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| **Title** | County Councillor’s Report |
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Since the May 6th elections, a new administration is running Oxfordshire County Council, comprising the councillors from the Liberal Democrat, Green and Labour groups. The administration is collectively known as the Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance. In the cross-party cabinet, my colleague Dr Pete Sudbury, who was the only Green county councillor before May 6th, holds the portfolio for climate change and environment. The new council leader is Liz Leffman of the Lib Dems, with Liz Brighouse of Labour as deputy leader.

I look forward to getting involved at the county council and supporting our local parishes. I will also be on the Planning and Regulation committee. Please get in contact to alert me to issues or if there is anything at county level I can assist with. I’ve included the **10 key objectives of the Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance administration** at the end of this report.

**Councillor Priority Fund**

The Councillor Priority Fund (CPF) is a sum of £15,000 per councillor that runs over the course of two years until 31 March 2023. The fund is now open for applications and each councillor can use their fund to support community projects and organisations.

Any eligible organisation can approach me directly to apply for this fund, and would then have to complete the form available for download on the county council website.

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/community-and-living/thriving-communities/councillor-priority-fund?utm_term=90432&utm_content=>

Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback on their proposal and, where possible, we will work with organisations to help them identify alternative funding opportunities.

**Active travel**

Work on the existing active travel schemes continues, such as for cycle paths in Witney and Bicester, while the new administration considers what actions we can take to extend them more widely. In Oxford, a consultation on the next phase of low traffic neighbourhoods is due to run from 8 to 29 June – this will include the Divinity Road, St Mary’s and St Clements areas.

Phase 2 of our e-scooter trial has been temporarily paused; the trial has proved a big success in Headington, with demand exceeding all expectations since its launch in February. We will be working with our e-scooter supplier Voi Technology to meet the current high demand levels before moving to phase 3 of the trial. This will cover the whole city, from Kennington to Kidlington and from Botley to the Horspath area.

**Oxfordshire’s aim to be smoke-free by 2025**

You may have noticed media coverage on the subject of Oxfordshire’s aim to be smoke-free by 2025. This stemmed from a discussion on the subject at last week’s Health Improvement Board. Oxfordshire County Council’s existing tobacco control strategy outlines our smokefree 2025 plans, which include creating healthy and family-friendly smokefree spaces, helping people not to take up smoking in the first place, and supporting those who wish to quit.

**Race and restorative youth justice**

Last week the youth justice service had a week-long Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) thematic inspection – focused on the experience of black and mixed heritage boys. A report covering all the local authorities visited will be published in the autumn.

The inspectors were positive about the quality of casework, interventions and pre-sentence reports and fed back that management oversight and the restorative justice offer were both strong.

**New service launched in the county**

Pause Oxfordshire is a new service being offered to women who have experienced, or are at risk of, repeated pregnancies that result in children needing to be removed from their care. Women choose whether to take up the offer of long-term (up to 18 months), intensive, trauma informed relational support, which is delivered by skilled practitioners. It is very early days in Oxfordshire, but 17 women contacted so far all want to take up the Pause offer. To find out more about Pause in Oxfordshire you can email pause@oxfordshire.gov.uk, or visit the national charity’s website www.pause.org.uk

**Park and Charge open day events in Bicester, 7-12 June**

The very first electric vehicle (EV) charging hub in the Park and Charge Oxfordshire scheme went live last week at Cattle Market in Bicester. To celebrate the launch of the first EV hub in this scheme, we are holding open day events this week at the Cattle Market to engage with local residents, before the rollout begins to other locations in the county.

**Walk to School week**

Hundreds of school children across the county got active in May by clocking up thousands of steps as part of our annual Walk to School Week. The week is an extension of the ‘WOW’ project supported by our public health team over the past two years. Run by Living Streets, the year-round walk to school challenge encourages children to collect badges each month as a reward for making journeys actively. Nine schools are currently participating in the walk to school challenge, with another 11 signed up to join in September.

**Covid update**

As was to be expected with the further easing of lockdown, the number of COVID-19 cases in the county is on the rise again, with numbers almost tripling from last week. The new Delta variant of concern that was first identified in India is now present in Oxfordshire, with over two dozen cases reported as of 27 May. This is being closely monitored, as is the overall case rate in the county. This serves as a reminder that the virus is still very much in circulation and that we need to continue to be careful in order to keep Oxfordshire open and keep our communities safe.

As before, we must encourage everyone to get vaccinated when they can – and do so ourselves. All over 50s are urged to bring forward their second jab if asked – data suggests both doses of the vaccine helps most people from getting ill. And alongside vaccinations, testing is key to help us control the virus. So please do encourage your constituents to take part in rapid symptom-free testing twice a week.

**Vaccination programme**

The COVID vaccination programme is proceeding at pace, with those aged 30 and over being offered the first dose of the vaccine. Following a change to government advice, people aged 30 - 39 will now receive either a Pfizer or Moderna vaccine.

You can book a vaccination on the national booking service (you do not need to wait to be invited) if any of the following apply:

* you’re aged 30 or over
* you’ll turn 30 before 1 July 2021
* you’re at high risk from COVID-19 (clinically extremely vulnerable)
* you have a condition that puts you at higher risk (clinically vulnerable)
* you have a learning disability
* you’re a frontline health or social care worker
* you get a carer’s allowance, get support following an assessment by your local authority or your GP record shows you are a carer.

**Testing and test centres**

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you must self-isolate and book a PCR test as soon as possible. A reminder of the county’s symptomatic test sites:

 Oxford Parkway (OX2 8HA)

 Woodgreen Leisure Centre (OX16 0HS)

 Osney Lane, Oxford (OX1 1NY)

 Woodford Way car park, Witney (OX28 6JS)

Oxford Brookes University (OX3 0BP).

There are also a number of mobile testing units operating in the county, including:

Chinnor Rugby Club, Rectory Pavilion, Kingsey Road, Thame, Oxfordshire OX9 3JL

 June: 10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 25.

Dalton Barracks, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX13 6JB

June: 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, 26, 27.

Wheatley Campus, Oxford Brookes University, College Close, Oxfordshire OX33 1HX

June: 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29.

Everyone without symptoms is encouraged to get tested twice a week – this applies even if you have been vaccinated. One in three people with COVID-19 don’t have any symptoms –regular rapid lateral flow device (LFD) testing helps us to find these cases and prevent the spread of infection. There are a number of ways you can get tested – collecting home test kits, getting them delivered to your door or going to one of our testing sites.

**Communications campaign**

We have a new countywide campaign in place, encouraging people to start safely enjoying what Oxfordshire has to offer. Using the message ‘Eat. Shop. Play. Love local’, the campaign is targeted at a range of different audiences, using social media, digital activity and poster advertising. We have adapted the supporting messaging during the week, and are now encouraging people to meet outdoors where possible. This reflects the increase in cases across the county.

**Staying up to date**

For the latest information about the council’s response to COVID-19, visit the council’s website oxfordshire.gov.uk and follow our social media accounts.

**The key objectives of the Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance administration are:**

1. Tackling the Climate Emergency through rapid decarbonisation, proper accounting of carbon emissions and ambitious targets, as well as supporting climate resilience;
2. Tackling inequalities and providing opportunities for everyone in Oxfordshire to achieve their full potential;
3. Prioritisation of wellbeing – improved outcomes for residents and improved air quality and access to libraries, cultural facilities and the arts;
4. Review and reform of the social care system to prioritise end-users and carers with a focus on co-operative and community provision of social care, helping those who want to stay in their own homes;
5. Increased investment in an inclusive, integrated, county-wide active and sustainable travel network fit for the 21st Century to improve choice and reduce car journeys across the County;
6. Improved access to nature and green spaces for all communities, and landscape-scale nature recovery across the county;
7. Supporting all our children and young people to achieve improved health, wellbeing and educational outcomes; improved provision for children with additional needs; all decision-making to have regard to impact on young people and future generations;
8. The creation of a resilient local democracy where decisions are devolved to the lowest possible level and residents are meaningfully involved in the decisions that affect their lives;
9. Support for local employment and businesses, working with partners to make Oxfordshire a centre for green and sustainable technologies through a local ‘Green New Deal’; we will use our purchasing power and contracts to maximise benefit to local employment and businesses;
10. Responsible management of the Council’s finances, reducing wasteful outsourcing.