

District Councillor Report Cllr Andy Graham and Leader of the Council

Budget 23/24

The budget consultation undertaken by the new administration at West Oxfordshire District Council finished on 12th January. With the government settlement better than expected it seems we are expecting to balance the budget with just a £5 council tax increase from the district council element. The budget will reflect the new council plan replacing the previous administration and is built on bringing the council business closer to our communities and more reflective of the aspirations of our distinct communities.

We are bringing the council chamber into the modern era, updating the furniture and fixtures, installing the technology so that live streaming of all our meetings takes place and ensuring when the council business is not being conducted it is flexible for community use and hire. The reception at Wood Green will be more welcoming and you will be greeted with a welcome to assist your enquiries.

We are looking to invest/build new homes with a mix of social rented and affordable homes aimed at supporting those in our communities who need homes that are built to high and sustainable standards. The new administration is currently exploring options and more details will be forthcoming.

Climate Change is a commitment beyond words and we are looking to further invest with other authorities like the Cotswold District Council and Oxfordshire County Council new approaches, strategies and actions that will make a difference in our communities. This partnership approach is already underway and we will be wanting our communities to get involved with new environmental projects that can be implemented with support from WODC.

Grant monies have been secured to facilitate community projects and it is our intention to ensure a wider reach across the district where equality of opportunity to access funds for new innovation which reflects environmental concerns as well as the health and well being of the community.

We will be undertaking a leisure strategy review with a vision to create a wider offer than has been currently available through our leisure centre provision which caters and reflects the needs of current and future generations with additional pitch playing provision across the district bringing cohesion and sufficient provision reflective of our growing provision.

The new administration is taking active steps to support our shopping centres in the main towns and invigorating the public ownership by direct investment. That means we on your behalf have a real say about what the retail offer is and how we can support local business to prosper in both rural locations and main towns.

Our fundamental change is a commitment to change the ethos of the council to underpin these changes that are long overdue.

This is your council and our commitment is to demonstrate that through our actions to consult, work with and raise the quality of standards in services we have to deliver.

The Council plan is recommended for approval to council next week and action planning will follow. I will keep you in touch with developments as one of your local councillors and as leader of the West Oxfordshire District Council, your council.

An exciting future awaits.

Regards

Cllr.Andy Graham

