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# STANFORD IN THE VALE PARISH COUNCIL

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# NEWS UPDATE APRIL 2016

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## Queen Elizabeth II Recreation Field

With the lease now signed, we're keen to progress the arrangements required in order to make the best use of this open space as soon as possible. There are a number of pre-requisite requirements to deal with, including Change of Use and the relocation of the power lines that currently run above the site. In order to start progressing plans to create the new recreation facilities, we have arranged two public meetings – we hope you can come along to one of these and share your ideas and opinions with us: Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, Large Village Hall 19:30 / Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April, Large Village Hall 10:00

## Parish Council Precept

As previously reported, last year the County Council slashed 50% (approx. £3,000) from the grass cutting grant which we use to maintain areas of grass belonging to OCC. Whilst we absorbed this cut through careful management of our funds, as well as using volunteers where possible, we are now faced with the loss of the precept grant as well as the expectation that there will be further reductions in the grass cutting grant. Therefore, after many years of not increasing the precept, faced with the threat of additional cuts from Oxfordshire County Council, your Parish Council voted to make a modest increase in the precept for the year 2016-2017 of just £700 (an increase of 66p for a Band D dwelling). Whilst we will continue to monitor and manage this situation carefully, there is the risk of further rises over the coming years, if we are to maintain services at the same levels that we have all come to expect.

## Public Work of Art

Funding has been secured by Vale of White Horse District Council from developments within the parish towards a public work of art. We are in the process of discussing possible options with the District Council, if you have any suggestions for suitable sites/subject, please get in touch with any of your Councillors so that these can be taken into consideration

## Dog walkers

Whilst I know the majority of responsible dog owners already clean up after them, it is a great shame that a number seem to believe that they have no responsibility for their dog whilst out in the village. Not only is this unsightly and unpleasant, it can lead to toxocariasis in humans, which can cause both serious illness and blindness.

Evidence of anyone allowing their dog to foul the verge or pavement, without clearing it up can be submitted to Vale of White Horse District Council's Environmental Protection team via [env.health@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:env.health@southandvale.gov.uk) or via telephone 01235 540555.

We will continue to highlight the issue around the village through the use of an environmentally friendly chalk-based spray paint – it would however be preferable not to have the issue in the first place, so *please clean up after your pet.*

## Archaeological Surveys

Following a number of successful test pits that have been dug around the village, over the coming months David Ashby intends to lead a team in completing a ground penetrating radar scan of Church, Upper and Millennium Greens, followed by a number of test pits in areas of interest, identified through these scans.

## Peter Lewis

*Chairman – Stanford in the Vale Parish Council*  
[plewis.sitv@gmail.com](mailto:plewis.sitv@gmail.com)

## Local Plan to 2031 Examination

Throughout February the Vale's Local Plan Examination in Public has been continuing at the Beacon in Wantage. The formal sessions have now finished, however it is expected to be some weeks before the Inspector publishes his report. The inspector will then indicate whether there are any modifications required to the Local Plan and whether these need to be consulted on, but the scale and timescale of any changes won't be known until the Inspector has given his verdict.

## Vale Council tax frozen for another year

The District Council element of your council tax bill is to be frozen for yet another year at just £116.69 for a Band D property. Services are also being improved with scheme to enhance street cleaning, funding for community flood groups and celebrations of HM The Queen's 90th Birthday later this year.

## A new vision for Oxfordshire

Many of you will have already heard about the proposal put forward by seven district councils for a new devolution deal for Oxfordshire. The plans include government devolving more funding and powers to local authorities and the reorganisation of local councils themselves. We are proposing the abolition of the existing district and county councils to be replaced by three or four new Local Unitary Councils. In our part of the world that would mean a new council covering the area of the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire that would provide all of the local services for residents.

Discussions are continuing with government on how to progress these proposals as quickly as possible, but the whole process is still likely to be measured in months and

years. You can read some more details about the plans at [www.oxfordshire.vision](http://www.oxfordshire.vision).

### **Vale on the brink of major procurement success**

The Vale of White Horse has been working with four other councils (South Oxfordshire, Hart, Havant and Mendip) on an ambitious procurement process that is set to save taxpayers millions of pounds. This is one of the largest projects of its kind and all the councils have now agreed to go ahead to bring new innovation to council services and save the five councils more than £50m. It will save the Vale taxpayers nearly £1m a year.

### **Robert Sharp** VWH District Councillor

The Old Stables, Shellingford, Faringdon, SN7 7PU

Tel. 01367 710549

E-mail [Robert.Sharp@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:Robert.Sharp@whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

### **Report from County Councillor**

#### **Budget**

Prior to Christmas, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) went out to consultation on possible additional budget cuts totalling £51m, at the time believed to be the worst-case scenario. However, due to a change in the funding formula, which penalised shire counties, the settlement was even worse than expected and the additional savings required now total £69m. In response to protests from shire counties, on 11th February the Government announced transitional funding and OCC will receive £9m across two financial years in respect of this.

The Council met on Tuesday 16th February to debate the budget measures necessary to achieve the savings. Although most of the savings will still go ahead, a cross-party agreement was made on the day incorporating the following changes:

- \* A total of £2m of savings relating to Early Intervention Hubs and Children's Centres will now not take place. An original £6m saving on Early Intervention Hubs and Children's Centres - agreed by the council at its annual budget meeting in February 2015 - will still take place. No decisions have been taken at this stage on how this £2m will be spent.
- \* A total of £3m of savings relating to day centres (including transport to day centres) will now not take place. Instead they will be replaced by a saving of £1m from 2017/18 resulting from a full review of all day services for older people.

- \* There will be a further £300,000 contribution to the budget from reserves.

The net result of this is that the council will be able to set a balanced budget in 2016/17 but over the medium term now has £15.2m of unidentified savings to make as opposed to the previous figure of £11.2m. The new £4m of unidentified savings all fall in 2017/18.

A number of other important decisions were made during the debate:

- \* A cross-party board of county councillors will be created to consider how best to use the transitional funds.

- \* The council will consider workplace parking with a view to early implementation.

- \* There will be a review of the number of Cabinet members.

- \* The benefits of a Unitary Council will be discussed on a cross-party basis and full and timetabled consultation will be prepared. This will be subject a free vote for all councillors.

### **PROPOSALS FOR DISTRICT UNITARY COUNCILS**

On Thursday 25th February a surprise announcement was made by Oxfordshire's District Councils and Oxford City Council. (This may have been in response to OCC's call for a debate on a single Unitary Council for the county.) It called for the abolition of OCC and the establishment of four district unitaries:

- \* A new Southern Oxfordshire Unitary Authority would cover the area currently administered by Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils.

- \* An Oxford City Unitary Authority would be formed in the centre of the county, covering the area currently administered by Oxford City Council.

- \* A West Oxfordshire-Cotswold Unitary Authority covering the area currently administered by West Oxfordshire District Council and Cotswold District Council.

- \* A Cherwell-South Northants Unitary Authority covering the area currently administered by Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council.

OCC welcomes the District Councils' engagement in the Unitary debate and will shortly be putting forward its own proposals.

### **Village Resilience Fund**

Oxfordshire communities are being urged to tap into a special 'resilience' fund to help them to cope better with emergencies. The SSE (Scottish and Southern Energy) Resilient Communities Fund offers up to £20,000 to help communities to:

- \* Protect the welfare of vulnerable people during a major power cut or emergency due to severe weather.

- \* Enhance community facilities and services that may be needed during a major power cut or emergency due to severe weather.

- \* Improve communication during an emergency situation, to keep communities informed or to aid contact between local groups and response services. Further information at <https://www.ssepd.co.uk/Resiliencefund/> or call 0141 224 7191

### **Secondary School Places**

Over 92% of pupils got their first choice of Secondary School in Oxfordshire.

### **Melinda Tilley**

Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families  
Oxfordshire County Council

## Stanford in the Vale Public Purposes Charity (PPC) – mid March 2016

The Trustees met on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2016. They noted that the portfolio now stands at just over £716k and that the interest for the calendar year 2015 had amounted to over £26k. They also noted that the total of the grants paid in 2015 was only £10.1k with an approved grant for £5k outstanding and two further grant applications for which further details had been requested which could amount to around £14k to £19K depending on their final requirements. They expressed some disquiet that grant applications had diminished over the past two years.

### Approved Grant Applications still outstanding at 14 March 2016 and those awaiting further information include:

- The agreed grant of up to £5,000 for the revised proposal from the Parochial Church Council (PCC) for support for a grant to open part of the church wall on to Church Green in order to make the memorial more inclusive for the village as a whole is still outstanding. It is thought that the work will be carried out soon, but it was noted that if it is not completed in 2016 the grant application will be annulled and an application will need to be made again.
- With regard to the request for support for the SitV CE Primary School to improve the Foundation outside area the Trustees agreed that, on the condition that the options for the future school expansion are confirmed by OCC, a grant of 1:1 matched-funding with funds raised by the Parents Association and FOSS (Friends of Stanford School) up to a maximum of £10k should be offered to the school. This grant offer remains outstanding.
- The request for a grant for support for the SitV Preschool, for the purchase of lockable storage cupboards for confidential information and custom built storage for equipment, still awaits revised quotations.

### **Allotments**

The waiting list remains at eleven villagers. At 14<sup>th</sup> March about 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the rentals have been paid and the deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March is approaching rapidly. The hedges have had their Spring trim and the water bills have been paid.

As usual, Allotment holders are reminded that ,if they do not keep up their allotments according to the Rules laid down by the Trustees, their allotment holding will be withdrawn and given to the next villager on the waiting list. Any parishioner who wishes his or her name to be added to the allotment waiting list should please contact Paul Corrigan on 01367 718 325.

### Villagers are reminded of the PPC Trust Mission Statement:

*“Striving to improve and strengthen the community within Stanford-in-the-Vale by providing a source of finance for projects that will benefit the parish.”*

Success of course depends on such projects being brought forward. The village organisations and societies which feel the need to improve their facilities are encouraged to make grant requests.

The Trust continues to have around £20,000 to £25,000 per year available for grants. Grant Applications are made to the Trustees through the Hon. Clerk/Correspondent, who

can supply Grant Application Forms on request either by e-mail or hard copy. (Tel: 01367 718 480)

The next meeting of the Trustees will be on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2016 in the Village Hall Committee Room.

### **David N. Axford**

Hon. Clerk/Correspondent, SitV Public Purposes Charity

### **Let's have a Street Party to meet your neighbours and celebrate the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday.**

As you read last month a giant street party is to be held to mark the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on the Mall on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2016. It will be the culmination of a weekend of national events to celebrate her official 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The Parish Council would like to invite you all to join in the birthday celebrations of her Majesty by organising a street party for your local community. This will be chance to meet your neighbours in a fun way and an opportunity for all to join in.

This could be held on either Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June or Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June, possibly on a local green space, whichever suits your local residents best. Nearer the time we will publish a list of when and where the street parties are being held so that if there is not one being organised near you, you could join in one of the others. It is our wish that no one should feel excluded from this village event and so feel free to contact Tina to either get involved or to get details about a street party local to you.

**We are now needing volunteers** to organise and co-ordinate a party in an area of Stanford near where you live. If you are interested, please contact Tina Jenkins on [tjenkinssitv@gmail.com](mailto:tjenkinssitv@gmail.com) or 07443 906150 or 01367 710614. giving your contact details - e mail / phone number.

There will be a meeting in the near future for interested volunteers to get together to help one another to share ideas for the planning and preparation of their street party. Available at this meeting will be an organisers pack which will include an initial questionnaire, invites, check list and publicity posters.

**YOU** need to make it happen – get in contact with Tina.

<b>Mike Dew (Clerk)</b>	-	<b>01367 710387</b>
<b>Cllr.Amanda Bailey</b>	-	<b>07777 691336</b>
<b>Cllr.Peter Gill</b>	-	<b>01367 718224</b>
<b>Cllr.Mark Isaacs</b>	-	<b>01367 718719</b>
<b>Cllr.Simon Jackson</b>	-	<b>07979 917001</b>
<b>Cllr.Peter Lewis (Chair)</b>		<b>01367 710166</b>
		<a href="mailto:plewis.sitv@gmail.com">plewis.sitv@gmail.com</a>
<b>Cllr.Janet Warren</b>	-	<b>01367 719789</b>
<b>Cllr.Karin WilliamsCuss</b>	-	<b>07771 614101</b>