

## **SODC Councillor's Monthly Report May 2020**

**SODC Councillor's emergency £2000 budget for volunteers.** I emailed your clerk and chair details of my budget for your comments and thoughts on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020. This contained details of eligibility criteria. To date I have only received one request which was from a group providing food parcels to the most vulnerable and applied for by Chalgrove Parish Council. I do of course realise that many people are helping each other privately which is great. Please respond to me as appropriate to your communities' needs if you think my fund would be suitable and qualify.

**SODC Local Plan.** You will recall that following the direction from Robert Jenrick MP at the Cabinet meeting and subsequent Full Council meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020 we were left with no choice but to let the existing plan go to the Planning Inspectorate for examination at the EIP (Examination in Public). This followed a threat in March by Robert Jenrick to take all Planning Powers from SODC and hand them to Oxfordshire County Council. The administration agreed after discussions with the MHCLG (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government) to continue with the Local Plan through to the Examination in Public but with a decision for SODC members who had registered to speak on the existing plan to contest the plan at the public enquiry. At this time, we have no idea how, where and when the EIP will take place.

**Extra garden waste collections.** If you are a garden waste brown bin customer, now is the time to spend getting your garden into shape. We will be collecting one extra bin's worth of garden waste in the week commencing 18<sup>th</sup> May. This extra collection will you may recall replaces the lost collection over the Christmas period. A bin's worth of waste is around three large bin bags, which you should leave next to your brown bin on your usual collection day:

### **Business Grants update**

As it's now around six weeks since the COVID-19 grants became available to support businesses, we thought it would be a good time to give you a breakdown on what's happening at the moment. We have now paid grants to over 2,200 businesses across South and Vale which is almost 70 per cent of all companies that are eligible for the grants. Over the past few days Capita (SODC's sub-contractor) have identified some additional eligible businesses, and whilst that is good news for the businesses concerned, it will have the effect of temporarily reducing the percentage of businesses paid until the processes to complete payments to them have been completed. We are now processing forms for any remaining eligible businesses on the same working day, or at the very latest the next working day, providing they submit a correctly filled out form. Even if a business has contacted Capita before, the quickest way for them to receive a response is for them to email and query to: [sodc.businessrates@secure.capita.co.uk](mailto:sodc.businessrates@secure.capita.co.uk)

**Online committee meetings.** From the end of May, we will start to hold SODC Council Committee Meetings remotely via video conferencing. Details will appear on the SODC website in due course.

**County Council re-opening the tips.** We understand that the County Council is reopening

its household waste recycling centres from Monday 18 May at 8am. All seven sites in Oxfordshire will be open seven days a week from 8am until 4pm and will be accepting all waste materials normally accepted. To allow for social distancing the number of vehicles allowed onto the site will be reduced by approximately 50 per cent. This means that queues are highly likely, especially at peak times such as weekends. Traffic marshals will be in place to manage queues, which are not allowed on the public highway. We are helping the County Council to push the message out to residents to only visit the sites if their trip is essential and they cannot safely store their waste at home – please do help reinforce this message. There is more information and some FAQs on the County Council’s website at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastereopenquestions](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastereopenquestions)

David Turner  
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10<sup>th</sup> May 2020