without the need for a statement.
- Asset Register: Recommendation:** That the asset register is published on the Council’s website.

**Consideration:** Councillors agreed that the asset register could be published in the Financial Information folder on the website.
- Insurance Policy: Recommendation:** If the Council has not undertaken a building valuation in the last five years it is recommended that one be commissioned to ensure that the rebuild costs of the pavilion, including fees, is adequately insured.

**Consideration:** The Clear Councils insurance policy figures include a buffer over and above the listed asset values to ensure adequate cover. Councillors agreed that it would be sensible to investigate the cost of undertaking a building valuation in the next year, as the long term lease agreement between EHS&RC and the Parish Council is due for renewal.

**10. Items for report and inclusion on the January agenda:**

- Grass cutting
- Future Governance of the Pavilion and Recreation Ground

The meeting closed at 9.53pm.

Items for consideration for the January agenda must be received by the clerk no later than Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> January.

**The next meeting will be held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at The Pavilion, Great Mead, East Hagbourne.**

Signed.....Dated.....

**ATTACHMENT 1: ACTION LIST**

<b>Action No</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Status</b>
2023-03-01	Deanfield Homes Car Park Land Transfer	LL	Transfer documentation signed at meeting on 26 <sup>th</sup> March. Still awaiting confirmation of transfer from solicitors. 05/11/2024 Deanfield solicitors confirmed they completed the required documentation some time ago and have now also emailed the OCC Legal team requesting that the transfer is completed as a priority.
2023-06-02	Parking and Traffic Management on Main Road	NM	NM to prepare a proposal with initial steps to investigate the practicalities and resident perception of current issues. Progress with this item has been delayed by the current Main Road closure.
2023-06-03	Footway repairs in the parish	ID/PD/RJ	Prioritise potential repairs for OCC to review. C. Stallwood has added East Hagbourne to the list for slurry sealing Main Road footways in the future. Meeting with Highways Engagement Officer on 3 <sup>rd</sup> October being followed up. 28/11/2024 Progress update requested
2023-10-01	Disabled Parking spaces in the village car park	LL	Research options and costs. This has not been raised again as a concern in the last 12 months
2023-10-03	Weed management on Main Road	LL/ID	14/10 Deep Cleanse team have cleared the outer edge of the raised footway approaching Lower Cross. Now awaiting quote for weed treatment from BGG. The footway and verge in front of Lawson's Orchard have also been improved.
VARIOUS	Footpath accessibility: 2023-12-02 FP10 MFL to West Hagbourne 2023-12-03 FP12 Church Lane to Fieldside 2023-12-04 FP13 Parsonage Lane 2024-01-01 FP1 West Hagbourne to Didcot 2024-03-02 FP15 Grange Footpath 2024-03-03 FP8 Bakers Lane to The Croft 2024-04-01 FP30 Village Hall	LL/CS/PD/ ID	20/11/2024 Plans to renew efforts to engage OCC and arrange a meeting between OCC/EHPC and WHPC to assess FP10 and FP1 in the New Year 2024-01-01 – Sought advice from District Councillors as to whether the DGT funding may support improvements to FP1 – as this is not on the LCWIP list of paths for improvement the PC has been referred back to OCC for advice. Volunteer labour is available for FP8 aggregate laying subject to OCC approval 03/10/2024 FP13 was discussed with the Highways Engagement Team and recorded as Cat 3 03/10/2024 FP30 – Initial review of possible surface improvements undertaken by Chloe from the Highways Engagement team 05/12/2024 FP15 new surface between Fieldside and the bridge would be better finished in tarmac to withstand instances of flooding. This is under consideration.
2023-12-09	Community Speedwatch	RJ	The installation of 20mph signage indicates that the new speed limit is imminent although the Traffic Regulation Order has not yet been completed (this takes around 2 weeks to allow for publication in local press).
2024-01-02	Emergency Plan / Flooding documentation Review	RJ/LL	Emergency Plan Approved and now online. Resident feedback and volunteers for emergency contact list now ongoing.
2024-02-01	Pavilion Lease Renewal	DR/LL	Feedback from CFO received and being reviewed

2024-02-04	Flood Management in the Parish	CS/DR/PD	<p>The OCC funded channel clearance and bridge removal works along FP19 (Tadley) were completed in mid-November.</p> <p>NB: Following the PC meeting: 06/12 Leigh Travers confirmed he has reviewed the FP19 channel works and has asked the contractors to return and deal with the piled up silt, as this does not meet the specification given by OCC.</p> <p>Clerk now trying to arrange for Leigh Travers to complete a site visit to assess the rest of the watercourses in the parish.</p>
2024-03-04	Main Road 20mph limit Extension to include New Road/Blewbury Road	OCC	Public consultation complete and signage being installed. Awaiting Traffic Regulation Order from OCC, which must be advertised for 2 weeks in local press.
2024-03-05	From APM: Step reinstatement on Main Road/Bakers Lane footpath	OCC/LL	<p>This is an OCC Highways matter and has also been raised with the Highways Engagement Team on 03/10/2024.</p> <p>11/11/2024 The clerk chased SGN, OCC officers and Highways Engagement when SGN contractors were working on Main Road. No communication has been received from the local depot. 28/11/2024 Further support has been requested from Chloe in Highways Engagement to resolve this.</p>
2024-03-06	From APM: Main Road to Coscote road surface	OCC	<p>An OCC matter as no agreement was made with the developer during the planning process and the S278 agreement to maintain and repair the main agreed access route to the site. The Parish Council has full support from our County Councillor, Jane Murphy, to lobby for repairs and reinstatement.</p> <p>28/11/2024 Further discussion with Chloe from Highways Engagement on the necessary works to make good the road and verges.</p>
2024-04-01	CIL Projects Shortlist	ALL	Councillors reviewing and updating project proposals following discussion at the APM
2024-10-01	Blewbury Road Drainage	CS/LL	Initial communications being followed up
2024-12-01	Zebra Crossing Visibility	LL	Contact OCC to undertake a review and consider options

## ATTACHMENT 2:

<b>Title</b>	District Councillor's Report
<b>Councillors</b>	Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson
<b>Parish</b>	East Hagbourne Parish Council
<b>Date</b>	5 December 2024

[Booking link](#) for planning surgeries for town and parish councils  
Annual Corporate Plan Performance Report – [2023-2024](#)  
Climate Action Plan Performance Report – 2023-2024 [Quarter 4](#)

### Adverse Weather Update

Please monitor [the Environment Agency's Flood Warnings map](#) for updates relevant to your area.

### Advice to share

- The [Environment Agency](#) is regularly updating its website and social media with relevant information.
- Residents can call the Environment Agency's flooding hotline for advice and support at any time on 0345 988 1188.
- As the lead authority for flooding in the county, [Oxfordshire County Council has a live webpage up and running](#) with the latest information and advice.

### Preparing and reporting

Residents and businesses have responsibility to protect their own properties, so please direct them to [the Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit](#) where they can read about preventative measures they can take.

**Importantly, they should also use the [reporting form on the toolkit](#) should their home or business become flooded.** The toolkit explains what constitutes a reportable flood.

If it's a flooding emergency, you should focus on the safety of yourself and your family. **Dial 999 if it is an emergency** and you or someone else is in danger. If there is flooding to your property, make sure you stay safe and visit the County Council's [Help I'm Flooding page](#) for more information on what to do.

Oxfordshire County Council leads the flood response activities in our area, and we provide a supporting role across a range of areas.

We also have general Flood Advice webpages: ([South](#) / [Vale](#)) which can direct members of the public to the relevant authorities' websites.

### Vision for the future of sports pitches and leisure facilities approved

A vision for the future of sports and leisure facilities across South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Districts was top of the agenda last week.

Both South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils are committed to creating healthy and inclusive communities. The aim is to support wellbeing through increasing opportunities to be physically active – with high-quality, accessible and affordable local facilities near to where people work and live.

The Councils have produced Leisure Facilities Assessments and Strategies and Playing Pitch Strategies that set out the current and future provision of facilities across the two districts.

The reports identify the high level, strategic need to protect and enhance existing facilities, alongside the need to provide new facilities ranging from tennis courts, gym facilities and swimming pools, to pitches for football, rugby union, cricket and hockey.

The Councils appointed external experts to help identify what was already available, what needed improvements and where new facilities could be introduced in the districts.

Each district then ran consultations earlier this year between March and April 2024 asking sports clubs, leisure users and sports enthusiasts, alongside residents and town and parish councils, to have their say on sports and leisure facilities provision – and to give their feedback about what the Councils, in partnership with other organisations, need to protect, enhance, and provide.



South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils both unanimously approved the strategies at Cabinet meetings in November: View the [South reports here](#) and [Vale reports here](#).\*

The next steps will be to create action plans linked to the strategies and to work in partnership with sports clubs, town and parish councils, national governing bodies, leisure providers and other organisations to allocate funding and support projects going forward.

In South Oxfordshire, 126 responses were received with 33 per cent of respondents replying on behalf of a user of a sports club.

In the Vale of White Horse, 147 comments were received on the draft strategies, with 31 per cent of responders being users of a sport club.

The Councils listened to feedback from the consultations and have made changes to the strategies such as including recommendations in South for new skate parks in Chinnor and Wallingford, and recommendations in Vale for the modernisation of the swimming pool at Wantage Leisure Centre.

Both Councils have also put an additional emphasis on the needs of people with disabilities and safety issues (particularly regarding women and girls) are addressed through good design and improvements.

The strategies also reflect both Council's drive to tackle climate change – to fully consider climate change impacts and mitigation against them. They also form a key part of the evidence for the emerging Joint Local Plan (JLP), by identifying the leisure and playing pitch infrastructure that large scale residential-led developments will need to provide.

### **Councils take delivery of their first electric waste vehicle**

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils have taken delivery of their first electric food waste collection vehicle – part of the councils' ambitions to decarbonise the waste vehicle fleet and move towards net zero.

The vehicle, a Terberg EV ORUS, was delivered to the councils at the Culham depot of their waste contractor, Biffa, earlier this autumn. It is being used throughout both district council areas as part of the fleet of 12 food waste collection trucks. The diesel food waste trucks each cover approximately, 26,000 miles per year, which with an average load would produce 30.9 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e (carbon dioxide equivalent). By changing to an electric food waste vehicle the councils expect to save more than 20 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent a year.

In addition to the reduction in carbon emissions, the EV will also save time and energy as it has a compressor function which means that despite being the same overall size as the other food waste trucks, it can take more food waste before it fills up. This means fewer trips to the food waste reprocessing facility in Wallingford to empty the truck before it can continue its collection round.

The new vehicle also has a lift to allow the bins to be mechanically lifted and emptied into the waste compartment, which will be quicker for the collection crew as the current food trucks are loaded by hand. The vehicle like most EVs, is also quieter than diesel and petrol vehicles.

### **Council begins to decarbonise fleet with delivery of new Electric Vans**

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils have taken delivery of two new electric vans as they start to decarbonise their fleet of maintenance vehicles.

The all-electric Renault Kangoo vans, which were delivered at the start of autumn, will be used by the parks team and the public toilet cleaning team to travel throughout both districts, as the teams conduct inspections, perform cleaning and maintenance work, and make deliveries to various sites.

These electric vehicles (EVs) will replace petrol and diesel vans, making a significant impact on reducing the councils' carbon emissions – it is estimated each van has saved 475.25kg of carbon dioxide equivalent in the first two months of use.

Their arrival is the beginning of a broader plan by the councils to fully convert the 12-strong fleet of maintenance vehicles used by the facilities, toilet cleaning, and parks teams to electric vans within the next three years.

### **New tourism and local events website**

Last week, we launched the new [Visit Southern Oxfordshire website](#). It is packed with things to do in our districts both for visitors and residents alike – right now you can find out about what's going on over the festive period from light switch-ons and pantomimes, to festive markets and Santa Dashes – there's something for everyone! Please take a look and spread the word on the new site.

### **Business support on offer**

We've awarded some funding to [OSEP](#) – a social enterprise that supports social enterprises in Oxfordshire - to provide a programme of support and guidance for early-stage, purpose-led businesses and social impact organisations in South and Vale.

The money has come from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund – a government fund for local places to invest in communities and place, support for local businesses and people and skills.

OSEP is partnering with Co-operative Futures, Aspire Oxfordshire, Makespace, SOFEA, Soha Housing Association and African Families in the UK.

Among the programmes on offer is:

- A Bootcamp Training Course for early-stage and pre-start enterprises, offering workshops on essential topics
- Business support specifically aimed at self-employment and sole trader options, empowering individuals with the knowledge to explore entrepreneurial opportunities
- One to one mentoring with signposting and strategy development tailored to the needs of emerging social enterprises

If you know a business based in South or Vale that would like to access support, [please encourage them to visit OSEP's website](#).

### **Nuclear RAI Cluster Oxfordshire and Cumbria**

Earlier this year, we provided a letter of support for the UK Atomic Energy Authority with UKAEA as lead on their application for their Place Based Impact Acceleration Account submission focused on a nuclear robotics and AI cluster linking Cumbria and Oxfordshire.

We are pleased to announce that they were successful and have secured funding - [more information available here](#)