

# Councillor news and updates

16 January 2025

## Latest news

### Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

In case you missed it, we issued press releases about the county's decision to write to the government requesting Oxfordshire be in the fast track for the creation of new unitary councils. You can see the press releases on our websites

- o South - [Councils should seek to influence Local Government Reorganisation for the benefit of communities](#)

The county is expecting to hear back from the government by the end of January. We will let you know when we hear more.

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### Diversity and social campaign dates

Our Diversity and Social Campaign Calendars for 2025 are now available to view on our websites.

These dates have been agreed by our Leaders and Cabinet Members for Communications and champions for Diversity and Inclusion and are designed to reflect our services, corporate priorities and values.

Note that there may be occasions when they need to be updated through the year.

You can view the new calendars by clicking on the links here [South](#) / [Vale](#).

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### Ask for Angela

Our Community Safety team have been visiting pubs across South and Vale to help ensure staff know what to do if someone asks for 'Angela'.

Ask for Angela is the national scheme which provides customers with a simple discreet code word they can use to request help if they are feeling unsafe or receiving unwanted attention while in a pub or bar. The aim of the scheme is to help prevent and reduce sexual violence and vulnerability.

Venues are given easy to follow guidance for staff as well as posters and stickers to inform the public. If someone needs help, they can be taken aside or to a safe location so they can

Speak in confidence. Staff can then call a taxi, contact someone the person trusts, or ask the individual causing the distress to leave the venue.

Premises signed up for the scheme are listed on our [South Oxfordshire Ask for Angela page](#) and [Vale Ask for Angela page](#).

## Climate and sustainability news

### Energy Saving Week

We are promoting [Energy Saving Week](#) which starts on **Friday 17 January**. We will be signposting residents to our websites with helpful advice on how to reduce their energy costs at home and where they can get support with lower cost solutions.

The information includes links to the county council's Energy Saver app and opportunities for businesses looking to reduce energy usage. We will be promoting this on our social media channels – please help us by sharing.

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### Chilterns National Landscape survey

The Chilterns National Landscape (formerly the AONB) has launched a consultation on proposed changes to its management plan, which focus on changed legislation and guidance as well as an increased emphasis on nature recovery, climate adaptation, equality, diversity and inclusion. While this will be of particular interest to councillors whose wards lie in the National Landscape area, everyone can have their say on the [proposed changes to the management plan here](#).

The Climate and Biodiversity Team will be compiling a corporate response to the consultation and if you want your views to be considered for inclusion then please email them to [climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk) by 21 January 2025.

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### Performing Arts grant

Our new £60,000 Performing Arts grant scheme will open for applications on 3 February 2025. The scheme supports voluntary and community organisations in South Oxfordshire, who will be able to apply for up to £5,000 in funding for projects that improve community wellbeing across the district.

We are holding a funding advice event at Watlington Town Hall from 4 – 5.30pm on Thursday 23 January. There are limited spaces remaining and places must be booked in advance – [please register here](#).

The application form and guidance document will be available to view from 23 January [on our website](#) where you can also find more information about the new grant.

Please help us spread the word!

Councillors Ali Gordon-Creed and Ed Sadler