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| **Title** | District Councillor’s Report |
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**2023/24 Leader, Cabinet and Chair of SODC**

At the Annual meeting of South Oxfordshire District Council on 18th May Cllr David Rouane was re-elected as leader. He confirmed his cabinet as:

* Councillor Maggie Filipova-Rivers – Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing, and statutory Deputy Leader
* Councillor Robin Bennett – Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration, and Deputy Leader
* Councillor Pieter-Paul Barker – Cabinet Member for Finance and Property Assets
* Councillor Sue Cooper – Cabinet Member for Environment
* Councillor Andrea Powell – Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Policy and Programmes
* Councillor Anne-Marie Simpson – Cabinet Member for Planning
* Councillor Freddie van Mierlo – Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Nature Recovery

Cllr David Turner will remain as Chair of the Council with Cllr Kellie Hinton as Vice-Chair.

**Riverside outdoor pool, splash pad and campsite**

The pool is now open. There is a new cover for the pool overnight to enable the water temperature to stay warmer which will reduce energy use from the pool heaters.

The campsite opened to visitors on 1 May after £150,000 refurbishment of the washroom area. Campers will be able to visit the site and enjoy the new facilities until the 30 September.

The splash pad should be ready for use from July following its renovation currently taking place and costing £296,450 paid for by CIL funding (Community Infrastructure Levy). The old surface is being replaced with a new brightly coloured soft rubber crumb finish. The new look pad will have exciting new features shooting out water from colourful columns. These will include sensor operated water jets, tall sprinklers, tipping buckets and water tunnels intended to provide everyone with hours of entertainment!

Following last year’s success, the Swim Doctor will be back as will the weekly aqua aerobic sessions, plus Riverside will be open from sunrise to sunset for the summer solstice on 21 June.

The pool and splash pad will be open for the summer season until Sunday 3 September.

**Great Big Green Week 10-18 June**

This is a national celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature.  The idea is that we should all try to do something to make everyone’s world a little greener.

From 12 June residents will be invited to take part in a waste satisfaction questionnaire. Questions will cover waste collections, street cleansing as well as contact made with the council waste team and Biffa. Please do provide your feedback on the current waste service. This will help when we come to designing what will follow when the Biffa contract ends.

Also from 12 June there will be a consultation on a recently produced Air Quality Action Plan. These plans have to be reviewed and updated every 5 years or so.

The air quality in our AQMAs (Air Quality Management Areas) has improved greatly, probably because vehicles are less polluting, such that Wallingford and Watlington no longer have to be declared as AQMAs. However, Henley is still so defined, mainly because of high levels of nitrogen oxides recorded in Duke Street.

**Help develop our local food action plans**

We’re calling for all local businesses, community growers, voluntary and community groups, food businesses and producers, and more to help us provide fairer, healthier and more sustainable local food systems for our districts.

Join us on Friday 9 June where we’ll be raising awareness of the Oxfordshire Food Strategy, which the councils adopted along with the other Oxfordshire councils and partners in December 2022. We’ll also be discussing the development of the South and Vale Food Action Working Group, which will work with stakeholders and partners to shape new action plans.

Anyone or any organisation that is interested in attending can register for the event by email at [communityconnectors@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:communityconnectors@southandvale.gov.uk).

The meeting will take place on Friday 9 June, from 11am to 12.30pm at The District Community Centre, Great Western Park, Didcot.

**Council grants now available for food banks and community larders**

The voluntary food network – voluntary and community organisations such as food banks, food larders and community fridges for residents – plays a vital role supporting people, but demand for their help has surged as fuel and food costs escalate, particularly for everyday staples.\* While demand continues to rise, voluntary food networks are seeing their supplies reduce due to a drop in donations from individuals and companies while also facing rising fuel and food costs themselves.

To help support the voluntary food network SODC is inviting community food groups to apply for a grant of £2,500 for essential supplies. The grants can be used to help pay for a variety of expenses including food, additional storage and energy bills.

The closing date for applications is midday Wednesday 28 June 2023.

For more information on the grant and details on how to apply go to our South Oxfordshire Food Network Grant Scheme page <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/food-network-grant-scheme/>

\*Source: ONS Census data December 2022 and Oxfordshire County Council food cost of living data