REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS JANUARY 2024
FROM CLLR KEVIN BULMER

GENERAL OCC REPORT

BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2024/25

As previously reported, the Liberal Democrat/Green administration at OCC has revealed its first draft of Budget proposals for 2024/25. The opposition parties have criticised the administration for failing to engage with them at an early stage, given the Budget cannot pass without opposition support, and are currently developing their own Budget proposals. A meeting of Full Council on Tuesday 20th February will vote on the options.

OCC SPENDS £10,000 ON COLOURING-IN BOOKS PROMOTING 20MPH SCHEME

OCC has come under criticism for spending £10,000 on colouring-in books for schoolchildren promoting its 30mph to 20mph sign-changing exercise. Opponents say that not only is it a waste of money that could be spent repairing potholes, but it also fails to provide children with a balanced view of the controversial scheme.	

RIVER LEVELS IN OXFORDSHIRE

Consistent rainfall during December has followed a wetter than average Autumn. This has in turn led to higher than normal river levels on many watercourses in Oxfordshire. Useful information for local people to monitor the situation in their part of the county – especially when the Environment Agency issues flood alerts or the more serious flood warnings – can be found here: https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/river-levels-in-oxfordshire/
There are also links to the Met Office's weather warning bulletins.

PRIORITY ACTION PLAN PUBLISHED TO IMPROVE SEND SERVICES

On 18 December) OCC published the local area partnership priority action plan to improve services and support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The plan responds to Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission's inspection report of SEND partnership services in July. A draft plan was submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) on 24 October and was approved by Ofsted on 12 December. The plan sets out what will be achieved across five priority action areas.

1. Gathering and acting on the views of children and young with SEND and their families.
2. Developing effective communications systems across the partnership to ensure coordinated approaches.
3. Improved timeliness and quality assurance of education, health and care plans.
4. Commissioning of services to meet the needs of children and young people and their families.
5. Producing plans that are coproduced with children and young people and their families, which are rigorously monitored.

The local area partnership includes Oxfordshire County Council, NHS Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board and the parent carer forum (PCF), the official body for the voice of parent carers. The PCF will be directly involved in activities in the

priority action plan that lead to improving services and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

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