Title	**District Councillors' Report**
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Parish	**Warborough**
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Local Government Reorganisation – back on!

As you will have seen, the Government has published its "minded to" decision at the end of October, confirming that Oxfordshire and West Berkshire will be split into three Unitary Authorities. They have allowed a short, three-week period for discussions around parish boundaries and have already moved some of the parishes currently in SODC that were slated to go into Greater Oxford back into Ridgeway (e.g. Culham, Nuneham Courtenay, Wheatley). However, Warborough and Dorchester are still listed as going into Greater Oxford, so the negotiations continue…..

Devolution Update

Separately to LGR, we are also going through a Devolution process to create a new Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA) for the Thames Valley. The Government is basically giving us a binary choice – agree to go with Oxfordshire/Berkshire/Swindon or get nothing. The Leader of SODC wrote to government to express our dismay at this approach, repeating our preference for an Oxfordshire/Berkshire/Buckinghamshire model, since this aligns much more closely with other structures (e.g. Health & policing). So once again, we may be forced to accept what we perceive as a sub-optimal outcome or forfeit additional funding and powers as only the Berkshire/Oxfordshire/Swindon option appears to be on offer.

New National Scheme of Delegation for Planning

As we explained at September's meeting, the new National Scheme of Delegation (NSD) for planning decisions has now come into effect as from the end of October 2026 and the Council has briefed its members and other relevant parties (e.g. Parish Councils) for the new procedures. The new system divides applications into Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 cases. **Schedule 1** applications will always be delegated to officers and include:

- Householder development
- Minor commercial development
- Minor residential development
- Modifications to planning obligations connected to a schedule 1 application
- Reserved matters up to 499 dwellings and creation of less than 50,000sqm floorspace
- Approval of details (otherwise known as discharge of conditions)
- Prior approvals, certificates of lawfulness, PIPs, NMAs

For Schedule 2 applications, the overriding presumption in law is that these will be also delegated to officers.

This includes:

- Applications that are not householders, minor residential or commercial
- Retrospective applications

- Advertisement consent
- Listed building consent, and associated planning applications
- Works to TPO trees
- Reserved matters 500+ dwellings and creation of more than 50,000sqm floorspace

A new concept is being introduced *for Schedule 2 applications only* – the Gateway Test and associated Referral process, which will be used if a Member would like an application to be considered for decision by the Planning Committee (given that we will lose the power of "call-in"). This can only be initiated:

a. ***Where the application raises an economic, social or environmental issue of significance to the local area***

b. ***Where the application raises a significant planning matter having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations***

A two-step process will then be implemented with the Director of Planning ultimately deciding if an application should NOT be delegated to officers for determination.

Waste and Recycling

Extra garden waste collections - If you are a garden waste permit holder, you will be able to have extra garden waste collected for free, on your normal collection day only between 2 November and 13 November 2026. To check if you are eligible for a collection and for details on how to leave the extra waste out, please follow the guidance found on our garden waste page.

I (Sue) had an interesting visit to our new recycling contractor recently and saw in action how waste film – plastic bags and the like – are sorted and baled. This means we too can now put these plastics into our recycling bins. More information on this should appear on our website soon but any such plastics put into our bins will be recycled. The contractor is currently sending such plastics to a factory in Peterborough if you are interested.

#BeWinterPrepared

https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/be-winter-prepared/

The Council has launched this information resource covering all types of services and activities to ensure that residents are ready for winter conditions. It's a very useful set of links and contact numbers, and it would be great if the Parish Council could promote this link to its local community.

Chair's Charity Quiz

Many thanks to all those who participated in the Chair's Charity Quiz on 23rd October. We are delighted to say we raised nearly £1300 on the night for the Chair's (Andrea's) two charities, Style Acre (who provided the excellent supper on the night) and Cycling without Age.