

District Councillor Debby Hallett's Report to North Hinksey Parish Council

25 Apr 2013

- 1. Electoral Review of Vale of White Horse:** The last bit of news on this. The name of our new district ward is 'Botley and Sunningwell'. I asked the Boundary Commission about their rationale for naming it 'Botley'. They replied, "*The name of the community within North Hinksey parish was most commonly referred to by respondents as Botley. In addition, Vale of White Horse District Council's initial proposal was for a 'Botley' ward.*" The name can be changed; of course there is a complicated process, and it will probably become a political issue. The original proposal was a Tory proposal. The Boundary commission listened to arguments from residents and Lib Dem councillors to change the boundaries of the ward, but no one suggested the name change. Please let me know if you think it worthwhile to try to get the name changed to 'The Hinkseys & Sunningwell'. I'll respond according to what residents say (via Facebook or other means).
- 2. Community Governance Review:** David Buckle, CEO of the Vale, wrote to parishes requesting their responses by 28 June 2013. Terms of reference for this review include altering parish boundaries, warding a parish and changing the numbers of councillors on the parish council. I mention these three because of various comments over the years.

 - Some people think Dean Court should be part of North Hinksey parish.
 - Warding the parish would reduce confusion over deliveries of parish communications in the ward (each councillor would represent a defined area)
 - ensure everyone gets a newsletter, and an insert (I didn't)
 - ensure each resident had a council member elected by and concerned primarily with their near neighbourhood
 - Allow each councillor to focus more on their 150 or so dwellings – ensure the silent majority has a voice
 - Abingdon is warded, and so is Wantage.
 - If councillors feel overworked, maybe more are required? If bureaucracy means nothing much gets accomplished, maybe fewer are needed? If communications are difficult, maybe fewer councillors would be better?

Check out the letter and terms of reference you've been sent. It's an opportunity for a sort of self-evaluation that comes along only about once in a decade.
- 3. New Homes Bonus Grants:** Confirming what I reported last month, the north-east area of the Vale has £9.5k to award in community grants this fiscal year (2013-14). The administration hasn't announced the procedures and deadlines for applying; as soon as they do I'll publish it.
- 4. Leisure facilities:** Still no report from the Vale cabinet on the results of their leisure facilities consultation in Dec 2012. This year's budget didn't have anything in it for recreational facilities in North Hinksey parish. When they do report, I'll publish it.
- 5. From the PCSOs:** Complaints are increasing about people cycling and skateboarding in the precinct. Cycling, skateboarding and scooting are prohibited in the pedestrian area; it has a penalty of £30. Lisa will be spending more time in the area to monitor.
- 6. West Way Development.** No movement. Public consultation closed and Doric are busy collating results and creating plans.

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7. **Road sign replacement.** In recent weeks I've ensured these replacements:
 - Stanley Close
 - Westminster Way (at the junction with West Way)
 - Lime Road (at the junction with Laburnum Road)
 - Cedar Road (where it begins at Hutchcomb Road)

8. **West Way Improvements:** This is mostly down to a government grant, the High Street Innovation Fund, also known as Portas money.
 - West Way is getting free wi-fi permanently.
 - There are some nice new benches.
 - Painting, branding, information boards, banners.
 - Recycling bins.

9. **Lime Road Development.** Consultation closed 24 Apr 2013 for the planning application for the land off Lime Road. Many residents left comments. I left a comment. You can see all comments on the Planning website: bit.ly/142m5IW

10. **Oxford Brookes University (OBU) Master Plan:** No change from last month. Still awaiting completion by OBU of a transport assessment requested by OCC. It's tentatively on the Cabinet agenda for June 2013. When I hear I will post it on my Facebook page.

11. **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** CIL will replace section 106; CIL is a charge to developers of new dwellings and business properties for contributions to local infrastructure. Some authorities have already rolled it out. The Vale's scheme is delayed until 2014. Recently it was announced that 25% of CIL charges will be earmarked for the parish or town council, if the parish has a Neighbourhood Plan in place. If there is no plan, parishes will get 15%, but capped at £100 per property. For example:
 - Average house size in the UK is 76 sq m
 - Oxford City CIL is £100 per sq m (let's assume ours would be similar in the Vale)
 - Ergo, average house will contribute £7600 in CIL
 - If we have a Neighbourhood Plan, we'd get £1900
 - If we don't, we'll get £100
 - Flats are smaller than average, and we get mostly flats. But our income will be much less without the Neighbourhood Plan.

12. **Progress of Local Plan.** Consultations are ongoing through 9 May 2013: bit.ly/ZMdvR8

13. **Local info online:** You can easily find current North Hinksey planning applications on my public-facing Facebook page: www.facebook.com/DebbyHallettLD (you don't need to be a registered Facebook user to see this page). I add info as soon as I receive notice of the planning application from the Vale. Included: consultation period, targeted decision date, and a link to the Vale Planning site so readers can see all information about the application.

14. **Anything else you'd like to hear about?** Please ask.