

Vale District Councillors' Report

September 11th, 2019

It may have been the holiday period, but there has still been plenty going on. Over the last few days we have been working officers at the Vale who are in conversation with Lloyds trying to resolve the situation regarding the covenant in Southampton Street Car Park. It is a complex situation in which Lloyds have been offered several alternatives and while we are not fully aware of all the facts at this stage, we are hopeful that Lloyds will choose to accept one of the alternatives available to them.

Planning

We're nearing completion of the review of options on the Vale Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2). We want to find the best way forward to implement a new strategy for the future, whilst safeguarding against speculative development – as you know this plan does not directly affect Faringdon, but supplementary documents that may allow for greater emphasis on sustainable development throughout the Vale – a decision on this document is likely to be made in early October.

Parking

Poor parking adds to the road dangers for cyclists and we are working with other local district councils and Oxfordshire County Council to bring in civil parking enforcement. A report is due out from Oxfordshire County Council next month and we hope that all district councils can agree a joint approach to proceed

We are also looking at the possibility of bringing in electric car charging points to the council-owned car parks. These will encourage the switchover to greener transport and help draw people into the town centre for a stop before continuing their journey on the A420.

Leisure

We're glad to say we're changing the way that the district council provides leisure facilities, by developing a new Health & Wellbeing Strategy. A key driver is the desire for housing developer contributions to stay in the communities the houses are being built in. In the meantime, Faringdon Leisure Centre's pool changing rooms are open and looking good again after the refurbishment.

For those who prefer outdoor exercise, the Vale has appointed a 'cycling champion', Eric De La Harpe. Eric is a keen cyclist and will work with local organisations, communities, other councils and transport bodies on our behalf to improve access to cycling paths across the district.

Grants and Outreach

There are £10,000-worth of festival and events grants on offer from the district council. These grants have helped fund many recent events across the Vale. Applications for grants of between £250 and £1,000 for events taking place over the next 12 months will be considered and applications can be made via whitehorsedc.gov.uk/grants. You have until February 2020 to apply.

Following the success of the Faringdon Pop-Up Business School earlier in the year, next up is Shrivenham, from October 7th – 11th. Feedback from the Faringdon one was very positive, so we encourage anyone who's ever dreamed of starting their own business to go along.

Finally, polling stations seem to be getting regular use at the moment. We're holding a review of them, so if you have any ideas for improvement, please email elections@southandvale.gov.uk before 27th September.

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