

REPORT TO FRITWELL PARISH COUNCIL SEPTEMBER 2022 FROM COUNTY CLLR FATEMIAN

LOCAL ISSUES

I have to say I am a little surprised and disappointed that the meeting tonight is going ahead. Given the period of national mourning, and the cancellation of almost all public meetings during this period, including Oxfordshire County Council, Cherwell District Council and plenty of parish councils throughout the county, including almost all of the meetings in my division, I think it would be been more prudent and reflective of the national mood not to proceed this evening.

Nevertheless I wish to update on a number of matters.

Developer Funding

Firstly, on the issue of section 106 Money going to Heyford school rather than Fritwell Primary School. I have been back and forward on this at length with various officers and I am afraid that legally the situation is quite constrained.

Section 106 funds can only be spent on additional infrastructure which is necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. For primary schools this means we can only secure funding for additional accommodation at a school which would otherwise be unable to accommodate the pupils who will be generated.

In the case of Fritwell, the primary school has sufficient capacity for the scale of housing development in the village, and therefore we would not be able to secure any funding. I appreciate this is frustrating but diverting money to Fritwell would be subject to legal challenge..

Additionally, any Education s106 funding secured for Heyford will be towards secondary school capacity, not primary.

20 MPH

I am delighted that Fritwell has been confirmed in the first tranche which should take place in this calendar year. The cabinet member decision is scheduled for the Cabinet meeting in October, with signing scheduled to be updated between November and December and the implementation date of 20 mph set for December 2022.

Fritwell is the first of my parishes to have the implementation and should be flowed soon after (January 2023) by North Aston and Somerton. I am aware that Bucknell is also due for implementation in October so there should be some geographic momentum towards reduced speed in the parish and surrounding villages

Development

I am aware that the outlining planning application for 22/01807/OUT on the land adjacent to 81 North Street has been withdrawn. I know that as the district cllr, Cllr Reeves submitted a robust response and after my own personal site visit and liaison with highways I was pleased to see a strong objection on highways grounds from OCC

GENERAL OCC REPORT

LIBDEM/GREEN/LABOUR ADMINISTRATION RAMPS UP VEGANISM CAMPAIGN

The administration continues to push its vegan agenda under the guise of climate action. A new website promoted by Oxfordshire councils called Climate Action Oxfordshire features links to the Vegan Society. Pressure group the Countryside Alliance has responded by stating that the vegan policies which OCC has adopted should be dropped because they undermine British farmers. The alliance is urging councillors to withdraw from the campaign which encourages residents to give up meat and adopt a plant-based diet. It argues that in order to make an environmental choice, it is more important for consumers to know where food comes from and how it is produced. At the OCC Full Council meeting in September, Conservatives will again try to reverse the imposition of vegan meals at council meetings. Conservative Councillor Yvonne Constance will ask members to reinstate meat and dairy on to the menu and to support local producers. She will move that: "This Council resolves to offer locally produced menus at Council-catered events, including meat, dairy and vegan options, or to make alternative provisions for members, staff and attendees to facilitate personal choice." Cllr David Bartholomew, who is seconding the motion, will say: "We are not opposed to vegan food, but we want to serve local food rather than flying in mangoes from abroad. And we want there to be a choice. It is not right to impose ideological dietary opinions on others."

COST OF GENDER-NEUTRAL TOILETS

Subsequent to the Cabinet decision to further investigate the provision of gender-neutral toilets in all council buildings, OCC's Property Director confirmed that OCC has 905 sites and that each of these would have to be assessed. Ignoring the cost of any actual work required, just this assessment could cost in excess of £90,000 if each individual assessment cost £100. If the actual work costs £1000 per site on average, then the total cost would be in the region of £1m.

HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE DRAFT CENTRAL OXFORDSHIRE TRAVEL PLAN

OCC has launched a consultation on its draft Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan, which focuses on potential ways of taxing motorists to reduce car use in and around the city of Oxford. Residents and parish councils can respond to the survey on Let's Talk Oxfordshire:

<https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/central-oxfordshire-travel-plan>

Meanwhile, opponents of the hugely divisive Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme in Oxford have launched a legal bid to overturn the council's decision.