

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

Policy Bulletin

July 2014



Where key elements of legislation, government bills, recently enacted legislation, news etc. are not noted, the information can be found in previous ORCC policy bulletins.

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Recently Enacted Legislation

Care Act

A Bill to reform the law relating to care and support for adults and the law relating to support for carers, to make provision about safeguarding adults from abuse or neglect, to make provision about care standards, to establish and make provision about Health Education England, to establish and make provision about the Health Research Authority, and for connected purposes: [Care Bill 2013-14](#)

Links:

- All Care Bill documents: *see link above*

Current Stage:

- Royal Assent granted May 2014

Government Bills/ Regulations/ White Papers

Open Public Services

Open Public Services (OPS) is the government's reform programme for public services. We work with people across government, local government, the private sector and civil society to make sure that everyone has access to the best possible public services.

Cabinet Office, [Open Public Services](#).

Links:

- Open Public Services, [all documents relating to choice and opening up public services](#)
- Open Public Services, [2014 Progress Report](#). The report explores the following themes:
 - Increasing choice and control to deliver personalised services tailored to an individual service user's unique needs
 - Allowing local decision-making and decentralising power to the lowest appropriate level by empowering neighbourhoods and communities
 - Opening up public services to a range of providers through top class commissioning, social investment innovations and challenging the public sector to innovate in their business models
 - Giving everyone fair access to public services
 - Making public service providers accountable to users and taxpayers for the quality of service and the outcomes they achieve

High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Bill 2013-14

On 25 November 2013 the Government published the High Speed Rail (London-West Midlands) Bill. The Bill confers the powers required to construct phase 1 of the proposed HS2 scheme from London Euston to Birmingham Curzon Street with intermediate stations in West London (Old Oak Common) and at Birmingham Airport. It provides for a connection to the existing rail link to the Channel Tunnel (HS1) but not to Heathrow Airport: [High Speed Rail \(London - West Midlands\) Bill 2013-14](#)

Current Stage:

- Committee Stage House of Commons, 2/7/14

Links:

- Bill documents, *see link above*
- [High Speed Rail \(London-West Midlands\) Bill 2013-14 - Commons Library Research Paper](#)
- [High Speed 2](#)
- [HS2 Action Alliance](#)

Latest comment:

[George Osborne calls for new Manchester to Leeds high-speed rail](#). Guardian, 23/6/14

George Osborne will show on Monday that he remains unbowed by the controversy over the first high-speed rail line north of London when he calls for another to be built between Manchester and Leeds to create a "northern powerhouse".

Latest News and Emerging Issues: National

Welfare Reform

Latest news:

[Welfare reform 'takes toll on poor', Citizens Advice Cymru claims.](#) BBC News, 8/7/14

Vulnerable people are being forced into hardship due to welfare reform, Citizens Advice Cymru has claimed. It was concerned at the mental and physical toll of benefit cuts and delays on people on low incomes. Benefit and tax credit changes now accounted for more than two-fifths of problems handled by its advice offices in Wales, a report said. The Department for Work and Pensions said its welfare reforms would make three million households better off. The report - One Day at a Time - is based on evidence from citizens' advice offices across Wales, as well as interviews carried out by Shelter Cymru about the effects of the UK government's welfare reforms.

[Labour pledges to 'pause' universal credit if elected in 2015.](#) BBC News, 22/6/14

Labour will "pause" the government's flagship welfare reform if it wins the next general election in 2015, shadow work and pensions secretary Rachel Reeves has said. Ms Reeves said her party supported the universal credit policy in principle, and hoped to "rescue" it. She said the Department for Work and Pensions had been in "chaos" under her opposite number, Iain Duncan Smith. Mr Duncan Smith said implementation of the project was now "working well". The universal credit system merges six working-age benefits - income-based jobseeker's allowance, income-related employment and support allowance, income support, child tax credit, working tax credit and housing benefit - into a single payment in a far-reaching change designed to encourage work and reduce fraud.

Latest News and Emerging Issues: Regional and Local

Local Development Frameworks/ Local Plans

West Oxfordshire District Council

The key findings and final report of the 2014 Strategic Market Housing Assessment (SHMA) for Oxfordshire have now been published. The key headline from the SHMA is an identified need for the provision of between 4678 – 5328 homes a year over the 2011-31 period.

Following publication of Oxfordshire’s new SHMA, West Oxfordshire District Council is announcing how it intends to move forward with its Local Plan. The SHMA suggests a significant increase in the number of new homes that are needed in West Oxfordshire in the future.

Whereas the draft Local Plan (which was based on the former Regional Plan) identified a target of 306 homes per year or 5,500 homes in total for West Oxfordshire, the SHMA suggests that a target in the order of 635 - 685 homes per annum is needed.

Cllr Warwick Robinson, West Oxfordshire District Council Cabinet Member for Planning said, “The SHMA is an important part of the evidence base for the Local Plan but does not of itself set the housing target. It does not take into account limitations on development which may be imposed as a result of environmental constraints or issues related to congestion and local infrastructure. These are also critical factors which need to be taken into account when setting a housing target having regard to how much development can be sustainably accommodated and where it should be located.”

The timetable for taking forward the Local Plan in light of the new SHMA is:

Date	Activity
July 2014	focused consultation on housing and other related matters
October 2014	publication of final draft plan (statutory 6-week period)
December 2014	submission of final draft plan to Planning Inspectorate
March 2015	independent examination
July 2015	adoption

West Oxfordshire District Council: [Next stages for West Oxfordshire’s Local Plan](#)

Links:

- WODC, [Draft Local Plan Pages](#)

Cherwell District Council

The proposed new Cherwell Local Plan (2006-2031) was submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for formal Examination on 31st January 2014. The Inspector's task is to consider the soundness of the submitted Local Plan, based on the criteria set out in paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework): [Cherwell Local Plan 2006-2031](#).

Links:

- All plan documentation available via link above

Latest news:

[Oxfordshire local plan examination hearings suspended over housing target concerns](#). **Planning Resource, 5/6/14**

Hearings on Cherwell District Council's local plan were due to continue this month, but inspector Nigel Payne this week said the authority's housing target may be too low and officers should re-examine the figures. Payne made his comments in the wake of the publication of a county-wide strategic housing market assessment (SHMA) that proposed a higher housing need figure than the plan's target. The local plan proposes the building of 16,750 homes by 2031, but the SHMA, published in March, said there was a housing need of 22,800 homes over this period. The council has confirmed that the examination hearings have been suspended but has yet to publish details as to why. Ian Kemp, the programme officer for the inquiry, said: "The inspector has suggested that Cherwell could accommodate a higher housing figure in line with the SHMA."

South Oxfordshire District Council

[SODC has launched a] consultation launched today on our Local Plan. Local plans contain policies that are used when determining planning applications, and identify key locations for where major new planned housing developments will take place. A new study of housing need in Oxfordshire has indicated that more housing is needed than we've planned for in our current local plan. We are therefore starting the process of preparing a new local plan, and want your views to help shape it. In this Issues and Scope consultation we ask what the plan should cover and explore some options for where the additional homes, jobs and infrastructure could go.

The following documents are available to view at council offices, all local libraries in South Oxfordshire and on-line at www.southoxon.gov.uk/newlocalplan

- South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 Issues and Scope

- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the Local Plan 2031 (this document proposes the sustainability appraisal framework against which options for the Local Plan will be tested to understand how sustainable each option is)

The consultation runs until **Wednesday 23 July 2014**. To respond we encourage you to fill in the online questionnaire on our website at www.southoxon.gov.uk/newlocalplan.

Email update from SODC Planning Policy, 11/6/14

Links:

- All plan documentation: [Local Plan: Sites and General Policies](#).

Vale of White Horse District Council

The Local Plan is a key planning policy document that will help us guide development decisions in the Vale until the year 2031. A consultation into an update to our Local Plan 2031 proposals has now closed. Our consultation is closed but you can still access our [consultation portal using this link](#). We will publish a timetable for when the responses will be available on the website once we have processed all of the responses.

Vale of White Horse, [the New Local Plan 2031](#)

Links:

- All plan documentation, *see link above*
- You can subscribe to Local Plan updates at: localplan@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Open Consultations: Regional and Local

Vale of White Horse- air quality action plan

Vale of White Horse District Council invites you to comment on a draft action plan which proposes measures for improving air quality across the district and in settlements where acceptable air pollution levels have been breached.

The consultation seeks your feedback on the measures proposed in the action plan. It also provides an opportunity for you to suggest other measures that could be taken to alleviate air pollution.

CONSULTATION ENDS 15 AUGUST

Links:

- [Consultation survey](#)

Cherwell District Council- customer satisfaction survey

Each year we undertake an annual customer satisfaction survey, it helps us to measure customer satisfaction with our services. It is also used to identify priorities for actions and for allocation of future resources.

This survey is open to all residents of Cherwell. Please take a few minutes to tell us what you think of Cherwell District Council services and the value for money we offer by completing the questionnaire. This survey is being run on our behalf by The SPA Future Thinking. Your responses will be confidential and used to inform service improvement and the development of our budgets.

CONSULTATION ENDS 11 JULY

Links:

- [2014 Satisfaction Survey](#)

Oxfordshire County Council- Local Transport Plan 4

To ensure that the county's transport systems are fit to support population and economic growth, we are developing a new Local Transport Plan. LTP4. This is an important statutory document. We are asking for your feedback on the proposed goals and objectives: these will form the basis of the LTP, which will be developed

over the next few months. Then there will be further consultation in 2015 on the draft LTP4 itself.

CONSULTATION ENDS 1 AUGUST

[OCC, Local Transport Plan](#)

Links:

- Consultation documentation- *see link above*
- [Online questionnaire](#)

Oxfordshire County Council- Draft local flood risk management strategy consultation
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Flooding has a significant impact on the people and economy of Oxfordshire. While it is not possible to prevent all possible local flooding, the relevant authorities, local communities and businesses can work together to reduce the risk and minimise the damage it can cause.

This consultation is to gather views on the draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Oxfordshire, which:

- Sets procedures for identifying the relative priorities of measures for reducing local flood risk (i.e. from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses such as rivers
- Establishes how to identify areas where a 'holistic approach' to flood risk management will achieve multiple benefits
- Establishes how to identify affordable measures for implementation to agreed time frames Facilitates engagement and consultation with the community and all our partners
- Encourages public awareness and self-help where appropriate

This strategy does not cover any emergency planning activities as a response to flooding and any effects of a flooding event such as the clean-up operation. Please take the time to read the draft strategy document and have your say.

CONSULTATION ENDS 19 SEPTEMBER

OCC, [Draft local flood risk management strategy consultation](#)

Links:

- Consultation documentation- *see link above*

Open Consultations: National

Protecting personal health and care data

The government wants to hear your views on proposals to strengthen controls and safeguards on the use of an individual's health and care data. People should be confident that their personal data is not open to misuse.

We propose allowing a number of local organisations, to create secure safe havens, that will have access under strong controls to information from peoples' personal care records which could be used to identify an individual. These safe havens will need to be accredited by the Secretary of State for Health.

The Health and Social Care Information Centre continues to be responsible for holding identifiable data at the national level. This work is separate from but complementary to the work on care data that NHS England is leading.

CONSULTATION ENDS 8 AUGUST

Links:

- [Consultation information](#)

Closed Consultations: Regional and Local

Oxfordshire County Council- Minerals and Waste Core Strategy

The County Council is reviewing the current planning policies for mineral working and waste management in Oxfordshire. We are preparing a new Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. This will provide planning strategies and policies to guide the development that will be needed for the supply of minerals and management of waste in Oxfordshire over the period to 2030, including where in the county mineral workings and waste management facilities should be located.

Consultation on Draft Plan

The Council has published the Draft Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Core Strategy for consultation. This sets out the Council's preferred approach to strategies and policies for minerals and waste, after the consideration of alternative options. We want to get as wide a response as possible to this consultation draft plan. This is an important opportunity to tell us your views on planning for minerals and waste development in Oxfordshire.

What we will do with Responses

The comments received in response to this consultation will be reported to the Council's Cabinet and the Full Council later in 2014. We will take all the comments received into consideration in the next stage of the plan process, which will be preparation of the pre-submission draft of the plan. We expect to publish this towards the end of 2014, providing a further opportunity for representations to be made.

The plan and the representations received will then be submitted to the Secretary of State in 2015, for independent examination by a government appointed inspector. We hope that the final plan will be adopted by the end of 2015.

The consultation has closed and the results will be published by **15 Jul 2014**.

Links:

- [All consultation documents](#)

Closed Consultations: National

Draft Transparency Code for Parish Councils

The [Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014](#) received Royal Assent on 30 January 2014. The Act sets out a new audit framework for local public authorities which are currently covered by the Audit Commission regime. Under this new framework, smaller authorities with an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000, including parish councils, will be exempt from routine external audit. Instead, these parish councils will be subject to the new transparency requirements laid out in the draft Code included in this consultation document.

This consultation asks questions on the content and application of a draft audit-substitute transparency code for parish councils. Specifically, the consultation requests feedback on:

- whether the code should be mandatory for parish councils with an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000
- whether parish meeting should be exempt from complying with the code
- whether authorities should publish the required information online
- how much additional staff time and cost will be involved for authorities in publishing the required data online

gov.uk, 10/3/14

Consultation is now closed and the feedback is being analysed.

Links:

- [Consultation documents](#)

European Social Fund Operational Programme 2014 to 2020

This consultation seeks comments and views on the contents of the draft European Social Fund (ESF) Operational Programme for England 2014 to 2020 (part of the 2014 to 2020 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme in England).

The ESF Operational Programme is the main document for setting out the strategy and priorities for use of the fund to support the [Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth](#). It also contains high level information on how the fund will be delivered, managed and evaluated, including partnership arrangements.

We are running this consultation before submitting the ESF Operational Programme 2014-2020 document to the European Commission. This ensures we provide

partners with the opportunity to comment on and provide views on the operational programme.

[gov.uk](#), 14/4/14

Consultation is now closed and the feedback is being analysed.

Links:

- [Consultation documents](#)

Local Bus Services: Revised Statutory Guidance

This is the second consultation on the Senior Traffic Commissioner's revision of existing statutory guidance on local bus services, the first was completed between 21 August 2013 and 13 November 2013.

The Senior Traffic Commissioner is required to provide guidance and directions as to the way that traffic commissioners will approach their duties as part of the Local Transport Act 2008. We are seeking feedback on this revised publication which takes account of the many responses to the first consultation, including from local authorities, operators, passenger groups, trade associations and individuals.

[gov.uk](#), 7/4/14

Consultation is now closed and the feedback is being analysed.

Links:

- [Consultation documents](#)

Child Poverty: a Draft Strategy

This Government is focused on breaking the cycle of disadvantage – where you start in life should not determine where you end up. Ending child poverty is an essential part of this vision. We firmly believe the way to end poverty is to tackle the root causes now and across generations so we can transform lives. We want to know what more can be done and how we can work together to end child poverty. Only by working together can we transform the lives of the poorest children in our society. We are seeking views on our draft strategy, which sets out what action we plan to take from 2014 to 2017 to tackle child poverty.

[gov.uk](#), 11/3/14

Consultation is now closed and the feedback is being analysed.

Links:

- [Consultation documents](#)
- [Consultation on the Child Poverty Strategy 2014-17](#)

Visit the ORCC website: www.oxonrcc.org.uk

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