



Milcombe Parish Council <milcombec@gmail.com>

District Councillor's Written Report for PC meeting of 18th April (Annual Parish Meeting)

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Hi Theresa

As I have already said my good-byes, I will not be attending the Annual Parish Meeting on 18th April, nor the Parish Council meeting on 2nd May (as there will be no new business to report)

Before I report on Council business, could I just say what a great honour, and pleasure, it has been to represent **Milcombe** at CDC over the past 7 years. Unless one is involved in it, there is no reason why anyone should appreciate how varied (and busy) is the life of a Councillor, and that goes for Parish Councillors as well. Many people seem to believe (and why wouldn't they?) that it is a full-time, well-remunerated job akin to that of an MP. In fact, it is neither (not officially full-time, anyway) but it is, in many ways, far more rewarding. While our Lords and Masters, in Westminster, pontificate and prevaricate over great (and not so great) Affairs of State, all of us in Local Government (inc. Parish Councils) set ourselves the more modest, but in many ways more important, task of helping, and guiding, our communities to thrive while striving to keep what is "special" about them special. Every Village has its own unique characteristics and while "progress" (this word has many interpretations) is inevitable we all have a desire to protect those aspects of our communities which drew us to live there in the first place. This has been an especial challenge in Cherwell where the "pressure to build" has been relentless but now that we are above the 5-year Housing Land Supply, for the time being at least, I detect a renewed determination at Planning Committee to push back on the more egregious proposals. I trust that my successor, as your District Councillor, will continue to uphold the interests of **Milcombe** for the benefit of all parishioners. Thanks to you and all Parish Councillors for your tremendous support over the past 7 years.

Since I last reported on 28th Feb, for the PC meeting of 7th March, there has been 1 meeting of the Executive (3rd April) and 0 meetings of Full Council. As we approach the end of the Civic Year (and elections) there is no meeting of the Executive in May, with the next one scheduled for 5th June. The next meeting of Full Council is scheduled for 17th May, and that is Annual Council, where traditionally no business, as such, is transacted (unless urgent) and the main purpose of the meeting is to confirm membership of Committees

Executive, 3rd April

- **Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Actions Plan** - The Route Map and Action Plan is a high level document, which brings the work of the county's local authorities together, with the ambition for Oxfordshire to become carbon net zero by 2050. During the last few years, CDC has taken a very proactive role in responding to the climate emergency, both in supporting carbon reductions in its own emissions, whilst also supporting the district to do the same, e.g. through the Park & Charge scheme, resulting in EV charging points in our public car parks. The Action Plan and Route Map builds on this recent work, giving additional focus to how to support the district in its journey to becoming net zero. Five high-level Route Maps have been produced to deconstruct the often-distant 2050 net zero target into clear and tangible intermediate goals aligned to milestones at 2025, 2030, 2040 and 2050. These include four sectoral Route Maps (based on the highest emitting sectors explored within the net zero pathway modelling) and one overarching decarbonisation Route Map which provides an overview of Oxfordshire's interim targets.

The Action Plan provides direction and specific steps on how key interim emission milestones can be achieved, thereby maintaining progress towards the wider net zero goal. The Action Plan indicates that the transport sector is responsible for 42% of the county's emissions, housing for 26% and businesses 27%. The Action Plan consists of a portfolio of 14 actions, ranging from actions that will deliver measurable results over the short-term to empower and demonstrate success, and others that will span across multi-year programmes; the actions cover Building Decarbonisation; Net Zero Carbon Energy Systems Programme; Decarbonisation of Transport; Circular Economy; Nature Recovery and Carbon Sequestration. The key focus of the Action Plan is to support accelerated measures towards decarbonisation, with a specific focus on the priorities for the next three to five years. Securing the appropriate funding to execute the priority actions is an integral part of Oxfordshire's net zero journey, with finance acting as either a key enabler or barrier to success. Whilst a fundamental component, finance is historically difficult to secure. It requires ongoing attention, critically taking forward the enabling action to identify innovative approaches to sit alongside conventional funding sources (including grants from national government and the allocation of local authority budgets). An innovative approach to delivering the actions will be needed. This includes sourcing and accessing alternative funding opportunities, supporting and bringing inventive technology into the mainstream, and encouraging communities to adopt novel solutions to local problems.

- Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plans** - The Equality Act 2010 requires all public bodies including councils to take extra steps to stop discrimination. This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty. The duty means having to consider equality as part of our daily business and sets out specific requirements for achieving this, which are to: (i) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, (iii) Foster good relationships between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not, (iv) Set and publish equality objectives at least every four years and, (v) Publish information at least annually, to show how we comply with the Equality Duty including information about employees and to people who are affected by our policies and procedures. In 2020, the council agreed an equalities framework, 'Including Everyone', which was co-produced with Oxfordshire County Council. This framework was to capture the councils' statutory obligations but also their commitments to going beyond what the law expects, to deliver inclusive communities, services and an inclusive workplace. Earlier this year, the Executive agreed to refresh the action plan that underpinned the framework to reflect Cherwell as a standalone council and also the significant progress that has been made since it was developed. The action plan is split into 3 streams – (i) Inclusive Communities Action Plan, eg: work directly with communities to identify inequality and tackle disadvantage, (ii) Inclusive Services Action Plan, eg: ensure all Council services, inc. digital, are accessible, (iii) Inclusive Workplaces Action Plan, eg: improve diversity within CDC. For more details on the progress to date for each of the 3 streams click on: <https://modgov.cherwell.gov.uk/documents/g3672/Public%20reports%20pack%20Monday%2003-Apr-2023%2018.30%20Executive.pdf?T=10> and scroll to pages 125-135.

- Integrated Care Board (ICB) 5-year Strategic Plan Update** - This has been a year of significant change in the local Health system. From July 2022 new organisations and partnerships were created and the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group ("the CCG") ceased to exist. The Integrated Care Board ("the ICB") was formulated. This is the new NHS body that receives funds from NHS England and plans and buys services for West Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire ("BOB"). The purpose of the strategy is to set the direction for the system, outlining how local authorities and the ICB, working with other partners, will meet the needs of our population and deliver more joined-up, preventative and person-centred care for people across the course of their lives. The vision for the BOB ICB is "for everyone who lives in Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West to have the best possible start in life, to live happier, healthier, longer lives, and to be able to access the right support when it is needed". Integrated Care Partnerships ("the ICP") are currently being developed to sit beneath the ICB. The ICPs are joint committees of the local authorities and the NHS, with each county having an ICP. The ICP will be responsible for the implementation of the Integrated Care Strategy. The Oxfordshire ICP Director is Dan Leveson.

Best Regards

Hugo

Hugo Brown

Ward Councillor for Deddington, Cherwell District Council

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