

District Council Report for Faringdon Town Council

Bethia Thomas and David Grant

12 Jan 2021

We would like to start by wishing you all a happy new year!

With the Christmas period intervening since our last report there is perhaps less district council wide news, but we still have local updates for you.

Obviously, the biggest concern currently is the spread of the Omicron variant and the pressures it may place upon our health service. We urge everyone to continue to take sensible precautions and take advantage of the excellent vaccination service provided in Faringdon. Our council leader, Cllr. Emily Smith, recently came to Faringdon to visit the vaccination centre with Bethia to see the fantastic example being set by hard-working doctors, nurses and volunteers and we are extremely grateful to them all for the rapid rollout.

Please keep in mind that grants are available to vulnerable residents, and businesses who may be struggling over winter. For further advice and support visit the website:

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/vale-of-white-horse-district-council/coronavirus-community-support/

Local Issues to Faringdon

- **Red Lion Pub proposed redevelopment (P21/V3542/FUL & P21/V3543/LB):** An application has been made to redevelop the old Red Lion pub. The vibrancy of Faringdon town centre is obviously one of our highest priorities so this is a proposal we will review with great care in order to achieve the best outcome for Faringdon.

The current layout is the bar area downstairs with the upstairs consisting of a residential area for the landlord and three bed and breakfast rooms. The proposal is to convert the downstairs into café/bakery style use with an office unit at the back. It is proposed to turn the upstairs into two residential flats.

These applications are always a fine balance and we welcome hearing the views of Faringdon Town Council and local residents.

- **Elmside Hostel Refurbishment:** We are pleased to report that Elmside is due to reopen by March following successful completion of works to replace the fire doors and other minor repairs.
- **Bin Collections:** A quick reminder that bin collections will still be on catch up following the holidays and not on the normal day until Monday 24th January. For everywhere that has their usual collection day on a Monday the dates will be Wed 12th January, Tuesday 18th January and then back to normal thereafter.
- **Public waste bins on Coxwell Road:** Following feedback from locals, we've put in a request to get new bins installed along Coxwell Road from the new estates out of town and will keep you posted.
- **New Post Boxes:** A request was made for the installation of a new post box to service the estates on the top of Park Rd. This has been granted, and the box should be installed within the next three-four months subject to compliance with the Streetworks Act. We are now actively pursuing the installation of another post box for the newer estates on Coxwell Road.

- **Leisure Centre Decarbonisation:** Work is due to start at the Leisure Centre to install the new air source heat pump and solar panels. We're very excited about this as a key step to reduce our carbon footprint. We will keep you posted on updates about this over the coming months.
- **Civil Parking Enforcement:** We are looking forward to hearing residents' experience of the new on-street parking enforcement and any ideas when the town meeting is rescheduled.
- **Gloucester St Car Park:** We had a successful meeting with officers at Gloucester St Car Park to progress the ideas from the town council and local residents including:
 - Recycling & waste bins for town centre businesses
 - Pool hire car location
 - Lockable cycle storage
 - Safety railings outside Faringdon Junior School

Unfortunately, we are now aware of a property issue that needs to be resolved before new licensing actions can be taken, but will working to get this resolved as soon as possible.

- **Adoption of Folly View estate:** No update since December report.
- **Folly Park car park:** As reported last month, we have money reserved to repair the council-owned half of the car park. Unfortunately, Bloor Homes are unwilling to commit to repairing the half still under their control and have not resolved the issue of adoption to the council as mentioned above. This is obviously frustrating for everyone and we continue to call for Bloor Homes to take their responsibilities to health and safety seriously or to facilitate the adoption of the estate expeditiously.
- **Brackendale Retirement Flats:** No update since December report.
- **Funding for leisure returning to Faringdon:** No update since December report.

District Update

[Covid-19 business support](#)

A Leisure and Hospitality Grant has been announced by Government to support rate-paying businesses in the hospitality and leisure sectors that have been affected by Omicron with a grant of up to £6,000 each. Our business rates team are working as fast as they can to set up the system to award grants.

To be kept up to date with details of how, where and when businesses will be able to apply, please visit the South & Vale Business Support website, or better still, subscribe to receive the newsletter.

<https://www.svbs.co.uk/omicron-hospitality-and-leisure-grant/>

[Waste recycling](#)

Oxfordshire's waste recycling made it to Escape to the Country on the BBC believe it or not – Somehow, it's the most exciting thing about Oxfordshire they could think of filming!

If you want to see what happens to your waste, it's actually pretty interesting. Start watching from 35 minutes in.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m0012b0n/escape-to-the-country-series-22-15-oxfordshire>

Major Planning Developments

[Planning enforcement](#)

Our new Planning Enforcement Statement is now published and available on our website. It's designed to streamline our resources to focus on the most urgent and damaging cases and make sure cases are dealt with in a timely manner. Please take a look via this link:

<https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/vale-of-white-horse-district-council/planning-and-development/planning-enforcement/>

[South of Park Road Phase 2 \(P21/V0984/RM\)](#)

Revisions have been made to this application to address some of the comments made by the local residents, including positive confirmation that ten additional bird and bat boxes have been added as requested by the Town Council.

We still have a call in request to take this to committee if officers are minded to accept it as we are yet to receive a satisfactory explanation as to how the applicants intend to address Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan Policy 4.7B to minimise energy consumption.

[Fernham Road \(P21/V0576/O\)](#)

Revisions have been made to this application to re-route the pedestrian link to correctly link with the neighbouring Fernham Fields estate as requested.

We are continuing to ask questions as to why this couldn't be widened to 3m in order to allow a future shared cycle link to be created.

We'd appreciate hearing the Town Council's view on whether such a link would be of benefit between Fernham Fields and Fernham Rd.



[Fernham Road \(P21/V3041/FUL\)](#)

We have had feedback from officers that they are currently not minded to accept this application due to the number of houses in a small plot. They are giving the applicants the opportunity to withdraw the application and consider if they want to submit an alternative which clearly shows how it would integrate with surrounding developments.

[Grundon Faringdon Quarry \(P21/V3283/CM\)](#)

Please note this planning application is the responsibility of the County Council and will be reported in Bethia's next full county report.

Contact us

District and County Surgeries will continue with a presence at the first Saturday Market of the month from 11.00am. As ever, if you have any questions or want to let us know about anything, we are very happy to take phone calls and emails from residents and town councillors at any time.

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