

REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS FEB 2025 FROM CLLR KEVIN BULMER

GENERAL OCC REPORT

Local Government Reorganisation

Bit of a confusing picture from government on the reorganisation of LA in Oxfordshire but seems the May the first election will go ahead in Oxfordshire.

It seems its cancelled in nine councils, affected are East Sussex, West Sussex, Essex, Thurrock, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Norfolk, Suffolk and Surrey.

Rayner claims it is cancelled in those areas because they will become unitary authorities, which is the cunning plan for Oxfordshire so why there is a difference is somewhat a mystery to me.

Rayner has said she only agreed to postpone elections in places where this is central to labour promise to deliver devolution and there not in the business of holding elections to bodies that won't exist and where they don't know what will replace them.

This is the statement from Oxfordshire, which makes no sense in relationship to what Rayners saying, so could be a timing thing or the reorganisation plan is too vague (who knows 🤔) watch this space. It will be interesting to see how the various political parties fight this election with this hanging over their heads, their going to have to set out a preferred route if they are going to be honest with the electorate. The statement seems to suggest its timing with out being clear or commenting on the rejection of their request (remember the Liberal administration asked for a postponement).:-

We re writing with an update following our [letter to government responding to the white paper on devolution and local government reorganisation](#).

Our county elections on 1 May 2025 will go ahead as planned.

Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner has announced that all 21 two tier (district and county council) areas in England, including Oxfordshire, will be asked to submit plans for unitary structures. We await further information from government on future timescales as to when a new unitary council or councils would go live. You can [read the full statement](#) online.

Changes will ultimately mean that the present two-tier system of county and district councils that has been in place in Oxfordshire since 1974 will be replaced by consolidating all council services into unitary authorities. This is already the case in neighbouring areas such as Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Northamptonshire.

As a group of partner councils in Oxfordshire, we are continuing to discuss and prepare for the transition to a unitary authority or authorities. We are also continuing our discussions with neighbouring authorities across the Thames Valley about devolution

Street Lighting Turnoff

Oxfordshire have revised the plans on this and it will now need local community support (not sure how that will work) but anyway good news for rural communities with the lack of

pavements and answers the real concerns on safety & potential for increased isolation put forward by women's groups.

Grant

Received notice of this grant fund.

**Community groups invited to apply for
share of £200,000 of crime prevention
funding**



Thames Valley
COMMUNITY FUND

Hi Kevin,

Matthew Barber (Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley) has opened the first round of this year's [Community Fund](#), with a particular focus on supporting projects that tackle anti-social behaviour and vehicle crime.

Jointly managed by the PCC and Chief Constable, the Community Fund helps to prevent crime and keep communities safe. Money for the scheme is created from the proceeds from the sale of items seized from criminals that cannot be returned to their rightful owners.

Announcing the fund, Matthew said: A total of £200,000 of grant funding is available for community and voluntary groups to apply for, with the aim of supporting my [Police and Crime Plan](#) in order to reduce crime across Thames Valley.

I look forward to receiving applications which support a range of areas within my Police and Crime Plan, particularly those which are focused on tackling anti-social behaviour and vehicle crime within our communities.”

Organisations from across Thames Valley can apply for a grant of up to £10,000 for projects that support one of the PCC's [Police and Crime Plan](#) priorities:

- **Protecting Communities** (including anti-social behaviour and road safety)
- **Protecting People** (including domestic abuse and the night-time economy)
- **Protecting Property** (including cybercrime and fraud and retail crime)

The closing date for this round of applications is **12pm (noon) on Monday 24th February 2025** with further information on how to apply available on the [Community Fund webpage](#).

We recommend that applicants review the Community Fund Guidance and Grant Funding Application Guide (attached) before submitting an application to the Community Fund

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