

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

7 June 2013

1. **Community Capital Grants.** Last year the Vale gave away more than £60k to community organisations. This year applications open 5 Jul 2013. Details: <http://bit.ly/14wPKQo>
2. **Festival Grants.** The LM Pavilion Trust has applied for a Vale grant to help with the costs of the North Hinksey Festival on 13 July 2013. Costs not covered by the grant will be met by the Trust.
3. **All Vale bring banks to be closed.** From 28 June; notices will be placed. I'm dismayed at this decision to close our community bring banks. In recent consultations, more than half of respondents opposed closing them. Let me be clear: I am completely opposed to closing them and think it's worthwhile to work to solve the problems. More on my FB page.
4. **Under 16's swim free at Abbey Meadow pool this summer.** Details: <http://bit.ly/12p5H80>
5. **Food bins not replaced.** The small food bins used indoors aren't replaced if lost or damaged, so take good care of yours. This is a cost saving policy.
6. **Community Governance Review.** The deadline is 28 June, and as of yet no correspondence has been received by the Vale from North Hinksey Parish Council. This is a once in a decade opportunity to address any parish problems. I've heard it expressed by some parish councillors that Dean Court area should be part of our parish. Here's your chance.
7. **When Parish Council objects.** Continuing my 'Did you know' series, I thought it might be helpful to explain how planning applications are handled when there's a parish council objection. If a parish council objects, and if the planning officer is minded to recommend that the application be approved, it will always go to committee rather than being decided by Head of Planning. (It can still be refused by Head of Planning.) It's good to remember that a planning application with PC objection will never be approved without going to committee. At committee, people with something to say have a chance to speak. It's good practice say something new; don't bother to come along if you only repeat what's already been submitted in writing -- the committee members have already read what you wrote. Bring a new perspective.
8. **Councillors expenses.** We are authorised to claim valid expenses back from the Vale (ergo, from the tax payer). I claimed no expenses in 2012-13, offering it to the public purse.
9. **Lime Road Development.** This is still under consideration. I've heard from Vale officers that Bovis have agreed to scale back the 4-storey towers to 3 so that there isn't such an impact on the nearby neighbourhoods. Discussions beginning about how Bovis might help us with the LM Pavilion (ask PC about this – I don't have the latest details). See plans and engineers reports, plus residents comments here: <http://bit.ly/142m5IW>
10. **Tilbury Lane Development.** The planning application for 150 homes was registered 5 Jun 13, consultation ends 11 July 13. You can read about it and comment here: <http://bit.ly/1389Wfk>
11. **Oxford Brookes University (OBU) Master Plan.** Cabinet consideration of this masterplan is scheduled for 2 Aug 2013. Despite repeated requests, the Vale management is keeping this

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masterplan confidential; no one has seen it that I know of. I'm still working on having it made public. When I hear anything I will post it on my Facebook page.

12. **Planning Department Restructure.** The internal consultation is complete and the plan is going into effect. Two senior managers have gone (one in Planning and one in Enforcement) and replacements must be recruited. During this uncertain and confusing time, if you have any problems with the Planning Department, please let me know. I've successfully escalated quite a few projects recently that were encountering stumbling blocks. Maybe I'll also be able to help you.

13. **Consultations:** participate via www.whitehorse.dc.uk/haveyoursay

- Local Plan: Sites & General Policies. Through 5 Aug 2013
- Gambling Policy in the Vale. Through 2 Aug 2013

14. **My portfolio responsibilities are Legal & Democratic Services, and IT, HR, Customer Services and Projects and Performance.** Regular meetings with Heads of Services in these departments keep me aware of what's going on. If I can ever help the council or residents in any of these areas, I'm happy to do it.

15. **Living Wage:** You may recall I seconded a motion to full council a few months ago that the Vale investigate and report on what it would take to be a Living Wage employer. The 'other side' voted it down as the effort to do a report was too expensive. This week I found out the Strategic Directors asked for a report about what it would take to ensure all staff are on a Living Wage. Report was generated, one person got a pay rise, and guidelines have been written to ensure all staff are paid a living wage. A win! With such difficulty.

16. **Facebook – see my page.** You can easily find current North Hinksey planning applications and other relevant info 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 planning application info as soon as I receive notice from the Vale. Included: consultation period, targeted decision date, and a link to the Vale Planning site so you can see all information about the application.

17. **Would you like to see anything else?** Just ask.