

REPORT TO SHIPLAKE PARISH COUNCIL JULY 2024

FROM CLLR DAVID BARTHOLOMEW

GENERAL OCC REPORT

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT/GREEN ADMINISTRATION'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Liberal Democrat/Green administration that runs OCC has claimed good progress has been made in 2023/24 against its nine strategic priorities, with particular success achieved in the council's work to address climate change. These achievements were reported to the 18 June meeting of the Cabinet. Critics observe that by far and away the most-complained about issue by residents is the state of the roads and drains, yet these are not mentioned in the list of priorities. The latest 'Residents Survey' shows that 'Maintenance of roads' was rated by 67% of residents as one of their four most important council services, but just 19% were very or fairly satisfied. The overall satisfaction with the council is just 39%.

OCC PAYS OUT £95K IN DATA BREACH CLAIMS

The Oxford Mail has reported that OCC has paid out £95,350 in compensation for data breach claims since 2021 amid a "worrying" rise in security attacks. OCC had the second-highest figure of all county councils in the UK according to new Freedom of Information data which revealed an increase in attacks across councils nationally. The figures showed OCC confirmed a total of 1,709 personal data breach incidents since 2021. Councils are expected to collect, store, use, share and dispose of personal information or data about individuals, in line with General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act.

OCC HEADCOUNT CONTINUES TO RISE

2018-19 4959, 2019-20 5079, 2020-21 5087, 2021-22 5116, 2022-23 5310, 2023-24 5378. Agency workers are in addition to these figures. There were 446 for 2023-24.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERSPEND

The Children's Services budget of £172.3m for 2023-24 was overspent by £7.7m, taking the figure to £180.0m. The total number of children in care was 768 as at March 2024.

DEMENTIA SUPPORT DESIGNED BY PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

Oxfordshire residents who receive a dementia diagnosis now have the opportunity to attend support sessions that have been created with the help of people who are living with the condition themselves. Dementia Oxfordshire, a service provided by Age UK Oxfordshire with funding support from OCC, has worked with a group of experts by experience who are living with the condition, to devise post-diagnostic education sessions for people who have recently had a diagnosis of dementia. The sessions are taking place at various venues across the county and also online. Full details can be found on the [Dementia Oxfordshire website](#).

WORKING WITH BUSINESSES TO PREVENT UNDERAGE BOTOX AND FILLERS

Businesses that administer botox and fillers for cosmetic purposes in Oxfordshire have been the focus of an ongoing project by OCC's trading standards team with the aim of protecting young people. Overall, 27 businesses were visited by trading standards, who found that most of them were aware of the legal and ethical requirements to not inject anyone under 18. However, few of them asked for proof of age or recorded refusals.

SPECIFIC OCC REPORT FOR SHIPLAKE

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ADJACENT TO THAMES FARM

I have been copied on PC emails raising this topic again. Previously, at the PC's request, I have put the suggestion of a pedestrian crossing at this location to OCC officers. It has been rejected on the basis that officers:

- believe the existing crossing to be safe;
- have stated there is insufficient road width for a refuge island;
- have stated that a controlled crossing would cost in excess of £100k to install and that there are multiple problems relating to existing drains and land ownership.

For me to go back to officers and ask for a re-evaluation, the PC would need to provide evidence to support the claim that the site is unsafe. The urbanising impact of such works should also be considered.

FOOTPATH ALONGSIDE A4155 FROM MEMORIAL AVENUE TO PLOUGH LANE

At the Annual Parish Meeting a resident enquired about the possibility of constructing such a path. The PC asked me to investigate this and I can advise that a self-binding gravel path would cost in the region of £20,000.

TEMPORARY EMERGENCY FOOTPATH CLOSURE OF FOOTPATH-7 (GRID SU77947873)

OCC has closed Footpath 7 as the surface has collapsed. Officers hope repairs will be completed by Network Rail and the EA by the end of July.

THAMES FARM

OCC met with Taylor Wimpy in March to discuss next steps in relation to the S278 highway works. TW undertook to produce a briefing note by the end of April, but this has not happened.

CHURCH LANE HOARDINGS

OCC approved the hoarding licence at this location until the 5th of July 2024 but will not extend it further unless there is evidence of work in progress.

FMS ENQ241004927: DEGRADATION OF STATION ROAD AT ENTRANCE TO VILLAGE

As previously reported, I alerted officers to the poor state of this section of road and substantial full-width patching has now been scheduled for the end of the summer. There was an incorrect FMS update stating this was not going to happen.

FMS ENQ22939732: PLOUGH LANE/MEMORIAL AVE/SIPLAKE ROW JUNCTION

Officers have apologised for the delay in clearing the overgrown vegetation at the Plough Lane/Memorial Ave/Shiplake Row junction and have confirmed works will take place during the forthcoming school holidays.

FMS ENQ23972527: FLOODING OPPOSITE HAILEYWOOD FARM

OCC has now referred the matter to SODC Enforcement as the Shiplake Meadows developer is not maintaining the drainage ditch. I have chased officers for an update.