**REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS SEPTEMBER 2018**

**FROM CLLR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE**

**NEW PARTNERSHIP APPROVED BY OCC AND CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Councillors at OCC and Cherwell District Council have approved a proposal for a partnership between the two local authorities, including the appointment of a joint chief executive. The partnership arrangement will offer long-term opportunities to join up services for residents, reduce the costs of providing services, and secure investment in Cherwell to enable the continued growth in homes and jobs. The partnership proposal came after the financial problems in Northamptonshire County Council, which has implications for Cherwell’s existing partnership with South Northamptonshire Council, created an opportunity to explore closer joint working. Yvonne Rees, the current chief executive of Cherwell and South Northamptonshire councils has been appointed to the new post of joint chief executive of Oxfordshire and Cherwell councils, with a start date of 1 October. The post of county council chief executive, currently occupied by Peter Clark, will be made redundant.

**STUDENTS RECEIVE A-LEVEL RESULTS ACROSS OXFORDSHIRE**

Thousands of students are preparing to take their crucial next steps after receiving A-Level results at schools and colleges across Oxfordshire last month. Confirmed pass rates for the county as a whole will be confirmed when national figures are published later this year. In the previous two years the key benchmark of two or more A-Levels at the A\*-E pass rate was achieved by around 95 per cent of students. For anyone unsure of their next steps after A-Level or GCSE exam results, further help can be found at the [Oxme website](http://oxcentric.oxme.info/cms/oxcentric/education-and-work) and through the [National Careers Service](https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx) which has a helpline number - **0800 100 900**. Throughout the results period and beyond, county council staff will be available via the web chat service on the [Oxme website](http://oxme.info/cms/learn/results-day) or over the phone (**01865 328460**) to talk to young people and parents about the wide range of learning and employment opportunities available in Oxfordshire for 16-19-year-olds, and to help with applications. Details of [drop-in sessions](http://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/support-for-youngsters-taking-next-steps-after-exams/) can also be found on the council’s website.

**CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT IN DELAYED TRANSFER OF CARE NUMBERS**

The latest published figures on people who are unnecessarily in hospital while they await confirmation of care arrangements have been published. The figures for June 2018 show that on average 90 Oxfordshire residents had their hospital discharge delayed. This is 9% fewer than in May and less than half the number of people delayed than the same time last year. Oxfordshire’s delays figure trajectory continues to be better than national improvement with a 0.3% improvement in the last month and a drop of a quarter in the last year.

**ACTIVE AND HEALTHY TRAVEL ENCOURAGED BY OCC**

Commuters returning to work after the holiday period are being encouraged to walk or cycle, for all or part of their journey, by OCC. The council is championing healthy alternatives to the car, which will also help to reduce congestion and pollution on the county’s roads. Exercise is widely recognised as one of the best ways to improve physical and mental health. Daily physical activity lowers the risk of depression and dementia by around 30 per cent according to the Department of Health. Exercise also reduces the likelihood of cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease and strokes. The council has appointed an active and healthy travel officer, using central government funding, to assess existing walking and cycling routes. Priority will be given to improvements and maintenance schemes designed to encourage active travel and reduce pollution. Over 85,000 new jobs and 100,000 new homes are planned in Oxfordshire by 2031. The council is committed to ensuring that as the population grows, infrastructure is in place to encourage healthy travel options. Streets and spaces will be developed to put first the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. OCC’s Cycling Champion, Councillor Suzanne Bartington, said: *“Active travel is win, win, win - for health, the environment and local economy. I encourage Oxfordshire residents to try foot or bike even for only part of their journey and feel the positive benefits for themselves.”* For further information about the benefits of active travel, visit the website: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/whycycle](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/whycycle)

**£80K BOOST FOR KIDS’ CYCLING SAFETY**

Almost every primary school child in the county will now be able to get free cycle safety training after the award of an £84,500 [Bikeability](https://bikeability.org.uk/) grant which will pay for an additional 2000 places. The bulk of cycling training in the county is carried out by a 700-strong army of volunteer instructors under the Oxfordshire Cycle Training Scheme, which has been running for more than 40 years. Training is offered to children from nine-years-old and up and is a mixture of learning about the Highways Code and practical ‘on the road’ tuition. Parents and carers who want their children to take part in training should contact their school’s head teacher.

**CABINET RE-SHUFFLE – CHANGE OF ROLES FOR ME**

The Leader announced a re-shuffle to his Cabinet effective from 1st September. I have been appointed the Cabinet Member for Education. This is a completely new challenge for me, and I am looking forward to getting up to speed with all the issues. I continue to look after our Cultural Services which includes libraries, museums, the history service and the schools music service.

My previous responsibilities for Property and our Fit for the Future programme are being amalgamated and passed to Cllr Eddie Reeves under the new title of Cabinet Member for Transformation. Cllr Laurie Stratford adds Public Health to his existing role for Adult Social Care. Cllr Ian Corkin becomes the new Cabinet Member for the Cherwell Partnership agreement.