

REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS OCTOBER 2017 FROM CLLR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE

OXFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD BACKS INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING BID

The Oxfordshire Growth Board* has provided unanimous support for an application to the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) as part of a package of investment to deliver transport infrastructure. The funding bid for up to £500 million was submitted on 28 September by OCC as the county's transport authority. Money is sought to bring forward infrastructure investment to pump-prime three major development schemes:

- 1. Didcot Garden Town** – £171m is bid for transport improvements including a Didcot Science Bridge and A4130 dual carriageway, a new river crossing at Culham and Clifton Hampden Bypass. This would support the delivery of over 22,000 homes in Didcot, Culham, Harwell and Berinsfield. Additionally up to £70m of cycle and other sustainable transport improvements are proposed for inclusion in the bid plan.
- 2. West Oxfordshire Garden Village** – £135.4m is bid for further upgrades to the A40, building on existing schemes and based on the approved A40 Long Term Strategy including development of the Rapid Transit network and additional highway capacity on A40 transport corridor. This would support the delivery of over 10,000 homes in Witney & Carterton, and around Eynsham.
- 3. North of Oxford** – £152m is bid for the development of Rapid Transit lines on upgraded A44 and A4260 corridors, a new Park & Ride, and strategic cycle infrastructure plus. Support is also sought for additional education requirements (as yet un-costed). This would support the delivery of 5,570 homes in Woodstock, Begbroke/Yarnton and the Northern Gateway.

The bids submitted to the £2.3 billion Housing Infrastructure Fund are ranked as above according to the Government's scoring method, with the guidance that the strongest bid be put first. The Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy, commissioned by the Growth Board, was used to identify infrastructure priorities that offered the prospect of a step-change in housing provision in a defined area. The Government will consider Oxfordshire's bids along with those from other areas and the highest ranking schemes will go through to a second stage in the Spring 2018, with final funding awards announced from Summer 2018.

The HIF funding bids complement other work being conducted by the Growth Board to secure investment in transport, schools, hospitals and other infrastructure needed to support the predicted growth in population, and meet the future needs of Oxfordshire families, their children and grandchildren in terms of jobs and homes across the county to 2040 and beyond. This includes discussions with the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) over the proposed Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor. It also involves linked discussions with Government - supported by both Oxford Universities - over a Housing and Growth Package for Oxfordshire to help unlock the benefits of the county's strong and growing knowledge-intensive economy.

*The Oxfordshire Growth Board comprises the six councils: Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council, together with the county's Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP).

TENTH PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT PUBLISHED

Oxfordshire's Director of Public Health has published his tenth Public Health Annual Report. It is an independent report about the state of health in Oxfordshire and the challenges facing the county and its residents. It is written in a very readable style and can be found here <http://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=148&MId=5106>MORE

MORE CHANCES FOR OPEN ACCESS CHILDREN'S SERVICES START-UP FUNDING

The council last year opened a £1m Transition Fund to help schemes for nought to five-year-olds get off the ground at locations formerly served by children's centres. To date a total of 27 projects have been awarded funding – in addition to open access sessions at the council's network of eight family centres. The final round of applications ended earlier this year, with £232,000 remaining unallocated. OCC's Cabinet has agreed to reopen the applications process to enable new groups to come forward with their plans. The funding criteria will be broadened to allow groups to apply for grants in locations not previously served by children's centres, or where a children's centre has been repurposed – for instance, as a nursery. Community groups interested in finding out more about the Transition Fund and running open access children's services should contact localities@oxfordshire.gov.uk

NEW ERA FOR DAYTIME SUPPORT IN OXFORDSHIRE

A new system of delivering daytime support services in Oxfordshire came in to operation on 1st October. Eight new centres** will provide support for more than 500 older people or people with a learning disability who have been assessed as having an eligible need and some other people who do not have an assessed need. The changes follow a consultation with service users and their families in late 2016 in which they were given the opportunity to have a wide-ranging input in to how the new service should take shape. Within the council's new £4.5m service there are 1,600 days of support per week (3,200 sessions) being provided across the eight locations. Each centre will have its own fleet of family-size vehicles, some of which will be adapted. These will be used to transport people to and from the centres and will be driven by staff from the Community Support Service. There will be a number of options for meals, including: staff supporting people to eat out at a local café, cooking as part of a small group, paying towards a group meal prepared by others, a simple hot meal prepared by staff, and people bringing in their own pre-prepared meal or light lunch if they wish to.

**The centres are located at Audlett Drive, Abingdon; Neithrop Avenue, Banbury; Launton Road, Bicester; Britwell Road, Didcot; Agward Stone Road, Horspath Driftway, Oxford; High Street, Wallingford; Charlton Village Road, Wantage; and Moorland Road, Witney.

FREE ELECTRIC BLANKET TESTING OFFERED AS THE WINTER MONTHS APPROACH

People in Oxfordshire who have electric blankets to keep them warm on chilly nights are again being urged to get them tested free by OCC Trading Standards & Fire and Rescue Services. In 2016, 21% of blankets tested failed to meet safety requirements. Blanket testing this year is taking place at the following locations during October:

Oxford - Monday 2 October
Banbury - Tuesday 3 October
Witney - Wednesday 4 October
Wallingford - Thursday 5 October
Abingdon - Friday 6 October
Oxford - Monday 16 October
Bicester - Tuesday 17 October
Chipping Norton - Wednesday 18 October
Thame - Thursday 19 October
Wantage - Friday 20 October

To book a safety check appointment call 01865 898642
or email: communityengagement@oxfordshire.gov.uk