

SODC ward councillor's report

Shiplake – 13th February 2023

Covid-19

The reliability of data on Covid cases is now much reduced following the end of test and trace. However national figures have shown falls in cases – contrary to what might be expected for this time of year.

At 4th February 2023, **reported** cases in SODC were at a weekly rate per 100k of population of **45** (it peaked at 1,504 on 6th January 2022) – a very low level - albeit that reporting may be somewhat incomplete.

Separately, there has been significant levels of flu causing some references to a “twindemic” in terms of absences and pressures on the NHS.

Councillor Grants Scheme

The local bids have been approved. I believe payment will proceed by end of March.

NPPF consultation

The consultation remains open for input. The draft revised NPPF – with tracked changes - has been released for consultation:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-reforms-to-national-planning-policy>

SODC Budget

The draft budget provides for a Band D precept increase of £5 – the standard figure assumed by government in their financial settlement. The deficit for the 2023/24 year is budgeted at £0.6m – a fifth of the level inherited for the 2019-20 year – despite inflation and other challenges. Efficiencies and prudent adjustments have enabled progress after many pre-2019 years of neglect and poor decisions – including botched outsourcing.

AONB extension

All parishes have approved their share of likely cost and the work is proceeding. Phase 1 of the work has been done and phases 2 and 3 of the work are expected by the end of February. The next meeting is pencilled in for 15th March 2023.

Poplar Eyot and the White House

Application P22/S4211/HH remains open but officers have concerns which are in process to resolve or otherwise.

Leigh Rawlins

District Councillor