

Title	County Councillor's Report
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Parish	Chinnor Parish Council
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SEND Improvement:

Steps are being taken to improve the support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). A priority action plan has been developed by organisations involved in the delivery of SEND services, including Oxfordshire County Council and the NHS, along with the county's parent carer forum. The plan will need to be approved by Ofsted. An Improvement Board meeting will take place in November.

Buses:

In December in the run up to Christmas, single fares in Oxfordshire will be capped at £1.

OCC Budget 2024-2025:

Cabinet agreed an approach to setting the 2024/5 budget. Continued inflation and demand pressures (particularly in SEND and adult care) mean the council is currently forecasting £30-40 million in additional costs in 2024/5.

The council's financial strategy includes a 4.99% rise in council tax for 2024/5 with 2% ring fenced for adult social care. Details of the proposals will be published in November.

Oxfordshire tops table for county councils tackling climate change:

Oxfordshire was rated the best performing county council in the UK on climate change by the Climate Emergency UK climate action scorecard.

Reducing disruption caused by utilities & developers:

The County's new plan for charging an increased daily fee of £2500 (instead of the £300 fixed fee) to utility companies that dig up major roads is being consulted on. By law it is restricted to 5% of Oxfordshire's roads and so will focus on busy, critical parts of the network. Surplus funds will be reinvested. The DfT is encouraging all councils to adopt schemes like this.

Homes Upgrade Grants:

Money is available for off-gas grid homes to improve energy efficiency (including solar). To qualify a resident (renter or owner-occupier) must live in a home rated EPC D or lower, and have a household income of less than £39,000

Empty properties for Ukrainians

People with vacant properties are encouraged to consider letting them to Ukrainian refugees. People with suitable properties will receive, one month rent in advance, a security

deposit payment; and a £1,000 thank you payment. Contact:

oxfordshirehousingcapacity@southandvale.gov.uk

*****GRANTS AND COST OF LIVING*****

Councillor Priority Fund

Applications to the Councillor Priority Fund are still open. This is a fund of £15,000 to be used over two years on projects in Thame, Chinnor, Tetsworth and surrounding villages

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/community-and-living/thriving-communities/councillor-priority-fund>

Hardship fund: OCC's hardship fund (Resident Support Scheme) was launched in June.
Phone: 01865 804171

Home Upgrade Grants: OCC & its partner AgilityEco is reaching out directly to households who will qualify to benefit from Home Upgrade Grants (to improve energy efficiency for 'off-grid' homes)

Community Capacity Grants: The Community Capacity Fund will open for grant applications from 6th September. Grants of between £5,000 and £20,000 are funded by OCC and applications processed by Oxfordshire Community Foundation. Grants are given to projects that "support people to live well in their community, remaining fit and healthy for as long as possible"

Chinnor Library

Chinnor Library will be fully refurbished in early 2024 thanks to s106 developers' funds with some additional contributions from Oxfordshire County Council Decarbonisation and Facilities Management budgets