

BLEWBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held via an e-conference system on Wednesday 11th November 2020 at 7.30pm.

In attendance: - Cllrs C Lakeland (Chair/CL), M Penington (MP), V Humphries (VH), P Kilroe (PK), J Gibson (JG), M Blythe (MB), M Jacobs (MJ). E Cooper (Clerk/EC), D Hollick (Lengthman (DH), County Cllr M Fox-Davies, District Cllr H Gascoigne

1. Apologies for absence
None.
2. Declarations of interests relating to this meeting
None.
3. County Councillors report (see Appendix B below)
VH raised the poor state of the road surface on the B4016 through Hagbourne.
New 94 bus route from 1 January 2021– subsequently confirmed that this covers weekdays and weekends.
4. District Councillors report (see Appendix C below)
MJ asked if there were any climate change grants available, particularly to improve the sustainability of village venues. It was agreed that the council will investigate available grants to inform future decisions.
5. Lengthman’s report (see Appendix A below)
DH to check the basket swing post for signs of deterioration.
6. Open Forum
Representations from members of the public if present.
None present.
7. Approve previous minutes
Minutes of the BPC meetings 14th October 2020
Council agreed to approve as a true record of the meeting.
8. Outstanding Actions from previous meetings and any matters arising

No.	Actions from this meeting	When By
1.	MS to chase SCS re quote for Coffin Way repairs	December
2.	MP to speak to contact re use of footpath 19.	December
3.	DH to check basket swing post at TFF	ASAP
4.	EC to send thank you letter re Savages donation.	Actioned
6.	JG to ensure included in bulletin update	December
7.	MJ to finalise spraying signalling system with Beeswax contact	December
8.	CL to check and update village emergency plan with particular reference to the pandemic	December
9.	LI to engage Cob Wall contractor & speak to Graham Close representative regarding damage to wall.	December

10.	PK to investigate the history around the siting of the war memorial.	December
11.	VH to include information on shopping vouchers on FB JG to include in Bulletin update	December
12.	All to consider ways of increasing information to the village.	December

9. Planning Consultations & Other Planning Matters

9.1 Planning committee report

As per responses below.

9.2 Update on the Council's response to Planning for the Future white paper

LI said BPC response had been copied to local MP. Also drew the council's attention to the Vale's comprehensive response to the paper.

9.3 Ratify council responses to planning consultations

9.3.1 P20/V2270/HH Amendment no. 1, 3 Chailey Gardens, Blewbury

Two storey rear extension, conversion of part of garage in to habitable room, insertion of new window to side elevation of main house & internal alterations.

Deadline 5.11.20. BPC majority no objections.

9.3.2 P20/V2513/HH The Old Mill, Berry Lane, Blewbury

Installation of a swimming pool, summerhouse and structure to house pump.

Deadline 04.11.20. BPC majority no objections, 1 declaration of interest.

9.3.3 P20/V2583/HH Humfreys, London Road, Blewbury

Single storey extension including link to the outbuilding plus internal alterations.

Deadline 11.11.20. BPC majority no objections.

9.3.4 P20/V2584/LB Humfreys, London Road, Blewbury

As 9.2.3. Deadline 11.11.20. BPC majority no objections.

9.3.5 P20/V2640/HH 3 Berry Lane, Blewbury

Amendments to rear hipped portions of roof to convert to gable.

Deadline 18.11.20. BPC majority no objections.

9.4 Planning permissions received during the month

None received.

10. Finance & Administration

10.1 Updates on contributions planned expenditure (S106, CIL, CPF, SBRR)

Council agreed the following: -

SBRR spend for clubhouse.

CIL can be spent on Cob Wall repairs.

It was noted that CIL can be used in conjunction with S106 under the proposed new guidelines but the rules of spend remain the same for the S106 money i.e. relevant to the particular agreement.

Other suggested areas for spend: - Cemetery footpaths, alternative surface for TFF car park, Coffin Way repairs, potential relocation of war memorial, refreshing KAP play area.

10.2 Update on Lloyds Bank

Bank charges October 2020 £6.50. EC confirmed that Lloyds Bank had agreed to refund September & October charges.

Lloyds Bank also confirmed situation with signatory card reader & this was resolved with LI.

10.3 Approve end of month reconciliations for Lloyds & Barclays banks

Sent in advance of the meeting to the Chairman. To be physically signed at a later date.

10.4 Approve payments to be made under ancillary powers and within budgeted amounts

Council agreed to the inclusion of an invoice for Whitehorse Horticulture for £200 for payment.

PAYEE	Description / Power to spend	Amount
E Cooper / D Hollick	Clerk & Lengthman's salary and expenses for October (LGA1972 s112(2))	£1,584.98
NEST	Clerk's pension DD October (LGPSR2013 (SI2013/2356))	£71.33
HMRC	PAYE Clerk & Lengthman payment October (LGA1972 s112(2))	£250.03
Biffa Waste Services Ltd	Waste services DD October (LGA1972 s137)	£88.13
BT	Clubhouse line rental DD October (LGA1972 s137)	£35.04
Andrew Moxon	Clubhouse decorating. Paid to be ratified. (LGA1972 s137)	£540.00
SSE	Scout Hut Electricity (LGA1972 s137)	£71.62
Total		£2,841.13

Major Receipts	Description	Amount
09.10.20	Memorial	£75.00
09.10.20	Allotment rents	£510.00
22.10.20	Savages donation	£300.00
29.10.20	VoWH CIL Payment	£11,141.12
Total		£12,026.12

Barclays Bank Payments	Description	Amount
28.10.20	Ridge and Partners 'Our time charge fee for professional services when managing the Loss and Expense and Extension of Time claim submitted by MD Group during the refurbishment of Blewbury Village Hall as per client approval dated 22.09.2020. 15 hours expended to date charged at £75 per hour.'	£1,350.00
Total		£1,350.00

10.5 Agree any amendments to the following Council documents: -

10.5.1 Ratify Risk Management Document (issued 05.11.20)

Council unanimously agreed to the ratification of this document.

11. Update on the Village Hall Refurbishment

CL confirmed that all work is nearing completion. Drainage work is currently being carried out in the car park. The VHEMC is awaiting hand over documents and a final invoice from MD Group. The hall will not open before the New Year and this will be subject to government guidelines in place at that time.

12. Recreation Ground / Clubhouse

12.1 Transition of Clubhouse management from CIC to the Parish Council

The council now has control of all aspects of the clubhouse & continues to arrange outstanding Repairs (Velux windows / heating). As with the village hall, this venue will not open before the New Year and will be subject to government guidelines in place at that time.

12.2 Update from the Clubhouse Working Group

As above.

12.3 Update on the Ticklers Folly Field recreation ground and car park

None other than Lengthman's report.

13. Risk Management – no updates

13.1 Update on village play spaces (TFF / KAP) relating to risk

13.2 Any other updates on Management of Risk

13.3 Update on Compliance

14. Update on any issues relating to the Environment

14.1 Update from Sustainable Blewbury

14.1.1 Spraying

MJ reported on a discussion with Beeswax re prior notification of spraying. Warning notices are difficult to implement as spraying is weather dependent. A signalling system between walkers and sprayers was suggested, where walkers gain the sprayers attention and the sprayer will stop until the walkers have passed. MJ to pursue with Beeswax contact & to provide an article for the Bulletin to inform the village.

14.1.2 Hedge Laying

Sustainable Blewbury are looking at hedge laying on the allotments.

14.1.3 Old Sewerage Works site

Thames Water are considering hedging off this area and creating a nature reserve.

14.1.4 Blewbury Climate Action Group

Would like more young people to become involved. Please contact BVS via Facebook.

14.1.5 Garden Market & Apple Juicing

Both went ahead this year with restrictions.

14.1.6 Blewbury Nature Walk

In development.

14.2 Update on the OGB & ONPA

LI reported a meeting of the Oxford/Cambridge Arc on Tuesday 17.11.20.

14.3 Requirements of a Winter Resilience and Emergency Plan(s)

CL to look at the existing plan over the next month with a view to inclusion of pandemic response actions, if necessary.

15. Update on any issues relating to Footways, Footpaths, rights of way and open spaces

15.1 Update on Coffin Way / Cycle Path, including temporary repairs

MS to provide contact details to MB re Frog Alley footpath and Drew land ownership.

15.2 Update from the Cobb Wall Committee

LI reported on current condition of Cob Wall and the need for some repairs. Funds confirmed as available. LI to engage contractor & speak to Graham Close representative regarding damage to wall.

15.3 Update on any other issues relating to the above

15.3.1 Agree in principle to exploring the re-siting of the War Memorial

16. Update on any issues relating to roads, road safety and public transport

16.1 Conditions of local roads and decide on any course of action

No update.

16.2 Update on the Blewbury Speed Watch group

Deferred until further notice.

16.3 CL confirmed details of the 94-bus route effective 1 January 2021.

17. Correspondence – To consider items circulated/requiring a reply/consultation

Following on from information supplied by the District Council in relation to C-19, VH to include information on supermarket shopping vouchers on Facebook and JG to include in Bulletin update.

Councillors to consider ways of increasing information to the village.

18. Dates of the next meeting of the Council

Full council meeting Wednesday 9th December at 7.30pm via an e-conference system.

Financial Committee meeting Wednesday 16th December at 6pm via an e-conference system.

The meeting finished at 9.05pm.

Appendix A

LENGTHMAN'S REPORT - OCTOBER 2020

Much quieter month for grass cutting, probably only one more cut this year with luck.

All hedges now cut and bonfire on the TFF burned and cleared of ash.

TFF car park is potholing again but there is not much we can do. Just have to live with it by filling with spare aggregate.

Play areas are being well used. There is some matting wear at the TFF area. Something to look at next year perhaps.

We have had to replace the Honda Strimmer this month as the old one had broken and repairs were not cost effective on an eight year old piece of equipment.

All other equipment is in good order.

Footpaths, Recreation ground and TFF all good.

No problems with buildings.

David

Appendix B

REPORT BLEWBURY PARISH COUNCIL NOVEMBER 2020

FROM CLLR MIKE FOX-DAVIES

Oxfordshire update

As I am sure everyone is now aware, a four-week national lockdown has been introduced for England. This move comes in the wake of rapidly rising infection levels across the country and a significant rise in hospital admissions. More information on the national restrictions and what it means can be found on the government's website. Councillor Ian Hudspeth, Leader of Oxfordshire County Council, has joined the five other leaders of Oxfordshire councils, the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner, and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership to urge everyone to play their part to help control the spread of the virus and save lives.

What are the new restrictions?

- People must stay at home unless they have a specific reason to leave, such as education, childcare, and work which cannot be done from home.
 - Pubs, restaurants, and non-essential shops and businesses will have to close, although hospitality venues can continue to provide takeaway and delivery services.
 - Schools, colleges, universities and early years settings can remain open.
 - People must not meet socially indoors or in a private garden with family or friends who are not part of their household or support bubble.
 - People should reduce the number of journeys they make and avoid all but essential travel.
 - People are allowed to exercise outdoors or visit an outdoor public place with members of their household or support bubble.
 - A maximum of two people from different households – excluding children under school age – are allowed to meet outdoors for the purpose of exercise or to visit an outdoor public place.
- Detailed information about the new restrictions is available on the gov.uk website.

What public services will remain open?

Under the new national restrictions, a greater number of public services can remain open than under the previous lockdown. This includes schools, colleges, and early years settings; household waste recycling centres; and registrar's offices. Public outdoor spaces including parks, gardens and playgrounds will remain open. Outdoor markets will also be able to continue, although trade will be limited to food and other essential items. The overwhelming majority of Oxfordshire County Council's services will still be delivered without interruption. We will continue to provide care and support to vulnerable residents through home visits and our community support services; and our formally organised support groups that provide mutual aid or therapy will continue, with a maximum of 15 participants. Our registration services will continue to provide birth registration and notices face to face in COVID-secure offices, while death registration will continue by phone. However, weddings and civil partnerships will be paused, in line with national guidance. The music service will continue to offer face-to-face tuition in schools. All lessons outside of school settings will move to online delivery, including all our ensembles. The Oxfordshire Comet bus service is with immediate effect only providing transport for essential journeys for shopping once a week or for medical appointments for individuals that have pre-booked. All group bookings and timetabled services are suspended.

What will temporarily close?

The government has confirmed that entertainment venues, including museums and galleries, must temporarily close. This means that the Oxfordshire Museum and the Oxfordshire History Centre have closed until 2 December. Libraries have also closed, although the home library service will continue to operate, as will the online library service. A potential new click-and-collect service is being investigated for the libraries, together with limited access to public network PCs across a small number of branches. All OCC staff have been asked to work from home if at all possible and it is only in exceptional circumstances that they should go into the office. Staff working in frontline services will continue to do so in line with the COVID-compliance measures.

Support for extremely vulnerable people and self-isolating residents

The over 60s and the clinically vulnerable people have been recommended by the government to minimise their contacts with others during the lockdown period. Those who are clinically extremely vulnerable are encouraged to stay at home as much as possible, including working from home. If anyone in your division has received a letter from the government about receiving additional support, they have been identified as being extremely vulnerable. In order to benefit from this support, they need to register themselves on the national system if they have not already done so. If they require additional support their district council will be informed and will make contact with them to identify their needs in more detail. If they need urgent support then they can contact their district council directly. If residents do not have the means to register and have no one who is able to assist, they can call us on the number below.

☐ Call 01865 897820

☐ Email shield@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

☐ The service is open 8.30am - 5pm Monday – Thursday, and 8.30am - 4pm on Fridays. Closed Saturday - Sunday and Bank Holidays

This guidance will not affect any social care or support they are receiving. People should continue to contact our social and health care team if they have any ongoing social care needs. Comprehensive information is on our website, including how to access community support, food and essential supplies and income and employment support. Wider information about the support available for residents during the pandemic is also on our website.

#StopTheSpread

We continue to work closely with our partners in health, the district councils, police and the universities to issue extended #StopTheSpread communications, including urging people to follow the new restrictions, communicating the symptoms and ensuring understanding and reminding children and young people they must wear face coverings on school transport.

Pandemic won't stop Oxfordshire's roads from being gritted

As temperatures start to dip, the county council's winter weather response springs into action, becoming one of our key frontline services that keeps almost half of the roads across Oxfordshire free as possible from winter hazards. The pandemic will not stop our efforts – we are ready to go. This year we have trained 15 extra drivers, will have 25 gritter lorries on the road at any one time, and will use approximately 220 tonnes of salt per treatment. For more information about our winter service, please read our news story.

Hand it back campaign

As part of our joint 'hand it back campaign' with Oxford Health, Oxford University Hospitals and supplier NRS Healthcare, please encourage residents in your division to return any unused health and social care equipment loaned to them so others can take advantage of it. Worldwide manufacturing of items including

bed rails, pendent alarm equipment/sensors (telecare) and mattresses has slowed because of the pandemic, meaning new ones may be harder to come by. The pieces of unused equipment being sought are:

- chairs, beds, bed rails and mattresses
- wheeled commodes
- any electrical items
- walking and toilet frames
- pendent alarm equipment/sensors (Telecare)
- slings.

Anybody wanting to give back equipment can arrange a collection by calling NRS Healthcare on 01869 225420 or by sending their details to enquiries@oxfordshire.nrsuk.net.

All items for return must have a barcoded NRS or Millbrook sticker on them. Because of the pandemic, all items can be collected by NRS Healthcare or taken to the Bicester depot. People must not take any items back to health or social care buildings.

Appendix C

Coronavirus Update and Community Support

Councils providing vital community and business support through the second lockdown

The new national lockdown restrictions, in place from 5 November to 2 December mean:

- You must work from home if you can
- You should not socialise with people who are not from your household, indoors.
- You may only meet with one person from another household and must stay outdoors
- All non-essential shops to close, but may offer click and collect or delivery services.
- Food stores, supermarkets and pharmacies will stay open
- Hospitality businesses to close, but may offer take-away deliveries or click and collect (excluding alcohol)
- Gyms, leisure centres and leisure venues like cinemas and museums to close
- Schools, colleges and universities remain open

The council is very aware that the winter lockdown will be tough on some of our residents and businesses, but we're here for anybody who urgently needs our help.

The councils' Community Hub, which has been up and running since the first lockdown in March, is on hand to answer calls and emails from people struggling to access support and essentials during the lockdown and have nobody else to turn to. The Community Hub can put people who need help getting essentials in contact with community groups and volunteers providing doorstep support in their neighbourhoods. The councils also have some practical support available for eligible people facing financial hardship as a result of the pandemic.

This helps provide a vital lifeline to a way to access basics like food and prescriptions for those who are vulnerable or isolated, as well as a friendly voice at the end of the phone for those who need it. The message to anybody who is unsure if they need help, or if they're unsure if the councils can help, is *if in doubt, get in touch!* It can sometimes take a day or two for support to reach people, so anybody who thinks they'll be in need should not wait until they've run out of supplies before getting in touch.

To contact the Community Support Team:

call: 01235 422 600 Monday to Thursday 8.30-5pm and Fridays 8.30-4.30pm

email: communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk

fill in an online form at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/communityhub

Remember, for the most up-to-date coronavirus information relating to district council support and any changes to services, please take a look at the dedicated Vale webpage for updates: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/covid19

Business Support: the councils also provide a local support service for businesses in the districts worried about the impact the lockdown will have on their operations, providing helpful guidance and pointing them in the direction of the support that is available – see svbs.co.uk.

District council services: for the time being, the majority of our public-facing services are operating as normal. We will let you know if anything changes in the coming weeks. Regardless, the best way for people to access our services now, throughout the lockdown and beyond, is via our websites, which are also the best place to get the most up to date information on the pandemic and any impact it is having on our services: whitehorsedc.gov.uk. The council

offices on Milton Park remain closed to the public, as they have been since March. Gyms and leisure centres are closed to the public (for more formation go to the Better UK website - [better.org.uk](https://www.better.org.uk)), as are all community centres.

Financial Support

Emergency Assistance Grants

Funding for community groups

Since launching on 1 September, we have allocated more than £42,000 in Emergency Assistance Grant funding to ten local charities and community organisations in the Vale that have been delivering essential services to vulnerable residents impacted by Covid-19. This grant is now closed for applications.

Supermarket vouchers for individuals and families

We have also provided supermarket vouchers worth £2,500 to help support 16 families and ten individuals who have been experiencing financial hardship. We still have more than £26,000 left for this fund. If you come across someone or a family struggling to afford food or other essential supplies, please put them in touch with Citizens Advice or Wantage Independent Advice Centre. They will look to provide them with a package of advice and support to help them in the longer term, and for those who meet the eligibility criteria in urgent need, they may be able to provide a supermarket voucher to help in the immediate short term.

- Citizens Advice – 0300 3309042 (South and Vale)
- Wantage Independent Advice Centre – 01235 765348 (Vale)

There is lots of other help for anyone struggling as a result of Covid and our own [Community Hub](#) can also signpost people to a variety of organisations that can help with any ongoing support that might be needed. There's also the [Oxfordshire All In](#) website which has a great interactive map of the food larders and food banks available in the area.

Self-isolation grants available for those who can't work

Support grants of £500 are available for people on lower incomes who have been told to self-isolate by NHS Track and Trace, and as a result can't work and have lost income. We are managing the application process for the grants. Further information about it is on our website [here](#).

Call for Government to help ease funding pressures

Oxfordshire councils have written a [joint letter](#) to Robert Jenrick MP – Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, calling on the Government for better financial support – not only for their continued Coronavirus response, which will become more significant and expensive in light of the second lockdown announcement, but also to ensure there is enough funding to provide day-to-day services for communities in the longer term.

Business Support

Business Grants

Businesses that need help and guidance should continue to visit the South and Vale Business Support website svbs.co.uk.

The council has not yet received the full details on the government's next business grant funding scheme, but we do know that it will be providing all councils with funding so grants worth up to £3,000 per month can be distributed to business premises forced to close due to the restrictions. Businesses required to close in England due to local or national restrictions will be eligible for the following:

- For properties with a rateable value of £15,000 or under, grants of £1,334 per four weeks
- For properties with a rateable value of over £15,000 and below £51,000, grants of £2,000 per four weeks
- For properties with a rateable value of £51,000 or over grants of £3,000 per four weeks.

More detail on this will be provided as soon as the administration process has been confirmed.

Local News

Rail travel during lockdown

GWR have confirmed that they will not be making any changes to their current timetable during the national lockdown. This means that all school and college services, as well as those taking people to and from work will be operational. For more details please see [GWR's website](#).

Projects moving forward for Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board

Members of the Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board met last week to hear about the latest developments for

Didcot Gateway and other key initiatives around the town. You can watch the meeting in full via <https://youtu.be/QfXTrFSOKGo>. The board were updated on the district councils' plan to build their new offices at Didcot Gateway, which will be located opposite the railway station. During the meeting Homes England's proposal and online community engagement, which took place during this summer, to redevelop the Gateway area was discussed. The district councils are pleased to be working with Homes England to ensure the new councils' offices provide an important part of the overall sustainable redevelopment of the site.

Members were updated on a range of initiatives, including plans for a new health centre and a county council led project to improve roads and cycle paths for the wider garden town area. The board obtained feedback from councillors who had attended the first meeting of the Parish Council Sounding Board. The virtual session was chaired by Cllr Ian Hudspeth and was attended by eight parish councillors from the garden town's surrounding villages. Their views on housing quality, maintaining green buffers between town and villages, transport links and infrastructure plans for residents living in more rural areas will be used to inform projects which will benefit the area.

The Didcot Garden Town team will be engaging with local residents and businesses, through resident and business led Sounding Boards, which will provide further information on the projects with the opportunity to feedback on the new proposals. If you'd like to hear more about the latest developments in Didcot Garden Town or are interested in joining one of the resident or business sounding boards, you can sign up to the [latest newsletter here](#).

Climate and Environment

Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme

We're looking into applying for government funding that could help make some of our buildings across both districts more energy efficient. The recently announced Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme focuses on low-carbon heating and improvements to help reduce energy consumption like insulation, glazing and ventilation.

The scheme offers grants to finance up to 100 per cent of the costs of capital energy-saving projects for non-domestic public sector buildings. It could provide very welcome resources to help both councils meet their own Climate Emergency targets. The timescales for applying for the funding are tight, with bids required by 11 January 2021 and we're now looking into putting forward bids for a priority list of sites for both councils.

This work will involve input from a number of different teams, including Property and Active Communities and will link into other work going on like the Strategic Property Review. We will keep you up to date with progress on this exciting initiative. Parish councils are also eligible to apply to this scheme.

Tree Planting Guide introduced by Climate Emergency Advisory Committee

As suggested by the Vale's Climate Emergency Advisory Committee, the council's Specialist Planning team have created a handy [Tree Planting Guide for Community Groups](#). This can be found on the following dedicated webpage, alongside useful advice on Tree Protection Orders: <https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/vale-of-white-horse-districtcouncil/planning-and-development/wildlife-trees-and-landscape/trees/>

Council Matters

Full council

At a Special Meeting of Council on 22nd October, the Vale's new Corporate Plan was considered and formally adopted. The Corporate Plan sets out the strategy and overarching projects for the Council, so councillors welcomed the incorporation of targets to address the climate emergency and to build healthy communities. The minutes of the meeting, including reports on the Corporate Plan, can be found here:

<http://democratic.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=108&MIId=2822>

Planning

Councils raise objections to Government's proposed reforms to the planning system

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have written separate letters to Robert Jenrick objecting to many of the Government's proposed reforms to the current planning system. The Government's proposed changes were outlined in the [Planning for the Future white paper](#). You can read our full response here: [Vale letter](#)

Oxford to Cambridge Arc prospectus

The Oxford to Cambridge Arc is a strategic area incorporating the ceremonial county areas of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. The Arc Leaders Group is a body comprising most of the local authorities, local enterprise partnerships and universities from across the Arc.

On 17 November the key figures behind Oxfordshire-Cambridge Arc are hosting a virtual event to launch [the Arc Economic Prospectus](#) and to give people a chance to find out more about the what it means for the region.

The event takes place online from midday until 1.30pm and is the first in a series which will explore different aspects of the Arc's development, including how it intends to unlock investment, promote world-class research and drive innovation-led growth. To find out more and to register please visit the event's [the event's webinar page](#).

Parking Policy Consultation

Your chance to comment on proposed changes to off-street parking in the Vale

People in the Vale of White Horse have the chance to comment on some proposed changes to parking arrangements in the district council's off street car parks. Over the summer Vale of White Horse District Council's Cabinet agreed to amend the district's parking policy, including measures to encourage the use of electric vehicles in order help tackle the climate emergency, and changes to parking in Rye Farm and Hales Meadow car parks in Abingdon.

The council is now giving people the chance to have their say before the new parking policy is finalised early in 2021. The council will also seek comments from statutory consultees such as the Police, the highways authority and town and parish councils.

The following changes are being proposed:

- Additional parking for electric vehicles and powers to issue fines for parking non-electric vehicles in electric charging bays, or for leaving an electric vehicle in the bay when it's not charging
- removing the parking for lorries in the Rye Farm car park, Abingdon and creating more spaces for smaller vehicles
- formalising the parking bays in Hales Meadow car park, Abingdon for coaches and campervans

To find about more about the proposals and to take part in the consultation please visit www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/parking. The consultation is open until Thursday 19 November.

UK terror threat level

We've been advised by Thames Valley Police that, as precautionary measure following recent events in France and Austria, the UK's terror threat level has been changed from Substantial to Severe. There is no specific intelligence to suggest any threat to our communities at this time, but Thames Valley Police has said that it means we should all be more vigilant.