**Oakley Village Stores Limited**

**Report to Oakley Parish Annual Meeting – 2nd May 2023**

This has been our first full year as a fully constituted CBS and as you would expect, has been full of activity as we look to complete the construction of the shop and get it open as soon as possible. As is often the case with these types of projects, the build has taken a little longer than we would have hoped, with one or two delays, but as we stand today we hope that the shop will be open and serving customers within a few weeks.

As members of the Parish Council will be aware, Oakley Village Stores Limited is the Community Benefit Society set up to oversee the construction and operation of the new community village shop. It has 189 members/shareholders in the village (or in some cases connected to the village) and its day to day activity is overseen by a Management Committee consisting of 9 members.

Since the last Parish Annual Meeting there has been significant activity including:

* Obtaining planning permission for the building from Bucks Council;
* Securing over £65,000 in grant funding from funding bodies the Bucks Community Board, Rothschild Foundation, The Lottery Fund, Heart of Bucks Foundation and the Shanley Foundation;
* We have held our first AGM – the next will follow shortly; and
* We have commenced and nearly completed construction of the building.

We are now very close to opening our doors to customers and are very excited about that. We have an extensive list of local suppliers ready to supply the shop and a list of volunteers we think is sufficient to staff a 4-week rota. We have a part-time assistant manager lined up but are still looking for someone to take on the full-time manager’s role. At present, that is probably the biggest hurdle to us opening but we are widening the net for our recruitment and believe that we can fill the position (or come up with an alternative solution) so as not to delay opening up.

I’d like to place on record my thanks to all of the Management Committee members for their hard work and to the village and Parish Council for their continued support of the project. Those who have contributed to the build and fit out element of the project are too numerous to list here but a full list can be found on our website the level of support has genuinely been amazing and just re-enforces how fortunate we are to live in this community.

I look forward to reporting next year at this meeting on how our first year of trading is shaping up!

**James Smith, Chairman, OVSL Management Committee**.