

## **Water and flooding**

At the recent July full council meeting the council passed a motion of 'no confidence' in Thames Water, which also requested the leader to write to new Secretary of State at DEFRA, Steve Reed MP. Now there's a new government, and 2 county councillors now sitting as MPs (including our own new local MP), perhaps we'll see some changes!

The letter stated: "We would like to see the new government urgently place regulatory and administrative limits on Thames Water, suspending bonuses and bringing charges for polluting the ecosystem. The government should urgently evaluate the pros and cons of renationalising Thames Water."

It also called for an inquiry into Thames Waters 'Water Resource Management Plan', which relates to the very large reservoir being planned near Abingdon.

We also passed a separate motion requesting tighter rules on building in flood-risk areas and more powers and funding for local flood authorities.

I've also just been voted in as vice chair of the Place Scrutiny Committee, and we'll be looking closely at flood response preparedness in a forthcoming meeting.

Separately, we recently had a scrutiny meeting with the new Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police; we asked them what they are doing about speeding and road safety, and asked them to work more closely alongside the council in local areas like ours which are affected by speeding.

## **A new political map for Oxfordshire**

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has published final recommendations setting out new electoral arrangements for Oxfordshire. The report and interactive mapping is available on the LGBCE website. <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/oxfordshire>

A draft order to start the formal approval process will be laid in parliament to provide for the new electoral arrangements becoming effective for the county elections due in May 2025. The current Berinsfield & Garsington division gets chopped into 3, due to planned population increases over the coming years, as follows:

Culham, Clifton Hampden & Burcot, The Baldons, Garsington, Sandford, Nuneham Courtenay, Berinsfield and Drayton St Leonard stay as they are; Dorchester and Warborough move in with Benson and Crowmarsh; and Stadhampton, Chiselhampton and Newington go in with Chalgrove.

## **Oxfordshire Pension Fund recognised for responsible investing**

The Oxfordshire Pension Fund has successfully applied to be a signatory to the [UK Stewardship Code](#) for the second year in a row. The code is administered by the Financial Reporting Council and sets high standards of stewardship for those investing money on behalf of UK savers and pensioners.

Becoming a signatory is recognition of the work the fund has undertaken in recent years to become a responsible investor, actively using its voice and influence to encourage companies to act in a way that recognises the importance of environmental, social and governance issues, and delivers financial benefits. You can [read more about our approach to responsible investment](#) on our website.