

# REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS JUNE 2016 FROM CLLR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE

## PROPOSALS FOR UNITARY COUNCIL

As previously reported, Oxfordshire's District Councils have appointed consultants PwC to prepare a report on the future of local government in Oxfordshire, and OCC has appointed consultants Grant Thornton to do the same. The districts' previously preferred option that comprised four unitary councils, including parts of Gloucestershire and Northamptonshire has collapsed because of legislative issues relating to cross-border authorities. It is unclear whether the reduced size of four unitaries that don't include the neighbours could be viable.

PwC will report in June, followed by Grant Thornton in July. All councils will then submit proposals to central government in the autumn, following a period of public consultation. In advance of this, stakeholders can participate in a 'call for evidence' here:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/oxfordshire-evidence>

Additionally, town and parish councils are invited to attend workshops to discuss the issues on the following dates:

Date	Locality
Mon 6 June	Thame
Tues 7 June	Henley
Thurs 9 June	Witney
Tues 14 June	Chipping Norton
Wed 15 June	Banbury
Thurs 16 June	Faringdon
Tues 21 June	Bicester
Wed 22 June	Abingdon
Tues 28 June	Didcot
Wed 29 June	Wantage

Names of delegates and the preferred meeting should be emailed to:  
[ask@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ask@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

## SUBSIDISED BUSES UPDATE

Bus subsidies will end on 20 July. A full update on the work that has taken place to minimise the impact of the withdrawal of the subsidises (including using public buses for home to school transport, allocating S106 funding where available and the launch of a new pilot scheme using the downtime of our fleet vehicles) can be obtained from the OCC website here:  
[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/subsidisedbuses](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/subsidisedbuses).

Thames Travel have issued a revised timetable for the T1 service which will be operating from 24<sup>th</sup> July. The route will be extended to Chinnor and will link Chinnor, Watlington, Chalgrove, Stadhampton and Garsington with Cowley, and for the first time will provide a suitable bus for pupils attending Icknield Community College. As Thames Travel admit the new timetable is not perfect but they hope that as many people as possible will use the new service to make sure that it is financially viable for the future.

## **OXFORDSHIRE'S ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES SCORES IN TOP 5%**

Recently announced results show that last year, Oxfordshire's Adults Social Care services ranked as the 6th best of 152 upper tier authorities in achieving outcomes judged against the 'Adult Social Care Outcome Framework'. This framework measures how well services achieve outcomes that are most important to people and informs the development of reporting local priorities and progress to citizens. Last year Oxfordshire performed above the national average on 20 of the 27 measures included in the framework.

## **OXFORDSHIRE CARE HOME WINS RARE 'OUTSTANDING' RATING**

Vale House, a 40 bed specialist dementia home in Sandford-on Thames, has recently been inspected by CQC and as a result was given the most positive grading available to the inspectorate. It is the first in the county to be rated 'outstanding' by the CQC – a feat achieved by only one per cent of homes in the South East. The home is privately run and the organisation is 'not for profit'. The original Vale House was located in Botley, and began operating in 1990. It relocated to Sandford in 2012, after the organisation bought the land from Oxfordshire County Council. Vale House had won a competitive tender process to build their new home, fulfilling the ambition of OCC to use the land for a specialist Dementia Care Home for the people of Oxfordshire. OCC buys 25 of the 40 beds in the home and has ambitions for similar projects elsewhere in the county.

## **EIGHTEEN LOCATIONS FOR NEW CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE**

A £2m boost to the future provision of children's services in Oxfordshire has been agreed by OCC's Cabinet with a further £1m of one-off funding set to help communities keep yet more of the current children's centres network open. The plans build on the brand new service for 0-19 year olds agreed by the Cabinet in February and deliver services from 18 locations with strengthened outreach services – as opposed to the eight originally proposed. The new £14m service includes £2m of additional money agreed by county councillors in February and would provide a safe, effective and co-ordinated system that targets resources on protecting the most vulnerable families - and works hand-in-hand with schools, health services, voluntary and community groups. By combining children's social care and early intervention in one seamless service, it represents a completely fresh approach to delivering services for children, young people and their families at a time of rising demand and reduced Government funding.

## **BERINSFIELD CHILDREN'S CENTRE**

A Steering Group has been established to support the Berinsfield Children's Centre which is one of the centres that will see their funding withdrawn under the new arrangements. The Group that includes the County Council, the Parish Council, the Church, Soha Housing, Employment Action Group, Berinsfield Information Centre, The Community Foundation and Action for Children will work to try and keep the Centre open. The Group is seeking opinion and support from Berinsfield residents and the surrounding villages. If anyone thinks they could help to keep this valued facility open please get in touch with either myself or a member of the Parish Council.

## **POSITIVE RESULTS FROM INITIATIVE TO TACKLE DELAYED TRANSFERS OF CARE**

A new initiative by OCC and NHS has seen then number of delayed transfers of care reduced by 30% since December 2015, despite higher demands over the winter and a reduction in hospital beds. The Oxfordshire health and social care system has long struggled with the timely discharge of patients from acute and community hospitals to the next stage of their care. This is

often referred to as 'bed-blocking' or 'delayed transfers of care', which are costly to the system as a whole and can increase people's dependence rather than promoting their independence. The initiative involved the block purchase of 150 care beds and the development of an integrated hub to manage assessments and bed allocations.