**REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS DECEMBER 2018**

**FROM CLLR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE**

**OXFORD TO CAMBRIDGE EXPRESSWAY – UPDATE**

Highways England recently held some local briefings for Councillors who represent areas that may be impacted by the proposed expressway. I attended the one held in Sandford-on-Thames on November 29th. Their objective was to listen, and learn and much as they could about the local communities here and on the West side of Oxford**. The best news for this Division is that Corridor B1 has been narrowed so that Shillingford, Warborough, Dorchester, Clifton Hampden, Burcot, Berinsfield, Newington, Drayton St Leonard and Stadhampton are no longer in the danger zone! While this is a huge relief for these villages, we still have to consider the impact the expressway may have on Chiselhampton, Culham, Nuneham Courtenay, Sandford, the Baldons and Garsington.** I will continue to support The Expressway Action Group in their efforts to persuade Highways England that a far less costly and more environmentally acceptable route would be to the West of Oxford.

**COUNCIL BUDGET**

The council’s initial proposals for the 2019/2020 budget will be reviewed by the Performance Scrutiny Committee during December. A key element is the plan to invest up to £120m in roads and schools – a ‘growth dividend’ as more households mean more Council Tax revenue in future years. Tough decisions in the past have created a route to financial stability at a time when other councils face financial threats. There are new ‘Transformation’ plans being developed to completely redesign the council to reduce running costs. Making financial savings will enable OCC to support the growing number of vulnerable children and adults – more vulnerable children are coming into council care, both locally and nationally, creating financial pressures. Protecting children remains OCC’s top priority.

**OCC CALLS FOR PUBLIC INQUIRY ON THAMES WATER’S RESERVOIR PLAN**

Residents’ interests come first – that was the resolute message from OCC last month as its cabinet called for a public inquiry on Thames Water’s plans for a new reservoir. The council has concerns about the size and need for the proposed reservoir to the southwest of Abingdon, between Steventon, East Hanney and Marcham. It is also concerned about the length of time Thames Water has set itself to reduce leakages. Further clarity is sought from Thames Water on whether other potential sites have been fully assessed across the southeast region. Only when these details are provided in the form of a regional water resource plan for the south east, will the council be able to decide on whether to back the principle of having a reservoir at this location.

**HOUSING AND GROWTH DEAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME**

The Oxfordshire Growth Board has published details of the infrastructure projects to receive funding in Year 1 and Years 2-5 of the Oxfordshire Housing & Growth Deal, signed in April 2018. The total £150 million of Growth Deal funding has been earmarked for specific projects. This forward funding is helping unlock projects that will benefit from developer contributions, delivering schemes valued at over £480 million in total, excluding costs of the major rail projects, which are still to be confirmed. There is no mention of the proposed new road from Didcot to the A415 at the Culham Science Centre, the new river crossing and the Clifton Hampden Bypass. This will depend on the outcome of the SODC Local Plan which will decide where the large ‘strategic housing sites’ will be located.

**Most Locally the Schemes are:**

**Benson relief road**

The relief road will provide traffic with an alternative route from the A4074 and B4009 to the north of the village, particularly for HGVs. There will also be capacity improvements at the A4074/Church Road junction and improved pedestrian and cycle facilities in and through Benson. The road will help unlock development sites to the north of the village along the new route, delivering around 600 new homes, with the Growth Deal forward funding enabling the work ahead of significant developer contributions.

**District: South Oxfordshire**

**Estimated Growth Deal spend: £1,200,000**

**Full cost of scheme: £12,000,000**

**Cowley Branch Line**

Growth Deal funding will contribute to a feasibility and design study Network Rail is undertaking to enable the Cowley Branch through Oxford to be brought forward for passenger services. The scheme forms part of plans for other rail improvements countywide.

**District: Countywide**

**Estimated Growth Deal spend: £250,000**

**Full cost of scheme: TBC**

**Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS)**

The Growth Deal is contributing £5m of funding to the Environment Agency’s planned Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, to help bring the scheme forward . The scheme should significantly reduce the risk of flooding to homes and businesses in Oxford City and neighbouring areas in the Vale of White Horse. It will also protect the public highway and other transport infrastructure including the Botley Road and Abingdon Road.

**District: Countywide**

**Estimated Growth Deal spend: £5,000,000**

**Full cost of scheme: £TBC**

**Oxford Station Redevelopment**

Growth Deal funding will support feasibility work on widening the Botley Road railway bridge, through replacement of the existing structure. This is required to support the Oxford rail station development, enabling more rail lines to be provided to increase capacity through Oxford. Widening the road underneath the bridge will improve headroom for vehicles and also provide more space for cycle lanes and wider pavements, complementing improvements along the length of Botley Road. The scheme is part of a wider improvement plan for Oxford station which includes additional track and platform capacity.

**District: Countywide**

**Estimated Growth Deal spend: £500,000**

**Full cost of scheme: £TBC**

**Didcot Garden Town Project: Central Didcot Transport Corridor improvements**

A priority “place-making” project involving a mixture of bus, cycle and pedestrian improvements from the new Science Bridge on the A4130 west of Sir Frank Williams Way to Jubilee Way Roundabout at Broadway. It is estimated that the project will contribute to the delivery of 391 houses as part of the programme of works.

**Districts: South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse**

**Estimated Growth Deal spend: £2,000,000**

**Full cost of scheme: £60,000,000**

**Barns Road**

The Barns Road scheme included in the South East Corridors Study is part of the Oxford Transport Strategy’s Cycle Premium Route network. It aims to support local growth and wider movement between new housing and employment sites in south Oxford (Cowley, Blackbird Leys, Littlemore, Oxford Science Park, Oxford Business Park) and connections to Oxford city centre, east and north Oxford. It envisages new and improved cycle routes along the whole length of the corridor, as well as improved bus provision. It is a key component of proposals to support social inclusion, equality of opportunity, protect/enhance the local environment and health/wellbeing, by improving connectivity and air quality through reducing congestion. It is estimated that the project will contribute to the delivery of 2081 houses.

**District: Oxford City**

**Estimated Growth Deal spend: £1,300,000**

**Full cost of scheme: £10,300,000**

**A34 Corridor**

This project looks at providing a city-bound bus lane from the proposed P&R at Lodge Hill to Hinksey Hill Interchange. This forms part of proposals for rapid transit from major housing sites in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse to Oxford city centre and around the "Eastern Arc" (Littlemore, Cowley, Headington and North Oxford). Phase 1 of the project (bus priority at Hinksey Hill Interchange) has already secured funding with design work is now underway.

**District: Oxford City**

**Estimated Growth Deal spend: (included in £1,300,000 listed above)**

**Full cost of scheme £25,100,000**

**Eastern Bypass Corridor**

The project will help move more people around more efficiently along the Eastern Bypass by providing a bus lane/priority along the corridor. This is required to support growth and wider movement between key housing and employment across south and east Oxford (Headington, Cowley, Oxford Business Park, Littlemore, Oxford Science Park) and South Oxfordshire/Vale of White Horse (South of Genoble Road/Chalgrove, Abingdon etc.). It is expected to reduce private car traffic and improve the city's air quality.

**District: Oxford City**

**Estimated Growth Deal spend: (included in £1,300,000 listed above)**

**Full cost of scheme: £38,100,000**

**Cowley Road/Garsington Road/Watlington Road corridor**

The project will help reduce the impact of congestion and expand connectivity along the Cowley Road/Garsington Road corridor by improving traffic at existing pinch-points/junctions and new bus priority (improving bus journey times and reliability) and by providing a higher standard and safer cycle route along the whole length of the corridor. Side road entries and improved crossings will also assist pedestrian movement and safety. This will support housing growth along the Cowley Road/Garsington Road corridor and is part of proposals to improve wider movement between key housing and employment in south Oxford (Cowley, Oxford Business Park), South Oxfordshire (South of Genoble Road/Chalgrove) and Oxford city centre.

**District: Oxford City**

**Estimated Growth Deal spend: (included in £1,300,000 listed above)**

**Full cost of scheme: £39,700,000**

**A4074 Corridor**

The project will help reduce the impact of congestion along the A4074 corridor by providing a city-bound bus lane and bus priority at Heyford Hill roundabout, and by providing a new two-way cycle route. This corridor forms part of the Rapid Transit network to support growth and wider movement between key housing and employment across south and east Oxford (Littlemore, Oxford Science Park, Oxford Business Park, Headington) and South Oxfordshire (South of Genoble Road/Chalgrove) and connections to Oxford city centre.

**District: Oxford City**

**Estimated Growth Deal spend: (included in £1,300,000 listed above)**

**Full cost of scheme: £18,800,000**

**B4495 Corridor**

Starting at its junction with The Slade/Horspath Driftway to its junction with Abingdon Road, the aim of this project is to help reduce the impact of congestion along the B4495 corridor by addressing existing pinch-points and by providing a new and improved cycle route. As part of the Rapid Transit and connector bus network, and Oxford's Cycle Super Route network it is expected to support growth and ease movement between key housing and employment across south and east Oxford (Cowley, Oxford Business Park, Headington) and South Oxfordshire/Vale of WH (South of Genoble Road/Chalgrove, Abingdon).

**District: Oxford City**

**Estimated Growth Deal spend: (included in £1,300,000 listed above)**

**Full cost of scheme: £22,000,000**

**Abingdon Road Corridor**

The project will help reduce the impact of congestion and ease movement along the Abingdon corridor by providing a new and improved cycle route and improving bus routes to support housing and jobs growth and promote healthy and active travel. It connects people to major employment sites in South and East Oxford ((e.g. Headington, Cowley, Oxford Business Park) and South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse.

**District: Oxford City**

**Estimated Growth Deal spend: (included in £1,300,000 listed above)**

**Full cost of scheme £13,700,000**

**Iffley Road corridor**

This is the A4158 corridor between the Eastern Bypass and The Plain roundabout to reduce the impact of congestion and move more people around more efficiently along Iffley Road by improving traffic at current bottlenecks, improving bus journey times/reliability, and by providing a higher standard and safer cycle route treatment along the whole length of the corridor. Side-road entry treatments and new/improved crossings will also assist pedestrian movement and safety. This will support housing growth along Iffley Road and is part of proposals to improve wider movement between key housing and employment in south Oxford (Littlemore, Oxford Science Park) and the city centre.

**District: Oxford City**

**Estimated Growth Deal spend: (included in £1,300,000 listed above)**

**Full cost of scheme £19,700,000**

**HIGHWAYS DEFECTS UPDATE**

As reported last month, the county council has increased the amount of relatively small-scale work it does to put right local roads that are suffering from potholes, cracks and worn out tarmac. The number of completed defect repairs between January and October this year is 37219.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR**

I would like to thank Parish Councillors for all their hard work over the last year and wish them together with everyone in my Division a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.