



Focus on Parishes with Cllr Freddie van Mierlo (Chalgrove and Watlington)

December 2021

Welcome to my monthly update. I share a regular update in the first week of every month. In the interests of transparency and sharing good ideas I will be sharing this update publicly as well as with parish councils in Chalgrove and Watlington division.

My recent meetings

- 2nd November: Full County Council, Oxford
- 2nd November: Nettlebed Parish Council
- 4th November: Chalgrove Parish Council
- 8th November: Great Haseley Parish Council
- 9th November: Watlington Parish Council
- 10th November: Brightwell Baldwin Parish Meeting
- 10th November: Little Milton Parish Council
- 11th November: Berrick Salome Parish Meeting
- 15th November: Great Milton Parish Council

Upcoming meetings:

- 8th December: Swyncombe Parish Council
- 8th December: Little Milton Parish Council

If there are meetings you would like to invite me to please get in touch: freddie.vanmierlo@oxfordshire.gov.uk

OCC news:

Changes to bus network: Changes have been made to the bus network following an urgent need by the bus companies to adapt to new commercial realities. With the tapering down of

pandemic government support but a failure of passenger numbers to rebound, the bus companies came together with OCC to review how the network can be made more efficient and reduce duplication. While OCC had no formal role, as the routes were all fully commercial routes, OCC was commended by the companies for their role in facilitating the discussions. While most of the changes impact Oxford City, the X38 will now shuttle hourly between Wallingford and Henley, rather than going on to Oxford. Instead, passengers travelling to Oxford will be required to change to the X39/X40 services at either Crowmarsh Gifford or Wallingford. I'm hopeful that if and when the county's bid for government funding is successful, services could be restored or improved

Civil parking enforcement: Under the Lib Dem/Green led Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance, we have finally relieved our overstretched police of on-street parking enforcement. In the first two weeks: 1,199 warning notices issued and 75 requests from the public to target areas with enforcement. Report illegally parked cars [here](#)

Councillors vote to protect local community rights on planning: At full council in November, a motion was brought forward by Labour councillor Brad Baines to call on the government to protect local communities rights to be consulted on and to object to developments. Lib-Dem leader of the council, Liz Leffman will write to the secretary of state for housing with our request

Roadworks halted for Christmas: The county is suspending roadworks on certain roads during the festive period to support businesses and facilitate movement of people and goods

Budget consultation opened: The county's process for approving a new budget has kicked off with a public consultation on draft proposals. The budget is based around the nine key priorities of the Lib-Dem led alliance, include making the county greener and fairer. While the county has many statutory responsibilities and a limited budget, we are still aiming for a fiscally responsible, balanced budget for 2022/3.

In the Autumn spending review, the chancellor told councils to increase council tax by 1% to cover shortfalls in funding for social care. Given the previous administration had already planned for a 3.99% rise for 2021/22, the county will need to rise council by 4.99%. For a band D property this equates to £78.50 per year.

Councillors are council taxpayers as well, and so I know that this rise, although perhaps expected, is not what residents will want to hear at Christmas. However, when my council tax bill lands next year, I will pay it, knowing that in doing so we are protecting the most vulnerable in our society.

To have your say on the budget, you can submit a response [here](#) (Deadline 5th January)

20mph applications: With the OCC portal open for parish councils to apply for 20mph zones, I am so far aware of planned applications from: Berrick Salome, Britwell Salome, Chalgrove, Great Milton, Lewknor, Little Milton, Nettlebed, and Watlington. Cuxham and Ewelme have already moved ahead separately to the new OCC process. If you would like your parish to apply, make sure to get in touch with them!

Parish round up

Not all parishes are covered – below is a selection of the main updates I have worked on this month.

Britwell Salome

- **Speed survey completed:** Results of the speed survey on the B4009 have been completed and the results are being analysed – there is a lot of data! The results will inform next steps in reducing speeds on the B4009 passing through the village

Chalgrove:

- **High Street road closure:** A small section of the High Street between Marley Lane and Brinkinfield Road will be closed in mid-December (Mill Lane will still be accessible). Originally, this work was planned for 13-17th December, but this has now been moved to 12th-13th December only. This work is to link up the new SOHA housing at The Acreage to mains water

Cuxham

- **Traffic calming:** Signs for the new 20mph zone were installed between 15th and 17th November.

Watlington

- **Pyrton Lane public consultation open:** A public consultation is being held on plans brought forward by the parish council and county to introduce a 20mph zone for Pyrton Lane and St Leonard's Close, with 2 speed bumps and a speed cushion. Contributions to the consultation can be made [here](#) (closing date: 31 December)
- **Charlotte Coxe Trust:** Residents of Watlington have written to the Henley Standard (article not yet online) to express their dissatisfaction at the empty state of number 33 high street, which is owned by the Charlotte Coxe Trust, for which OCC is the sole trustee. In my comments to the paper, I emphasized that I have made resolving this long-standing issue a top priority for my first year as a councillor. I have brought this to the attention of the highest levels of the council and, while the architecture of the trust makes it complicated, I'm hopefully we can put the building back to good use, to the benefit of the community