

Aldermaston Ward Report for November 2019

Dominic Boeck

West Berkshire Council

Budget for 2020/2021

The spending announcement from HMG last month (the one year Spending Review for 2020/21) contained proposals for funding social care that included additional grant funding and the option for councils to levy an Adult Social Care precept at 2%. Favourable announcements were also made on the continuation of New Homes Bonus and on special educational needs funding. Unfortunately, WBC will no longer be a Business Rates Pilot authority for 2020/21 which means we will forego around £1.5m that we are benefitting from this year.

At the start of the year we decided that we would divide our savings programme for 2020/21 into two phases. Phase 1 (£4m of savings) was seen as likely to be required given our financial forecasting at the time. Phase 2 (£3m of savings) would hopefully not be required but this all depended on how the Government decided to respond to the financial challenges in social care and across the sector. Work to identify the savings needed to meet Phase 1 is virtually complete, plus the latest financial modelling suggests that demand for Adult Social Care next year may not be quite as high as we initially thought (although we will need to keep this under review).

So, while we await the detail in the Local Government Financial Settlement for next year, which should arrive soon, our position is currently looking more positive than it has often appeared at this time in earlier years.

Officers are currently finalising the Council Strategy Delivery Plan alongside the Executive and through that we are identifying the additional resources we will need to realise our ambitions for the next four years.

Community Champion Awards

The nominations for the Community Champion Awards closed on 25 October. There will be a celebration at Shaw House in December to recognise the achievements of the winners.

<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/communitychampion>

Climate Conference

The first West Berkshire Climate Conference took place on Monday 28 October. The day was well attended with over 300 people from across the district coming to

find out more about the challenge of climate change for West Berkshire. We were joined by some neighbouring local authorities which is very encouraging as we shall all need to play our part if we are to reach our carbon zero target. Feedback from those that attended is currently being analysed to help inform next steps. If you didn't make it to the Conference you can watch Tom Heap's address here.

<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/climateconference>

Consultations

Sports and Leisure Centre Satisfaction Survey 2019

The Council has carried out a survey of West Berkshire leisure centre users to find out how our centres are performing and to identify areas for potential improvement.

Centre users aged 11 years or over who use the centres to take part in an activity, watch an activity, use another service (example, onsite café or business service) or attend a non-sporting activity (example, a party or meeting) were encouraged to give feedback. Responses will be used to help develop better leisure services and to guide future investments.

Environment Strategy

The draft environment strategy is being developed following the Climate Conference and will go out for public consultation shortly.

Market Street Road Closure

Market Street in Newbury will open shortly, if it hasn't already by now, after a long closure.

The closure will enable important infrastructure work required as part of the multi-million pound regeneration of the Market Street area. One of the first tasks required is to install a new sewer to serve the 200 new homes, and businesses, coming to the site. West Berkshire Council has granted a work permit to Cappagh to install the sewer and as a result the road will be closed between Mayors Lane and West Berkshire Council offices from Monday 28th October and around 1 December.

Motorists are asked to avoid the area if possible or allow extra time for their journeys. The diversion routes are available to view online ([Market Street Closure](#)) and are as follows:

Clockwise:

- Cheap Street, Bear Lane, A339 (southbound), St John's Road, Newtown Road and Bartholomew Street

Anti-clockwise:

- Bartholomew Street, Newtown Road, A339 (northbound) and Cheap Street

The roadworks on the A339 are set to be removed next week and the new traffic lights at the Sainsbury's roundabout turned on which help to keep traffic on the diversion route flowing.

Motorists should note that access to Northbrook Street will be subject to current restrictions (closed 10am to 5pm), access to the Kennet Centre car park will be via Bartholomew Street and exit onto Market Street, and access to the Kennet Centre service ramp will be available 24/7.

The road closure will affect Kennections services coming into Newbury town centre from the south of Newbury. Kennections 2 and 3 will be diverted over this period and Kennections 4 and 6 will not serve Newbury Railway Station for the duration. Detailed information and updates about this closure can be found here

- www.westberks.gov.uk/transportchanges.

Information will also be posted on affected bus stops around Newbury Town Centre and on social media. Services operated by other bus companies will be making their own arrangements so contact the operator directly.

Dunston Park Flood prevention scheme

Work started at Dunston Park and South East Thatcham in March this year. Both schemes are part of the comprehensive programme of flood defence work outlined in the council's Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) for Thatcham, which was developed in partnership with the Environment Agency, Thatcham Town Council and Thames Water, in response to the severe flooding on 20 July 2007.

The reservoirs at Dunston Park and South East Thatcham form part of a flood defence strategy that already includes reservoirs at Cold Ash Hill and Tull Way. They will have storage capacities of 36,600 m³ and 14,200 m³ and will benefit 512 and 61 properties respectively.

<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=36488>

The South East Thatcham Flood Alleviation Scheme Blog

<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/sethatchamfas>

New bins help people to Recycle 'on the go' in Newbury

We've teamed up with our waste contractor Veolia to install eight new recycling litter bins in Newbury town centre to help people to recycle on the go!

Residents and visitors to Newbury will now be able to recycle their plastic bottles and cans easily which will boost the districts recycling rate.

The new recycling bins will be branded green so that they are easily recognisable for recycling rather than normal litter bins.

To be recycled on the go, plastic bottles and cans must be completely empty before they go into the recycling bins. They are for plastic bottles and cans as drink containers are frequently bought and discarded within the town centre and train station area. Paper is not discarded in volume at these locations and items such as

sandwich packets are not suitable for recycling due to the lining of the packet and food contamination.

The new bins can be found at The Broadway, Park Way, Cheap Street, Northbrook Street, Market Place, Station Road, Wharf Road and (following completion of roadworks) Bear Lane, Newbury.

Council announces new plastic waste recycling trial

A selection of harder-to-recycle waste materials such as sweet and crisp wrappers, and small plastic toys will soon be collected for recycling at some of West Berkshire Council's buildings as part of a new trial scheme.

The Council has teamed up with Veolia, its waste management services partner, to offer new recycling points for materials which are harder for residents to recycle. Recycling boxes will be available at the following locations in Newbury during the trial period:

Sweet wrappers: Market Street Council Offices Reception; West Street Council Offices Reception;
Northcroft Leisure Centre; and Newbury Library;
Plastic toys: Market Street Council Offices Reception; West Street Council Offices Reception; Northcroft Leisure Centre; and Newbury Library; and

Toiletries containers: changing rooms for cyclists/joggers in the Market Street Council Offices (these facilities are available to Councillors and staff only).

Initially ten boxes will be available and once these have been successfully trialled, the Council will consider whether to continue with the scheme and potentially roll it out to more locations within the district or increase the scope of the materials which are collected.

This scheme is part of Veolia's [Procycle](#) service, which has recently been launched.

West Berkshire Council has supported the development of a pioneering smartphone app

In a joint venture with award-winning transport safety consultancy, *Agilysis Ltd*, West Berkshire Council has supported the development of a pioneering smartphone app that uses geolocation technology to give reassurance to parents/ guardians and security to children for their local unaccompanied journeys.

In recent years, the Traffic and Road Safety team at West Berkshire Council has been considering the potential for developing technology solutions that support parents and young people who want to confidently pursue independent and active travel, such as walking and cycling.

Not only does this App give parents greater confidence, we hope that it will encourage them to let children walk to school rather than being driven and contribute to a more environmentally sustainable solution for young people getting to school than relying on carbon emitting vehicles.

The new RouteGuardapp will be available to download from Apple and Google Play stores. As the RouteGuardian, parents will be able to plan, monitor, and adjust routes and pre-defined zones encouraging mutual agreement with their child.

Flu jab

People in eligible NHS groups are strongly encouraged to get their free NHS flu vaccine via their GP or chemist.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/>

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