Public Document Pack

Committee: **Executive**

Date: **Monday 6 September 2010**

Time: **6.30 pm**

Venue **Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA**

Membership

Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman)
Councillor Ken Atack
Councillor Colin Clarke
Councillor James Macnamara
Councillor D M Pickford
Councillor G A Reynolds (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Norman Bolster
Councillor Michael Gibbard
Councillor Nigel Morris
Councillor Nicholas Turner

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

   Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest that they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.

3. **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

   The Chairman to report on any requests to submit petitions or to address the meeting.

4. **Urgent Business**

   The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any item of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.

5. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 4)

   To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2010.

Strategy and Policy

6. Local Economic Partnerships (LEP) (Pages 5 - 66) **6.35 pm**

Report of Chief Executive and Strategic Director Planning, Housing and Economy

Summary

To understand the implications of the Government's proposals to create Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) and to seek approval for Cherwell District to be included in the submissions being made to the Secretary of State by two prospective LEPs.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

(1) Support the inclusion of Cherwell District in both the Oxfordshire City Region Enterprise Partnership and the South East Midlands Enterprise Partnership as they are submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government for consideration.

(2) Request a further report when the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government responds to all the LEP submissions he has received and when he provides final information on any rules which might be put in place which would prevent Cherwell District being part of two LEPs simultaneously (should the Secretary of State accept both the Oxfordshire City Region and South East Midlands LEP bids).

Service Delivery and Innovation

7. Review of the ICT Service (Pages 67 - 80) **6.45 pm**

Report of Strategic Director Environment and Community and Head of Customer Service and Information Systems

Summary

This report seeks Executive consideration of the outcomes of the Member and Officer IT Review Group and approval for the way forward.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to agree:

(1) Measures to reduce the cost of the Council's ICT Service through the implementation of an integrated, scalable and flexible staffing structure, selective external hosting of systems and improved procurement;

(2) By the end of 2012/13, to make savings of a minimum of £300,000 resulting in a minimum 15% reduction to the base budget and which brings the costs of the function to 2.3% total Council spend (based on 2010/11 estimated total spend);

(3) To continue to explore further cost reductions through shared service and joint opportunities with other Councils;

(4) The proposed change to the ICT service desk availability from 8am – 6pm, to 7am – 5.15pm Monday to Friday;

(5) Not to implement an additional Out Of Hours support service based on an assessed low risk of failure and impact plus additional cost;

(6) The setting up of an Information Systems Corporate Governance group with a remit to provide a corporate overview to the use of ICT resources, approve projects for delivery and realise targeted savings identified in the project business cases.

8. Overview and Scrutiny: (1) Committee Report on Democratic Engagement with Young People and (2) Task and Finish Group Report on Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (Pages 81 - 118) **6.55 pm**

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Summary

To consider the following overview and scrutiny reports:

- Democratic Engagement with Young People (Appendix 1)
- Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (Appendix 2)

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will attend the meeting to present the reports.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

(1) Note the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutiny review into the Council's approach to Democratic Engagement with Young People.

(2) Agree the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendation regarding the Council's approach to Democratic Engagement with Young People as detailed below:

Recommendation 1:

That the Council should adopt a more pro-active and structured approach to youth engagement in local democracy and that the Young People's Champion and officers should be invited to develop a formal policy and action plan to achieve this.

(3) Note the work of the Task & Finish Group scrutiny review into Crime and Anti Social Behaviour.

(4) Agree the Task & Finish Group recommendation regarding Crime and Anti Social Behaviour as detailed below:

Recommendation 1:
That the Council take an active role in promoting the positive activities which young people in the district are involved in.

Recommendation 2:
That the Council promote the success of the Street Wardens in Bicester and Banbury and that the possibility of developing the scheme in other areas of Cherwell be investigated.

Recommendation 3:
That Overview and Scrutiny investigate how the Council engages with young people in the District in more detail.

Recommendation 4:
That the Council embarks on intergenerational activities to tackle the perception of crime in the District.

Recommendation 5:
That the Council develop a policy on youth engagement and involvement as part of the Council's consultation and decision making arrangements.

9. Equality Performance Review & Self Assessment (Pages 119 - 174) **7.05 pm**

Report of Chief Executive and Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager

Summary

To provide an overview of our achievements relating to our equalities work during 2009/2010 and report the results in relation to the internal self assessment which has been completed under the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) 'Achieving' standard.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

(1) Note the progress in delivering the Corporate Equalities Action Plan and the Corporate Equalities Improvement Project.

(2) Agree the completed 'Achieving' Equality Self Assessment'

(3) Agree to continue with the equalities work programme for 2010/2011

(4) Not seek external accreditation of our performance under the equalities standard for local government at this time and take the costs of this inspection as an efficiency saving.

Value for Money and Performance

10. Asset Management Plan (Pages 175 - 200) **7.15 pm**

Report of Head of Regeneration and Estates

Summary

To consider the Council's Asset Management Plan for 2010/11

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

(1) Approve the Asset Management Plan for 2010.

(2) Approve that the proposal that vacant small industrial units be used for economic development purposes through lettings on flexible terms, and that this policy be monitored through future reporting on the Asset Management Plan.

11. Performance and Risk Management Framework 2010/11 First Quarter Performance Report (Pages 201 - 244) **7.25 pm**

Report of Chief Executive and Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager

Summary

This report covers the Council's performance for the period 1 April to 30 June 2010 as measured through the Performance Management Framework.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

(1) Note the many achievements referred to in paragraph 1.4 of the report.

(2) Request that officers report in the second quarter on the items identified in paragraph 1.5 of the report where performance was below target or there are emerging issues.

(3) Agree the responses identified to issues raised in the end of year performance report in paragraph 2.1 of the report or to request additional action or information.

12. 2010/11 Projected Revenue and Capital Outturn at 30 June 2010 and 2009/10 Treasury Management Annual Report (Pages 245 - 262) **7.45 pm**

Report of Head of Finance

Summary

This report summarises the Council's Revenue and Capital performance for the first 3 months of the financial year 2010/11 and projections for the full 2010/11 period.

These are measured by the budget monitoring function and reported via the Performance Management Framework (PMF) informing the 2010/11 budget process currently underway.

To receive information on treasury management performance and compliance with treasury management policy during 2009/10 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice. This report also reviews the treasury performance in Q1 2010/11.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

(1) Note the projected revenue & capital position at June 2010.

(2) Approve the changes in the 2010/11 capital programme as follows:

- Slip £4.8m of project funding into the 2011/12 capital programme (detailed in Appendix 1) and consider this as part of the 2011/12 budget process

(3) Note the performance against the 2009/10 investment strategy and the financial returns from each of the 3 funds (Appendix 2) and recommend that this report is considered by Full Council in line with CIPFA best practice.

(4) Note the Q1 performance against 2010/11 investment strategy

(5) Note the change in cumulative counterparty limits from £8m to £15m.

Other Matters

13. Strong Leader Model (Pages 263 - 270) **7.55 pm**

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Summary

To consider arrangements for adopting the so called 'Strong Leader' model of Executive governance as required by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, until this act is repealed later in the year.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

(1) Note that the Government intend to repeal these requirements later in the year and consequently to agree a minimal response to ensure legislative compliance as set out in the following recommendations and endorsed by the minister in his letter as set out in Appendix 1.

(2) Note that Cherwell already operates a Strong Leader Model

(3) Agree the proposals in 1.3 to 1.7 in the report, including the changes to the approval process for the Scheme of Delegation, the appointment of Leader and Annual Council and recommend them to Council for approval.

(4) Agree that a summary of the proposed changes be placed on the internet and any responses will be reported to Council.

(5) Agree that the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be requested to draft constitutional amendments for consideration by Council to implement the changes.

Urgent Business

14. Urgent Business

Any other items which the Chairman has decided is urgent.

(Meeting scheduled to close at 8.05 pm)

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or (01295) 221587 prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item. The definition of personal and prejudicial interests is set out in Part 5 Section A of the constitution. The Democratic Support Officer will have a copy available for inspection at all meetings.

Personal Interest: Members must declare the interest but may stay in the room, debate and vote on the issue.

Prejudicial Interest: Member must withdraw from the meeting room and should inform the Chairman accordingly.

With the exception of the some very specific circumstances, a Member with a personal interest also has a prejudicial interest if it is one which a Member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest.

Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare the fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact James Doble, Legal and Democratic Services james.doble@cherwell-dc.gov.uk (01295) 221587

Mary Harpley
Chief Executive

Published on Thursday 26 August 2010

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 12 July 2010 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman)
Councillor G A Reynolds (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ken Atack
Councillor Norman Bolster
Councillor Colin Clarke
Councillor Michael Gibbard
Councillor Nigel Morris
Councillor D M Pickford

Apologies for absence: Councillor James Macnamara
Councillor Nicholas Turner
Councillor Nick Cotter

Officers: Mary Harpley, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service
Ian Davies, Strategic Director - Environment and Community
John Hoad, Strategic Director - Planning, Housing and Economy
Liz Howlett, Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Martin Henry, Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer
David Marriott, Head of Regeneration & Estates
Tony Brummell, Head of Building Control & Engineering Services

32 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

33 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

34 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

35 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2010, were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record with the amendment that the declarations listed should relate to agenda item 10 Eco-Town Arrangements – Local Authority Funding Arrangements.

36 **The Case for Considering Close Joint Working between Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Councils**

The Leader of the Council submitted a report to agree to establish a Joint Member Working Party to examine the business case for sharing senior management structures between Cherwell District Council (CDC) and South Northamptonshire Council (SNC), recognising that this may well lead to joint teams for service delivery in the future.

Resolved

(1) That a Joint Member Working Party be established to examine the business case to create a shared senior management structure between Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council with a view to reporting its findings to the Executive and then to a special meeting of full Council on 3 November 2010.

(2) That the Terms of Reference for this Joint Member Working Party (attached as Annex 1 to the minutes as set out in the minute book) be approved.

(3) That Councillors Wood, Reynolds, Macnamara, Atack and Cotter be nominated to the Joint Member Working Party with Councillors Turner and Williamson as substitutes.

Reasons

Both CDC and SNC face significant medium term financial deficits, as well as short term financial challenges. These need to be addressed, but at the same time, both Councils want to protect valued front-line services for as long as possible. They also want to retain the capacity to serve their respective Districts over and above the normal work of District Councils, as both already do. Many District Councils have already put in place arrangements to share management teams, and have then moved on to consider sharing specific services and/or procuring jointly from others while remaining separate and sovereign organisations and securing savings.

Options

Option One	Not to proceed to appoint Members to the Joint Member Working Party.
Option Two	Establish the Joint Member Working Party

37 **Kidlington Pedestrianisation Scheme and Traffic Regulation Order**

The Head of Regeneration and Estates submitted a report to confirm the Council's approval for the release of the capital funds for the feasibility work on proposed changes to Kidlington's High Street via an improved Traffic Regulation Order.

Resolved

(1) That a supplementary capital bid of £25,000 to finance the feasibility work on proposed changes to Kidlington's High Street via an improved Traffic Regulation Order be approved.

Reasons

The Kidlington Pedestrianisation capital bid (value £25,000) was referred to scrutiny for further consideration by Council in February 2010. The bid was rejected as part of the 2010/11 budget process due to the overall financial constraints facing the Council. However the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Communication had indicated that a supplementary estimate could be made if the scrutiny review considers that it is justified. The review was considered on the 22 June 2010 by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and recommended approval to the Executive.

Options

Option One	Approve the capital bid for the scheme to move forward
Option Two	Reject the bid. However this will result in the postponement of any further work on the scheme and a failure to meet Service Plan targets.

The meeting ended at 6.44 pm

Chairman:

Date:

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Executive

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

6 September 2010

Report of Chief Executive and Strategic Director, Planning, Housing & Economy

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To understand the implications of the Government's proposals to create Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) and to seek approval for Cherwell District to be included in the submissions being made to the Secretary of State by two prospective LEPs.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

(1) To support the inclusion of Cherwell District in both the Oxfordshire City Region Enterprise Partnership and the South East Midlands Enterprise Partnership as they are submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government for consideration.

(2) To request a further report when the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government responds to all the LEP submissions he has received and when he provides final information on any rules which might be put in place which would prevent Cherwell District being part of two LEPs simultaneously (should the Secretary of State accept both the Oxfordshire City Region and South East Midlands LEP bids).

Executive Summary

Introduction

1.1 The Coalition Government has announced its intention to abolish Regional Development Agencies (including the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)) and enable the setting up of "local enterprise partnerships". The role of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) is to provide strategic leadership within their areas and set out local economic priorities. The Government has asked local business and civic leaders to put forward proposals for new LEPs by 6 September 2010.

Proposals

1.2 Since the announcement of the creation of LEPs, business and civic leaders have been considering the functional economic geography of areas and working together to develop alternative models for how LEPs may look.

1.3 This Council has been involved in the development of two LEP proposals. One of these is a county-wide Oxfordshire LEP (called the Oxfordshire City Region Enterprise Partnership) and the other is a wider "South East Midlands" Enterprise Partnership centred upon four unitary authorities; Milton Keynes, Bedford, Central Bedfordshire and Luton and a number of other districts including Aylesbury Vale and potentially a number of the Northamptonshire districts.

1.4 The Background Information section of this report discusses the role of LEPs more fully, and details the two LEP proposals.

1.5 The whole process of proposing LEPs is taking place in a very short timescale and there has been only limited guidance from Government as to the "rules" and conventions that will guide ministers as they consider LEP proposals. It is not yet clear if local authorities will be expected to sit within a single LEP or whether, where circumstances suggest it is appropriate, they will be able to be a member of two. It remains possible that Executive members will have to choose between the two at a later date if both are accepted by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and if such a rule applies.

Conclusion

1.6 There is no single model for an LEP that is uniquely suited to Cherwell District. For the time being it is considered right to pursue membership of two and to review the situation once more is known from the Secretary of State.

Background Information

Background to Local Enterprise Partnerships

2.1 In the Queen's Speech on 25 May, the Queen announced the Government's intention to abolish Regional Development Agencies and enable the setting up of "local enterprise partnerships". This is part of the Coalition Government's stated commitment to reform the existing system of sub-national economic development by enabling councils and businesses to replace the existing Regional Development Agencies (RDA).

2.2 Further to this announcement, on 29 June, Vince Cable MP (Secretary of State for Business Innovation & Skills) and Eric Pickles MP (Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government) wrote to all local authorities and business leaders to announce their intention to establish "Local Enterprise Partnerships" and provide some details of how this would happen. The Government is of the view that some of the existing functions of RDAs (including inward investment and access to finance) are best led nationally. It wishes, however, to see Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) set up to provide strategic leadership in local areas and set out local economic priorities.

2.3 The Government sees LEPs as having the following form and functions:-

- Their role will be to create the right environment for business and growth in their areas by tackling issues such as planning and housing, local transport and infrastructure priorities, employment and enterprise.

- They must be effective partnerships between local businesses and civic leaders. It is envisaged that each LEP will have a Board, and this will be chaired by a business leader.

- In terms of size, partnerships should reflect the functional economic geography of an areas rather than existing local or regional boundaries. The Government specifically refers to LEPs including"*groups of upper tier authorities*" suggesting that theses could or should be larger than a single county area. More recently, informal advice has been received to the effect that it would be reasonable for a county area to be covered by more than one LEP, but that each local authority would be part of just one LEP. However, it is not yet clear how this may or may not translate into formal guidance.

2.4 The timetable for local areas to consider all of these matters, and make proposals for LEPs it tight. The deadline that has been set for the receipt of outline proposals is today (6 September).

A Local Enterprise Partnership to include Cherwell District

2.5 Since the Queen's Speech, and more particularly since the letter of 29 June, there has been considerable activity as local authorities, business leaders and other key stakeholders have met to consider how best to respond to the Government's proposals. A number of different LEP models have been suggested which will impact on Cherwell District.

An Oxfordshire LEP

2.6 Oxfordshire County Council has been leading work on preparing a proposal for a county-wide LEP. The proposal is for a **"**Oxfordshire City Region Enterprise Partnership**"** which would work to build upon the existing strengths of the county including:-

- The world class universities of Oxford, Oxford Brookes and the UK Defence Academy at Shrivenham
- The research centres at Oxford, Begbroke, Harwell and Culham
- Clusters of key industries include motor sport, publishing and bio-tech companies.
- The eco-town at Bicester
- The heritage assets of the county.

2.7 The Oxfordshire City Region Enterprise Partnership will work to promote the economic offer of the LEP area, work to attract inward investment, seek to influence the supply side of the skills agenda and identify specific instances where businesses need support to fill gaps once SEEDA has gone.

2.8 The latest available version of this proposal is attached at Appendix 1.

A South East Midlands LEP

2.9 A further proposal for an LEP is being developed by some members of the Milton Keynes South Midlands Partnership. Milton Keynes South Midlands (MKSM) is the name of the Growth Area which crosses three regions in the centre of England. It is the largest Growth Area in the UK with plans to deliver over 225,000 new homes and over 200,000 new jobs by 2021. Formed in 2004 the Partnership aims to bring together the local, regional and national tiers of Government along with key infrastructure providers to plan the strategic delivery of sustainable growth across the area.

2.10 It includes local authority areas in three counties (Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire), including South Northamptonshire District Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council, both of which border Cherwell. The MKSM Partnership is proposing to establish an LEP which would include at its core the four unitary authorities of Milton Keynes, Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton with an "open door" for any surrounding authority to join. This has been notionally called the "South East Midlands LEP".

2.11 This LEP seeks to build upon its local strengths and opportunities including its:-

- International reputation as a prime business location
- Global connectivity and excellent road, rail and air links
- Place on the Oxford to Cambridge high technology arc

- Network of respected and engaged Higher Education institutions

- Expertise in low-carbon design and innovative approaches to growth

2.12 It is seeking to champion innovation and growth in business services, high performance engineering, tourism, logistics, sustainable construction, creative industries and health and wellbeing.

2.13 One reservation about the current SE Midlands proposal is the suggestion that it might operate as a coordinating partnership on funding priorities in the planning, housing and transport field. This appears problematic in terms of accountability and governance, particularly given the level of business involvement proposed for LEPs. However this issue will be a matter for any LEP to consider as the "rules" are clarified by Government.

2.14 The latest available version of this proposal is attached at Appendix 2.

2.15 Cherwell District Council has been invited to join this LEP. The proposal offers a number of key opportunities from which Cherwell District would benefit.

- It recognises that large parts of Cherwell District relate strongly in functional economic and planning terms to the areas east of the district. This direction of partnership also fits well with the proposal for a shared management team currently under discussion with South Northamptonshire Council.

- It also recognises the clear economic linkages which Cherwell has outside of the district and Oxfordshire, including within the motorsport and automotive technology and food processing and distribution sectors.

- There are greater general commonalities on economic and housing growth priorities between Cherwell and other SE Midlands authorities than there are with southern Oxfordshire and the Thames Valley, which tends to be more concerned with environmental constraint and a planning policy response of growth "restraint".

- There are important opportunities to link with expertise elsewhere within the South East Midlands area in areas such as low-carbon design and innovative approaches to growth. This may have benefits particularly in terms of the eco-town and growth at Bicester.

- It would appear to meet the Government's desire that LEPs should be sufficiently large and strategic, including more than one upper tier local authority.

A Thames Valley LEP

2.16 While officers of this Council have played a part in the development of the thinking around the Oxfordshire and South East Midlands LEPs, they have had no involvement in the development of a proposal for a Thames Valley LEP which is being led by the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce. Cherwell District would sit on a far-flung edge of any Thames Valley LEP, just as we have done with the South East region. Officers have not been pursuing any involvement in this LEP as we cannot see any value in doing so.

Which LEP for Cherwell?

2.17 There is no perfect economic geography that would suggest that one LEP proposal is uniquely suitable for Cherwell. There is no emerging LEP which would have Cherwell District at its heart, and therefore we are likely to be on the edge of a larger LEP which would include much larger centres of population and jobs. The South East Midlands LEP proposal, for example, potentially could cover a population of 1.5 million and 62,000 businesses with a Gross Value Added (a measure of economic output) of £33 billion.

2.18 A key question for Cherwell is therefore which of these wider LEPs is likely (a) to meet the needs of people and businesses in the district and (b) to be able to have the influence at a wider (national) level in how it can champion an area and attract investment and appropriate and targeted growth.

2.19 In light of the above, the following comments can be made:-

- It is important that whichever LEP Cherwell joins, we are able to find partnership on the key areas where our economy needs support and those areas we wish to grow. For example, it will be important any LEP can help us consider how best to maximise the benefits of the eco-town status of Bicester and some of our key employment sectors.

- Whilst the Oxfordshire City Region Enterprise Partnership and the South East Midlands LEP proposals are discrete, it is not the case that there would be no connection between them if both are eventually created. The South East Midlands LEP, for example, recognises its location of the Oxford to Cambridge high technology arc as one of its local strengths and key opportunities.

2.20 Businesses in Cherwell District are being asked for their views by both prospective LEPs and the Government have said that businesses' views on the functional economic area in which they operate will be very important. Given this activity we have written to a wide range of our local businesses to explain our position of pursuing membership of both and alerting them to the fact that we may have to choose to belong to just one in the event that this is established as the rule.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

3.1 The key issue before the Executive is therefore whether the Council should pursue membership of both the Oxfordshire City Region Enterprise Partnership and South East Midlands Enterprise Partnership at this point. The above section sets out the factors and considerations that may influence this decision.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One To support the recommendation and pursue membership of both the Oxfordshire City Region and South East Midlands LEPs.

Option Two	To not support the recommendation but to pursue membership of either the Oxfordshire City Region LEP or the South East Midlands LEP.
Option Three	To not support the recommendation and not to pursue membership of either LEP.

Consultations

Business community	Several business community and business leader consultation meetings have taken place.
Local authorities	Local authorities have also met extensively through existing partnership arrangements.

Implications

Financial:	Costs of LEP Membership are not yet known; but the arrangements are intended to be, and need to be, financially "lean". This issue will need careful consideration as proposals develop. Comments checked by Eric Meadows, Service Accountant for PHE, 01295 221522
Legal:	The partnerships proposed appear, on current information, to be informal. There are therefore no legal concerns. Governance will need careful consideration as these issues develop. Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal & Democratic, 01295 221686
Risk Management:	There are numerous uncertainties and risk in respect of the final decision on the best LEP to join. These are noted in the report. However the over riding risk is that Cherwell does not get its voice heard because it ends up in the wrong partnership. Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management & Insurance Officer, 01295 221566

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

Cherwell, A District of Opportunity

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Norman Bolster
Portfolio Holder for Economic Development & Estates

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1 Appendix 2	Draft Oxfordshire LEP Bid Draft South East Midlands LEP Bid
Background Papers	
Letter from Vince Cable MP (Secretary of State for Business Innovation & Skills) and Eric Pickles MP (Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government) wrote to all local authorities and business leaders, 29 June 2010	
Report Author	John Hoad, Strategic Director (Planning, Housing & Economy) Philip Clarke, Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development
Contact Information	01295 227980 john.hoad@cherwell-dc.gov.uk 01295 221840 philip.clarke@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

OXFORDSHIRE CITY-REGION ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP
The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for Oxfordshire

Draft Bid for an Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership to the Secretaries of State

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .

1 This bid is made in response to the letter from the Secretaries of State for Business, Investment & Skills and for Communities & Local Government, dated 29 June 2010, inviting local government and business leaders to put forward proposals for local enterprise partnerships (LEPs).

2 Oxfordshire has one of the strongest economies in the South East which is itself the powerhouse of the national economy, contributing £18bn to the exchequer in 2008. Many elements of the economy are world class and globally competitive in areas such as high performance engineering, biotechnology and medical instruments. It also has the potential to achieve comparable strengths in new sectors including a range of green technologies. Maintaining this competitiveness and succeeding in new markets is central to the long term prosperity of the county.

3 We are proposing an Oxfordshire based LEP that will:

(a) Involve the county's most senior public, academic and private sector leaders in articulating a shared vision for the future of the county's economy;
(b) provide the framework in which a smaller public sector works differently with the private sector to realise its full potential for long term wealth creation;
(c) tackle barriers to business growth and innovation;
(d) focus on the development of key sectors that complement national priorities; and
(e) provide an effective interface with national programmes for economic development.

4 We set out our rationale for this being based on Oxfordshire – rather than a larger area - with evidence that Oxfordshire is a classic city region and has specific challenges and opportunities that are different from those of its neighbours and research from the LGA showing that Oxfordshire is a functional economic area in its own right. We have called it, for now, the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership, to emphasise the functional economic area that underpins it.

5 To maximise its impact and address the challenges set out in the Ministers' letter, the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership is asking government to devolve a number of responsibilities from central government, in relation to local place-based budgeting, the development and commissioning of a local skills strategy and for Oxfordshire to act as the local contact point for innovation, investment and business support.

6 In addition, we are proposing that some SEEDA-supported initiatives are retained and funded, such as the successful Oxfordshire Innovation & Growth Team and a local element of Business Link providing networking and local context for Government and international clients**.**

7 Ultimately, we believe that the overlapping economic and administrative geographies, combined with the strength and distinctiveness of what Oxfordshire has to offer, provide an unusually powerful basis for a viable Local Enterprise Partnership that will be able to be operational without undue delay. If we are successful in achieving our vision, the medium to long term outcomes will provide a step change in realising the full potential of Oxfordshire's contribution to the UK economy.

PROPOSAL FOR AN OXFORDSHIRE CITY-REGION ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

8 This bid sets out an analysis of

(a) the very particular strengths of Oxfordshire's economy;
(b) the challenges confronting the Oxfordshire economy and areas of potential change;
(c) aims: what the Oxfordshire City-Region Partnership expects to deliver;
(d) the case for an Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership
(e) variable geometry – working across boundaries and permeability
(f) measuring the success of the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership
(g) improving how we work together
(h) what the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership needs from central government
(i) Annex 1: Proposed Structure of the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership
(j) Annex 2: LGA map evidencing Oxfordshire as a Functional Economic Area

The very particular strengths of Oxfordshire's economy

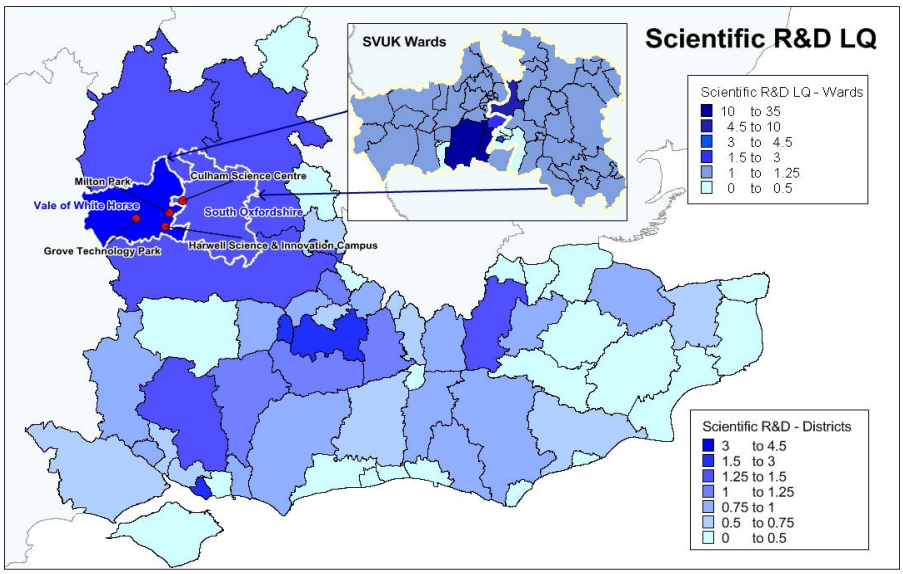
9 Oxford University is rated as the best in Europe or the second best in the world, according to preference. Academic excellence is how most people envision Oxford but the county's offer is far wider:

10 Oxford Brookes University is rated as the best new university in the country;

11 Oxford itself was recently highlighted as one of eight 'buoyant cities' in the latest Centre for Cities report, regarded as "prime candidates for major expansion to support further economic and employment growth".

12 The Science Vale UK area has a concentration of specialised science and technology that is without parallel in the UK and is globally competitive. Its major centres include Harwell, Milton Park and Culham while, overall, the Science Vale area contains 13% of research and development employment in the South East and 4% England.

Figure 1: Location Quotient of Research and Development across the South East: an LQ of 1.0 is average; more than 1.0 shows higher concentrations of R&D



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Source: Science Vale UK, July 2010

13 Harwell Science and Innovation Campus is being developed as a world-class centre for science, innovation and enterprise. Home to the Science and Technology Facilities Council, Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Medical Research Council and European Space Agency Space Centre among others, Harwell has more than 4,500 people working in over 140 organisations comprising large-scale research councils, high technology companies and a range of rapidly growing start-ups.

14 Milton Park is one of Europe's largest multi-use business parks, hosting more than 160 companies which employ around 6,500 people in one of the UK's foremost science communities, with companies of all sizes and ambitions ranging from start-ups to world-class plcs with particular strengths in the bio-tech and ICT sectors.

15 Culham is home to the UK's fusion research programme, known as the Culham Centre for Fusion Energy (CCFE) and the world's largest fusion experimental facility, JET (Joint European Torus).

16 The technology transfer companies of Oxford University (ISIS innovation) is one of the UK's most prolific and best regarded technology transfer companies and of the Science and Technology Facilities Council in Harwell (known as CLIK).

17 Science parks at Milton Park, Begbroke and in Oxford that house a wide range of high-tech businesses and that have the capacity to house further growth in these sectors.

18 Global headquarters and/or principal R&D facilities for world-leading high technology companies such as Oxford Instruments, Siemens MR Magnet Technology, Infineum and Sharp.

19 A medical sector with one of the leading research hospitals in the UK offering patient care, teaching and world class research, allied with a strong healthcare technologies sector.

20 We also have a high concentration of vibrant SMEs, many of them highly innovative and representing spin-outs from the universities. These have great potential to grow and become successful businesses, competing globally in existing and emerging industries.

21 The heartland of the multi-billion pound 'Motorsport Valley', a business cluster with Oxford at its centre. With links to successful firms supplying the global industry throughout the UK, these companies dominate the design and manufacture of components used in the majority of the world's racing categories and develop the leading-edge technology used in Formula One that will eventually be absorbed into mainstream car technologies.

22 The BMW Mini is also manufactured in Oxford, exported globally and with the new pioneering electric Mini being tested in Oxford.

23 Oxfordshire has more publishers than London, including Oxford University Press which is the largest university publisher in the world.

24 The Bicester eco-town will provide a springboard for economic regeneration in Bicester and for the nurturing of a hi-tech, innovative green technology that has the potential to be world class, coupled with an effective working network of interested partners.

25 Defence Academy of the United Kingdom at Shrivenham, responsible for the military's post-graduate education and training and providing the MoD's primary link with UK universities and international military educational institutions.

The challenges confronting the Oxfordshire economy and areas of potential change

26 The challenges facing Oxfordshire are distinctive and need to be addressed if it is to achieve its ambitions. While some are shared with many parts of the UK (demographic change, traffic congestion, housing availability and affordability, pockets of deprivation, pressures to reduce resource consumption and increasing global competition), others are particular to Oxfordshire.

27 Oxfordshire is not performing as well as it should. Our Gross Value Added per head is only average compared to comparable areas in the UK and internationally. The growth in our knowledge intensive economy is slower than our competitors.

28 There are skills shortages and particular concerns about young people aged 16-25 years who are not in education, employment or training

29 In the past, there has been a complacency and resistance to growth, a lack of intensive collaboration and not enough focus on developing the size of companies from small to medium and from medium to large.

30 Oxfordshire's economy is characterised by a large public sector, comprising local government, academic institutions, the health sector, the police and the military with a myriad of public and voluntary bodies. Most of these public sector organisations are large scale. Oxford City, at 46% of its workforce, has the highest proportion of any district in England in public administration, education and health sectors. Public sector spending cuts are going to lead to a significant reduction in the public sector economy which is likely to reduce its employment and GVA growth relative to its neighbours.

Figure 2: GVA forecasts by county 2010 to 20015

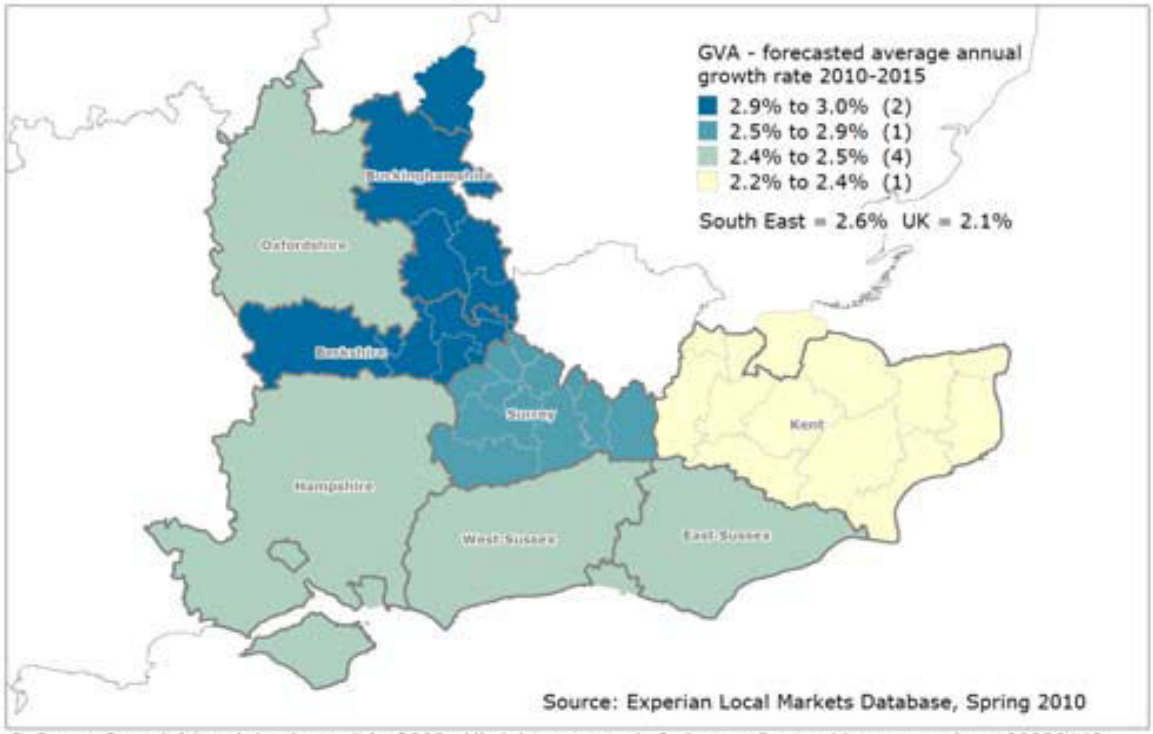

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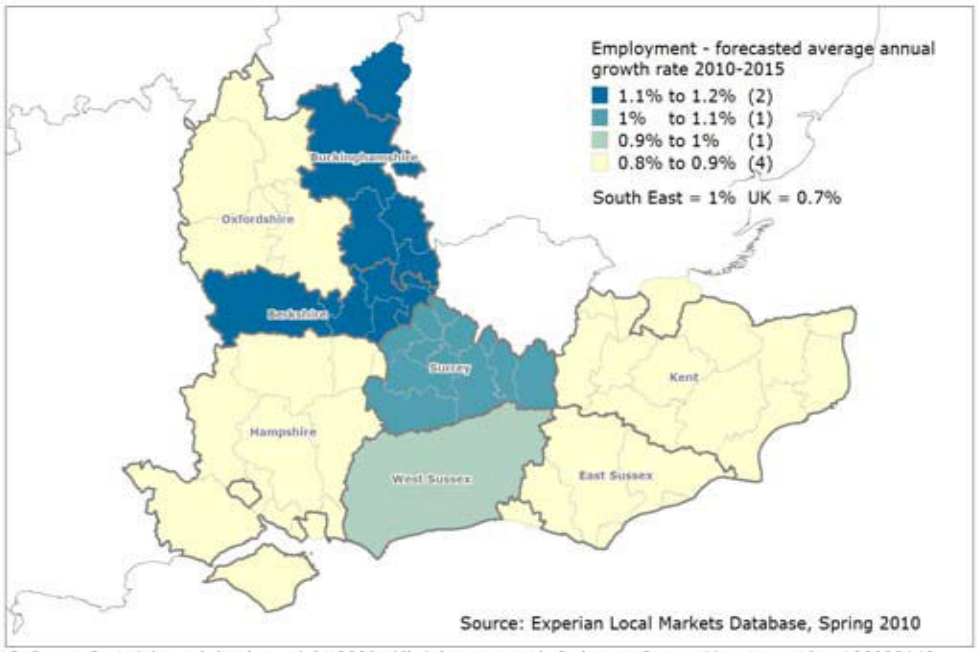
Figure 3: Total employment, forecast for 2010-2015



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31 By contrast, the private sector includes many small enterprises, with a lower proportion of medium sized and large businesses than comparable areas. BMW and Unipart are probably the largest private sector employers, employing several thousand people in Oxfordshire but the vast majority of businesses employ less than 20 staff. Each scale of enterprise faces particular challenges to creating growth.

32 The very strength of the Oxfordshire economy and the quality of its environment creates both a complacency that the county's future prosperity can be taken for granted and a tension between those pushing for economic development and those concerned about the effects of growth on the environment. As a result, Oxfordshire has not been seen to be sufficiently welcoming to business and has failed either to nurture its existing businesses or to promote itself to new investors. These tensions are often played out in the arena of the planning system that is seen by many in business as a barrier and by others as failing to protect the environment.

33 Oxfordshire's existing strengths mean that it has the potential to succeed globally in the years to come. We need to do much more to generate new and growing businesses, to increase employment opportunities and to increase investment and exports fundamental to the UK's economic recovery.

34 The emergence of new markets**:** Issues such as climate change, resource shortages and broadband infrastructure, are creating new forms of demand for new products including, for example, better insulation, cheaper and cleaner energy and faster broadband in hard-to-reach communities. Oxfordshire has the capacity to pioneer the development of new markets in response to these changes by bringing together its range and intensity of science and technology, its success in spinning out innovative and high growth businesses and its ability to connect these to supply chains linked to world and market leaders. Making new markets and obtaining first-mover advantages in them will be vital to remaining competitive in the future.

35 With a smaller public sector with fewer resources making public-private sector partnerships work will require new ways of working. The Oxfordshire City-Region

Enterprise Partnership will demonstrate a structure in which a smaller public sector can work differently but to greater effect to enable the private sector to achieve its full potential.

Aims: What the Oxfordshire City-Region LEP expects to deliver

36 Delivering a step change**:** The Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership will provide a level of leadership from business, academic and local government partners not sufficiently mobilised in the past, to articulate the county's ambitions, raise awareness of what needs to be done to address its challenges, to overcome barriers and promote the county to the outside world.

37 Strategic Leadership – acting on the voice of business**:** Breaking down traditional barriers to growth and ensuring that the right support mechanisms are in place when they are needed.

38 Focus on key priorities**:** Using the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership to act as the catalyst for realising Oxfordshire's potential will require prioritisation of key issues rather than trying to do everything. Thus we aim to focus on the five key priorities below. Among these, some are national level responsibilities but our experience has shown they also need local articulation if they are to succeed:

(a) Supporting innovation and growth including facilitating access to investment;
(b) Infrastructure investment;
(c) Addressing skills deficiencies;
(d) Business support provision;
(e) Tackling specific barriers to business growth, identified by business, by building on successful existing initiatives. See Annex 1, paragraph 7 for details.

39 Focusing on key sectors for global competitiveness: To make the greatest impact, we propose focusing initially on areas where we have existing strengths and where our analysis has shown that there is potential for growth and global competitiveness. These key sectors would be for discussion and confirmation at the first Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership meetings but could be:

(a) Low Carbon/Green Technology;
(b) Advanced Materials and Engineering; and
(c) Science and other High Tech where Oxfordshire are world leaders, such as health care, cryogenics, etc.

40 Other sectors, including retail, creative and cultural industries, tourism and the visitor economy, the military and the voluntary, community & faith sectors are all critical in terms of employment, providing as they do the bedrock of many SMEs and an essential part of what makes Oxfordshire such an attractive place to live and work. The strengths of Oxfordshire's military sector (for example the forthcoming expansion of Brize Norton), the variety of its creative and cultural industries and heritage offer (including Blenheim Palace and the concentration of historic buildings in Oxford) and the quality of its environment are all assets that make Oxfordshire such an attractive place to live and work and as such are vital to the county's future strength. The Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership will keep these sectors under review but recognises the need to focus on the key drivers for innovation and wealth creation.

The case for an Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership

41 Purpose before geography and structure**:** Based on this analysis, the proposal considers the geography, functions and structures of the Local Enterprise Partnership necessary to ensure that its aims are effectively delivered. While the invitation letter from the two Secretaries of State suggests that Local Enterprise Partnerships will

comprise groups of upper tier authorities, the case is made here for an Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership designed to address the particular challenges and opportunities facing the county

42 Oxfordshire's particular opportunities and challenges: An Oxfordshire-based LEP enables us to address the particular opportunities and challenges that are critical to the county achieving its ambitions. This scale of geography is supported by recent evidence from Experian showing that Oxfordshire's prospects are quite distinct from those of its neighbours and therefore need solutions that are particular to its circumstances rather than adapted to the needs of other areas such as the Thames Valley. See Figures 2 and 3 above for details.

43 The Oxfordshire City-Region as a functional economic area: There is considerable evidence[1], based on a range of criteria, that Oxfordshire is a functional economic area in its own right. See Figure 4 below for the LGA's "best fit' map showing the administrative boundaries of Oxfordshire are the closest fit to such an area, based on travel to work patterns, economic performance, markets and infrastructure. It has the historic City of Oxford at its heart and a hinterland of strong market towns and villages around it. Several of those towns have significant populations and economies in their own right. In the south of the county is a distinctive area that is particularly strong in research that forms the 'Science Vale UK' and, in the north, there is a strong manufacturing presence in Banbury and Bicester.

Figure 4: LGA Map evidencing Oxfordshire as a Functional Economic Area

[1] LGA research: ***prosperous communities II – vive la devolution!*** February 2007, http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/aio/21918

OXFORDSHIRE CITY-REGION ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP
The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for Oxfordshire

44 Successful working relations on which to build**:** Existing working arrangements are already pushing beyond traditional boundaries to improve the framework for growth. The Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership will build on these strengths with new ways of working and stronger leadership. The existing structures on which we are building include:

(a) **The Oxfordshire Economic Partnership** has been strengthened in recent years and has played a key role in the establishment of a Destination Management Organisation for Oxford & Oxfordshire and the Oxfordshire Innovation and Growth Team that brings together key organisations involved in providing business support to innovative and high growth businesses. It has helped bring together organisations involved in skills, and developed the quality of the county's inward investment offer. Its Horizons and Futures events have engaged a wide range of businesses in thinking about issues facing the Oxfordshire economy and it has taken on the hosting of the business directory and Oxfordshire Business Enterprise that organises volunteers to provide mentoring to small businesses. Its Task Groups have mobilised a small army of business leaders in working on a range of issues including skills, business support, broadband, tourism and the green economy.

(b) **OxfordshireinBusiness** has brought together the business representative organisations operating in the county (FSB, IoD, the Oxfordshire Town Chambers Network, the Oxfordshire Chamber of Commerce and the CBI) to work collectively rather than in competition with each other.

(c) **Oxford Inspires** which, since its creation, has pulled together all parts of the creative and cultural industries sector and is in the process of integrating its activities with the Destination Management Organisation for Oxford & Oxfordshire in promoting the visitor economy.

(d) **Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership's development of a Local Infrastructure Plan** – selected as a vanguard pilot for the 'single conversation' with the Homes and Communities Agency, Oxfordshire's Local Investment Agreement was one of the first in the country, used not only as a model for others in areas of two-tier local government but also as the basis for strategic allocation of infrastructure investment across the county. The capacity to do this came from the Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership that has the potential to provide business with an effective interlocutor on issues related to planning, housing and transport issues.

(e) **Collaborative development of the Oxfordshire Economic Assessment** – conducted in a public–private sector collaboration ahead of the statutory duty and providing the first class evidence base informing this Local Enterprise Partnership proposal.

(f) **Networking with attitude -** up to 80 different business events and groups across the county are all involved in bringing together the people needed for business success. The events range from a variety of breakfast, lunch and dinner meetings, to several business awards, the annual meeting of a 1,000 innovators, investors and entrepreneurs at Venturefest, investment networks and the largest university enterprise club in the world (Oxford University's 'Oxford Entrepreneurs').

45 The fact that we can build on these existing structures and strengths means that we can avoid duplication and implement the LEP sooner rather than later and that the administrative and governance overheads will be considerably reduced. This will avoid

the danger involved in a larger geography that requires the creation of exactly the sort of unwieldy and expensive structures that inhibited growth and led to the abolition of regional structures.

Variable Geometry - Working across boundaries and permeability

46 Whatever boundaries are drawn around a LEP, it is clear that, for many businesses, local administrative boundaries are irrelevant and it will be necessary to work across them. The economy of the Oxfordshire City-Region includes parts of clusters and supply chains that stretch well beyond the county – some to neighbouring areas, others to partners based in all parts of the world. Improving how the LEP engages with these areas will be part of its objectives. Sector-based working groups of the LEP will look along the length of supply chains in developing policies to support businesses in the county.

47 It is recognised that there will need to be permeability of our LEP at the edges, where members of the LEP or the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership itself may wish to cooperate with neighbouring LEPs on specific business-sector initiatives. Local authority members will actively facilitate businesses needs for cross boundary working beyond the limits of the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership.

Measuring the success of the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership

48 Outcomes**:** Oxfordshire is not growing as fast as its neighbours in terms of gross value added per head, business volume and employment. It therefore follows that these need to provide the basis by which the success of the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership will be judged. Nevertheless the measurement of these outcomes is not straight forward (measures of Gross Value Added, for example, are both complex and slow – the data is only available two years after the event) so it will be necessary to monitor a range of data to provide more timely feedback on performance. Metrics will cover:

(a) Improved Skills**:** the skills of the workforce and of students entering the workforce need to be improved but so also do the soft skills (such as behaviours, attitudes and motivation) necessary to release their full potential.

(b) Increased business stock**:** the numbers of new businesses, particularly in high growth, high tech businesses, their survival and growth and their success in becoming medium- sized and large businesses.

(c) Increased inward investment**:** capturing information about the investment of new businesses coming to Oxfordshire and the investment of existing foreign-owned businesses. While central government has claimed this to be a role for Whitehall, we are conscious of the need to compete with other regions within the United Kingdom and globally and we believe Oxfordshire must develop its own capacity to compete for inward investment on the basis that others are unlikely to do it for us.

(d) Wider Next Generation Access (NGA) Broadband coverage**:** there are existing maps of the expected coverage of superfast and NGA broadband. Measuring Oxfordshire's coverage against this base line will provide a way of assessing the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership's contribution.

(e) New markets developed**:** capturing case studies that demonstrate success and share learning about the processes and successes in creating new markets that can realise the potential that Oxfordshire has to offer.

Improving how we work together

49 To deliver this proposition, discussions have been held with the two universities at vice-chancellor level; with the five district councils at leader level, with the Further Education sector at principal level; with Oxfordshire businesses of all sizes at senior management level and with the full range of bodies representing the business sector in Oxfordshire.

50 At an early stage, senior business people who had expressed interest have been engaged in the drafting of the bid and have fed in as it has developed. This has helped to develop a sense of ownership of the bid by the business sector, local government and the Oxfordshire academic sector. The bid has the support of the academic institutions, businesses and business representative organisations and local government listed at the end of the document [to be inserted before submission].

51 Out of this process and in addition to the particular objectives around wealth creation, some important principles to improve how we work together have emerged:

(a) The Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership has to work for all of its stakeholders in business, local authorities, academia and other sectors;

(b) Business representation has to reflect different sectors and sizes of business because they face different issues; and

(c) The Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership must add value by building on what exists and bringing disparate initiatives together while also facilitating and enabling the work of others rather than trying to do everything itself.

What the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership needs from government.

52 Local Enterprise Partnerships are very new and the details of how they will work are still evolving. In this context, Oxfordshire has considered what it needs from government for our Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership to succeed.

53 Realising the potential of place-based budgeting. We believe strongly that many decisions are best taken at a local level and that our national economic performance has been held back by an over-centralised state. Given the tightening of public expenditure over the medium term, we believe significant savings are possible through place-based budgeting which devolves funding to local democratically accountable bodies while retaining a line of accountability to Parliament for funds it has voted to that locality. This could and should apply to funding for affordable housing and local transport schemes.

54 Skills funding and responsibilities**.** Government has decided to create a national organisation responsible for procuring and funding skills provision. Given the centrality of skills to the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership, it will be important for it to articulate its skills priorities in the form of an *annual statement of need* to feed into the work of that new organisation as they move through commissioning and procurement from education providers. The statement would provide the vehicle to articulate local need, support provider planning and inform learners of the economic prospects relating to the training opportunities available.

55 It will be important to establish good linkage between Oxfordshire and national initiatives such as the innovation and investment roles of the Technology Strategy Board and Business Link that have been reserved to central government.

56 Pump priming funding: The allocation of relatively small budgets to the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership to support its priorities will be essential in the

areas of providing support to innovative and high growth businesses and for the commissioning and procurement of training for those most disadvantaged or those who are least attractive to the provider market. Funding would be based on outcomes rather than outputs. The cost effectiveness of the current Oxfordshire Innovation and Growth Team which helped local businesses raise £26 million of investment in the last four months illustrates just how much can be achieved in Oxfordshire but we do need to preserve the basic infrastructure to keep this working.

Proposed structure of the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership

57 It is proposed to have three levels of engagement for local government, the local economy and academic partners. See Annex 1 for our initial governance arrangements but, in summary, these are:

(a) Oxfordshire City-Region Forum: meeting as a 'supervisory board' of 'shareholders' that engages and holds the City-Region Board to account. The forum will help articulate the opportunities, ambitions and challenges facing Oxfordshire in a way that drives improvements among those responsible for its delivery, engages Oxfordshire residents in debate about the challenges they face and promotes the county to the wider world. The size of this forum/supervisory board is not fixed but it is imperative that its members include the senior business, academic and local government leaders who have not all been sufficiently involved as corporate citizens of Oxfordshire to-date. This is a key part of the added value that the LEP will deliver.

(b) Oxfordshire City-Region Board: an executive board, accountable to the Forum and responsible for delivery of various areas of work. The size will be limited to keep it effective but will contain representative of different parts of the private, academic and public sectors. The board will fulfil a role equivalent to the directors of a private sector business.

(c) Oxfordshire City-Region Special Purpose Vehicles: Sector Groups, Area Strategy Groups, the public sector Spatial Planning & Infrastructure Group and Delivery Groups as necessary where particular areas of work are undertaken and where businesses are involved because of their very direct relevance in shaping the strategic direction of the county.

Expressions of support

58 This Bid has the support of:

Sector	Signatory	Organisation
Academic		
Private		
Public		

ANNEX 1: GOVERNANCE

This Annex is put forward in response to interest around governance from a number of partners and to promote a debate about possible outcomes. This is not the most critical area for a LEP but it is one that can consume energy and time before real issues are addressed. The purpose in putting forward some proposals is not to seek to establish a structure "in stone" but to identify areas that require debate and resolution. We hope to refine these arrangements as proposals become reality and there are a number of open questions posed throughout the annex. As per the Executive Summary, we will take a 'try it; fix it' approach.

Proposed structure of the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership

1 It is proposed to have three levels of engagement for local government, the local economy and academic partners. These are:

(a) Oxfordshire City-Region Forum (or Supervisory Board): We would expect that the Forum acts as the reviewing body of the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership, essentially acting as "shareholders" of a supervisory or non-executive board providing guidance, review and accountability oversight of the executive Oxfordshire City-Region Board.

The Forum will normally meet three times per annum for no more than two hours per meeting. The added value of the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership compared with previous structures will depend on these leaders being involved in the Forum, in person, rather than by a delegate. This is a big ask but it is at the core of the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership's success.

We have an open view on the size of this Forum. It can be as big as the list of people wishing to join it who satisfy some basic membership criteria to be agreed by the sponsoring members. We anticipate decisions should be taken by consensus and believe that resort to the voting rules would demonstrate a failure of the partnership. .

(b) Oxfordshire City-Region Board: This Executive Board will be accountable to the Forum and be responsible for managing the Groups proposed below. It will need to be large enough to represent the diversity of local government, academic institutions and the business community but small enough to be effective. For the business community it will need to be inclusive of large, medium and small businesses; of different sectors and of different geographies. We would suggest it should be limited to 12-14 members (see below) and with the chairman of the Forum to be the chairman of the Board. In essence, the Board represents the "directors" of this body. Further suggestions for the Board are set out below (see paragraphs 2-6 below).

It is anticipated that the Chairman and Vice Chairmen of the Executive Board would be part of the Supervisory Forum, however it is an open question as to whether other members of the Executive would also be members of the Forum without compromising the respective supervisory and executive roles of the two bodies. One possibility is that the business representative organisations are on both bodies in recognition of the wide membership that they represent.

(c) Oxfordshire City-Region Sector Groups, Area Strategy Groups, the public sector Spatial Planning & Infrastructure Group and Delivery Groups: These are where much of the work is done and where participants "roll up their shirt

sleeves" and give of their time to improve our economic offer. We suggest that four types of these Groups should operate beneath the Board:

- Sector Groups: focussing on sectors where Oxfordshire has an existing competitive edge on which to build:

  (i) Low Carbon/Green Technology
  (ii) Advanced Materials and Engineering
  (iii) Science and other High Tech

- Area Groups: that mobilise stakeholders in a particular are based on:

  (i) In and around the City of Oxford
  (ii) Science Vale UK
  (iii) Northern Oxfordshire: Bicester Vision and Banbury

- Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP):

  A member-led body, sponsored by the County Council and comprising county and district councillors with Homes and Communities Agency and Department for Transport representatives attending. Its role is, and will remain, to aggregate the Local Development Frameworks of the five Oxfordshire District Councils and to plan for the resulting infrastructure requirements across the county. This is likely to be increasingly important as the coalition government's planning reforms are implemented.

- Delivery Groups:

  Distinct individual groups, both existing and future as appropriate and including, for example, the Destination Management Organisation for Oxford & Oxfordshire and the Oxfordshire Innovation & Growth Team.

The Oxfordshire City-Region Board: Structures, Membership and Functions

2 The function of the Oxfordshire City-Region Board is to provide strategic leadership on a joint basis between the business and public sectors. It should 'own' the shared vision for the Oxfordshire City-Region and should be the Executive which ensures progress in delivering that vision.

3 The Board will adopt a 'try-it; fix-it' approach, responding to changes in circumstances quickly to ensure opportunities for wealth creation are realised wherever possible.

4 To provide effective leadership, the Board will be limited in number – ideally no more than 14 members, perhaps as follows:

- 1 x Chairman (from the private sector)
- 1 x County Council
- 2 x District Council
- 2 x Higher Education sector (University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes)
- 1 x Further Education sector
- 2 x Business Representative Organisations (potentially one representing small business interests, the other larger companies)
- 5 x Other private sector covering priority sectors including innovation and growth

5 Standing orders for the Board will provide for:

(a) To meet at least every two months; all meetings to be held in public with papers circulated 7 working days in advance and available via a website; minutes to be publicly available within 10 working days of the meeting taking place;

(b) Decisions to be made on a consensual basis with the business Chairman to have a casting vote if necessary.

(c) The business Chairman to be supported by 3 Vice-Chairman (one each from the private sector, public sector and academia) – the role of the Vice-Chairmen being to support the Chairman and, with the Chairman, to provide a basis for responding rapidly in exceptional circumstances;

(d) Individuals nominated to serve on the Board for a 2-year period; eligible to serve more than one term on the Board. 50% of the Board will be up for election each year, meaning that there will always be new input while providing for some continuity;

(e) The Board to have the ability to invite experts and/or other partners to address meetings where they would bring added value to the debate;

(f) The Board to have the ability to establish 'task and finish' delivery groups to examine specific issues with a view to making recommendations to the Board and to 'commission' work from any of the delivery groups;

(g) The Board to have the ability to challenge the public sector where it is seen as impeding the growth of the private sector.

Funding and operational capacity of the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership

6 The Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership will be supported by a small secretariat that will facilitate the partnership meetings while encouraging its members to engage with and contribute to particular activities. The Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership will minimise its own operational role in favour of supporting and promoting that of its members. Funding for particular programmes will be sought from external sources such as the Regional Growth Fund and European sources in line with the aims of the Oxfordshire City-Region Enterprise Partnership.

7 Examples of the existing and planned initiatives that illustrate the capacity of partnership members to provide a collective operational capacity include:

(a) OxfordshireinBusiness that brings together all the business representative organisations operating in Oxfordshire

(b) TBAC and Oxfordshire Business Enterprise (OBE), providing business mentoring to start ups;

(c) Fredericks Oxfordshire providing loan funding to businesses that can't access bank funding;

(d) ProOxford that brings together the county's professional service organisations;

(e) Oxfordshire business directory that provides a publicly available directory of the county's businesses;

(f) Oxfordshire Town Chambers Network that links all the very local businesses together effectively;

(g) Venturefest that brings together innovators, investors and entrepreneurs to facilitate the development of new high tech businesses.

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Draft Response to Letter of 29th June

RT Hon Eric Pickles MP
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

RT Hon Dr Vince Cable MP
Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills

Local Enterprise Partnerships

We are pleased to respond to your letter of 29th June and are submitting a proposal to develop a business-led Local Enterprise Partnership – South East Midlands. This partnership will build on the existing successful partnership between local authorities, working across the previous three regional boundaries, that has delivered significant growth in jobs and homes since 2003. The area includes local economies that are judged to be well placed to stimulate further enterprise and innovation and lead future national economic growth.

Vision

The shared vision for the area is of a competitive knowledge economy supported by first class transport and digital connectivity that generates wealth and inward investment.

This vision builds on the existing track record of partnership working, our strategic location between London and the West Midlands and our current strengths in advanced technology and precision engineering. We want to look to the future and create the right conditions for businesses to grow and prosper, winning exports and reducing the share of public sector employment.

Realising this vision would make the South East Midlands a key UK investment location, where partnerships between businesses, higher education institutions and further education colleges underpin economic growth.

Economic Geography

At the core of this proposal are the four unitary authorities of Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes with the addition of Aylesbury Vale district council in Buckinghamshire and Cherwell district in Oxfordshire. Northampton Borough, South Northamptonshire, Kettering and Corby have also indicated that they would like to work closely with this partnership as there is much business engagement between Northampton and its surrounding area and Milton Keynes. There are strong links between South Northamptonshire and Aylesbury Vale, not least because they share the Silverstone race circuit.

The South East Midlands LEP covers a population of around 1.5 million people and 62,500 businesses Together they account for 3.2% of the English economy. A map is attached, which shows the area of the proposed South East Midlands LEP and how it links to surrounding areas.

This proposal is based on a real functional economy whose principal strengths are common sectors of:

- High Performance Engineering;
- Avionics;
- Advanced Manufacturing;
- Information and Computer technology;
- Logistics;
- Business Services;
- Creative Industries.

The area benefits from shared assets including high quality and diverse Higher Education establishments such as University of Bedfordshire, University of Northampton, University Centre at Milton Keynes and Aylesbury, Cranfield University, University of Buckingham and the Open University.

There is a high incidence of commuting between the major conurbations of Aylesbury, Bedford, Bicester, Milton Keynes, Luton and Northampton. There is already a strong network of working relationships amongst businesses and local authorities. The LEP will work across local authority boundaries and with other LEPs to suit the needs of businesses.

Structure and Functions

The local authority partners and businesses will agree a legal form for the partnership with tightly focussed priorities. One option that is being considered is that of a company limited by guarantee. This would provide an effective structure with which businesses are familiar and comfortable. It is envisaged that the Board members will be evenly split between local authority and business leaders. We have already had offers of support from many key businesses. A number of letters are attached. The Board will appoint a Chair from amongst the Business representatives.

The LEP will be a strategic enabler – enhancing local delivery. We envisage that it would play a key role in the strategic planning of transport and other infrastructure. It will seek to use the limited private and public and private resources to meet priorities across the area of the partnership.

The expected outcomes of the partnership will include more business start-ups, sustainable growth of existing businesses and increased levels of investment. This will require building on existing and developing new skills, driving forward knowledge transfer and innovation in our businesses.

How do we want to work with Government?

We want the necessary legislation to empower the Local Enterprise Partnership to fulfil its strategic role. We would ideally want some resources from Central Government to help establish the Partnership structure and to pump prime private sector investment. However, we believe that ours will be a small efficient organisation, which will soon demonstrate its value for money and effectiveness and so gain financial support locally.

We want to work closely with Government as thinking develops so that we can ensure that policies support business, for example, by reducing regulation and supporting apprenticeships.

In conclusion

This Local Enterprise Partnership is for us - our businesses need it and want to lead it. We are looking to develop something new and exciting – bottom up not top down – that will take us into the future. In short we want to grow a vibrant diverse economy that will enable new communities to flourish and the regeneration of existing communities. We are also in a strong position to move forward quickly and have an immediate impact.

We are looking forward to developing this proposal over the next few months so that we have our Partnership structures in place by April 2011. We hope that it will be possible to make bids to the Regional Growth Fund whilst operating as a shadow LEP. We already have a number of good value for money strategic projects that were identified in the earlier work carried out in this area.

This proposal, which is set out in more detail in the attached document, has been developed in equal partnership by local authorities and the business community with strong support from the Higher Education and training institutions and the voluntary sector. We held a successful event at Cranfield University on 25th August, which we believe marked the beginning of a new approach to business-led partnership working in this area that will help us to realise our economic potential.

Yours sincerely

List of signatories to be confirmed

Councillor Cec Tallack
Mayor Dave Hodgson
Councillor Tricia Turner
Councillor Roy Davis

Councillor John Cartwright
Councillor Brian Hoare
Councillor John Hoad

Rita Spada Milton Keynes and North Bucks Chamber of Commerce
Brian Hibbert Bedfordshire and Luton Chamber of Commerce
Brian White FSB
Jonathan Bailey IoD
Cheryl Smart Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce
Alan Banks
Roger Talbot
Ian Cording FSB
Ben Jackson

South East Midlands

Local Enterprise Partnership

Innovation for Sustainable Prosperity

Proposition and Outline Business Case

The Local Enterprise Partnership includes (**all of below to be confirmed**):

Partner local authorities:

Bedford Borough	Central Bedfordshire	Luton Borough
Milton Keynes	Aylesbury Vale District	Cherwell District
Northampton Borough	South Northamptonshire	Corby Borough
Kettering District		

Partner business organisations:

Milton Keynes & North Bucks Chamber of Commerce	North Buckinghamshire Institute of Directors	Milton Keynes Federation of Small Businesses
Bedfordshire and Luton Chamber of Commerce	North Bedfordshire Business Leaders	

A selection of supporting businesses:

London Luton Airport	Cranfield University	VW Financial Services
NHBC	Hampton Brook	Barrett Strategic
Taylor Wimpey		

Specific roles and remits explored herein are subject to the availability of funding and complement and respect the statutory roles of local authorities.

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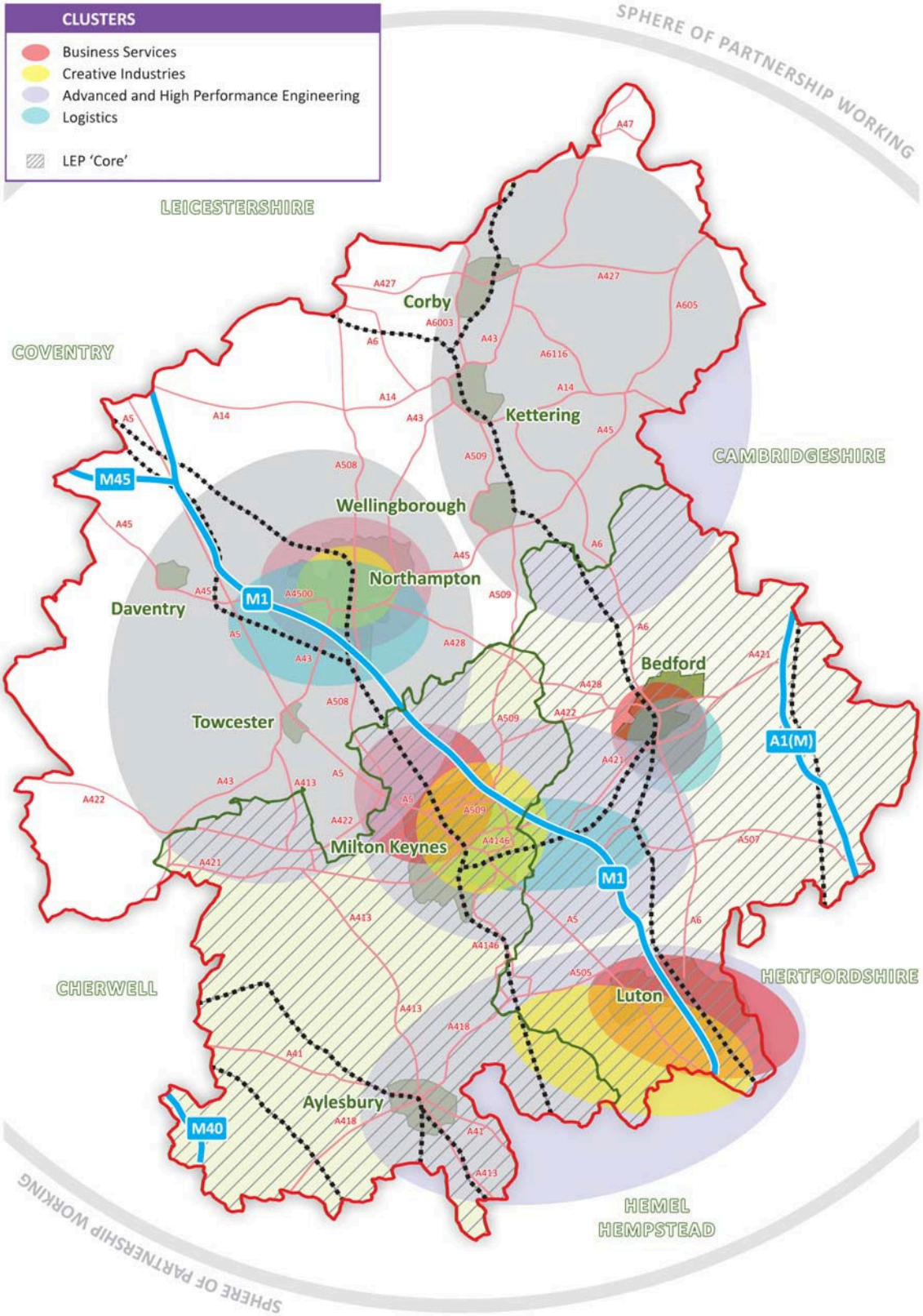
CLUSTERS
Business Services
Creative Industries
Advanced and High Performance Engineering
Logistics
LEP 'Core'
SPHERE OF PARTNERSHIP WORKING
LEICESTERSHIRE
COVENTRY
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
HERTFORDSHIRE
CHERWELL
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
Corby
Kettering
Wellingborough
Northampton
Daventry
Towcester
Bedford
Milton Keynes
Luton
Aylesbury
M45
M1
M40
A1(M)

Summary table of Actions and Interventions			
Objectives	**Actions**	**Supporting Interventions**	**Dialogue with Government**
high levels of economic success	balance housing development and planning with employment growth (6.1)	bringing forward strategic sites for private sector development, with funding streams to support infrastructure (6.3.1 & 6.3.4)	exploring funding to incentivise development, including tax incremental funding and the new homes bonus scheme
high levels of knowledge intensity	promote access to next generation digital communications (6.6)	develop a shared understanding of the local economy and its needs (5.1.1)	transitional arrangements for 2011/12 to realign and devolve skills funding and commissioning to the LEP area
a diverse industry base including distinctive specialist niches	target enterprise support to grow diverse and successful businesses (5.3)	creating a habitat for business growth with a single portfolio of services and access to finance (5.3.1, 5.3.2 & 7.1).	new ways of working with Government agencies, in particular UKTI, on inward investment
universities supporting local industries built on research strengths, knowledge transfer and the retention of graduates	place locally-provided higher and further education at the heart of the future growth (4.5)	access innovation and growth through collaborative research with higher education institutions (5.1.3)	developing a common set of environmental standards across the LEP
strong communications and transport infrastructure, including by air, rail and road	align area-wide strategic transport and infrastructure planning (6.2 & 6.3)	a forum for discussion on strategic land use planning and infrastructure priorities (6.2.4)	widening rural access to next generation broadband
an attractive sustainable offer to investors and individuals alike	support the transition to a low carbon economy (6.4)	agree common standards to inform locally-owned Green Business Plans (6.4.4)	allowing a shadow LEP to make bids to the Regional Growth Fund to support sustainable enterprise
low unemployment and high skills levels	develop LEP-wide apprenticeship schemes, and an adult skills strategy to direct funding (8.1 & 8.2)	work with JCP and DWP to co-commission employment interventions to support long-term unemployed (8.2.1)	financial incentives for businesses to offer apprenticeships
sharing the benefits of economic growth	develop social enterprises and community organisations as important local employers (8.3)	train Government-funded Community Organisers, and access funds for deprived neighbourhoods (8.3.3)	enabling surrounding areas to join the LEP at a later point in time

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1 Summary

1.1 The South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) will be an equal partnership between local government and the private sector. It will provide a forum for the strategic local leadership necessary to transform prospects for employment and the economy through private sector growth.

1.2 It has a shared vision of, "a diverse and competitive knowledge economy with first class infrastructure and high growth, built on private sector strengths and job creation in partnership with local authorities."

1.3 Realising this vision would make the South East Midlands the best place in Britain work, live and do business, where partnerships with businesses,[1] higher education institutions and further education colleges stimulate exports, create jobs and underpin economic growth.

1.4 The vision draws on local partnership working, expertise in technology development and the ability to attract investment to improve productivity, increase economic competitiveness and tackle exclusion.

1.5 The partner local authorities and businesses aim to make the South East Midlands a National Centre of Excellence for advanced technologies and precision engineering.[2]

1.6 There are key strategic transport links between Milton Keynes, Northampton, Bedford, Luton and Aylesbury. These include the M1, A1, A5 and A6 and the west coast mainline and midland mainline. The area has a valuable place on the "innovation triangle" formed by the university centres of Oxford, Cambridge and London and has an identifiable knowledge intensive corridor, containing important educational institutions.[3]

1.7 The Local enterprise Partnership will be a close fit with the area's functional economic geography and resolve the long-standing frustration of regional boundaries that do not match local circumstances. At the core of this proposal are the four unitary authorities of Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale district council in Buckinghamshire, with the addition of Cherwell in Oxfordshire and the Borough of Northampton.

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[1] Businesses include social enterprises and third sector employers, universities and further education colleges.
[2] Including environmental and low carbon technology, high performance engineering, motorsport, aerospace, automotive manufacturing and sustainable construction. See Annex D for further details.
[3] See section 4.4

1.8 South Northamptonshire, Kettering and Corby have also indicated that they would like to work closely with this partnership. There are strong links between South Northamptonshire and Aylesbury Vale, not least because they share the Silverstone race circuit. There is also much business engagement between Northampton and its surrounds and Milton Keynes.

1.9 These areas share a common desire for economic growth building on the key sectors of advanced technology and precision engineering, business services, logistics, food manufacturing, life sciences, bio-technologies and the creative industries. In recent years, these and other local authorities have worked in partnership to absorb growth in a sustainable manner, drawing in infrastructure funding to support a growing urban-rural community. This history gives us confidence in the added value of this LEP proposal.

1.10 The South East Midlands has the characteristics to support private sector jobs growth. The area has a population of over 1.5 million people and 62,500 businesses. Together they account for 3.2% of the English economy. Overall the LEP area is growing 10% faster than the rest of the British economy,[4] creating a critical mass that brings together a full portfolio of assets and delivery capacity as a collective offer to businesses and central government.

1.11 Partner authorities and businesses will play a transformational role by:

- attracting and encouraging enterprise and business formation;
- aligning transport and infrastructure planning with national investment;
- encouraging cross-boundary green infrastructure development, climate change adaptation, carbon reductions and health and wellbeing;
- tackling shared challenges of low skills, productivity and employment especially among disadvantaged neighbourhoods and groups;
- providing transitional and shadow arrangements for critical functions during the transition from Regional Development Agencies;[5]
- coordinating strong and focused bids for the Regional Growth Fund.

1.12 The LEP partner authorities and businesses will agree a legal form for the partnership with tightly focused priorities. Within a pyramid structure business and local authorities will nominate an equal number of members to the LEP Board. The Chair will be chosen from the private sector members of the Board.

[4] SQW, 2009
[5] For example, this would include ensuring access to European funding through 2011/12.

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2 Partnership Vision and Objectives

2.1 2030 Vision

2.1.1 The South East Midlands will provide a forum for the strategic local leadership over the next twenty years to transform prospects for employment and the economy through private sector growth.

2.1.2 It has a shared vision of, "a diverse and competitive knowledge economy with first class infrastructure and high growth, built on private sector strengths and job creation in partnership with local authorities."

2.1.3 Realising this vision would make the South East Midlands the best place in Britain work, live and do business, where partnerships with businesses, higher education institutions and further education colleges stimulate exports, create jobs and underpin economic growth.

2.1.4 To meet this vision the LEP partner authorities and businesses will:

- build on our their shared economic strengths;
- create the right conditions for economic growth; and
- stimulate enterprise and innovation.

2.2 Aims and Objectives

2.2.1 The South East Midlands aims to become the **National Centre of Excellence** for advanced technologies and precision engineering, including environmental and low carbon technology, high performance engineering, motorsport, aerospace, automotive and sustainable construction.[6]

2.2.2 This aim is underpinned by cross-boundary **priority objectives** include supporting business investment and private sector job growth with:

- high levels of economic success
- high levels of knowledge intensity
- a diverse industry base including distinctive specialist niches
- universities supporting local industries built on research strengths, knowledge transfer and the retention of graduates
- strong communications infrastructure and first class local and national transport links, including by air, rail and road
- an attractive sustainable place investors and individuals alike

[6] See Annex D for sector details

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2.2.3 To support these objectives the LEP partner authorities and businesses will work jointly to catalyse local activities that:[7]

- balance housing development and planning with employment growth
- align area-wide strategic transport and infrastructure planning
- support the transition to a low carbon economy
- develop leisure and the visitor economy
- produce innovative forward-funding models to support regeneration
- promote access to next generation digital communications
- target enterprise support to grow diverse and successful businesses

2.2.4 The partner authorities and businesses will work together to find ways to tackle unemployment, reduce skills gaps and ensure that all areas benefit from economic growth with locally-led actions to:[8]

- develop opportunities for young people and adults to gain work skills and apprenticeship placements
- target neighbourhoods and groups who are most disadvantaged and in need of extra support
- work with community organisers and groups and not-for-profit organisations to help the voluntary sector and social enterprises develop as important local employers and access development funding from the Government's planned Big Society Bank.

2.2.5 To support the development of the LEP, partner authorities and businesses would like to provide a forum for a meaningful dialogue with Government, among other things, on:

- enabling surrounding areas to join the LEP at a later point in time
- financial incentives for businesses to offer apprenticeships
- widening rural access to next generation broadband
- exploring all forms of funding to incentivise development, including tax incremental funding and the new homes bonus scheme
- new ways of working with Government agencies, in particular UKTI, on inward investment
- transitional arrangements for 2011/12 to start the realignment and devolution of skills funding and commissioning to the LEP area
- allowing a shadow LEP to make bids to the Regional Growth Fund to support sustainable business growth

[7] The points listed here are the subjects of chapters 6 and 7
[8] The points listed here are the subject of chapter 8

3 Strategic Leadership

3.1 Why have an LEP?

3.1.1 The Coalition Government announced at the end of June its commitment to reforming the system of sub-national economic development in a letter from Rt Hon Dr Vince Cable MP and Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP. Groups of business leaders and local authorities were invited to outline proposals to form Local Enterprise Partnerships setting out their local priorities.

3.1.2 In any case, a local business partnership is necessary to **provide the strategic leadership** to tackle the lag-effects of the economic downturn on sectors, businesses, people and housing. It is needed to transform prospects across the post-recession landscape for employment and private sector growth.

3.1.3 In particular, there is the need to ensure that our growing population is matched with a growing economy, by:

- building on our shared economic strengths;
- creating the right conditions for economic growth; and
- stimulating enterprise and innovation.

3.1.4 There is also an **added value** of working together at a higher than local level. A number of activities are better coordinated by making efficiencies in delivery and handling them sub-nationally across administrative boundaries. These include:

- sector-specific technical expertise to support business growth[9]
- being a single point of contact for UK Trade & Investments[10]
- interface with European programmes and institutions[11]
- design and promotion for key infrastructure and economic development projects which go across a number of authority boundaries[12]
- green infrastructure and the role it plays in supporting sustainable places and in attracting local investment

[9] For example, Cranfield University is involved in an extensive array of advanced technology research, for example, molecular modelling and bioinformatics, renewable energies, electric vehicles and ultra-precision optical engineering.
[10] Government cannot grow relationships with each and every firm. The partners could develop and manage virtual accounts for businesses interested in exports and attracting investment by sharing information through use of IT networks.
[11] The Government's consultation on the Regional Growth Fund suggests that the transition from RDAs to LEPs could include arrangements to continue access to European funding (BIS, July 2010).
[12] East West Rail, the A43/A45 corridor and the M1/A5 link are typical cross-boundary projects which have been jointly prioritised by local authorities.

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3.1.5 Such sub-national working will offer economies of scale and reduced costs. Potential cost savings from green infrastructure planning, for example, include a reduced need for healthcare, better employee productivity and better adaptation for climate change.

3.2 Expected Outcomes

3.2.1 By bringing together businesses and local leaders, their combined expertise, experience and know-how, this LEP will help **plan, facilitate and focus efforts** on the priorities that will make the biggest difference to businesses and address key economic challenges in:

- skills
- productivity
- transport, housing and communications
- unemployment
- environmental sustainability
- and the creation of more private sector jobs.

3.2.2 The partnership is of sufficient strength and size to collaborate directly with central Government, creating the conditions for economic growth and the delivery infrastructure to address these challenges a more efficient way.

3.2.3 Local economic growth, combined with the critical mass of the area, will also stoke business-led innovation, regeneration and **innovative funding arrangements** to deliver necessary infrastructure.

3.2.4 Therefore expected future outcomes of the LEP include:

- more business start-ups
- expansion of existing businesses
- more private sector jobs
- more businesses moving into the area
- a higher skills profile
- a more enterprising culture for the area

3.3 Partnership development and future collaboration

3.3.1 This LEP consists of a core group of four unitary authorities – Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes, and Aylesbury Vale District Council. These areas share a common desire for economic growth building on the key sectors of advanced technology and precision engineering, business services, logistics, food manufacturing, life sciences, bio-technologies and the creative industries.

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3.3.2 Formal conversations with representatives of businesses (the Chambers of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses and the Institute of Directors) have made clear that for an LEP to cover a real economic geography it has to be **an agreement between people who wish to work together**.

3.3.3 Therefore the partner authorities and businesses provide an **open door** to all surrounding local authorities **and/or** businesses to fully participate. This open door inclusive approach is well-established with the three Chambers running successful business to business events in the same economic area for many years, as the South East Midlands Chambers Alliance.

3.3.4 Cherwell and Northampton have made known their intention to join. South Northamptonshire, Kettering and Corby have also indicated their interest in working with the South East Midlands.

3.3.5 The South East Midlands area has also the size and location to engage constructively with surrounding LEP areas, building strategic partnerships and alliances, especially with Oxfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire and Leicestershire.

3.3.6 Tightly drawn boundaries and demarcation will not be helpful to the needs of businesses. Therefore cross-LEP relationships might be based strategic business themes or sectors, such as: advanced manufacturing with Hertfordshire, the automotive industry, logistics and research and development with Northamptonshire County, and transport planning with Cambridgeshire.[13]

3.4 Robust Governance and Accountability

3.4.1 One proposal under active consideration is that the structure and organisation of the Local Enterprise Partnership should take the form of a company limited by guarantee with tightly focused priorities. This would provide a legal entity with which businesses are familiar and comfortable.

3.4.2 To meet its objectives the LEP Board will need levers of control over some key issues, including adult skills and apprenticeships, business support and sector development.

3.4.3 The Board should promote business engagement within the planning process and align approaches to innovation and growth. Consistent with the localism agenda, the principle of subsidiarity will be adopted to ensure that service delivery is dealt with at the most practical local level.

[13] These configurations have been suggested to us by correspondents from within these areas in initial discussions and communications

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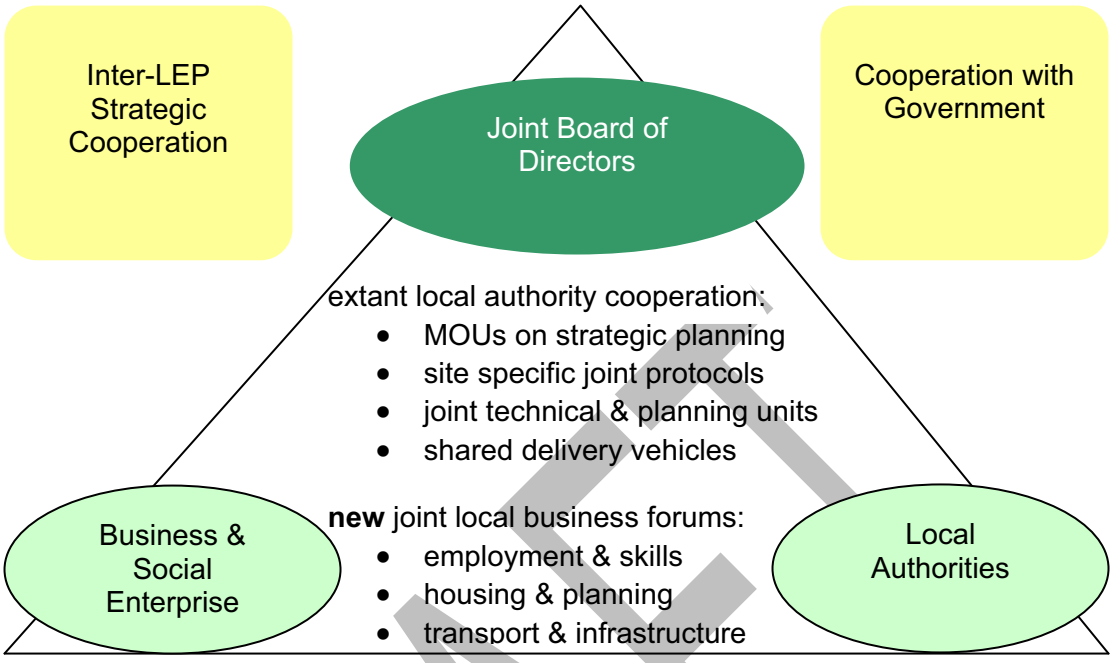
Fig.1: Potential partnership structure



3.4.4 The Board will be chosen from the businesses and local authorities of the LEP and will be accountable to them. the decision-making powers of the LEP will be reviewed regularly by its partner authorities and businesses. To avoid working in silos, the LEP structure will have to become an exemplar in network management and dealing with complexity.

3.4.5 A pyramid structure (above) would allow businesses and local authorities nominate an equal number of members to the Board. The Chair will be selected from the private sector members of the Board of Directors.

3.4.6 Joint business-local authority forums could sit under the LEP Board, alongside existing local joint working arrangements, to develop key themes, for example, housing and planning, employment and skills, and transport and infrastructure.

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4 Business Case: an environment for enterprise and employment

4.1 Critical mass and alignment within a real economy

4.1.1 People demonstrate that the South East Midlands is a real economic area in the way they behave. The functional geography is illustrated by:

- Mobile skills and commuting patterns (Annex A)
- Sustainable population growth (Annex B)
- Transport connections (Figure 2)
- Shared housing market areas (Annex C)
- Strong business sectors and linkages (Annex D)
- Shared needs and ambitions, for example, next generation broadband

4.1.2 The LEP covers a population of over 1.5 million people and 62,500 businesses. Together they account for 3.2% of the English economy.

Local Authority	Population[14]	Businesses[15]	GVA[16]
Aylesbury Vale	173,500	8,810	£3.9 billion
Milton Keynes	236,700	10,050	£6.7 billion
Bedford	158,000	6,330	£2.8 billion
Central Bedfordshire	252,900	11,135	£4.4 billion
Luton	194,300	5,175	£4 billion
Corby	55,200	1,600	£1.1 billion
Kettering	90,100	3,255	£1.8 billion
Northampton	210,500	7,215	£4.2 billion
South Northamptonshire	88,500	4,605	£1.8 billion
Cherwell	139,700	5,990	£3.4 billion
Total	**1,599,000**	**64,165**	**£34 billion**

4.1.3 Overall the LEP area is growing 10% faster than the rest of the British economy,[17] creating a critical mass that brings together a **full portfolio of assets** and **delivery capacity** as a collective offer to businesses and central government.

4.1.4 Although the South East Midlands has the characteristics and sector strengths to support private sector jobs growth,[18] the LEP provides the partner authorities and businesses **the scope** to share skills, know-how and expertise more efficiently **to better accommodate** population, and housing growth and **cultivate private sector employment**.

[14] ONS mid 2009 population estimates
[15] ONS, Business Demography 2008
[16] Gross Value Added, a measure of economic output, calculated using most recent ONS NUT3 GVA per head data (2007)
[17] SQW, 2009
[18] See paragraph 1.10

4.2 Building upon successful partnership working

4.2.1 Businesses and local authorities have come together to support this Local Enterprise Partnership because business grows best in a thriving and diverse local economy, with high quality local supply chains, an educated and motivated working population, high quality appropriate housing, and good local, national and international transport links.

4.2.2 The partner authorities and businesses share a common desire for economic growth and innovation building on local business strengths and key sectors including advanced technology and precision engineering, logistics, business services and the creative industries.

4.2.3 The South East Midlands LEP is ready to hit the ground running as it includes local authorities and business organisations, most of whom already work together effectively across the boundaries of three regions.[19]

4.2.4 The South East Midlands LEP offers outstanding value for money because it taps into a network of delivery skills, know-how and experience among local authorities and businesses, supported by Local Delivery Vehicles, in order to monitor and manage employment, business and housing growth.

4.3 An environment for growth

4.3.1 The environment has a leading role in supporting sustainable economic growth across the LEP area. The South East Midlands provides a rural setting with historic market towns and stunning conservation architecture peppering the area and demonstrating it roots. This environment makes the South East Midlands an attractive place to live, work and visit, and is also part of the infrastructure needed to support economic growth.

4.3.2 Much of the area is rich in species but it has suffered from some reductions in biodiversity and loss of habitats. Green infrastructure and regeneration initiatives will help address these issues. The Chilterns, Greensand Ridge, Whittlewood Forest, Marston Vale, Grand Union Canal and River Ouse provide the basis of the green infrastructure network that benefits people, the environment, and the economy.

4.3.3 Ambitious projects to further improve the environment across the South East Midlands means that the capacity of the environment to support new growth and economic development will be increased. Good examples of such partnership working include the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway, Ouzel Valley Park project and river restoration and habitat creation in Luton.

[19] As part of the Milton Keynes South Midlands partnership and South East Midlands Chambers Alliance.

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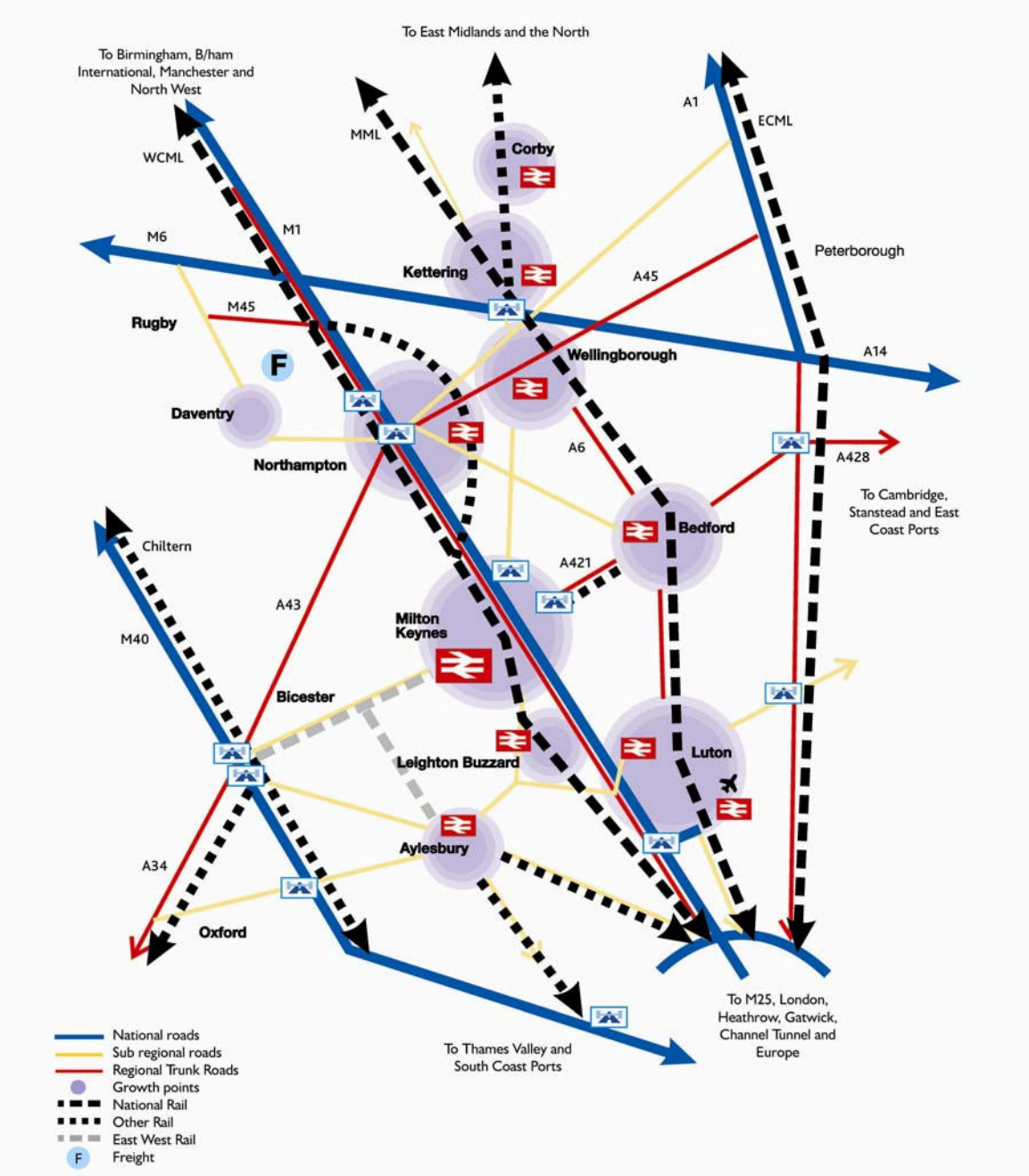
4.3.4 Green infrastructure projects will have impacts on tourism and recreation, place-shaping, eco-system services (such as flood control), property values and rural regeneration, underpinning the aspirations for growth and prosperity across the South East Midlands. The LEP is a further opportunity to enhance a partnership approach to plan, develop and manage green infrastructure across the area.

4.4 Excellent communications and knowledge gateways

Fig. 2 South East Midlands transport connections



4.4.1 There are key strategic transport links serving Milton Keynes, Northampton, Bedford, Luton and Aylesbury. These include the M1, A1 and A5, the A43/A45 corridor, and the west coast and midland mainlines. Building on existing collaborative work the partners will continue to develop and promote transport priorities, such as the M1-A5 link, East-West Rail and inter-urban bus routes.

4.4.2 The area's place on the "innovation triangle" formed by the university centres of Oxford, Cambridge and London is valuable, and an identifiable knowledge intensive corridor, containing important educational institutions[20] and companies, is strengthened by routes such as the A421.

4.4.3 The South East Midlands also is a communications hub for the UK with a critical international gateway, London Luton Airport. Cranfield Airport has a strong profile among business users. There are also strong links to London and the international gateway via St.Pancras.

4.4.4 The airports and the close proximity to London give the South East Midlands a global facing business and research environment with international links to support wider innovation and knowledge transfer. Partner authorities and businesses through the forum of the LEP will work together and with UK Trade and Investments and other relevant agencies to promote wider international interest in the area.

4.5 Higher and Further Education and Research Infrastructure

4.5.1 High quality, locally-provided higher and further education will be at the heart of the future growth, prosperity and economic development of the South East Midlands. Through the forum of the Local Enterprise Partnership, businesses and further and higher education partners will develop higher level skills strategies to underpin growth.

4.5.2 South East Midlands is well-served by a diverse portfolio respected, research-led universities and institutes,[21] many of whom are working together to support the emergence of the University Centre Milton Keynes.

4.5.3 Cranfield University is a worldwide **centre of excellence** in precision engineering and the Bedfordshire. The research activity at Cranfield is multidisciplinary with strong pan-university collaboration addressing

[20] Cranfield University and Technology Park, the Open University, the Butterfield Enterprise Hub, the Colworth science park, the Bedford i-Lab innovation centre and Northampton University

[21] University of Bedfordshire, Cranfield University, University of Northampton; Open University; and University Centre Milton Keynes (UCMK), Universtiy of Buckingham and the University Centre Aylesbury Vale

challenges across the Aerospace, Automotive, Bioscience, Defence & Security, Energy, Environment and Manufacturing sectors.

4.5.4 The University of Bedfordshire continues to build on its established reputation and to develop new programmes in science, computing and medically-related science, expanding a range of courses delivered in collaboration with industry. Its investment plans include the continued expansion of its campus in Bedford, the development of further facilities in Luton, and the enhancement of its laboratory facilities both for academic and commercial purposes.

4.5.5 Northampton University provides higher level skills across a wide range of subjects including logistics and sustainable communities. The Open University has its headquarters at Walton Hall, in Milton Keynes and the University of Buckingham is a leading centre for research in Law, Business, Humanities and Science. Barnfield College offers higher education opportunities in construction and building technology.

4.5.6 The Royal Society has recently refurbished Chicheley Hall, on the outskirts of Newport Pagnell, to act as its main international conference centre, bringing some of the most prestigious science research events to the South East Midlands. The National Enterprise Academy also will establish its headquarters and learning centre of excellence in Aylesbury town centre in 2012.

4.5.7 Businesses should be therefore confident in investing in the area, secure in the knowledge that there is a local pool of talented, skilled graduates to tap, and the quality of expertise with which to develop the benefits of research. For example, higher education partners are already creating a joint low carbon knowledge base and data warehouse[22] to identify and address low-carbon innovation challenges.

4.6 Key regeneration challenges for the area

4.6.1 A central aspect of the business case for a Local Enterprise Partnership in the South East Midlands area is working together to tackle shared regeneration challenges.

4.6.2 Although housing and employment growth has slowed due to the current economic climate there is still much potential for further development. In Milton Keynes, for example, there is the potential for 75,000 to 90,000 additional jobs based on existing employment land[23] in addition to thousands more in other partner authority areas.

[22] www.eon-uk.com/distribution/MKquestions.aspx
[23] Milton Keynes Council, draft Core Strategy 2010

4.6.3 To prevent unsustainable and counter-productive commuting patterns housing development across the South East Midlands needs to be balanced with and led by employment growth.

4.6.4 Micro and small businesses account for 90% of enterprises, yet they struggle to access affordable finance or equity to support growth.[24] Consequently smaller enterprises are not fulfilling their potential to grow.

4.6.5 The lack of high-speed broadband in rural areas is a barrier to new business formation, job creation and self-employment and hampers competitiveness. It has been a long-standing vision of our partners to make high speed broadband available to all communities and businesses.

4.6.6 Productivity in the South East Midlands falls behind parts of London and the South East. With economic productivity at £45,000 per employee, South East Midlands is on a par with Birmingham City Region.[25]

4.6.7 Despite the excellent progress of local universities and colleges, skills levels across the South East Midlands are lower than is needed to support an aspirant and growing knowledge economy.

4.6.8 There are still large numbers of people in relatively low-skilled low-paid work, and measures are needed to help employees get on and move up the skills ladder.[26] Adult apprenticeships are central to addressing the skills deficit particularly as people are working longer and need to retrain throughout their careers.

4.6.9 In difficult economic times, help is needed to increase workplace-based training and learning in industries, such as, construction, automotive and engineering. There is also a need and demand for more apprenticeships in logistics and sustainable construction to raise the skills levels and productivity within these growth sectors.

4.6.10 With the squeeze on transport infrastructure funding, the LEP partners will need to mobilise evidence, information and influence in support of key transport priorities, such as the A5/M1 link, A43/A45 corridor, A428/A6 link, East West Rail and Inter Urban Bus routes.

4.6.11 The LEP also needs to address the challenge of moving to a low carbon economy to ensure sustainability of economic development. This is particularly important as climate change will impact on essential locally delivered services including transport, hospitals, water and energy.

[24] Bedfordshire and Luton Business Survey, 2010
[25] See Annex E1
[26] See Annex F1

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5 Cultivating a Habitat for Business

5.1 Research, Intelligence and Information

5.1.1 The partners will develop a shared understanding of the local economy, which would inform their conversations with Government departments and agencies, for example, in shaping policies such as adult skills provision and strategies. Over time the LEP should become a valued source of expertise and advice.

5.1.2 The partner authorities and businesses will commission, collate and share information by:

- working with higher education partners and local authorities to collect and compile economic data, analysis and forecasting across the LEP;
- coordinating the refresh of local economic assessments;
- working with higher education and other partners to provide performance monitoring and evaluation of partnership activity;
- disseminating robust evidence and intelligence to inform local and national decision-making processes;

5.1.3 The LEP partner authorities and businesses will work with higher education and research institutions to help the private sector access innovation and growth by providing practical advice on:

- joint development projects and collaborative research;
- commissioning and sharing research; and
- research and evidence-based business cases to attract inward investment.

5.2 Engagement and communications with businesses

5.2.1 Learning lessons from past business engagement with Regional Development Agencies and the Training and Enterprise Councils, LEP partner authorities and businesses will need to develop the role of small businesses and ensure that they are involved in the leadership of place.

5.2.2 The South East Midlands LEP will bring together and engage with businesses and their representative organisations to track business needs. Evidence currently tells us that over-regulation and red-tape, transport costs, cash flow, increased competition and the high cost or lack of finance are among obstacles to growth.[27]

[27] Bedfordshire & Luton Business Survey 2010

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5.2.3 The LEP partners will develop existing 'ambassadors' programmes to work with local business and academic leaders in promoting the area's excellence, particularly in priority sectors. This level of engagement can link directly to the LEP Board and be coordinated through the Chambers of Commerce, Institute of Directors, the Confederation of British Industry and the Federation of Small Businesses.

5.2.4 Other methods of communication will complement and add value to those delivered at a local level and could include:

- leader-level meetings and consultations, including business breakfasts, consultations and workshops;
- an 'upward consultation framework' with feedback from local engagement fed upwards in a coordinated way to collate intelligence, develop advice and inform decisions;
- task and finish reference groups to bring together business leaders and public partners to tackle sector and business specific issues;
- the use of collaborative online technologies to share work.

5.2.5 It is essential for LEP partner authorities and businesses to deploy the resources necessary to wield influence and maintain engagement with the private sector.

5.3 Business support: building on what works

5.3.1 The South East Midlands partner authorities and organisations will cultivate a habitat for business growth by creating a common portfolio of services from both the public and private sectors.

5.3.2 Cranfield brings such support to fledgling companies that relocate to the Technology Park, offering 'incubator plus' style packages of support that recognise the different growth stages of businesses and adapt to their changing needs.

5.3.3 The LEP partner authorities and businesses are well-placed to encourage business growth and innovation, by:

- **drawing on local knowledge and intelligence** to help Government target high growth business support;
- working with high-growth businesses to secure research & development and innovation grants;
- connecting businesses to each other and to key knowledge bases, including universities, to form mutually beneficial relationships;
- providing open innovation events and training, including conferences, workshops and courses.

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5.3.4 Private sector provision of business advice will become more important under a South East Midlands LEP. A commissioned framework for business support, would:

- offer intensive coaching to senior management teams;
- support entrepreneurial skills and quicken new business formation;
- signpost national services and coordinating consistent local advice;
- co-ordinate redundancy support to help firms and employees at risk;
- identify opportunities to reduce local bureaucratic burdens on small and medium-sized businesses;
- align the direction of council services, such as, trading standards and economic development, to proactively enable business growth;
- source business support and advice in specialist areas, such as intellectual property protection and exploitation, marketing and sales and strategic development.

5.3.5 The LEP partner authorities and organisations could develop and manage virtual accounts for businesses interested in exports and attracting investment by sharing information through use of IT networks. This would ensure streamlined, consistent and informed support from partners and would be invaluable support to Government agencies responsible for supporting business growth through inward investment.

5.3.6 The LEP partner authorities and businesses also will help attract and maximise inward business investment, by:

- providing a single point of contact for UK Trade & Investment services, recognising their lead role overseas;
- creating a critical mass that brings together the full portfolio of assets presenting a collective offer;
- harnessing the innovation and skills from local businesses and investment intermediaries to create new ways of attracting investment;
- ensuring there is a sufficient local supply of business premises to match demand from potential investors;
- sharing business enquiries, intelligence and information across the South East Midlands area to inform inward investment strategies;
- providing potential investors with a range of options from across the LEP area, backed up with co-ordinated local site-finding services and investor support;
- coordinating ‘aftercare’ using sector specialists and local services;
- collating investment feedback from businesses and local authorities.

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6 Economic Development and Regeneration

6.1 Housing and Planning

6.1.1 To prevent unsustainable and counter-productive commuting patterns, housing development across the South East Midlands needs to be balanced with enterprise and employment growth.

6.1.2 Therefore the LEP partner authorities and businesses will:

- ensure and promote business engagement within the planning process;
- work with businesses to shape strategy and investment priorities on housing and regeneration;
- explore within an LEP-wide strategic conversation, including all relevant partner authorities, organisations and agencies, how to use public land holdings and assets to support regeneration-led housing growth;
- find ways to attract and maximise infrastructure investment to support sustainable housing development;
- actively engage the development industry to find innovative ways to help bring forward development and address issues of shared concern, such as: lead-in times on major projects, the hiatus on planning and the future of the Homes and Communities Agency.

6.2 Transport and Infrastructure

6.2.1 South East Midlands partner authorities and businesses will support and develop shared infrastructure priorities, for example, next generation broadband, East West Rail, road transport routes, green infrastructure projects and innovation hubs.

6.2.2 LEP partners will also work together to develop public-private partnerships to maximise inward investment,[28] possibly using public land holdings to leverage and broker projects.

6.2.3 LEP partner authorities and businesses will look for opportunities to develop infrastructure tariffs, levies and forward-funding models for the purpose of bringing forward shared strategic infrastructure.

6.2.4 To make these actions possible, the LEP partner authorities and businesses will be a forum for conversations with Government, local authorities, businesses and any other relevant agency on strategic land use, planning and infrastructure priorities.

[28] For example, leveraging limited public funds by bringing together private sector developers to support the A5/M1 link.

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6.3 Innovative funding models

6.3.1 The LEP partner authorities and businesses will explore delivery models to bring forward strategic sites for private sector development using income from developers and public sources to forward-fund the infrastructure needed to sustain employment and housing growth.

6.3.2 Such infrastructure could include brownfield land remediation, site preparation, road improvements, support for public transportation, next generation broadband, healthcare, education, support the voluntary sector and community projects in sustainable places.

6.3.3 Funding models would aim to attract and maximise funds from sources, such as, developers' contributions, the New Homes Bonus scheme, Community Infrastructure Levy, local tariffs, s106, Regional Growth Fund and receipts from public assets.

6.3.4 Partners will explore the opportunities to align national and local funding streams and priorities to support cross-boundary projects taking place within an agreed programme of work. East West Rail is one such infrastructure project where a blend funding might contribute to quicker delivery.

6.4 Transition to a Low Carbon Economy

6.4.1 Local authorities and their partner organisations in the South East Midlands will work with businesses to help them use natural resources more efficiently because of pressure on water and energy supplies and the need to manage waste efficiently. The LEP partner authorities and businesses will work with other bodies, such as the Environment Agency, to ensure that economic development is informed by robust and credible evidence, such as water cycle and green infrastructure studies.

6.4.2 Green infrastructure planning across the area is well developed and co-ordinated, with delivery programmes and green infrastructure design guidance for developers and planners.[29] However, environmental infrastructure requires careful planning, implementation, management and investment to support growth and protect human health and environmental quality.

6.4.3 For example, the Water Framework Directive will provide additional challenges within the South East Midlands as only 30% of river stretches are currently classed as having good ecological status. These are issues

[29] Partners launched a mksm Green Infrastructure Guide in May 2010 to inform local strategies and planning.

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that cross political boundaries and can be addressed by the LEP partner authorities and businesses, for example, by collating comprehensive waste data to assist in the planning and development appropriate waste infrastructure across the LEP area and beyond.

6.4.4 The multi-functional aspect of green infrastructure will make a contribution to climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity enhancement, recreation provision and place making. For maximum effect, green infrastructure should be strategically planned and managed by local authorities with partners organisations if it is to underpin a prosperous and sustainable economic future. LEP local authority partners and organisations will seek to agree an overarching low carbon framework to:

- extend and roll-out the existing low emission vehicles programme[30]
- support climate change adaptation and create attractive places to live
- promote a low carbon living programme to promote health and wellbeing, economic uplift and biodiversity, and cut CO2 emissions
- build on the existing Green Infrastructure Design Guide[31] and agree common environmental standards for locally-owned Green Business Plans to offer a better environment, jobs and sustainable enterprises and support local development frameworks.

6.5 Developing Leisure, Culture and Tourism

6.5.1 With the South East Midlands' focus on green infrastructure and rural development, its big international sporting moments, for example, the Grand Prix, the Paralympics with the Stoke Mandeville Stadium and potentially the 2018 World Cup, and with the strength of its creative and hospitality industries, tourism is set to grow.

6.5.2 The South East Midlands is also home to some of the country's top visitor attractions, ranging from leading heritage locations, such as Wrest Park and Stowe Landscape Gardens, to National Trust properties, including Waddesdon, the Excape Centre and Woburn Safari Park.

6.5.3 The growth in the Tourism Sector is set to continue with the opening of Centre Parcs at Warren Wood and, along with creative industries and advanced manufacturing, has a key role in re-balancing the economy away from financial services.

6.5.4 Culture will support the drive for business tourism by providing attractive alternatives to hotel and convention centre venues. The cultural sector will

[30] Milton Keynes is one of nine cities to pilot electric and hybrid vehicle plug-in points
[31] http://www.emgin.co.uk/default.asp?PageID=256

also underpin the weekend break market that is necessary to complement weekday business tourism and make hotel investment viable.

6.5.5 Promoting the visitor economy, rural diversification and creating associated employment opportunities will be a key role for LEP partner authorities and businesses. Partners aim to grow festivals, for example, in Bedford, Luton and Milton Keynes[32] and to attract mega-events, such the FIFA World Cup.

6.6 Supply chain strategies and digital connectivity

6.6.1 LEP partner authorities and businesses will collaborate to draw together purchasing and procurement strategies that will:

- support the transition to low carbon economy,
- simplify access to local government contracts,
- support the uptake of apprenticeships and work-based training,
- promote enterprise development, and
- support private sector job growth.

6.6.2 LEP partners will work together also to map, monitor and understand supply chains. Partners will also look for opportunities to use their combined purchasing power to serve shared objectives.

6.6.3 In particular, the LEP partners will consider how to use economic growth to leverage greater investment from telecommunications companies to widen access to next generation digital communications, particularly in rural and semi-rural areas.

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[32] Bedford host the annual River Festival, Luton holds a Carnival Arts Festival and Milton Keynes holds a yearly International Festival.

7 Supporting Enterprise

7.1 Access to Finance

7.1.1 A key goal and added value of the LEP is addressing market failure.

7.1.2 This is particularly important in the area of **accessing finance**, which is essential if businesses are to invest and grow. However, nationally, business investment is down 25% from its 2008 peak.[33]

7.1.3 Small and medium sized businesses face particular challenges in accessing bank and equity finance:

- lenders struggle to assess the viability of a loan to some SMEs lacking sufficient track record or security;
- sometimes smaller businesses are unaware of the finance sources available to them;
- and sometimes their investment propositions are not strong enough to attract investors at the lower end of the equity market.

7.1.4 In all these areas the LEP partner authorities and businesses can make a difference. For example, the LEP could:

- work with Business Angels and Venture Capital groups to develop integrated packages of support for high growth potential businesses and seek to maximise the local input from the area's high concentration of High Net Worth Individuals;
- help small businesses become more 'investment ready' and reduce 'information asymmetries' between firms and investors by mentoring SMEs on business case development;
- work with central government as 'sub-fund managers' to target the growth Capital Fund on local firms with committed and successful management and a robust plan for growth;
- investigate opportunities to provide a credit union for small businesses, perhaps in the form of Community Development Finance Institutions;
- use CDFIs to provide microfinance loans to start-up businesses, particularly in disadvantaged urban and rural areas;
- signpost access to government products, such as the Enterprise Finance Guarantee; and
- work with central government to help local firms access finance from the forthcoming Green Investment Bank to develop environmental enterprises and meet the low-carbon investment challenge.

[33] BIS, July 2010

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7.2 Stronger and simpler private-public partnership

7.2.1 The LEP partner authorities and businesses will address how local government controls could be changed or used to better nurture SMEs and business growth. In particular, they will aim to:

- increase private sector employment, particularly higher quality jobs;
- highlight opportunities to cut red tape that inhibit businesses;
- offer better value for (business rate-payers') money by streamlining services;
- improve and simplify access to local government procurement;

7.2.2 Only a relatively small number of businesses supply products or services to their local councils.[34] Therefore another added value of the LEP, building on successful local frameworks, will be to increase local public-private commercial collaboration.

7.2.3 The incubation capacity of the South East Midlands could be enhanced with simpler access to public sector procurement along with a stronger common portfolio of specialised start-up units and services provided by public and private partners.

7.3 Regional Growth Fund

7.3.1 Among the objectives of the Regional Growth Fund is 'to encourage private sector enterprise by providing support for projects with significant potential for economic growth.'[35]

7.3.2 The South East Midlands area is growing at rate 10% higher than the rest of the country and has delivered high levels of housing and employment growth since 2001.[36] Investment in growth in this area therefore is likely to have a high rate of return, in terms of **new businesses** and **additional sustainable private sector jobs**. This is particularly so if the fund is focused on private sector investment, and supports critical projects and infrastructure that help areas with low employment and skills.

7.3.3 It has been proposed by Government that LEP partner authorities and businesses should coordinate bids to the Regional Growth Fund in consultation with key stakeholders, such as universities, social enterprises, and the wider business community, represented by the Institute of Directors, Chambers of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses.

[34] Bedfordshire and Luton Business Survey 2010
[35] BIS, DCLG, HMT, July 2010
[36] SQW, 2009

7.4 European programmes and critical transitional functions

7.4.1 With the transition from Regional Development Agencies to Local Enterprise Partnerships there are critical issues to resolve. The Government is considering LEPs to manage statutory functions, strategies for RDA-owned assets, and responsibility for European funding.[37]

7.4.2 The Government will want to make arrangements to ensure that critical functions and projects will continue through the transition period, including ensuring access to European funding through to 2011/12.

7.4.3 The South East Midlands partnership will also:

- expand the role of local European Social Fund (ESF) co-finance organisations (CFOs) to complement national programmes;
- influence EU programme priorities for 2014-20;
- promote and support LEP-wide European projects;
- attract match-funding from business;
- work with universities to attract and retain European research resources, particularly from the EU Framework Programme 7;
- focus joint research activities on priority objectives and sectors, such as transition to a low carbon economy and precision-engineering.

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[37] BIS, DCLG, HMT, July 2010

8 Employment and Skills

8.1 Apprenticeships and skills for work

8.1.1 Across the South East Midlands there are large numbers of people in relatively low-skilled low-paid work, for example, in the hospitality, catering, retail and logistics sectors. To raise productivity, competitiveness and ensure sustainable employment in the wider economy, measures are needed to help more people get on and move up the skills ladder.

8.1.2 These industries tend to have low margin, high turnover and high pressure businesses with little time for training and apprenticeships. Industries, such as, construction, automotive and engineering do take apprenticeships, but in difficult economic conditions they may need more help to maintain and increase levels of participation.

8.1.3 The LEP partner authorities and businesses will work with employers, further education colleges, private training providers, the National Apprenticeship Service and the Sector Skills Councils to make it easier for trainees and businesses to benefit from apprenticeship schemes.

8.1.4 LEP partner authorities and businesses therefore will seek to agree a long-term programme, which will:

- tap into funding to make it easier to provide apprenticeships;
- establish relationships between schools, colleges and businesses to support routes into apprenticeships;
- help young people move easily from school into training and into work;
- working with local 14-19 coordinators to support the provision of technical certificates for apprenticeships in schools;
- work with school-based staff to explain and promote apprenticeships to young people and their teachers.

8.1.5 34% of businesses find that there are a low number of applicants with the required skills for job vacancies.[38] Supporting adult skills is therefore essential to help people find work. The LEP partners would:

- work with Sector Skills Councils and local employers develop an LEP-wide skills assessment and strategy;
- work with the relevant national agencies[39] and with employers to develop economically viable adult apprenticeships;
- develop routes between levels II and III apprenticeships, and pathways from level III apprenticeships into further education;

[38] Bedfordshire & Luton Business Survey 2010
[39] Such as the Skills Funding Agency and the National Apprenticeship Service

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- discuss with Government financial incentives for businesses to help those in most need into apprenticeships and vocational training.

8.2 Tackling Unemployment

8.2.1 To address disadvantage, make more people ready for work and improve the supply of skills to local businesses, the LEP partner local authorities and organisations will need to develop a strategic relationship with the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, the Skills Funding Agency, the Department for Work & Pensions and Job Centre Plus.

8.2.2 As well as shaping strategies to tackle unemployment, the partner authorities and businesses will want to be the forum that brings together the strategies, the funders and the delivery organisations to ensure what is delivered meets the needs of jobseekers, learners and employers in key growth sectors.

8.2.3 This would ensure that local knowledge of labour market skills gaps and employers' needs are properly taken into consideration when commissioning employment and training interventions to help match local jobseekers to local businesses.

8.2.4 Particular outcomes include:

- an LEP-wide skills strategy developed with local learning partnership consortia and the third sector;[40]
- transitional arrangements for 2011/12 to realign and devolve skills funding and commissioning to the LEP area;
- working with **social enterprise** and the voluntary and community sector as service providers and employers to help hard to reach populations and disadvantaged areas;
- working together to align existing family intervention services and focus efforts on developing pathways into employment;
- working across all sectors and with all partners to improve and encourage new employment opportunities.

8.3 Sharing the benefits of growth

8.3.1 LEP partner authorities and businesses will work with community organisers and groups and not-for-profit organisations to help voluntary sector and social enterprises develop as local employers and access funding from the Government's planned Big Society Bank.

[40] these could include the MK Economic and Learning Partnership and the Bedfordshire and Luton Learning Partnership

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8.3.2 Social enterprises can also draw upon the support of Community Organisers[41] being introduced by the Government to help local people make their communities better places in which to live and work.

8.3.3 LEP partner authorities and businesses will collaborate to help train some of the Government's planned 5000 Community Organisers (with the support of Government funding) and offer advice and support to charities and community groups in accessing Communities First funding for deprived neighbourhoods.

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[41] http://thirdsector.co.uk/news/Article/1022203/Nick-Hurd-interview-Tories-aim-sector-transformed/

9 Conclusion: Meeting the future needs of the South East Midlands

9.1 Strengths, opportunities and managing risks

9.1.1 The LEP partners are united in its desire to grasp **opportunities** to assist business expansion and private sector job growth. Partnership outcomes will include more business start-ups, the sustainable expansion of existing businesses, more businesses moving into the area, and higher skills.

9.1.2 To succeed the South East Midlands will build on its local **strengths**:

- a prime internationally-connected business location
- global connectivity and excellent road, rail links and air links
- network of respected higher and further education institutions
- expertise in hi-tech low-carbon design, blue-printing and proto-typing
- innovative and value-for-money approaches to managing growth[42]
- ambitious vision and commitment to employment-led growth

9.1.3 The LEP will address **weaknesses**, for example, the lack of affordable finance and business equity. It will work to mitigate and adapt to **risks**, most of all climate change, the biggest threat we face.

9.2 Links with businesses and higher and further education

9.2.1 It will be crucial to strengthen **links with businesses, education and research institutions**. Partners will work with high growth companies and local businesses, to champion collaboration and spread innovation.

9.2.2 Support for sector development, investment and agglomeration underpins the ambition to be a National Centre of Excellence and innovation test bed for advanced technologies and precision engineering.

9.3 Accountable governance

9.3.1 Through our business and governance structure, the voice of business will be at the heart of our priority-setting and decision-making. Equally, partners will be properly accountable to its constituent local communities.

9.4 Shared aspiration for the future

9.4.1 This proposal is the starting point for a new relationship between businesses, local authorities and the Government. It embodies the aspiration of local leaders and the communities they represent to **ensure growth, prosperity and environmental renewal** for the long-term.

[42] See paragraph 4.2.4

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Executive

Review of the ICT Service

6 September 2010

Report of Strategic Director Environment and Community and Head of Customer Service and Information Systems

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report seeks Executive consideration of the outcomes of the Member and Officer IT Review Group and approval for the way forward.

This report is Public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to agree:

(1) Measures to reduce the cost of the Council's ICT Service through the implementation of an integrated, scalable and flexible staffing structure, selective external hosting of systems and improved procurement;

(2) By the end of 2012/13, to make savings of a minimum of £300,000 resulting in a minimum 15% reduction to the base budget and which brings the costs of the function to 2.3% total Council spend (based on 2010/11 estimated total spend);

(3) To continue to explore further cost reductions through shared service and joint opportunities with other Councils;

(4) The proposed change to the ICT service desk availability from 8am – 6pm, to 7am – 5.15pm Monday to Friday;

(5) Not to implement an additional Out Of Hours support service based on an assessed low risk of failure and impact plus additional cost;

(6) The setting up of an Information Systems Corporate Governance group with a remit to provide a corporate overview to the use of ICT resources, approve projects for delivery and realise targeted savings identified in the project business cases.

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 A Member and Officer ICT Review Group has met four times and completed its work earlier this year as required by the Executive. It prime objectives were to assess the fit for purpose and value for money status of the current service and from this, to establish a vision and set out a direction for the service.

2. VFM Findings

2.1 The review group used CIPFA 2008/09 benchmarking data based on gross Council expenditure and extrapolated this into 2009/10 in recognition of the changes made within the service over the last two years. These changes represent past investment to secure future financial benefit as well as improved service resilience.

2.2 Overall, ICT costs increased by 6.2% between 2008/09 and 2009/10 while cost of overall Council gross expenditure decreased by 12.5% (£9.6m) leading to a 0.5% rise (to 3.0%) in the ratio of ICT costs to gross council expenditure (see table below). Although this compares favourably with the District Council average of 4.7% it is higher than the all council average of 2.9% for 2008/09. The proposed spend in 2010/11 which includes a cost reduction of £100,000 will bring the ratio back under the average at 2.6%

Year	Council gross expenditure	ICT spend	ICT spend as a %
2008/09	£76,751,128	£1,912,620	2.5%
2009/10	£67,134,116	£2,031,939	3.0%
2010/11	£74,941,859	£1,931,939	2.6%

2.3 A better analysis is possible using ICT spend in relation to net council expenditure, although this cannot be benchmarked in the same way. The table below shows that despite the proposed reduction of £100,000 the ratio actually increases due to the faster shrinking net spend of the council. This illustrates the need for additional savings to be identified within the service

Year	Council net expenditure	ICT Spend	ICT spend as a %
2008/09	£21,321,023	£1,912,620	9.0%
2009/10	£19,957,037	£2,031,939	10.2%
2010/11	£18,527,526	£1,931,939	10.4%

2.4 Recent and ongoing changes to how the Council delivers its ICT services are already delivering savings (50% drop in power consumption in the main server room estimated to be about £20,000pa from 2011/12, £10,000 per year reduction in the cost to provide our inter-office communications, £8,000 per year reduction on mobile phones, 10% reduction in support costs compared with 2008/09). These are contributing to the £100,000 ICT cost reduction target in the approved 2010/11 budget which forms part of the overall MTFS target of £300,000 reduction.

2.5 By targeting savings of in excess of £300,000 overall, the Council will

achieve ratios of 2.3% (against gross council expenditure) and 9.3% (against net council expenditure.

3 Proposals

3.1 The Review Group assessed the market options in relation to future service provision and concluded that the most benefit was likely to accrue through taking a “selective outsource” approach, on a case by case basis as the opportunity arises rather than any whole scale outsourcing. This will mean looking for lower cost procurement opportunities, likely to include using managed services rather than hosting, supporting and maintaining ICT systems in house.

3.2 In arriving at this conclusion, the Review Group was mindful of further savings which could be realised through future shared service and joint working opportunities with other Councils and therefore needed a flexible solution to capture such opportunities.

3.3 The Review Group has agreed an ICT strategy of actively seeking managed service opportunities on a selective outsource basis as and when the opportunity arises through the need for a major upgrade, the end of a contract or other market opportunities. Managed services allow the transfer of risk out of the Council, and in relation to data security, the costly and stringent security requirements too, while retaining strategic direction and governance in house. An example of where this is already happening is in relation to payment card compliance, which relates to the Council’s fitness in terms of process to take payments by debit and credit card. Rather than try to manage the risk and comply with stringent requirements internally, we are seeking an external, managed service for our payments, thereby transferring the risk and security requirements and ensuring continued compliance even if the standard should change.

3.4 This approach will reduce the cost base of Information Systems by some 15% (£300,000) over three years which is the MTFS savings target, while retaining its capability to transform and reduce the cost to deliver all other council services. It is not possible to detail at this stage which specific initiatives will deliver which particular savings, as new opportunities arise all the time, but an indicative breakdown is:

Staffing changes	£75,000
Telecomms and data communications	£80,000
Application support and maintenance	£40,000
Licensing	£30,000
Other savings	£50,500

3.5 Staff structure changes are under way to reduce the employee costs by 8.5% (£75,000) from September 2010, resulting in a scalable, flexible Information Systems (IS) team that can respond to a changing environment, new market opportunities and changing Council service delivery requirements.

3.6 There will be additional savings elsewhere in the Council through taking a

stronger approach to corporate governance. It is proposed to introduce an IS Corporate Governance group, which includes the ICT Portfolio Holder and an external technical expert, potentially procured through an organisation such as PWC. This will provide an outside perspective to proposals. The group would meet quarterly to provide strategic governance in respect of IS delivery and future development, and oversees procurement decisions leading to the achievement of IS-enabled savings across the Council in addition to the reduction in the IS base budget itself.

3.7 While there is some demand for system monitoring and support outside of the published service hours, the cost of that provision estimated to be a minimum of £36,000pa., is not deemed proportionate to the benefits. The proposal is to change the IS service desk available hours from 8am – 6pm, to 7am to 5.15 Monday to Friday from August 2010 in response to clear demand patterns. System monitoring and support will not be offered outside of those hours. In addition, the necessary planned systems maintenance will be carried out on a regular pattern on the first Saturday of every month.

4. Conclusions

4.1 It is the view of the Member and Officer ICT Review Group that outsourcing the whole of ICT Service Delivery is not a realistic option; the possible benefits do not outweigh the costs, and the national picture, and our local strategy is such that within three years other procurement options for data storage and communications will become available.

4.2 Structural changes are needed to reduce the management overhead and recognise the shifting requirements of the ICT team that will both reduce costs and put in place an integrated and scalable Information Systems team.

4.3 Establishing an IS Corporate Governance group to oversee ICT decisions with strategic significance including how we procure applications and systems in the future will improve the service overall, tying it more closely to Council objectives and priorities.

4.4 The benefits of a comprehensive out of hours monitoring and support service do not yet outweigh the costs; the proposed IS Corporate Governance group will review this as more customer services are delivered through online channels.

5 Background Information

5.1 The Member and Officer ICT Review Group was set up with the following objectives

- To understand to what degree its current (and imminent) ICT service delivery is fit for purpose, and have a clear vision for how this provision will need to be different to meet council needs and the expectations of external bodies in the medium to long term;

- Understand the value for money of its current ICT service delivery, and be clear on its ambition for the future cost/benefit balance (more for less, more for the same, lots more for a little more etc) of the service related to this vision

- Have devised a means to achieving the vision for future provision of ICT service delivery and its required value for money

5.2 The Review Group considered a wealth of information gathered through:

- An external assessment model led by KPMG

- CIPFA VFM benchmarking – this was undertaken in lieu of the planned Value for Money review of the service

- A review of the Council's corporate objectives and how ICT supports their delivery

- A survey of Members and Officers into requirements for out of hours standby and callout, and preferred time to carry out planned updating and maintenance work

- The implications of the National ICT Strategy

- The findings of Internal Audit

- An overview of market options provided by KPMG

5.3 A KPMG maturity and capability model was used to assess the way ICT and IS are governed, managed and delivered as an integral part of the organisation. The model examined four aspects of ICT service delivery: alignment with the objectives of the Council (corporate governance); management of the function; development of the systems used; and delivery of the service. In each of these four areas, people completing the model reported a consistent gap between the level ICT and IS are perceived to be performing at now, and the level appropriate to the work of the Council. The question then becomes one of priorities. Putting in place initial improvements/actions in certain key areas – specifically the corporate governance area - can yield multiple improvements across the assessment without having to have dozens of discrete actions planned

6. The ICT Service: Value for Money

6.1 A Value for Money Review of ICT had been planned as part of the 2009/10 VFM programme, and so was incorporated into this comprehensive review of the service. Benchmarking was undertaken using CIPFA VFM Indicators and

data from 2008/09, updated to included 2009/10 outturn data. Key findings from the work were;

- The overall cost of the service, as a proportion of total council spending, was higher than the average for other authorities. Support costs were also high; Despite a 10.1% reduction in 2009/10 these still ranked as expensive in comparison. In contrast, the cost of procuring new workstations was the cheapest in the country due to the move to thin client.

- The competency of non-ICT staff to undertake basic IT tasks was much lower than that of other authorities, but their satisfaction levels were above average. However, commissioners of ICT services (i.e. managers) had below average satisfaction. Above average levels of support requests were also identified

- Management practices and ICT governance were shown to be below that of other authorities, but were shown to have improved in 2009/10 due to changes introduced that year.

- Access to IT equipment and remote connectivity were shown to be above average.

6.2 The Review Group has requested that the competency of council staff and Members in undertaking basic ICT tasks be investigated further through linking with the Council's Training and Development team to more closely target training to user-need. In addition, as part of ongoing service improvement, reasons behind any dissatisfaction with delivery of projects is also to be investigated through individual interviews and the findings acted on.

7. Out of Hours Needs

7.1 System availability against our published hours is currently 99.44% this year to date. Service delivery has been impacted very little through unscheduled outages.

7.2 The Council is subject to a number of mandatory upgrades, updates and security work to keep the business systems supportable and secure. Both officers and elected members, when asked when they would prefer to have planned ICT outages for known maintenance, said they wanted this to happen out of normal hours. The view of the Review Group is that this planned work should be done on a regular, planned schedule made known to all staff and members.

7.3 When considering system availability, again the Review Group felt that ideally, systems should be monitored at all times, and some minimum level of intervention taken to reduce the risk of system outage within published operating hours. Currently, systems are not monitored between 6pm and 8am Monday to Thursday, and between 6pm Friday to 8am Monday. The technology is available, but not the manpower, without compromising staff availability during normal operating hours.

7.4 The Review Group then looked at both staff and Member use of systems out of normal hours, and the public's use of online services within the same timeframe. There is very little use or demand from staff or Members for access to the Council's business systems such as UNIform or i-world out of normal hours. There is, however, some consistent demand for email and

BlackBerry. Support of that system out of hours, in terms of monitoring and taking remedial action would be desirable, with some monitoring of the other systems so that potential outages can be flagged to the in-house team ready for them to act when the arrive at 8am.

7.5 A notable exception is the relationship with Capita; they frequently need to access the service desk from 7am, in relation to i-world, iclipse and other business systems used by that service; the SLA is currently to deliver service from 8am. At the other end of the day, there is little demand for service desk from staff or Members after around 5pm.

7.6 In terms of public access to online systems, usage outside of monitored and supported hours is growing; these currently make up nearly 33% of our total website visits and 40% of our total online payments (amounting to £231,000).

7.7 The Council is keen to drive take up of the online and other self-service channels as they are the cheapest and their use frees customer service resource to focus on those customers with complex service needs and for whom the online channel is not an option. It is vital therefore that these services are reliable so that customers continue to trust and use them.

7.8 The risk of an un-monitored break in service or some security breach to public confidence in the online channel was considered seriously by the group and assessed as low. When it was subsequently weighed against the cost of seeking either more staff or an external provider (estimated to be £36,000pa), the cost was seen to outweigh the benefit especially given that the risk is assessed as low. Supporting this decision is the Council's strategy to transfer out key public facing services such as the payments service, so its online availability is then governed by an external contract. It is important however to keep this out of hours support requirement on the agenda for periodic review by the proposed IS Corporate Governance Group. .

8. Delivering the Corporate Strategy Targets

8.1 The current Corporate Plan sets out corporate targets over five years; the plan has two more years to run. While the targets are disparate and far reaching, four key threads can be identified from this high level analysis:

- Online provision is key. Build up the website to make as many council services available as possible. Ensure the website is up to date, vital news, who to call, where to go etc

- Data sharing, making data available for self-service, exchanging data with partners, keeping it secure, compliance with "Government Connect" and other security protocols; these areas thread through much of what the council is seeking to achieve.

- A flexible structure and infrastructure resources able quickly to meet new requirements, and drive change that reduces front line service delivery costs.

- Able to demonstrate value for the investment, return and clear, quantifiable benefits and efficiency savings

8.2 In essence, data and systems management needs to be the focus of the Council's in-house team.

9. The Current Market

9.1 Block outsources of a whole ICT service is not currently seen as helpful to cutting costs while retaining the capacity to reduce the cost of delivering frontline services to customers. Looking nationally, drivers of efficiency are: process improvement enabled by ICT automation; self service through the online channel; better asset management; increased flexible working (fewer desks than staff); rationalisation of printing (which the Council has already done and is reaping the benefits); better portfolio management through application reviews, centralisation (again broadly done); virtualisation and thin client (again largely implemented); simplification of the infrastructure (which has been done in part); and reviewing how the Council sources its external services.

9.2 The National ICT Strategy plans to deliver a common infrastructure, comprising a single public sector network by 2014, a central shared hosting service from which to procure ICT services and applications, a shared data centre, the Government Applications Store from which the Council can procure and share applications, and even a common "desktop" in place of MS Office. Even if the National ICT Strategy delivers only in part, as major business systems come up for renewal, the intention is that the Council assesses the sourcing options including the transfer of hosting and management to the supplier, and thereby developing a suite of partners in service delivery rather than suppliers. These decisions will be in the remit of the proposed Corporate IS Governance group, and made in a corporate service context rather than on a service by service basis.

9.3 There is a maturing market for outsourcing different aspects of the ICT service, rather than a single block. Visits to two such suppliers have taken place – one regional and one local - who offer a menu of options including hosting our hardware, hosting and monitoring all or specific systems, hosting, monitoring and remediating, remote monitoring of our equipment here, remote monitoring and some intervention.

9.4 The review group also considered the desirability of seeking to partner with another local authority. The synchronising of business needs is not easy as every Council is different in terms of services, scale and systems. Discussions are underway with a number of Councils but not yet well advanced.

10. Internal Audit view

10.1 The Review Group had its origins in an incident in February 2009 which resulted in an audit of one aspect of the service by our internal auditors. The audit was revisited in February 2010 with the following outcome:

- *The ICT department has made significant progress over the last year in forming a well controlled IT environment when compared to that observed one year ago.*

- *Our work found several low and medium control weaknesses which, if addressed would improve overall control. Our work also showed that these weaknesses were known to management and are being considered with staff responsible and a timetable in place to remedy these weaknesses.*

11 Where We Need To Be

11.1 The value for money benchmarking supports an improvement in Information Systems (IS) governance and a focus on improved training for users. A move to a more (internal) customer focused model of delivery would help address managers' satisfaction with ICT as commissioners of services. Structural changes to the service are needed to enable savings to be released in future years.

11.2 The Review Group concluded that whether it is by adopting a selective outsourcing model or taking up the new services made available in the National ICT Strategy, the infrastructure provision and support requirements will necessarily shrink over time, as the focus shifts to systems and data management. Consequently a change in staff structure has been implemented, bringing the client support team and infrastructure support teams into an integrated Information Systems team under a single manager.

11.3 This proposal will produce a saving in 2011/12 and subsequent years of around £75,000.

11.4 The Review Group also concluded that corporate governance of IS had to be improved if real cost-savings and efficiency benefits across the Council are to be achieved through automating whole business processes across many services. A group with a wholly corporate view, taking decisions on business cases put forward by individual services, will ensure the necessary prioritising of resources takes all corporate priorities and resource demands into account. This will ensure investment in major corporate business systems is made with full consideration of the use of the system to the Council as a whole as well as to the service which identifies the initial need. It will greatly improve the maximisation of our existing investments. The recent virtualisation of the Council's infrastructure has created a corporate infrastructure made up by service-specific groups of servers; a corporate approach to system development and provision is the next step.

11.5 In respect of planned maintenance the Group proposes the designation of the first Saturday in every month as a planned maintenance day with no IS services available to any user. It is important that all remote equipment, including council-supplied computers used at home by Members and staff, are captured in this planned maintenance, and those users will be responsible for ensuring their equipment is plugged in and switched on, at least once a month on or after each first Saturday.

11.6 In respect of unscheduled outages, the Review Group considered using £36,000 of the savings released by the staff structure change to procure out of hours monitoring and remediation of the Microsoft Exchange (email) and BlackBerry servers, and of the online forms, payments, and modern.gov systems, used by our customers 24/7, However, given the severe financial challenges the Council faces and after a risk assessment, the proposal is that the service desk start at 7.00am and finish at 5.15 pm, and remain without monitoring or support outside those hours.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

12.1 The focus of ICT service provision is shifting away from infrastructure, which is increasingly generic, and towards the data and systems used to deliver services to customers.

12.2 The enabling role of Information Systems to facilitate change and deliver efficiencies in how frontline services are delivered is helped by close, partnership working that would be compromised by wholesale externalisation. However, there are real benefits to be had from selective outsourcing

12.3 Strong corporate governance for the Information Systems function will make it easier to prioritise the benefits of individual business case proposals and provide strong corporate ownership of the benefits that accrue. If a process is automated and resources released, corporate governance is there to ensure the headcount goes down. Not every proposal by every service can be delivered; commissioning at the corporate level will ensure maximisation of the benefits of existing and new systems.

12.4 Planned maintenance should have minimal impact on service availability during publicly available service hours.

12.5 The effect of unplanned outages can be reduced by bringing forward the service desk availability hours and "early morning checks".

12.6 A more streamlined, scalable staffing structure will allow flexibility in accommodating changing service demands in the future, and improved resilience despite a smaller team, through skills sharing and knowledge management.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One **Improved service governance**

Establish an IS Corproate Governance Group to identify and realise "whole Council" benefits from the use of technology, ensuring best value and proper prioritising of the corporate IT Infrastructure resource.

This option is recommended to be implemented

Option Two **Improved value for money both in the function and across the whole council**

Seek to reduce the base revenue budget, reduce further the capital investment in the infrastructure, and secure one off savings to bring ICT costs as a proportion of total council spend to under x% this year and for the next three years. This to be achieved through

- structural change and staff reduction
- ICT automation, with savings in other services identified and realised through the IS Corporate Governance Group
- More self service through the online channel, reducing

service-delivery resource need in other services. There are additional costs and risks attached to this approach, including security of data. However, a strategy of transferring out, over time, key public facing service will mean that the security requirements are transferred also, while the Council retains control of the strategic direction..

- better asset management, ensuring the Council is not over-licensed, have equipment or applications that are not used etc.
- increased flexible working (fewer desks than staff) across the whole Council, with clearly identified savings to be achieved;
- further rationalisation of printing
- better portfolio management through application reviews
- long term commitment to virtualisation and thin client
- further simplification of the ICT infrastructure
- reviewing how the Council sources its external services

This option is recommended to be implemented.

Option Three **Outsource the Council's datacentre, releasing the server room and the need to maintain and monitor it, power it and cool it.**

The virtualisation project will, when complete this summer, allow the Council greater flexibility with regards to its physical infrastructure, including the possibility of moving the physical hardware elsewhere. Virtualisation will greatly reduce the physical space that is required to host its infrastructure.

The usual reason for choosing to locate servers elsewhere is to transfer the risk arising from a poor environment. The Council has good power into the building, has a site generator, has good power into the server room etc the current physical setup is appropriate for our requirements.

Additional costs would be incurred from staff travelling to the off-site location, or contracting the host to carry out work.

In the medium term, it is likely that applications used by the Council are increasingly provided direct centrally, or from a supplier; this will reduce the future requirement for the Council to "own" services and hardware. Therefore it does not make sense to commit and limit flexibility now by entering into a costly and long-lived hosting agreement.

In addition, there are no staffing savings to be made by taking this approach; physically looking after the hardware is the smallest part of

the roles in the ICT team.

Finally, the good quality of our datacentre makes it possible to consider seriously a shared service with another authority.

The option to outsource the hardware is not recommended

Option Four (a) **Out of hours provision: outsource the monitoring our systems, and the taking action if an agreed list of services fail, out of hours.**

This is an unbudgeted extension of the service we currently provide to the Council but would address the risk of service loss, and can be accommodated in the savings that will accrue from the staffing structure changes.

This would extend the supported day for a sub-set of applications to match the published flexible working day of 07:00 to 22:00, Monday to Friday and to extend that support through the weekend and other non-supported days, Bank Holidays etc.

The Council already possesses the required tools to allow for event monitoring by a third party outside of the current supported hours of 08:00 to 18:00.

Feedback from users and members has indicated that support outside of the standard day is best targeted at the mail and web services including Blackberries. Business application availability is not expected by most users. However, certain systems do feed information or make services available to the public via the web site so it is proposed that these systems are also monitored.

Exploratory discussions with providers indicate this kind of service is available for around £36,000 locally, around double that from a larger, regional operation. To extend the cover to include overnight between 22.00 and 07.00 would increase this cost to over £70,000.

This option is desirable but not recommended as the need is not currently deemed sufficient to warrant the level of spend associated with it.

Option Four (b) **Out of Hours provision: Staff-up the in-house team to provide the out of hours standby and callout in respect of the services set out in Option Two.**

To deliver what is described at Option Two, through use of in-house staff, would require 2 FTE technicians at approx £50,000 pa, plus additional costs arising from the need to move to a different pattern of working – 5 days from 7 rather than Monday to Friday, and a shift pattern spanning 07.00 to 22.00.

However, dependent upon the Council's needs, known weekend working such as patching and major system upgrades could be accommodated without recourse to overtime, offsetting the cost.

A far greater range of extended support could also be managed than through a third party, as well as more actual working hours in which "work" could be done.

However, this approach requires a critical mass of FTEs and can only work within a larger single technical team. It is vulnerable to sickness and leavers, and given that we do not yet have a robust picture of out of hours needs

This option is not recommended at this time.

Option Four (c) **Change the working patters of the service desk team**

This will allow earlier morning starts to meet the needs of Capita and pick up overnight failures earlier in the day, reducing the impact on public availability hours.

This option is seen as proportionate and is recommended.

Option Five **Exploration of the shared services opportunities with neighbouring and other local authorities.**

The Review Group found that while there is not currently a like for like partner which would offer the maximum shared service benefit, efforts should continue both in seeking shared procurement, collocation of data centres and shared service provision.

This option is recommended.

Consultations

Chris Dickens, PWC (Internal Audit)	Internal Audit have approved the contents of this report
	Comments checked by, Chief Internal Auditor 07720 427215
Member Officer ICT Review Group	This group conducted all the research and analysis leading to the proposals in this report.
ICT and IS Staff	Current ICT and IS staff contributed to the review.

Implications

Financial:	The financial implications of the proposals recommended in this report constitute a reduction in service cost to a proportion of total council gross spend less than 2.3% - a specific reduction in base budget of £300,000 by the end 2012/13 (15%).
	Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance 01295 221551
Legal:	There are no specific legal implications arising from the proposals in this report.

	Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services 01295 221686
Risk Management:	There are no strategic risks arising from any of the proposals in this report. Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Insurance Officer 01295 221566

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

An Accessible and Value for Money Council

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Nicholas Turner
Portfolio Holder for Customer Service and ICT

Document Information

Appendix No	**Title**
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Pat Simpson, Head of Customer Service and Information Systems
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Executive

Overview and Scrutiny Reports: (1) Committee report on Democratic Engagement with Young People and (2) Task & Finish Group report on Crime and Anti Social Behaviour

6 September 2010

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the following overview and scrutiny reports:

(1) Democratic Engagement with Young People (Appendix 1)

(2) Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (Appendix 2)

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will attend the meeting to present the reports.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

(1) To note the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutiny review into the Council's approach to Democratic Engagement with Young People.

(2) Agree the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendation regarding the Council's approach to Democratic Engagement with Young People as detailed below:

Recommendation 1:

That the Council should adopt a more pro-active and structured approach to youth engagement in local democracy and that the Young People's Champion and officers should be invited to develop a formal policy and action plan to achieve this.

(3) To note the work of the Task & Finish Group scrutiny review into Crime and Anti Social Behaviour.

(4) Agree the Task & Finish Group recommendation regarding Crime and Anti Social Behaviour as detailed below:

Recommendation 1:
That the Council take an active role in promoting the positive activities which

young people in the district are involved in.

Recommendation 2:
That the Council promote the success of the Street Wardens in Bicester and Banbury and that the possibility of developing the scheme in other areas of Cherwell be investigated.

Recommendation 3:
That Overview and Scrutiny investigate how the Council engages with young people in the District in more detail.

Recommendation 4:
That the Council embarks on intergenerational activities to tackle the perception of crime in the District.

Recommendation 5:
That the Council develop a policy on youth engagement and involvement as part of the Council's consultation and decision making arrangements.

Executive Summary

Introduction

1.1 These two reports present the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2009/10 and of a Task & Finish Group from the summer of 2008 to the winter of 2009. The reports are presented together because the themes emerging from these two separate reviews are complementary and focus our attention on the fundamental importance of creating a meaningful role for young people in our society.

Proposals

1.2 In the current financial environment it is important to note that none of the recommendations in these two reports need result in a significant increase in cost to the Council.

Conclusion

1.3 Although both of these reviews took longer to complete than was ideal their submission to Executive now is timely given their clear links and relevance to the current debate on breaking the cycle of deprivation.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One To accept all of the recommendations contained in the two Overview and Scrutiny reports.

Option Two To accept some of the recommendations contained in the two Overview and Scrutiny reports.

Consultations

See Appendix 1 and 2 for details

Implications

Financial: There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by Karen Muir ,Corporate System Accountant, 01295 221559

Legal: There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by Paul Manning Solicitor 01 295 221688

Risk Management: There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management & Insurance Officer, 01295 221566

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

All

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Colin Clarke
Portfolio Holder for Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation

Document Information

Appendix No	Title

Appendix 1 Appendix 2	Democratic Engagement with Young People Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Catherine Phythian, Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
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Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Youth Engagement

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report

July 2010

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Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Dan Sames	Councillor Lynda Thirzie Smart
Councillor Ann Bonner	Councillor Nick Cotter
Councillor John Donaldson	Councillor Alastair Milne Home
Councillor Tony Ilott	Councillor Les Sibley
Councillor Paul O'Sullivan	Councillor Chris Smithson
Councillor Trevor Stevens	Councillor Lawrie Stratford

Councillor Colin Clarke, Councillor Rose Stratford and Councillor Devena Rae also contributed to this review.

Acknowledgements

The Committee would like to thank the following for providing information and evidence either in person or by written response:

- Jon Wild, Senior Recreation and Sport Development Officer (Play and Young People)
- Philip Rolls, Recreation and Health Improvement Manager
- Paul Marston Weston, Head of Recreation and Health
- Pupils from Banbury School and Frank Wise School involved in the Councillor Shadowing Programme
- Members of the Bicester Youth Council
- Francesca Heffernan, Decision Making and Young People Worker, Oxfordshire County Council
- Emily Little, Involvement Officer, Participation and Play, Oxfordshire County Council

Executive Summary & Recommendation

As the Young People's Champion for Cherwell District Council, I have a particular interest in ensuring that the young people of this district have a voice. I know that as a Council we have a very successful programme of sport and recreation activities for young people delivered by excellent, committed and professional officers. This is all the more remarkable because youth services are a discretionary activity for this Council, with a limited budget and resources. I know that we should and could do more, especially with regard to youth engagement in local democracy.

This review was not about changing the voting age or recruiting teenage councillors but it was about determining whether this Council had the procedures in place to allow it to hear the views of young people on issues that impact on them.

I am pleased to say that as a result of our work my fellow councillors on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee now share my desire that this Council should build on these strong foundations and expand our youth engagement activities.

The Committee believes that promoting democracy and citizenship amongst the under 18 age group does have an important role to play in shaping and promoting a more positive image of young people within the community and it has very clear links to our corporate priority to be a district of opportunity for our [younger] residents.

This does not have to be a costly exercise for the Council. For a relatively modest investment we can make better use of the current resources and exploit existing systems and relationships. The Council already has an effective and valuable resource in the calibre of the officers working within the youth services team. Their commitment and the enthusiasm has allowed us to punch above our weight. But they have been working in a vacuum in so far as the Council has no clear policy or systematic approach for the democratic engagement of young people. We need to address that omission.

We believe that the excellent work conducted during Local Democracy Week should be extended to provide a sustained programme of activities throughout the year. And as not all young people are part of the traditional school system the same approach should be extended to include other forms of further education and youth employment.

It is essential that the Council does not treat this as a box ticking activity and bombard our young citizens with all manner of information and consultations. Effective engagement with young people must be centred on listening and responding to feedback on relevant topics and delivering tangible results in a timely manner.

We firmly believe that engaging our population at a young age is likely to see a more engaged adult population. If we are to see a rise in the number of people voting across the district and becoming engaged with the Council then socialisation at their formative stage is vital. Failure to do so will continue the trend towards a disengaged adult population not taking an interest in their community and ultimately leading to the dilution of community spirit and engagement in the political process.

Failure to make the necessary investment in this area now, even in these austere times, will have a profound impact on the future.

Our recommendation is simple:

That the Council should adopt a more pro-active and structured approach to youth engagement in local democracy and that the Young People's Champion and officers should be invited to develop a formal policy and action plan to achieve this.

Cllr Dan Sames
Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Young People's Champion
July 2010

Introduction

Objectives of the review

In the summer of 2009 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to conduct a scrutiny review on how the Council engages with young people. Such a review would be timely given the growing profile of democratic awareness and the emphasis placed on involving young people in decision making.

The Committee considered that undertaking such a review could assist the Council in gauging the effectiveness of its performance and delivery against national indicators: NI 110 (Young People's participation in positive activities) and NI 21 Dealing with concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police.

The Committee agreed the following terms of reference for the review:

1. To consider whether the Council has suitable mechanisms in place to actively involve young people.
2. To examine how the Council currently involves young people in its decision making, operation and provision of services, (including but not limited to consultation, communication and education).
3. To consider whether this follows best practice and is of a suitable standard.
4. To consider how the Council is contributing towards the promotion of citizenship locally and review the activities of Local Democracy Week.
5. To ascertain whether the Council is doing all that it can to ensure it is a suitable environment to enfranchise young people.

Gathering the evidence

The review was conducted on a committee basis as the members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that this approach was more appropriate than a Task & Finish Group study. The Committee met in July 2009 for an initial briefing and to review background documents. This was followed by further discussions to review 'evidence' in the autumn of 2009.

The Committee invited representatives from the local Youth Councils and the Youth Parliament to participate in a committee meeting on 9 February 2010. Pupils from Banbury School involved in the Councillor Shadowing programme also attended the meeting.

Context

> *Also, younger age groups are much less likely to see voting as a civic duty than older age groups and new analysis for us suggests the beginning of a cohort effect, i.e. a generation apparently carrying forward their non-voting as they get older [1].*

Demographically young people represent an increasing proportion of the UK population but research shows that they are only half as likely to vote as older age groups and only 37% of young people (aged 18 – 24) voted in the 2005 general election.[2] Indeed the turnout for the next age group (25 – 34) was only 48% (a slight increase on 46% in 2001). This compares to a 2005 turnout of 75% for the over 75s.

This concern about increasing apathy amongst the general electorate and in particular the 18 - 24 age group underpins many of the national initiatives to promote democracy and citizenship amongst the under 18 age group.

But it is not just about voting…

> *There is also a clear need to re-connect people with politics, and vice-versa, beyond moments of (relatively) high political drama such as general elections[3].*

… it also about developing a culture of community involvement and local leadership.

The importance of involving young people in all levels of decision making and local democracy has been widely promoted both globally and nationally, from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child through to the implementation of Every Child Matters. The introduction of the citizenship curriculum in schools and the imminent introduction of the Duty to Promote Democracy are just two of the tools available to local authorities to address the situation.

Young people, crime and anti-social behaviour

Coupled with this apparent lack of interest in local democracy is the widespread perception that young people are engaged in anti-social behaviour. This stereotype of the under 18s as 'hoodies and hoodlums' is apparently fuelled by media hype and is a contributing factor to the high "fear of crime" ratings faced by many local authorities.

As background to the review the Committee viewed a DVD: The Youth of Today, a film produced by young people in south Oxfordshire who have teamed up with their communities to explore the reasons for the negative perception of young people.

The Committee also spoke to the Chairman of the Council's Task & Finish Group looking at Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour. That review had set out to establish whether young people congregating on the streets were engaged in anti-social behaviour or if this was perception. In the course of the review the Group went on walkabouts with street wardens in Banbury and Bicester; met with members of Banbury and Bicester youth groups; and spoke to representatives of the National Youth Agency. Officers from the Council's Safer

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[1] Election 2005: turnout, How many, who and why?, The Electoral Commission 2005

[2] Ibid

[3] Ibid

Communities and Community Development team had been involved in the review and had provided evidence and advice on the type and volume of anti-social behaviour in the district.

The Task and Finish Group had concluded that it was largely a question of perception and that in general the young people congregating on the district's streets were not engaged in anti-social behaviour. The challenge facing Cherwell would be to promote this message and at the same time reassure the public.

Youth Demographics in Oxfordshire

The 2001 Census recorded the Cherwell population of 10 – 19 year olds at 15,114 or roughly 11.5% of the overall population of the district.[4] A further 13% (17,564) of the population were aged 0 – 10 years and, ten years on, it is this group who are effectively the subject of this report. Their teenage experiences of, and exposure to, local democracy as presented by Cherwell District Council will shape and influence their social and political engagement with their local communities as young adults.

[4] Office of National Statistics, Cherwell Age Structure
ttp://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=3&b=277085&c=OX15+4AA&d=13&e=13&g=480115&i=1001x1003x1004&m=0&r=0&s=1278506348015&enc=1&dsFamilyId=276

Evidence

Cherwell District Council's Youth Services

During the course of the review, the Head of Recreation and Leisure, the Recreation and Health Improvement Manager and the Senior Recreation Development Officer (Play & Young People) attended meetings of the Committee to brief members on the Council's work in support of youth engagement.

The Committee learnt that the provision of an integrated youth support service for Oxfordshire is a statutory requirement placed on Oxfordshire County Council. Cherwell and the other District Councils have a statutory responsibility to act as a local authority partner and support the County Council in the delivery of the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan.

The Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan is the single, strategic overarching plan for all services for children and young people in the county. This plan sets clear targets and priorities for all the Oxfordshire local authorities and partner organisations. The second version of the plan for 2010 - 2013 was under development during the course of this review and members of the Committee had the opportunity to comment on the draft document. The final version of the plan was published in January 2010.

However, the direct provision of services in support of young people by a district council is a discretionary activity. But Cherwell, like many other district councils, recognises the importance of providing local youth services which contribute to the national indicators 110:

NI 110 (Young People's participation in positive activities)

- This indicator is designed to measure young people's participation in structured positive activities. What young people do, or don't do, out-of-school matters. Research demonstrates that the activities young people participate in out-of-school have a significant bearing on their later life outcomes. Positive activities are a good use of young people's time because they provide opportunities to:
    - acquire, and practice, specific social, physical, emotional and intellectual skills
    - contribute to the community
    - belong to a socially recognised group
    - establish supportive social networks of peers and adults
    - experience and deal with challenges
    - enjoy themselves

Cherwell has a well established programme of health and recreation activities for young people including the Easter and summer holiday activity camps, Play Rangers and Youth Activators initiatives, and the Bicester and Banbury Bus projects. This is complemented by a range of projects that are centred on local schools, community centres and youth clubs / youth groups to develop youth engagement in the local community through youth councils and similar.

The Committee noted that in 2009/10 the overall youth services budget was about £130,000 and that this area would be the subject of a value for money review in 2010. On the basis of this information they agreed to defer any detailed consideration of the finances for youth services until the conclusions of that review were available. In the meantime they wished to put on record their admiration for the work of the officer team in delivering such a positive and extensive range of youth services within such limited budget constraints. The Committee reflected on the costs associated with supporting and promoting youth engagement. They acknowledged that there would be resource pressures on this type of activity but felt that this re-affirmed the need to make better use of the existing resources and exploit existing systems and relationships.

How Cherwell District Council engages with young people

As part of the review the Committee looked at which of the Council services routinely engaged with young people in the district. Based on the responses provided by the Heads of Service it emerged that in terms of the democratic process there was little or no systematic engagement with young people across the Council (See Table: 1 below). The Committee discovered that the main channels for contact with young people tended to be needs driven involvement in specific projects within the housing, community safety and recreation service areas.

Outside the Youth Services team and the Democratic and Elections team members who worked on Local Democracy Week there appeared to be little awareness amongst officers of the potential benefits of engaging with young people to inform service delivery.

Table 1 How Cherwell District Council engages with young people

Service area	Engagement activity
Recreation & Health	• Responsible for Local Democracy Week, Youth Councils and all other discretionary youth services such as play and recreation.
Urban & Rural	• Some involvement of young people on specific projects e.g. pupils from Gosford Hill school contributed to the discussions on the refurbishment of street furniture in Kidlington.
Safer Communities & Development	• Primarily needs driven involvement. For example the Bicester Issues Group which looked at significant anti-social behaviour on the Bure Park estate. • Some NAG involvement
Environmental Services	• Schools education programme for waste and recycling • Climate Change Forum membership includes a pupil from Banbury Community College
Community Planning & Policy	• No routine or systematic engagement with young people. • Worked with specific schools to inform work on the sustainable communities strategy.
Communications	• No routine or systematic engagement with young people. • Survey group and public consultation age group is 18+ • Using new communications media (Facebook, Twitter) to reach young people
Democratic Services and Elections	• Involved in delivery of Local Democracy Week activities
Planning	• Previously no routine or systematic engagement with young people • Future stages of LDF consultation will target young people, using Youth Parliament and Youth Councils
Housing	• Primarily needs driven involvement through homelessness and other specific programmes.

The Committee was concerned that the Council was not actively engaging with young people in key areas such as Planning and Communications. We should embed engagement in such activities as a matter of course making it plain, simple and easy to understand and not obscured by meaningless council jargon.

The Committee considered that the Council's Heads of Service should be made aware of the work we currently undertake with young people and of the existing channels for

communicating and consulting with them. They should be encouraged to ensure that the involvement of young people is a mainstream consideration in their service delivery.

Local Democracy Week

The Council has participated in Local Democracy Week for several years, the main activities being a visit to Westminster hosted by the local MP and participation in the on-line game "I'm a Councillor Get Me Out of Here".

In October 2009 22 pupils from four schools in Banbury and Bicester visited Westminster to find out more about how democracy works. The visit was organised by Cherwell District Council as part of Local Democracy Week 2009. After a tour of the Lords and Commons, they had a chance to quiz local MP, Tony Baldry. He faced questions on a range of issues including young people being disregarded because they are not old enough to vote, the future of paediatrics at the Horton General Hospital, public sector spending cuts and MPs' expenses.

As part of Local Democracy Week the Council has encouraged its elected members and schools in the district to take part in the "I'm a councillor, get me out of here" on-line event. Each year a group of Cherwell District Councillors post a manifesto or 'blog' and engage in on-line question and answer sessions with local school children about a wide range of issues, both national and local. The Councillors are voted 'out' of the political jungle on a daily basis until one remains. Three members of the Committee had participated in the event in 2009 or previous years.

The Committee noted that Council staff were already developing ideas for new initiatives including a Cherwell Challenge (a team based activity for young people to take decisions and apply the democratic process to a series of case studies on budgeting, planning, housing and recreation) as well as a Councillor Shadowing programme.

The Committee concluded that the excellent work conducted during Local Democracy Week should be extended to provide a sustained programme of activities throughout the year. An example of this sort of approach might be a debate (or series of debates) between local schools, facilitated by the Council, on relevant topics such as changing the voting age.

The Committee felt that the Council should seek to encourage greater involvement from those councillors and officers who were school governors or active in the school parent/teacher organisations. They were aware that there were councillors who were actively involved in local schools and invited to speak about democracy but that this was somewhat ad hoc and driven by individual contacts and relationships. The Committee felt that the Council, through the Young People's Champion and officers, should aim to collate information about these activities and to promote a central point of contact, to offer advice, information and even materials.

The Committee acknowledged the financial constraints facing the Council, and indeed local schools, but felt that the sort of initiatives that had been identified would be fairly modest and should be possible to plan and implement for a relatively low cost.

Youth Councils

There are two Youth Councils in the district in the urban centres of Banbury and Bicester. These are relatively autonomous groups who set their own agendas and manage their own affairs, with guidance and support from the Council's Senior Recreation Development Officer (Play & Young People).

In November 2009 members of the Committee attended a meeting of the Bicester Youth Council, to observe the youth councillors at work and to talk to them about their interest in local democracy. The Committee members were very impressed by the maturity and commitment of the youth councillors and the professional manner in which they conducted the meeting. The Committee noted that Bicester Town Council was fully supportive of the initiative and ensured that relevant agenda/minute items from their meetings were referred to the Youth Council for comment. Officers stressed that it was essential to get this balance right and ensure that the issues referred to the Youth Council were on topic and relevant; in the past there had been problems elsewhere with Youth Councils being bombarded with large volumes of paperwork from the parent local authority.

The Committee learnt that officers from the Council had been working with representatives from Kidlington Parish Council and Gosford School and colleagues at Oxfordshire County Council to set up the new youth forum in Kidlington. The officers were also exploring the possibility of establishing a further youth council for the young people in the rural areas of the district.

The Committee felt that the Youth Councils were a somewhat under publicised and under utilised opportunity and resource for youth engagement. They agreed that the Council should promote their existence and encourage the District Council Service teams and the Town/Parish Councils to consider whether they could work with the Youth Councils on particular issues. The Committee recognised that it was essential that the Youth Councils should retain control of their own business and set their own agenda. It was essential that they did not become overloaded with information and requests for comments from the District or Town/Parish Councils.

They suggested that this closer relationship with the Youth Councils could be facilitated by inviting a local councillor to act as a link / liaison councillor for each of the local Youth Councils to alert them to issues of interest to young people and to support and mentor them on the democratic process.

Question & Answer session

In February 2009 the Committee held a question and answer session with officers from Oxfordshire County Council responsible for the provision of youth services and with pupils from Banbury School and the Frank Wise School. The pupils were all members of their respective school youth councils and were participating in the Local Councillor Shadowing programme.

The Committee used this session as an opportunity to find out more about the practical operation of a school council and the type of issues that they address, to hear about outcomes and achievements of the youth councils and to explore some of the frustrations and barriers facing young people seeking to engage in local democracy.

Specifically the pupils pointed out the risk of over reliance on internet based communications and information sharing. They explained that not all young people had unlimited access to the internet at home or at school and so it was important to continue to use more traditional

methods of communication such as newsletters and school notice boards. The Committee learnt that the County and District Council were in fact in the process of rolling out Youth Activator notice boards to secondary schools across the county. These boards provided information in the areas of Physical Activities / Arts & Culture / Health / Youth Clubs and were updated on a monthly basis. The Committee was also told about two county-wide websites which hold information about youth organisations and events for young people.

In addition the pupils said that they felt that the information about initiatives such as Local Democracy Week should be made available to parents as well as pupils and that there might be a better take up if there was more notice given.

The Committee felt that it was important to ask young people about the activities they want and the mechanism for doing this should incorporate a wide range of young people, not only those who are involved in youth/school council. As not all young people are part of the traditional school system the same approach should be extended to all forms of further education.

Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

Task and Finish Group Report

July 2010

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1. Introduction

The Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Task and Finish Group was formed to gain a better understanding of the levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in the District. The main issue the Council faces is that whilst crime levels in the District are low the level of fear of crime is high and the perception of young people in the District contributes to this issue. The Group believe that this review is a starting point in addressing the fear of crime and the perception of young people. This report identifies some key issues including: the need to challenge the negative perception of young people, the role of the media in forming the fear of crime and the relationship between different generations and how this contributes to the fear of crime. The scope and timing of the review did not allow the Group to look in any great detail at youth engagement and the provision of facilities for young people. And it is acknowledged that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may wish to look at these issues in more detail.

Additionally the Task Group acknowledge the considerable time that has been taken in producing this report due to both officer and member availability. The Task Group would recommend that the difficulties of Task group working are reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a view to this type of work being carried out by the committees themselves using an enhanced select committee model.

2. Recommendations

Recommendation 1:
That the Council take an active role in promoting the positive activities which young people in the district are involved in.

Recommendation 2:
That the Council promote the success of the Street Wardens in Bicester and Banbury and that the possibility of developing the scheme in other areas of Cherwell be investigated.

Recommendation 3:
That Overview and Scrutiny investigate how the Council engages with young people in the District in more detail.

Recommendation 4:
That the Council embarks on intergenerational activities to tackle the perception of crime in the District.

Recommendation 5:
That the Council develop a policy on youth engagement and involvement as part of the Council's consultation and decision making arrangements.

3. Role of Task and Finish Group

3.1 Terms of Reference

(1) To establish whether teenagers congregating on the streets are engaged in anti-social behaviour or if this is a perception.

(2) To investigate what measures the Council has in place to engage with young people on the streets

(3) To consider how the Council tackles any resulting anti-social behaviour.

(4) To evaluate how young people contribute to their communities and how the Council can further encourage this.

(5) To produce a report and evidence based recommendations regarding the above issues.

3.2 Membership of Group

The Group comprises Councillors Irvine (Chairman) Ahmed, Billington, Clarke, Cullip, Sibley, Smithson and Tompson.

The Group greatly acknowledges the contributions and evidence freely given by:

Peta Halls (National Youth Agency)
Cherwell District Council Street Wardens
The Banbury Youth Forum
The Bicester Youth Council
Grahame Helm (Head of Safer Communities and Community Development, Cherwell District Council)
Terry Paxton (Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator, Cherwell District Council)
Jo Smith (Communications Manager, Cherwell District Council)
Jeremy Leggett (Children and Young People Services, Oxfordshire County Council)
Owen Pennock (Children and Young People Services, Oxfordshire County Council)
Pippa Martin (Arts Officer, Cherwell District Council)

3.3 Time table of meetings

Date of meeting	Who gave evidence	Issues scrutinised
5 August 2008	Grahame Helm Head of Safer Communities and Community Development	Consideration of anti-social behaviour statistics

	Terry Paxton, Anti-social behaviour co-ordinator	Safer Communities Briefing – setting the context of anti-social behaviour in Cherwell
14 August 2008	Walkabouts with the Bicester Street Wardens	Extent to which young people are congregating on the streets
26 September 2008	Walkabouts with the Banbury Street Wardens	Extent to which young people are congregating on the streets
11 February 2009	Owen Pennock, Oxfordshire County Council Members of the Banbury Youth Forum Member of the Bicester Youth Council	Perception of young people congregating on the streets and the extent to which they are engaged in anti-social behaviour Youth engagement
21 May 2009	Bicester Youth Bus Visit Youth Workers Young people using the bus	Youth engagement
16 June 2009	Grahame Helm Councillor Dan Sames, Young People's Champion Peta Halls, National Youth Agency Owen Pennock, Oxfordshire County Council Members of the Banbury Youth Forum	Roundtable discussion covering anti-social behaviour, the perception of young people and inter-generational issues Youth engagement
9 December 2009	Age Concern Banbury	Perception of young people from an older perspective Intergenerational issues

3.4 Documentary Evidence Considered

Video Projects Banbury Youth Forum and Bicester Youth Council, edited by Pippa Martin Arts Officer
BBC Mischief Series, Episode Three *Hoodies can be Goodies*
West Midlands Police Authority – *Listening to Young People*
Cherwell District Council (2006 and 2007) *Customer Satisfaction Results 2006 and 2007*
Audit Commission (January 2009) Tired of Hanging Around, Local Government National Report
Home Office (2005) Defining and Measuring Anti- Social Behaviour, Home Office Development and Practice
West Midlands Police Authority Listening to Young People

3.5 Status of Report

This report is the work of the Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Task and Finish Group, on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and where opinions are expressed they are not necessarily those of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Cherwell District Council.

Whilst we have sought to draw on this review to make recommendations and suggestions that are helpful to the Council, our work has solely been designed for the purpose of discharging our task in accordance with the terms of reference agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Accordingly, our work cannot be relied upon to identify every area of strength, weakness or opportunity for improvement.

This report is addressed to the Executive of Cherwell District Council in the first instance. It has been prepared for the use of the Council and the Task and Finish Group takes no responsibility for any Member or Officer acting in their individual capacities or to other third parties acting on it.

4. Background and Context

The Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Task and Finish Group was formed to gain a better understanding of the levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in the District. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee regularly review customer satisfaction levels which indicated that a significant proportion of residents were dissatisfied with how the Council was dealing with anti-social behaviour particularly in terms of young people congregating on the streets and graffiti. In 2006 29% of respondents were not satisfied with the Council's approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour and nuisance, this increased to 37% in 2007. The lowest levels of satisfaction in 2007 were for dealing with 'vandalism and graffiti' and 'dealing with youths hanging around on the street' both with only 14% satisfaction rating. 50% of respondents indicated that they were not satisfied with how the Council dealt with young people congregating on the streets.[1] This view is not just a Cherwell issue; the British Crime Survey 2007/08 showed that young people 'hanging around' is the greatest concern in terms on anti-social behaviour.[2]

As the issue of crime and anti-social behaviour is so wide the Group decided to focus on anti-social behaviour and decided to narrow the focus to young people congregating on the streets which as outlined above is an important issue to local residents.

There is evidence to indicate that people feel a sense of intimidation if they walk past a group of young people congregating outside the local shops, as confirmed by the Group's visit to Age Concern, Banbury. The Group wanted to find if this sense of intimidation was justified and if young people congregating on the streets are engaged in anti-social behaviour or if this is just a perception.

Statistics relating to levels of anti-social behaviour are difficult to capture. This is perhaps because anti-social behaviour has been difficult to define. The only legal definition of anti-social behaviour can be found in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 'a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as himself.'[3] The House of Lords have stated that 'anti-social behaviour can take different forms and may consist of insults, abuse, threats, assaults or damage to houses by stone throwing or the painting of graffiti.' The Group found the Government's view of anti-social behaviour most relevant that is: 'the common element in all anti-social behaviour is that is represents a lack of respect or consideration of other people.'[4]

Although the perception that teenagers 'hanging around' is a national issue data has not always been captured in national surveys For example the Home

[1] Cherwell District Council (2006 and 2007) *Customer Satisfaction Results 2006 and 2007*
[2] Audit Commission (January 2009) *Tired of Hanging Around, Local Government National Report*, www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/localgov
[3] Home Office (2005) *Defining and Measuring Anti- Social Behaviour, Home Office Development and Practice Report* www.homeoffice.gov.uk
[4] Head of Safer Communities and Community Development Briefing 5 August 2008

Office '*One day count of anti-social behaviour* 2006 did not gather information relating to young people congregating on the street. The Justice Survey also excluded date on young people congregating on the streets.[5]

Like much of the country the perception of young people congregating on the streets is an issue for residents in Cherwell and what is or isn't antisocial behaviour is based on perception. This particularly seems to be the case with youths 'hanging around', statistics relating to anti social behaviour are difficult to gather but it seems especially so in relation to youths congregating on the streets. Hence, the Group have focused on perception. Is the idea that young people congregating on the streets are engaged in anti-social behaviour just a perception? And if so how can the Council challenge this perception?

The issue of young people congregating on the streets or 'hanging around' is a high priority across the District. Each Neighbourhood (of which there are thirteen in Cherwell) has three priorities. Only Kidlington Rural North does not include anti social behaviour and/or youths 'hanging around; as one of its community priorities. Their priorities focused on speeding which can be a key issue in rural areas. Also young people congregating on the streets tends to be less of a perceived problem in rural as compared to urban areas.

Cherwell District Council takes a major role in tackling anti-social behaviour and is a member of a multi-agency anti-social behaviour group. The Council has been involved in initiatives such as the Bicester Youth Bus and Youth Shelters in Banbury and Bicester, designed to tackle anti-social behaviour and engage with young people. The anti-social behaviour team has also been recognised for establishing best practice with their Anti-Social Behaviour Orders Procedures and drug house closures. In the time since the review commenced the Council has been rated as excellent by the Audit Commission the Corporate Performance Assessment recognised the Council's achievements in dealing with anti-social behaviour. The Audit Commission, in particular praised the co-ordinated response of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team provides in tackling anti-social behaviour.[6]

This performance is also evident in the improving customer satisfaction results in 2009. The level of respondents not satisfied with how the Council was dealing with youths hanging around on the streets decreased to 42% and the percentage of respondents satisfied with the Council's approach increased to 19%. Overall 42% were not satisfied with the Council's approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour and nuisance with 36% satisfied with the approach. The Customer Satisfaction Survey Report 2009 stated that the lower levels of satisfaction in relation to anti-social behaviour and nuisance were not affecting the overall level of satisfaction with the Council as this was

[5] Audit Commission (January 2009) *Tired of Hanging Around, Local Government National Report* www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/localgov

[6] Audit Commission (March 2009) *Annual Report and Inspection Letter 2009* www.cherwell.gov.uk

a low ranking priority as residents viewed this as a Police rather than Council function.[7]

The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour team have identified several challenges in dealing with young people and anti-social behaviour these are: understanding the needs of young people, effective engagement with Oxfordshire Youth Service and managing expectations as well as ensuring clear information gathering. The team also recognises the need to promote their work in terms of the initiatives they are involved in and successes in terms of developing best practice, which in turn will help alter public perception.

A disproportionate number of youths entering the criminal justice system in Oxfordshire are from Cherwell at a third. It is a priority of the Council's anti-social behaviour team to intervene before anti-social behaviour escalates into criminal activity. Most reports of anti-social behaviour are in the urban centres of Banbury Bicester and Kidlington. The Group have therefore focused the review on these areas.

The table below shows the level of anti-social behaviour in the district.

Complaint Type	**2004/05**	**2005/06**	**2006/07**	**2007/08**
Abandoned Vehicles	1997	1696	892	757
Anti social behaviour	306	542	565	467
Dog fouling	117	67	61	90
Fly Tipping	600	749	495	616
Graffiti	24	28	21	6
Littering	308	393	286	N/A
Noise	454	368	399	748

(Source: Cherwell District Council Community Safety Unit)

[7] Cherwell District Council Customer 2009 *Satisfaction Survey Report* (p 36) http://intranet/corporatepolicy/Researchreports.cfm

5. Findings

5.1 Walkabout with the Street Wardens

The Street Wardens Scheme was originally set up in 2001. Street Wardens, carry out patrols, attend community meetings and support Thames Valley Police with information and intelligence. Their responsibilities include:

- reporting fly tipping, abandoned or untaxed vehicles and other waste related issues
- promoting recycling and advising to residents
- assisting the dog warden with stray dogs and other related issues
- wardens are trained and equipped to deal with needles and drugs related litter
- assisting Leisure Services to promote events.
- Wardens are also trained walk leaders for the health walk scheme.

The Street Wardens are also engaging with young people. The Audit Commission described the Cherwell Street Wardens as 'highly visible' in the community. [8] The Group undertook walkabouts with the Street Wardens in Bicester and Banbury to see for themselves if young people were congregating on the street or being anti-social.

Councillor Sibley went on a walkabout with the Street Wardens in Bicester on Thursday 14 August 2008. The objective of the walkabout was to investigate the first term of reference of the Task and Finish Group which was: to establish whether teenagers congregating on the streets are engaged in anti social behaviour or if this is perception. The walkabout focused on the Bure Park area of Bicester where issues relating to anti-social behaviour had been reported in the past. In the time Councillor Sibley was with the Street Wardens there was no evidence of young people congregating on the streets.

Councillor Sibley identified that there was a lack of facilities for young people in the area and learned about the role of the Street Wardens, in reporting vandalism and anti-social behaviour, dealing with resident's complaints, and communicating with local schools. Councillor Sibley reported to the Group and highlighted the success of the street wardens in Bicester and the value of their role in terms of: high visibility, involvement with the community, pro-active approach with engaging local schools and knowledge of young people in the area.

The street wardens were able to offer their own insight into the issue of anti social youths. The wardens felt it was a perception that young people congregating were engaged in anti-social behaviour. It was acknowledged by the wardens that large groups of young people could be intimidating to people, especially when accessing facilities such as local shops. When the street wardens had spoken to young people congregating together the general explanation was that there was no where else for them to go.

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[8] Audit Commission (March 2009) *Annual Report and Inspection Letter 2009* www.cherwell.gov.uk

Councillor Sibley on a walkabout with Street Wardens in Bicester, 14 August 2008

Councillors Cullip and Smithson went on a walkabout with Street Wardens in Banbury on Friday 26 September 2008. In the time the Councillors were in Grimsbury with the street wardens there was no evidence of young people congregating on the streets or engaged in anti-social behaviour. In their time with the Street Wardens the Councillors saw young people engaged in normal activities during the walkabout: getting conkers from trees, going to the park to play football etc.

The Street Wardens had explained that they had experienced instances of young people engaging in anti-social behaviour in Banbury but not to the extent reported in the media. They felt the idea of young people congregating on the streets and engaging in anti-social behaviour was very much a perception as opposed to a reality.

The Group also discussed the Street Wardens with members of the Banbury Youth Forum. Members of the Group and the Audit Commission had praised the work of the Street Wardens and recognised the value of the visibility on the community and their role as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour. The young people saw the Street Wardens in a different light and felt they would be ineffectual in dealing with the issue of anti-social behaviour and specifically young people congregating on the streets. The Street Wardens themselves expressed their own concerns relating to young people congregating on the streets and were aware that although their presence alone could help disperse large groups of young people congregating this would not stop them returning once the Street Wardens shifts had ended after 8pm.

The findings of the Budget Consultation 2009 supports the young people's view of the Street Wardens, local residents stated that they were not aware of what the Street Wardens were responsible for and that they had 'no respect from the community of kids.' The issues identified in the budget consultation were around knowledge and experience of the Street Wardens, that is, residents taking part in the budget consultation were not aware of what the Street Wardens did and what they could do.[9]

It appears that despite their visibility the Street Wardens are not perceived to be effective in tacking youths congregating on the streets by local residents. However, the Councillors who spent time with the Street Wardens felt they did have an impact and played an important role in the community. The perception of the Street Wardens success and effectiveness can be linked to the general perception of anti-social behaviour and youths congregating on the streets. If it is a perception that young people congregating on the streets are engaged in anti-social behaviour then the Street Wardens success cannot be judged in terms of dealing with this as it is a perception not a real problem.

The Group felt that the Street Wardens were a valuable tool in tackling anti-social behaviour and nuisance and felt that the possibility of extending the scheme to other parts of the District should be investigated along with the possibility of extending them by 1 hour during school holidays. However their success and impact in tackling anti-social behaviour needed to be promoted in the community so that local residents were more aware of their role and responsibilities and how this relates to reducing anti-social behaviour, or its' perception.

Recommendation

That the Council promote the success of the Street Wardens in Bicester and Banbury and that the possibility of developing the scheme in other areas of Cherwell be investigated.

[9] Cherwell District Council (2009) *Budget Consultation Report 2009* (p 22) http://intranet/corporatepolicy/Researchreports.cfm

5.2 Banbury Youth Forum and Bicester Youth Council Video Projects

The Group invited the Banbury Youth Forum and Bicester Youth Council to produce video projects on their perspectives of anti social behaviour with particular focus on the first and second terms of reference of the Group: (1) to establish whether teenagers congregating on the streets are engaged in anti-social behaviour or if this is a perception and (2) to investigate what measures the Council has in place to engage with young people on the streets. Members of the Task and Finish Group visited the groups to explain the purpose of the review and how their perspective would contribute to a balanced investigation into the issue of young people congregating on the streets. The perspective of older residents had been clearly established in the results of the Council's customer satisfaction results which inspired this review, as outlined earlier in the report.

The Banbury Youth Forum and Bicester Youth Council took similar approaches to their projects interviewing young people in their areas. The Banbury Youth Forum met with young people in Banbury who were congregating in areas of the town and the Bicester Youth Forum interviewed young people using the Bicester Youth Bus.

The videos highlighted that some of the activities that may appear intimidating to local residents were viewed by the young people as normal social activities. For example in the interviews congregating in a shopping precinct was explained as playing football in an area which was well lit and sheltered. Skateboarding in a shopping centre was viewed as better than causing trouble and drinking. Many of the interviewees identified a lack of facilities and a lack of 'things to do' in the district as a reason for young people congregating in public places.

The young people interviewed by the Bicester Youth Council praised the Bicester Youth Bus and felt this type of facility would prevent teenagers from congregating on the streets but also commented that it needed to be better publicised to ensure teenagers were aware such a facility existed. They also highlighted that young people often congregated around places such as shopping precincts and centres because they were well lit and sheltered and they would like better shelters elsewhere in which to meet. In the discussion following the video presentation (which members of the Banbury Youth Forum attended) the young people gave examples of facilities in the district which would take young people off the streets but which were not lit at certain times. It was noted that in Banbury 'lit' hours had been extended and this should be considered across the district. The provision of a managed Graffiti wall was also suggested. One of the interviewee's in Bicester stated that he felt more safe in a big City such as Oxford as it was busier in the evening, there was more going on and cities are well lit. The young people also gave examples of being dispersed by the police; they felt this was unreasonable in public places such as parks, and this was the type of location that larger groups should be allowed to socialise and congregate in.

The video projects also highlighted that young people themselves shared the feeling of intimidation caused by teenagers congregating on the streets and that concerns relating to anti-social behaviour were not only concerns of adult residents in the district. Interestingly in the West Midlands Police Authority Report Listening to Young People, young people identified teenagers hanging around as a priority in terms of antisocial behaviour problems. They also advised that better street lighting and more visible police presence in anti social areas could make a difference.[10]

Both groups stated that the idea that young people congregating in the streets are engaged in anti-social behaviour is a perception. Young people in Bicester felt that this perception was created as teenagers are being stereotyped. The members of the Banbury Youth Forum who met with the Task and Finish Group supported this view and felt that the media had played a role in creating this inaccurate and damaging stereotype of teenagers. The representatives from the Banbury Youth Forum explained that when making their video project they had struggled to find young people congregating on the streets and in their view none of the young people they met had been engaged in anti-social behaviour. Both groups stated they felt young people were 'hanging around' because they had nothing to do; the vast majority were not engaged in antisocial behaviour.

This input from young people in the review caused the Group to consider if the behaviour of young people today is significantly different to that of previous generations, members of the Group felt that they had been 'mischievous' in the past but there behaviour had never been labelled as anti-social.

It is clear each generation has a distinct youth culture. Is the behaviour of 'hoodies' any different to other youth cultures of the past such as: teddy boys, mods and punks, a view also considered in the BBC documentary *'Hoodies can be Goodies'*.[11] Whilst, the language, activities and fashion trends of young people are different to that of previous generations the Group considered that the core desire to be around friends to associate with a group had not changed. It is possible the language and fashion trends are undoubtedly different and may cause inter-generational tensions, which contribute to a perception that associates 'hoodies' and 'hanging around' with anti-social behaviour. This view is supported by the West Midlands Police Authority Report, Listening to Young People. The report found young people 'repeatedly said that the media and public perceptions of young people were generally negative, focusing on young people as anti-social and involved in gangs. Young people felt this stereotypical portrayal helped to maintain and provoke inter-generational tensions'[12]

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[10] West Midlands Police *Authority Listening to Young People* (p. 11) http://www.west-midlands-pa.gov.uk/publicconsultationpublications.asp
[11] BBC (October 2008) *Hoodies can be Goodies* http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00dnf0p
[12] West Midlands Police Authority *Listening to Young People* (p 11) http://www.west-midlands-pa.gov.uk/publicconsultationpublications.asp

Members of the Banbury Youth Forum made the first link in the Group's investigation between this perception of young people and the media. They had grown up in a culture where language was different to that of previous generations and where swearing was common, on TV, in video games and music. The view was expressed that the media plays a role in creating the current youth culture which it at times vilifies. Although young people were able to make this link between the role of the media and this harmful perception of young people they could not offer any concrete suggestions to the Group on how to challenge and correct this perception.

It is worth noting that the negative image of young people has been magnified during a period where the roles of the media has been changing. The media has grown with more television channels, newspapers and the growth of the internet. The messages that the media promotes are more widely available and easier to access. The public access reports relating to knife crime and anti-social behaviour involving young people from across the country and this shapes their perception of young people where they live. Residents' in Cherwell perceptions of young people are shaped by events in places like Birmingham or London as opposed to Cherwell were incidents of anti-social behaviour are rare.

Members of the Banbury Youth Forum explained to the Group that they felt the positive activities that young people were involved in were often overlooked and that the media were eager to report only negative news stories involving young people. This view is shared by the young people the West Midlands Police Authority consulted, their report found that the positive activities of young people should be promoted and celebrated.[13] The Group has concluded that it is mainly perception that young people congregating on the streets in Cherwell are engaged in anti-social behaviour. The Group believe that this negative stereotype of young people should be challenged and that the Council should take a lead role in challenging this misconception.

Recommendation

That the Council take an active role in promoting and supporting the positive activities which young people in the District are involved in, as well as producing a leaflet to advertise activities for young people which is available to PCSO's and Street wardens to distribute.

5.3 Intergenerational Issues

The relationship between young and older generations in the District has been a recurring theme of this review. As the Group undertook their investigation the link to intergenerational tensions and the negative perception of young people became more prominent. The Banbury Youth Forum felt that there

[13] West Midlands Police Authority *Listening to Young People* (p 11) http://www.west-midlands-pa.gov.uk/publicconsultationpublications.asp

was a lack of understanding between different generations and that young people were unfairly blamed for the negative actions of all young people and that their behaviour was automatically labelled as anti-social even though in their view their behaviour was acceptable.

At the roundtable discussion it was suggested that intergenerational activities can be successful in challenging the negative perception of young people and uniting communities. Members of the Group visited Age Concern Banbury to understand how older people perceived young people and how it contributed to their understanding of crime in the District.

The general view of the residents interviewed was that there was not a problem with young people congregating on the streets although some did admit at times to feeling intimidated when they saw a group of young people congregating. Many residents expressed that 'young people were no different to how we were' and that the behaviour of young people today was not 'any worse' to that of older generations. Those interviewed felt that there was a lack of facilities for young people and that activities for young people were not as prominent as they once were. One resident gave the example of the Scouts or Boys Brigade and it was felt that institutions like this were not as popular or accessible as they once had been.

Although the older residents claimed that they did not think there was a problem with young people engaging in anti-social behaviour in the District they did mention problems with vandalism. In the course of discussion the interviewees did use negative language when talking about young people despite earlier stating that they felt that there was not a problem with young people and that their behaviour was no worse than any other generation. Many of the older people talked about a change in society generally and felt that young people showed a lack of respect towards adults. They felt that communities interacted in a different way and that young people were influenced more by computer games which they felt portrayed violence.

Customers at Age Concern felt that the media did shape their perception of young people and that the media had a 'lot to answer for.' They felt that there was a barrier between young and old but this had also been the case when they were younger and their parents didn't understand their interests of musical tastes etc. The idea of more intergenerational activities was well received and it was felt that generations could learn from one another and that this was vital to develop trust and challenge negatives perceptions of young people. Peta Halls, from the National Youth Agency, provided the Group with examples of where intergenerational activities had been successful in tackling the perception of anti-social behaviour

Case Study – Corby

Corby also suffers from intergenerational problems similar to those discussed above. A low level of tolerance in terms of anti-social behaviour was identified in the area which contributed towards a culture of blame from the older generation towards young people causing tension in the community.

Northamptonshire Police conducted a community audit in Corby which showed anti-social behaviour and criminal damage was a major concern in the community highlighted by (90% of participants). The audit allowed the Police to identify what residents perceived as the problems with anti-social behaviour and young people such as: lack of facilities boredom, lack of role models. The audit identified that people wanted to see more youth workers on the streets and CCTV cameras.

The results of the audit resulted in the securing of funding for two detached youth workers who were able to engage with young people effectively. The scheme was successful in reducing anti-social behaviour with a 39% reduction in the number of anti-social behaviour incidents reported in the area between December 2007 and February 2008 compared to the same period in the previous year. Youth workers were able to engage with young people in an informal manner and gave older residents the opportunity to express their concerns relating to young people. Youth workers provided feedback from in relation to these concerns through presentations to local community groups, newsletters and media reports.

Information Provided by Peta Hall Development Officer - Community Safety and Youth Justice, National Youth Agency.

Case Study – Conka Island Birmingham

Conka Island is a grass area in Birmingham about 150 metres long and 75 metres wide. Police were receiving complaints about nuisance and anti-social behaviour in and around the area. Young people were blamed for trouble in the area and the decision had been taken to apply for a dispersal order. This was put on hold and young people were approached to take part in a consultation process. Young people drafted a questionnaire for local residents to identify their concerns regarding the area.

Through this intergeneration work a bid for lottery funding was made and improvements were made to the island such as litter bins, fences, benches and an outdoor football area. The project was successful in bringing the community together. Police no longer respond to complaints to move young people on which only served to antagonise young people and did not resolve the anti-social behaviour issues. The young people no longer congregate in areas which caused a nuisance and have got involved in environmental projects in Conka Island. The area is recognised as a place for young people to meet and use.

Information Provided by Peta Hall Development Officer - Community Safety and Youth Justice, National Youth Agency.

Although these case studies give successful examples of dealing with anti-social behaviour particularly in terms of a ‘community’ approach and inter-generational working the situation in Cherwell are distinct from those faced in Corby and Birmingham. Cherwell has low level of crime and incidents of anti-social behaviour caused by young people are way below those experienced at Corby and Birmingham. However, intergenerational tensions do contribute to

the negative perception of young people which in turn contribute to the fear of crime. Intergenerational tensions can fuel the perception that young people are engaged in anti-social behaviour and add to the feeling of distrust. The Group has found little evidence of young people congregating on the streets or being engaged in anti-social behaviour. It is of paramount importance that the Council deals with the issue of perception.

The Group recognises the importance of engaging with young people and including the whole community in projects. The Group discussed the possibility of the council initiating youth projects where young people would be given responsibility and ownership for delivering activities for young people. The Group decided this warrants further investigation.

Councillor Cullip informed the Group of successful intergenerational activities in her ward involving the local Youth Club and Older Peoples Club which had produced community benefits. Councillor Smithson reported similar examples from his work with the Royal British Legion and their involvement with young people. It was suggested that intergenerational activities be recommended to the County Council to take place at the proposed new Wood Green Youth Club in Banbury, which could involve young people teaching older people e.g. computer skills and vice versa e.g. cooking, woodwork or car maintenance and that the County Council school liaison officers could be used to help build the bridges required.

The case studies demonstrate that intergenerational activities can be successful in challenging the negative perception of young people and creating greater community cohesion. The Group felt that this should be explored within Cherwell.

Recommendation

That the Council embarks on intergenerational activities to tackle the perception of crime in the District.

5.4 Bicester Youth Bus Visit

Councillors Billington and Tompson visited the Bicester Youth Bus (a project the Council is involved in) on 21 May 2009. The Bicester Youth Bus is in effect a 'mobile youth centre' that tours locations in and around Bicester. The Youth Bus provides access to computers and the opportunity for young people to take part in a variety of projects. Youth workers are available on the Youth Bus for information and guidance on issues such a alcohol, relationships and education.

Bicester Youth Bus

The Councillors met Youth Workers who work on the bus and some of the young people who use the bus. The bus was established and is funded by a partnership of organisations including Cherwell District Council, Bicester Town Council, the Police, Oxfordshire County Council youth service and Bicester Village. The bus is presently available for young people twice a week on a Thursday at Shakespeare Road and Wednesday at Bure Park from 6.30pm – 9.00pm. If there were no staff vacancies the bus would be open Monday – Thursday evenings.

The Bicester Youth Bus provides a valuable alternative to traditional methods of youth engagement and allows an opportunity for youth workers to establish relationships with young with more flexibility as the bus goes to the young people rather than them having to attend a youth centre. The Bus provides a safe place for young people to meet and has had a positive impact on taking young people off the street. The Group discussed the possibility of the scheme being extended to cover Banbury. Since that discussion, it has been announced that Banbury would also be getting a youth bus, a decision that the Group has commended. The Group was also of the view that there was a need for this type of provision in Kidlington and queried whether it may be possible for the Council to consider the possibility of using Section 106 money, either directly or indirectly, to fund this type of activity.

In the 2009 Budget Consultation residents suggested that more information on the Youth Bus should be published as they were not aware of the bus and how it was helping to addresses the perception of anti-social behaviour.[14] This highlights further the need for the Council to actively promote its role in successfully dealing with anti-social behaviour and the services it provides for young people.

Councillors Billington and Tompson visit the Bicester Youth Bus, 21 May 2009

[14] Cherwell District Council (2009) *Budget Consultation Report 2009* (p 23) http://intranet/corporatepolicy/Researchreports.cfm

5.5 Roundtable Discussion

The Group hosted a roundtable discussion attended by Peta Halls (National Youth Agency), Grahame Helm (Head of Safer Communities and Community Development), Jo Smith (Communications Manager), Councillor Dan Sames (Cherwell District Council's Young People's Champion), Owen Pennock (Oxfordshire County Council) and Members of the Banbury Youth Forum.

The Group discussed the role of the local media, the importance of engaging with the local press and promoting programmes for young people to be involved in. It was felt that it was not always true that the local media hold a negative perception of young people and that this tends on the whole to be a view of the national press, the local press tend to be very supportive of their communities. The Group felt that the local media could be a successful outlet for promoting the activities of the Council in dealing with anti-social behaviour and for promoting the positive activities young people in the District were involved in.

The Group was advised that anti-social behaviour in the district was not only caused by young people. Most anti-social behaviour and criminal damage is by adults and tends to occur late in the evening when pubs and clubs are closing, and is linked to exit rates from the urban centres and not at the times when young people tend to congregate. The Group commented that this was an important message to communicate to local residents in challenging the perception that young people congregating on the streets are engaged in anti-social behaviour.

The negative perception that young people are involved in anti-social behaviour has taken years to develop through this use of negative language and an image of young people built by the media which it is felt plays on the fears of older residents. The Group commented that this negative image is deep rooted and has developed over time. Challenging this perception will therefore, need to be an ongoing project and there is no quick fix to dealing with this stereotype. It has taken years to build a perception and it will take years to change it.

The Group discussed how the Council engages with young people and how this can be improved. The Group considered the use of social networking sites and web pages specifically designed for young people. The Group recognises that this is a large topic which goes beyond its terms of reference and so therefore requests the Council to develop a policy on youth engagement and involvement as part of the Council's consultation and decision making arrangements, with a view to this being used in the future on an interagency basis

Recommendation

That the Council develop a policy on youth engagement and involvement as part of the Council's consultation and decision making arrangements

6. Conclusion

The main conclusion of this review is that there is not a problem with young people congregating on the streets in Cherwell and that the majority of those congregating are not engaged in anti-social behaviour. However, a negative perception of young people does exist in the District and that this contributes to the fear of crime. It is extremely difficult to pinpoint where this negative perception originates and even those who hold these views had great difficulty in explaining how these views are formed. Young people themselves felt prejudiced by a negative perception could offer no easy solutions on how to challenge the perception. The Group is clear that the negative perception of young people has taken years to build and that there will be no ‘quick-fix’ to challenging this view of young people but this should not deter the Council from taking every opportunity to challenge it through positive reinforcement and breaking down intergenerational barriers.

Executive

Equality Performance Review & Self Assessment

6 September 2010

Report of Chief Executive and Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide an overview of our achievements relating to our equalities work during 2009/2010 and report the results in relation to the internal self assessment which has been completed under the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) 'Achieving' standard.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

(1) To note the progress in delivering the Corporate Equalities Action Plan and the Corporate Equalities Improvement Project.

(2) To agree the completed 'Achieving' Equality Self Assessment'

(3) To agree to continue with the equalities work programme for 2010/2011

(4) To not seek external accreditation of our performance under the equalities standard for local government at this time and take the costs of this inspection as an efficiency saving.

Executive Summary

Introduction

1.1 This Executive Report provides an update and overview of firstly our continued success in relation to the delivery of the equalities work programme for 2010/2011. It also includes a detailed self assessment in relation to the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) 'Achieving' accreditation standards (Appendix A).

1.2 During 2009 a new and more challenging Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) was introduced. Under the old regime there were five levels of performance. The new scheme has three levels 'Developing', 'Achieving' or 'Excellent'.

Research into the new framework and some comparisons with other authorities for each of the 3 performance levels has been completed against the assessment guidance. This suggests that authorities meeting the old level 3 standard (Cherwell's current self assessment) should be able to demonstrate 'Achieving' status under the new standard's criteria:

- Knowing your community: equality mapping
- Place shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- Community engagement and satisfaction
- Responsive services and customer care
- Modern and Diverse Workforce

Proposals

1.3 This report outlines key proposals for the Executive to consider. These proposals will help us to demonstrate our continued commitment and achievement in relation to the equalities work programme which improves outcomes for the local community and demonstrate our continued commitment to review for efficiency savings.

1.4 To agree the completed Equality Self Assessment'. This assessment has been completed across all departments within the Council along with the Equality Steering Group. This assessment has acted as a health check on our equalities work and will help focus our objectives throughout our 2010/2012 work programme as outlined in the Corporate Equality Action Plan

1.5 Policy change since the election including the removal of the Comprehensive Area Assessment and the proposed reduction of externally driven performance management frameworks. Given the Equality Framework for local Government has a cost of £4300 it is proposed that we do not seek formal external accreditation and take the cost of inspection as an efficiency The Council remains fully committed to the equality work programme demonstrated via the Corporate Equality Action Plan and Corporate Improvement Plan Project. The self assessment has been completed in line with the Equality Framework for Local Government standard and can be used to benchmark ourselves against similar local authorities.

Conclusion

1.6 By completing the Equality Framework for local Government 'Achieving' Self Assessment we have been able to build a comprehensive picture of the success of our equalities work programme over the last year which will ensure we focus and streamline our future objectives which will benefit all of our local communities.

1.7 We are confident that we have a structured and robust work programme which will continue to ensure that Cherwell District Council is ensuring fair access to all its services.

1.8 The cost of the external inspection would have been met by the Corporate Strategy, Performance and Partnerships Team and will now act as an efficiency saving.

Background Information

2.1 In April 2009 Executive requested that Officers prepare a self assessment. In March 2010 Executive reviewed the Equality Performance and plans for improvement and agreed the Council would be in a position to request a Peer Challenge under the 'Achieving' standard to take place in November 2010.

2.2 As a result of this the Council has undertaken a self assessment exercise of its equality performance. During June and July 2010 we have been gathering evidence against the 'Achieving' criteria to ensure we meet the Equality Framework for Local Government standard.

2.3 The Council has underpinned its performance by introducing a new performance monitoring approach with the introduction of the Equality Scorecard in April 2010. The 2009/2010 end of year report and quarterly reports demonstrate Cherwell's Corporate Equality Action Plan is progressing well and objectives are on target.

2.4 Appendix A presents the Equality Self Assessment under the Equality Framework for Local Government and the evidence used to underpin this. Currently we believe the Council achieves this standard. This also outlines some areas of improvement outlined in the Corporate Equality Plan. Particular areas of strength includes improved customer access, understanding the needs of the community, effective consultation performance and areas of significant performance relate to the older community, the disabled community, strong engagement from local partners and a robust corporate training programme which focuses on customer service and access.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

3.1 This report provides an in-depth review of Cherwell District Council's performance in relation equality that has been established through the completion of the Self Assessment against the 'Achieving' Standard under the Equality Framework for Local Government and it considers the overall assessment of the Councils performance, including the performance of key services the Council provides and highlights the areas in which our future objectives must focus.

3.2 Executive may wish to consider if an external assessment will demonstrate further commitment to the Equalities Agenda. However at this time the Self Assessment indicates a track record of improving performance.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One Agree recommendations as outlined above

Option Two Executive to request that an external inspection to take place in November 2010 using the Self Assessment attached.

Consultations

Equality Steering Group	The Steering Group have assisted gathering operational evidence for the Self Assessment. The Group have consulted on the final self assessment report and the recommendation to not seek an external inspection this year

Implications

Financial:	Report recommends an efficiency saving of £4300 plus expenses. Comments checked by Karen Curtain, Head of Finance 01295 221551
Legal:	The Self Assessment demonstrates how the Council meets its statutory responsibility under the Equality Framework for Local Government. Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic 01295 221686
Risk Management:	Small risk to Council's reputation by not seeking external accreditation. This risk is mitigated through our own Equality Scorecard. Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk and Insurance Manager 01295 221566
Equalities	No specific operational impacts arising from this report however if the recommendations are accepted the council will not have external accreditation for its equality 2010/2011 work. Comments checked by Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager, 01295 250652

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

All –Accessible Value for Money Council

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Wood, Leader of the Council
Portfolio Holder for Corporate Policy

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix A	Cherwell District Council Equalities Self Assessment

Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Caroline French, Equality & Diversity Officer
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Cherwell District Council
Equalities Self Assessment
28/07/10
Version 1

Knowing Your Community

2:1 - Relevant and appropriate information is gathered efficiently using a range of techniques, across the local community, to inform the authorities: corporate policy and strategy, sustainable community strategy, local area agreements and to identify key equality gaps.	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council collects and analyses good quality information and demographic data as part of our wider community mapping work. This includes a statistical profile of the districts 'Living in Cherwell', Equalities Mapping and access to equalities profiles compiled by the Oxfordshire Data Observatory. In addition to statistical profiles the Council has robust data sharing polices and work with partners such as the police, to share community information. This includes community profiles and tension monitoring and also the results of community consultations. The council undertakes effective community consultation using both quantitative and qualitative methods to understand local priorities. This information has assisted us when setting key future objectives within our corporate plan and strategies. **Activities:** • Living in Cherwell – demographic profile updated annually • Member of the Oxfordshire data observatory strategic board – equalities profiles are developed that cover the whole county and different equalities groups • Corporate consultation programme – a mix of quantitative and qualitative community consultation to measure satisfaction and set budget and service priorities

2:2 - Information and data are disaggregated and analysed corporately and at service/unit level to monitor and assess and set equality objectives. (Links to 2.4, 2.17 and 2.25).	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council has a robust corporate consultation programme that underpins service and financial planning. The results are analysed by population groups to ensure an understanding of the Cherwell community is developed. This includes sub-groups such as age, gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic location and urban/rural splits. All service managers are able to request bespoke analysis of corporate information to support service planning, this includes cross tabulations with different population or geographic groups. As part of the service planning process every September a series of managers workshops are held to provide an overview of community issues and priorities. This draws on the full range of information available. **Activities:** • Bespoke analysis of the corporate consultation programme available for all Cherwell managers • Housing – Older Person's Strategy • Customer Service Mystery Shopping yearly schedule. • Customer Satisfaction Survey. • Annual service planning workshops

2: 3 - Relevant and appropriate information and data (including data relating to the National Indicator Set) is mapped, disaggregated and used with partners, to assess and set equality objectives.	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council works alongside its partners to inform and discuss appropriate data which has been collected and analysed. These discussions form part of the Local Strategic Partnership meetings. **Activities:** • Through the process of determining countywide priorities Cherwell District Council along side the Oxfordshire Partnership have been charged with committing to the Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation and Addressing Health Inequalities in Banbury • Future objectives will include Cherwell District Council Equality Officer and Thames Valley Police CADO (Community and Diversity Officer) joint workings on projects which will help us indentify current data on who lives in Cherwell. • Regular JATAC meetings occur whereby tension monitoring is discussed with all partners whereby an escalation process would commence if our area level was to increase.

Knowing Your Community

Areas for Improvement:

Areas For Improvement

- The Council does not routinely collect data about sexual orientation. Staff awareness events have been held to promote an understanding of the LGBT community but currently sexual orientation is not collected as part of surveys (NB sexual orientation is monitored as part of the HR and Recruitment procedures).

- Building Control (application of Building Regulations to the built environment) are in the process of introducing ethnicity monitoring within their customer satisfaction surveys to ensure all groups within the community are aware of their legal/statutory responsibilities and helping individuals to achieve those obligations should trends identify a need.

Knowing Your Community

Key Sources of Evidence:

Place Survey	The Place Survey is a statutory exercise which Cherwell District Council completes every two years. This survey captures the local community's views, experiences and perceptions. It is analysed by population sub group and the results are used to inform service and improvement planning.
Living In Cherwell	The Living in Cherwell district profile provides a comprehensive source of data in relation to the Cherwell community. The profile is based on well researched facts, figures and is updated annually. Along with the corporate consultation programme the profile forms the evidence base for the corporate plan and improvement strategy.
TVP – Community Profiles	Thames Valley Police Community and Diversity Officers create Community Profiles on a yearly basis which gives in-depth information into the different communities.
Data Observatory	The District Council is a funding partner of the Oxfordshire Data Observatory. The Observatory produces population profiles at both district and smaller geographic areas. This information is used to information planning and decision making. The Data Observatory website has pages dedicated to equalities issues covering all equalities strands.
Experian Data	As part of the Oxfordshire Data Observatory partnership the Council has access to the Experian population data including the 'origins' data set. This information is used to help plan services. It provides information about the characteristics of different areas and helps identify preferred methods of communications and engagement. The origins data set helps inform the council about the breadth of different national and ethnic groups in the district.
SCS – Sustainable Community Strategy	The Sustainable Community Strategy sets out our long term strategic objectives for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Cherwell until 2030. The strategy was based on extensive consultation, including with harder to reach groups. As a result the strategy includes a focus on cohesion and equalities issues.
Cherwell District Council Corporate Plan and Corporate Consultation Programme	Equality objectives have been built with Cherwell's Corporate Plan, these have been developed using the corporate consultation programme which comprises of a detailed satisfaction survey (with booster samples for hard to reach groups) and qualitative budget consultation events (quotas are used to recruit participants ensuring a spread of representation from across the district.)
Corporate Equality Action Plan	Cherwell District Council can demonstrate our commitment to improving equalities within our district through the Corporate Equality Action Plan. This process allows us to investigate, highlight and commit to making improvements to the high level areas within our district whereby we feel

Knowing Your Community Key Sources of Evidence:	
	we can make a real difference
JATAC (meeting minutes)	Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordinating Group – Partners complete district tension monitoring, analyse and discuss accordingly.
Brighter Futures In Banbury Evidence Paper	Oxfordshire Partnership run programme with the objective to ' Breaking the Cycle if Deprivation and Addressing Health Inequalities in Banbury
County wide Data Sharing Policy	

Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

2: 4 - Clear organisational and partnership equality priorities have been set and are owned and understood by all key stakeholders, including the voluntary and community sector. (Links to 2.2)	
Summary of Achievement	The Council has a robust strategy and policy framework. The Sustainable Community Strategy (Our District, Our Future) was launched in February 2010 and sets the long term vision for the district. The strategy was based on extensive consultation and has a clear evidence base drawing on social and demographic trends, long term policy direction and local priorities. Cherwell District Council led the development of the strategy and as part of the work the Local Strategic Partnership for Cherwell was fully reviewed and membership broadened to give the voluntary and business sectors greater representation on the partnership. The Sustainable Community Strategy is underpinned by annual delivery plans (short term priorities set by the Local Strategic Partnership), the county wide Local Area Agreement and a suite of medium term strategies covering issues such as economic development, housing and homelessness, rural development etc. Cherwell District Council also has a corporate plan which sets out the strategic priorities of the organisation. There is also an improvement strategy which is comprised of a number of projects aimed at priority areas for development or improvement. Recognising the importance of equalities and diversity during 2009/2010 a new 3 year Corporate Equality Action Plan was created. This action plan brings together our long term equalities objectives for the district across all the equality strands. The plan encompasses issues around deprivation and building strong and cohesive communities, both key priorities included within the Corporate Improvement strategy for 2010/2011. **Activities:** • Cherwell District Council Sustainable Community Strategy includes deprivation, equalities and cohesion objectives. • The Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership has established a steering group to oversee a multi-agency work programme to tackle deprivation in priority areas in Banbury. • Council's Corporate Plan has equalities objectives and a cross cutting priority aimed at tackling deprivation (reflecting the strategic significance of the sustainable community strategy). • 3 year Corporate Equalities Plan which sets out specific equalities objectives underpinned by a refreshed equalities scheme.

Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

2:5 - Equality and cohesion priorities are monitored regularly by partners, the authority's political and senior managerial leadership, and appropriate resources are being allocated. (Links to 2.20)	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council monitors its Corporate Equality Action plan performance on a quarterly basis via the Equality Scorecard as part of the Councils overall quarterly performance report. This report is presented to the Executive Members by the portfolio holder with the responsibility for performance. This information is reviewed quarterly and forms part of the annual executive performance report. **Activities:** • The Leader of the Council is the Equality and Diversity Portfolio holder. • 2 years ago Cherwell District Council introduced the opportunity for all staff to have there say on various topics which would constructively help shape the future of the Council. Within this survey is a section on Equalities. The survey takes place every 2 years whereby constructive and realistic objectives are set and fulfilled.

Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

2: 6 - Action is being taken to implement commitments within the equality schemes and monitored regularly by political and senior managerial leadership.	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council' Equality Scheme is reviewed yearly. This process is led by the Equalities and Diversity Officer and supported by the internal Equality Steering Group. The Equality Scheme is published on our internet site and the Equality and Access Panel is the primary means by which external consultation takes place in relation to the scheme. These reviews also form part on the yearly Executive reports. In addition the Equality and Access Panel receives feedback reports in relation to changes to our services which demonstrate our commitment to keep the local community informed. This group is attended by internal and external Partners senior management.

Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

2:7 - Appropriate resources have been allocated and action has been taken to mitigate adverse impact and improve equality outcomes where shortfalls have been identified. (Links to 2.18)	
Summary of Achievement	**Cherwell District Council have introduced a 3 year Equality Impact Assessment rolling programme of policies and strategies which have been identified on needing an assessment. This document has been published to all senior members of staff and on Cherwell District Council's website. This document is reviewed quarterly by the Equality Steering Group to ensure new policies are included etc.** **All Equality Impact Assessment's are then consulted on with the public via the Equality and Access Consultation Panel.** **Actions:** • Job Club – Race & Disability At present there is no protocol for any translation i.e. anyone coming to Job Club requiring sign language or a translator would not be able to access the job clubs services that day. No protocol in place for the Job Club Co-ordinator to follow. Corporate Translation Document has been produced outlining procedures and in addition Cherwell District Council website now has an instant 'Translate' facility. Customer Service staff now attend Job Club and would access Language line for translation services. .

Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

2:8 - Political overview and scrutiny processes review equality impacts and objectives	
Summary of Achievement	All of Cherwell District Council's Executive papers require an impact assessment across a range of criteria including finance, risk, legal and equalities. In addition the Executive papers include a section whereby the consultation undertaken as part of the policy development or the required decision is outlined. Cherwell District Council Leader of the council and Executive members are portfolio holders for the Equalities and Cohesion agenda. This gives direct oversight to our equality and cohesion work programmes. The annual Equality Executive paper provides the Executive Members with a detailed review of the performance of work programme and has direct input into future work programmes. **Action** • Executive Members requested for Cherwell District Council to be accredited under the Equality Framework for Local Government. • There is a dedicated Member cohesion champion who focuses on cohesion and equalities work. The champion is briefed monthly by the lead officer and he also chairs the community cohesion group (a group made up of representatives of the local community). • The Performance Scrutiny Working group meets on a quarterly basis to scrutinise performance. Equalities issues are included within these reports and in addition the group has looked equalities performance. e.g. legal and equalities paragraphs in 'Implications' section in a report on Planning for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show people presented to Executive on 3 August 2009

Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

2:9 - The authority communicates effectively about its equality and cohesion priorities, how it is responding to its communities' needs and promoting good relations	
Summary of Achievement	The Council has a dedicated web page for its equalities work and also communities with key stakeholders in a number of ways. These include the quarterly performance reports, consultation and community engagement events, targeted reports and articles in the resident's newsletter. The Corporate Strategy and Performance Team work with key stakeholders across all sectors to publicise the work of the Council and a network of community engagement groups and forums has been established to ensure a wide as possible consultation and communication takes place. Our Corporate Equalities Plan includes objectives and action to improve consultation and communication with members of the local community. Our Equality and Access panel helps us refine all our policies and strategies to meet the needs of the local community which enables us to build strong relations across the community. The Council announces all public meetings on its website and all consultation opportunities are publicised on the council's consultation portal. **Activities:** • Disability Forum • Voluntary Sector Forum • Banbury Community Cohesion Group • Cherwell Faith Forum • Internal 'Knowing your Community' awareness events which help build levels of understanding about the diversity of Cherwell within the Council and partner agencies. • Recognising that the rural communities may not have access to the internet, or the PC's we have provided Link point kiosks into those communities at a point where the communities go. These allow uses to access any non-restricted websites

	• Current Kiosk locations are: Deddington Library, Deddington Hook Norton Cropredy Stores, Cropredy Heyford Wharf Ambrosden Further programmes of rural PC installations are planned for community halls. Each Link point office has self service PC's that any visitor can use.

Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

2:10 - The authority ensures that contractors, commissioned services and grant receivers regularly review their services and access to them to ensure they continue to be appropriate and accessible. (Links to 2.19)	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council take into account within its tender evaluation and contracting processes a potential contractor's approach to equalities in terms of its employment practices and service delivery, which are monitored and managed during the life of each contract. This is outlined in the Councils procurement strategy and documentation. The Council check a contractor's compliance with equality and diversity issues in two ways: • Prior to Contract Award - by asking equalities questions either prior to or during the tender process. If following evaluation the response does not satisfy the Council's criteria, the firm may not be short listed or awarded a contract. • After Contract Award - by including contract conditions on equality in all Council contracts and by monitoring a contractor's performance and compliance with those conditions.

Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

2: 11 - Work is being undertaken to promote equality of opportunity in terms of the participation of under-represented groups in civic and public life, including as elected representatives.	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council work with local schools, colleges and sixth forms to engage with the districts younger generation. We have done this by working in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council to create an Oxfordshire Youth Parliament.

Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

2: 12 - The quality of community relations and harassment and hate crimes are monitored and analysed regularly. Appropriate action is taken to address the issues that have been identified	
Summary of Achievement	The Cherwell District is a low risk area and has good working community relationships. Cherwell District Council receive tension monitoring reports for the district from the Thames Valley Police Community & Diversity Officer. Regular JATAC (Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordinating) meetings occur whereby tension monitoring is monitored and an escalation process is in place if our area level was to increase. The Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership has refreshed its local Information Sharing Protocol that has been developed so the Community Safety Partnerships can use its Information Sharing Procedures for the purposes of confidential data exchange. Cherwell District Council are Partners on new initiatives and steering groups such as MANTA Oxfordshire, Challenging Hate Crime programme and HALT (Homophobic Awareness Liaison Team). Both of these Steering groups produce reported figures of hate crimes within our district on a quarterly basis. Action • The Cherwell district as the highest reported hate crime figures next to Oxford City within the Oxfordshire area. As a result of this Cherwell will be the launch site for the new Mantra Hate Crime Reporting programme whereby Cherwell District Council will act as a third party reporting centre which will facilitate hate crime reporting from an incident and witness perspective. Cherwell District Council will work closely via an escalation process with its partners to report, facilitate and take appropriate action to enable to district to tackle and reduce hate crime incidents.

Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

Areas for Improvement:

Areas For Improvement

- There is an opportunity to widen the consultation as part of the annual review of the Equalities scheme.
- There is an opportunity for further Member engagement in the Equality Impact Assessment Process where issues can be escalated via the Equality Steering Group.
- Local promotion within the community for becoming an elected Executive Member for Cherwell District Council
- To obtain accurate hate crime figures via the success of the Mantra programme to ensure we have a clear understanding of what actions need to be taken in the future to reduce hate crime for the district.

Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

Key Source of Evidence

Corporate Equality Action Plan	Cherwell District Council can demonstrate our commitment to improving equalities within our district through the Corporate Equality Action Plan. This process allows us to investigate, highlight and commit to making improvements to the high level areas within our district whereby we feel we can make a real difference
Corporate Improvement Plan	
Equality Impact Assessment Programme	This is a three year rolling Equality Impact assessment programme which outlines timescales as to when which policies or strategies need to be reviewed
Equality Impact Assessments	Evidence of all completed Equality Impact Assessments throughout Cherwell District Council.
Equality Scorecard	The Equality Scorecard has been build into Cherwell District Council's performance management system allowing us to review or work programme progression which forms part of the overall Performance Management Framework.
Equality Executive Reports	Annual Equality Performance Report which gets reviewed by Executive members for future work programmes to be agreed.
Cherwell District Council Service Plans	Departmental Service Plans created by staff and managers to plan objectives on a yearly basis
LSP – Local Strategic Partnership Management	
Portfolio Holder – Leader of the Council	
Equality Scheme	Cherwell District Council has a Single Equality Scheme comprising the Corporate Action Plan and Equality Impact Assessment Plan. This document sets our standards and aspirations in relation to our future work programme.

Place Shaping, Leadership, Partnership and Organisation Commitment

Key Source of Evidence

Equality and Access Panel	Consultation Panel whereby all our Impact Assessments and Service Changes are reviewed by the public. Suggestions are researched and feedback reported via minutes.
Equality Good Practice Register	Available on Cherwell District Council website
Cherwell Link	Cherwell Link has included various equality articles
Banbury Community Cohesion Group	Voluntary group of Community Associations funded through the Community Cohesion government grant.
Corporate Procurement & Action Plan 2010/2011	
Oxfordshire Youth Parliament	
IAG	
MANTRA	Mantra Strategic Action Plan. Meeting minutes and agendas
HALT	HALT Strategic Action Plan. Partners Agreement, Meeting minutes and agendas.
Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership	

Community Engagement and Satisfaction

2:13 - Community engagement structures are working efficiently and effectively	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council is a lead member of the Cherwell the Local Strategic Partnership. The newly developed sustainable community strategy for the district sets out a clear ambition for the partners taking a lead role in community leadership. The ambition 'resourceful and receptive community leadership' sets out an ambitious programme for community engagement. As such the LSP has set out a clear structure and process for community engagement and Cherwell District Council has played a lead role is hosting and delivering several community engagement events. In addition to partnership working Cherwell District Council has a strong and effective Community Consultation and Engagement Strategy which includes our equalities work programme for improved consultation with members of the local community. Regular consultations take place and feedback is monitored. Cherwell District Council (in conjunction with the Access Officer) not only ensures the accessibility of its consultation events but also safe egress (means of escape in case of fire). For those whose require assistance it also makes special arrangements from travel arrangements to translators and signers, specialist catering and community reimbursement where appropriate. **Activities** • An annual LSP reference group – a conference style event open to all community stakeholders to help shape the priorities of the local strategic partnership • A family of community engagement forums that are support by Cherwell District Council and its LSP partners. The aim of these is to provide clear and accessible community engagement opportunities. An LSP board member attends each event, they include: the faith forum, the disability forum, voluntary sector and countryside forums, the Parish Liaison events, seniors forum. • In addition the Council holds a series of consultation activities including an annual budget consultation – where local residents are actively recruited and those who have previously participated are invited to return.

	• The consultation portal provides a one stop shop for all council consultation and engagement events from public workshops to surveys. • The Access Officer for Cherwell District Council sits on both the 'Cherwell Disability Forum Steering Group' and 'The Equality & Diversity Steering Group.

Community Engagement and Satisfaction

2.15 - Involvement and consultation influences and informs equality priorities and feedback is given to those consulted.	
Summary of Achievement	**Cherwell District Council involves established local community bodies which are well aligned to all stake holders.** **All feedback from consultation are communicated and used to set policy priorities throughout Cherwell District Council.** **Activities:** • Members of several services contribute to and consult with the Banbury Asian forum • Cherwell District Council 's Housing services have developed a protocol for working directly with residents of all Regional Social Landlords in the district, allowing them direct influence on priorities. The group will also develop and monitor the housing services equality plan and area housing plan.

Community Engagement and Satisfaction

2. 16 - Partners work together to balance diverse, but sometimes conflicting interests, in the locality	
Summary of Achievement	Within the Local Strategic Partnership Partners work together to develop the new Sustainable Community Strategy this prioritises the aspirations for Cherwell until 2030. This required the gathering of evidence and residents views and reconciliation of conflicting views to determine collective priorities. The Community Cohesion working group have a shared funding allocation from Cherwell District Council. The group use this funding to promote knowledge and understanding about their own cultural communities. Cherwell District Council hosts the JATAC on a regular basis. This partnership meeting combines expertise in all different fields from different organisations which helps to build a whole picture of the community in relation to community tension monitoring. **Activities:** • Work in relation to the Horton Hospital demonstrates the conflicts between cost, public demand and deliverability. • The Brighter Futures in Banbury project works to tackle deprivation in specific wards in Banbury using a number of diverse approaches and projects.

Community Engagement and Satisfaction

Areas for Improvement:

Areas For Improvement

- Feedback any complaints made on the grounds of discrimination.
- Housing services are reviewing grants given to community groups to improve distribution of funding to groups.

Community Engagement & Satisfaction

Key Source of Evidence

Corporate Equality Action Plan	Cherwell District Council can demonstrate our commitment to improving equalities within our district through the Corporate Equality Action Plan. This process allows us to investigate, highlight and commit to making improvements to the high level areas within our district whereby we feel we can make a real difference
Corporate Improvement Plan	
Equality Impact Assessment Programme	This is a three year rolling Equality Impact assessment programme which outlines timescales as to when which policies or strategies need to be reviewed
Equality Impact Assessments	Evidence of all completed Equality Impact Assessments throughout Cherwell District Council.
Equality Scorecard	The Equality Scorecard has been build into Cherwell District Council's performance management system allowing us to review or work programme progression which forms part of the overall Performance Management Framework.
Equality Executive Reports	Annual Equality Performance Report which gets reviewed by Executive members for future work programmes to be agreed.
Cherwell District Council Service Plans	Departmental Service Plans created by staff and managers to plan objectives on a yearly basis
Banbury Community Cohesion Group	Voluntary group of Community Associations funded through the Community Cohesion government grant.
Fair & Aware 'Moving Forward' Corporate Training.	Module 5 is based in 1-1 Equality Impact Assessment training to ensure a complete gap analysis is completed.

Community Engagement & Satisfaction Key Source of Evidence	
Corporate Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2010/2011	Including Equality Impact Assessment for strategy.
CMT (Corporate Management Team)	PMF Minutes of meetings.
Equality Good Practice Register	Available via Cherwell District Council's Equality Officer and intranet site.
Corporate Translation Policy	Available via Cherwell District Council's Equality Officer and intranet/Internet sites.
Executive Reports	Available from Democratic Services.

Responsive Service and Customer Care

2.17 - A set of equality outcomes/objectives/goals have been produced at service/unit level to meet the needs of identified equality target groups, and those who are most vulnerable. (links to 2.2 and 2.4)	
Summary of Achievement	During 2009/2010 a new 3 year Corporate Equality Action Plan was created. This action plan brings together our long term equalities objectives for the district across all the equality strands. The plan encompasses issues around deprivation and building strong and cohesive communities, both key priorities included within the Corporate Improvement Plan for 2010/2011. These strategic objectives are then filtered through down into our specific service yearly operational service plans. **Activities:** • Job Centre Plus operating a sign on facility from Bicester Link point 5 days a week. • Outreach work in Customer Services so far: Frank Cook Court – Elderly Hook Norton Day Centre – Elderly & Carers BHYP – under 25 mainly 17-19 Bicester & Banbury Job Clubs – working age Bicester Food Bank, soon to be Kidlington as well – All Kaboodle Mens club – men only Widows Club – all Bretch Hill estate Day – Brighter Future Neets Week – under 25s Banbury Show – all Parish Liaison – councillors Kidlington Parish Council OCVC open day – students • Home alone – those that live on their own that meet Oxeye – partially sighted Salvation Army Travellers site at Mollington Taking the health bus out. • Cherwell District Council's Housing services also do outreach work:-

	• Home visits to applicants who can't otherwise access housing services • We're providing preventative help (e.g. training courses) to Asian landlords who are struggling to meet their legal obligations - as we found higher numbers of Asian landlords were having legal action taken against them. • Housing services have explored effective ways to reach rural residents and other isolated people e.g. health bus – to give advice on homelessness prevention / access to social housing / grants and assistance • Housing strategy team have opted in to use of the Oxfordshire supported housing need toolkit which will enable us to better predict the need for supported housing in the district and work with Planning to enable more effective delivery of housing for disabled and vulnerable people • Visiting older people's groups to promote the Home Improvement Agency • Attending Polish community group to promote services to enforce standards in private rented properties • Housing needs team visit groups for people with mental health problems and other support needs to discuss how to access suitable housing • Role of the Access Officer regarding disabled/ inclusive access to council buildings. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) placed a duty on employers and service providers to ensure reasonable access to services and employment including the need to make 'reasonable adjustments' to physical features of premises to overcome barriers to access. The Audit Commission introduced BVPI 156 which required Councils to report the accessibility of their buildings through the compilation of access audits as defined by the now outdated approved document Part M (1991) to the Building Regulations. Although BVPI 156 has been withdrawn/deleted by CLG. Cherwell District Council have decided to continue with BVPI 156 as a local indicator within the Access Officer continuing bi-annual access audits of council premises (measured against the current approved document Part M (2004) to the Building Regulations). The findings of the audit being

	reported to the Directorate Team in order for managers to consider any indentified barriers to their service, including identification of reasonable adjustments. This is considered by the most effective way to continue measuring the accessibility and inclusiveness of all the council premises in the absence of a National Indicator. The Access Audits are held by the Access Officer.

Responsive Services and Customer Care

2. 18 - Appropriate resources have been allocated and action has been taken to mitigate adverse impact and improve equality outcomes where shortfalls have been indentified. (links to 2.6)	
Summary of Achievement	The process for all EIA objectives are fed into the Service Heads Service plans and are monitored, updated and reported on regularly. An Equality Scorecard is also created on a quarterly basis which reports on the Equalities overall performance. **Activities:** • Cherwell District Council's Housing services has developed an equality action plan from the Equality Impact Assessment objectives. Community groups were consulted on its development, it is published on the website and will be monitored by the social housing residents' group

Responsive Services and Customer Care

2. 19 - Mechanisms are in place to ensure that service equality objectives are delivered by contractors and providers through contract management, and those they are monitored properly. (links to 2.10)	
Summary of Achievement	**Cherwell District Council will take into account within its tender evaluation and contracting processes, a potential contractor's approach to equalities in terms of its employment practices and service delivery, which will also be monitored and managed during the life of each contract.** **Activities:** The 'Sustainable Community Strategy' Consultancy Services contract included equality objective's such as being able to reach 'hard to reach groups' For each invitation to quote processed via the Corporate Procurement team there is a pass/fail equal opportunities section where the potential contractor needs to list evidence of putting equal opportunities & diversity into practice. The interested party also needs to confirm that they actively sign up to the whole raft of equalities legislation. For every tender if it is a restricted process the same will apply as with the invitation to quote process above. For every open tender the process will be as above. As well as this, where relevant the tender evaluation - as opposed to the pre-qualification listed above - will involve evidence of equal opportunities in action - such as the Pay Progression Consultancy invitation to quote under way at present. Once a contract is awarded contractors should be asked to provide updated equal opportunity policies at the annual review meeting if the contract is due to run for two or more years. Service areas are also being encouraged to provide ongoing evidence of equal opportunities in practice and that their workforce reflects the community in which they work. For the public toilet cleaning contract, let in partnership with three other local authorities, at least one company expressing

	an interest via the pre-qualification questionnaire was failed on their response to the equal opportunity questionnaire - this company was a national company that failed to provide evidence of how they put their policy into practice. The fire & intruder alarm maintenance tender has also failed one company on their response to the equal opportunities questionnaire - this was in spite of all companies being invited to a Selling to the Council workshop which explained the reasoning behind the pre-qualification and tender process. The company who was failed declined to attend the half an hour workshop and has received feedback as to why they failed. **Housing services development protocol makes equality requirements of affordable housing providers w**hen providing new affordable housing, including having a clear understanding of their potential residents including breakdown by age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender and faith • Proposals for new housing should be assessed for impact on equality considerations • Require contractors to demonstrate commitment to equality through the tendering process, and monitor their performance • Provide housing for all groups where a need is identified including provision for wheelchair standard housing and supported housing for various client groups **The management protocol also makes equality requirements, including reference to the Audit Commission standards**

Responsive Services and Customer Care

2.20 - Equality and cohesion objectives are monitored regularly by portfolio holders and departmental management teams (DMTs). (Links to 2.7,2.22,and 2.23)	
Summary of Achievement	**All service plans are monitored using Cherwell District Council's Performance Management Framework and the Corporate Management Team.** All Portfolio holders meet regularly with their Heads of Service whereby performance is discussed. Cherwell District Council have a Strategic Risk Register which is reviewed regularly.

Responsive Services and Customer Care

2. 21 - The indentified needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups are addressed and services are designed to ensure that customers and citizens are treated with dignity and respect.	
Summary of Achievement	Throughout all our services to the local community we ensure that we are able to design and adapt our services to ensure that our customers are treated with dignity and respect. **Activities:** • **Disabled Facility Grant -** The number of DFGs completed has gone up from 105 (2007/8) to 140 (2008/9). The number of Home Improvement Agency cases has increased from 250 (2007/08) to 694 (2008/09). The DFG budget for 2009/10 was increased to £950,000 - £375,000 from GOSE plus £575,000 from the Council, resourcing our priorities. • **Tackling Domestic Violence -** A new scheme in 2009/10 assisting up to 30 families per year, independent domestic violence advisor service to support high risk cases, extended PACT outreach service (jointly commissioned with an RSL partner) (approx 40 families per year) which includes development of the freedom programme which this year has sought to reach hard to reach groups including people with mental health problems, Muslim women in Banbury • **Housing Services for Older people** One of the first district councils to produce a housing strategy specifically for older people, addressing the issues raised by an ageing population. Older people were involved from the start of the project and continue to take responsibility for monitoring the outcomes • **Miller Road** self build project addresses the needs of young people who are NEET in a practical and responsive way (young people had identified the construction industry as a popular area in which to gain work skills

Responsive Services and Customer Care

2. 22 - Human rights issues are considered and addressed when delivering services to customers and clients. (links to 2.7 and 2.20)	
Summary of Achievement	**Cherwell District Council is an accessible district council which is aware of its community make up and ensures that all its resources and services are accessed and available in a fair way.** **Actions** • **Corporate Translation Policy Procedure** • **Car parks - improving access for people with disabilities** Blue badge holders are able to park in any council space for free. In response to feedback from the Equalities Panel we renewed all information boards in council car parks to ensure disabled users are aware of this benefit. • **Face to Face Mystery Shopping -** Face to face mystery shopping at our LinkPoint offices and the "shoppers" included people with hidden disabilities. • **Re-Development of Customer Services** - Complete re-development of our three former cash offices into one stop shops has allowed us to put in place: All service access on ground floor, no step, Wheelchair access, Seated waiting areas, Hearing loop at all service points, Signage alerting customers to our zero tolerance of abuse, Language Line is available and used for face to face visitors and telephone callers, Leaflets are available in large print, Braille, audio tape and alternative languages. We identified that a lot of the callers at our town centre offices were Polish nationals. As a result of this we arranged for several posters and leaflets to be printed and displayed in Polish • **Customer Service Officer** – **Specialist –** Customer Service Officers who are non office based with the role of visiting the public at local level to ensure everyone within the district has access to our services.

Responsive Services and Customer Care

2. 23 – Access to and appropriateness of services is monitored regularly by portfolio holders and DMT's. (Links to 2.7 and 2.20)	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council has a robust performance management framework which includes a suite of performance measures monitored on a monthly basis. In the corporate score card there is a focus on customer measures and the corporate plan has several equalities targets. There is also a corporate improvement plan and the corporate equalities plan which further embed equalities into the performance management framework. In addition to these processes all portfolio holders meet regularly with their Heads of Service whereby discussions take place surrounding the performance of services. These discussions include issues around the quality of access and information about the service and ways to improve the service in line with community expectations. There is also a Member challenge process as part of service planning where councillors are able to consider each service plan to ensure that actions planned are appropriate, relevant and cost effective. The service plans include equalities actions. Each Executive report which is written within the council has equality risk assessments which are signed prior to the paper going through Executive. **Activities:** • Housing services have developed monthly performance monitoring which includes adding value to partnership working with vulnerable communities. This will feed upwards to DMT and the portfolio holder

Responsive Services and Customer Care

Areas for Improvement:

Areas For Improvement

- Contract monitoring and management is a key focus for the Council's 2010/11 Corporate Procurement Strategy and the emphasis on ensuring best practice forms part of this - with equal opportunities - being part of the overall drive for improved contract management

- Housing services is developing its own equality scorecard

- Strategic housing team is piloting parish profiles to gain deeper understanding of housing need in rural areas, leading to better prioritisation of work to support communities in achieving affordable housing

Responsive Services and Customer Care

Key Source of Evidence

Corporate Equality Action Plan	Cherwell District Council can demonstrate our commitment to improving equalities within our district through the Corporate Equality Action Plan. This process allows us to investigate, highlight and commit to making improvements to the high level areas within our district whereby we feel we can make a real difference
Corporate Improvement Plan	
Equality Impact Assessment Programme	This is a three year rolling Equality Impact assessment programme which outlines timescales as to when which policies or strategies need to be reviewed
Equality Impact Assessments	Evidence of all completed Equality Impact Assessments throughout Cherwell District Council.
Equality Scorecard	The Equality Scorecard has been build into Cherwell District Council's performance management system allowing us to review or work programme progression which forms part of the overall Performance Management Framework.
Equality Executive Reports	Annual Equality Performance Report which gets reviewed by Executive members for future work programmes to be agreed.
Cherwell District Council Service Plans	Departmental Service Plans created by staff and managers to plan objectives on a yearly basis
Banbury Community Cohesion Group	Voluntary group of Community Associations funded through the Community Cohesion government grant.

Responsive Services and Customer Care Key Source of Evidence	
Fair & Aware 'Moving Forward' Corporate Training.	Module 5 is based in 1-1 Equality Impact Assessment training to ensure a complete gap analysis is completed.
Corporate Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2010/2011	Including Equality Impact Assessment for strategy.
CMT (Corporate Management Team)	PMF Minutes of meetings.
Equality Good Practice Register	Available via Cherwell District Council's Equality Officer and intranet site.
Corporate Translation Policy	Available via Cherwell District Council's Equality Officer and intranet/Internet sites.
Executive Reports	Available from Democratic Services.

Modern and Diverse Workforce

2.24 - The equality aspects of the workforce strategy are implemented and monitored.	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council have a robust Human Resources processes which are regularly reviewed and Equality Impact Assessed to ensure compliance. Our Workforce Strategy encompasses our various policies which include: • Part Time Working • Flexi Time • Redundancy and Redeployment • Future Workforce Planning

Modern and Diverse Workforce

2.25- Employment objectives have been set based on internal monitoring, staff consultation and the assessment of the local labour market and barriers. (Links to 2.2)	
Summary of Achievement	Employment objectives have been set within the People and Development Workforce Strategy. Monitoring of staff figures are completed quarterly which informs employment equality objectives and have been linked into the Corporate Equality Action Plan and the Corporate Improvement Plan. Cherwell District Council opens itself to a range of techniques for attracting the local community to its workforce and also ensuring there is balance as to when it comes to looking after its existing staff. These consist of strategies and schemes such as: • **Apprenticeship Scheme –** This government funded scheme allows young adults from deprived areas of the Community to gain hands experience and training to assist them with their future carers. • **Recruitment & Employment -** Cherwell District Council have developed a number of new posts to encourage graduates and individuals without a professional qualification to move into professional roles. Career graded posts exist across the council. These roles have stepped progression with clear criteria for development including attainment of professional qualifications and experiential development. There has been a focus on encouraging an increase in numbers of employees in the 16-29 age groups and this has been successful • **Improved Work Experience Schemes -** Cherwell District Council worked with Cherwell Valley College to provide a work placement for a young adult with downs syndrome. The placement was strongly supported with considerable one to one supervision whilst providing experiential development within 3 departments over 22 weeks

Modern and Diverse Workforce

2.26 - The authority regularly monitors, analyses and publishes employment data to fulfil its statutory duties.	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council monitors and analyses its employment data on regular basis using various methods from the recruitment stage through to full employment. This is captured and analysed using our in house performance management system and reported up using the Quarterly Performance Framework Report and the Equality Scorecard. **Activities** • A review of the HR policies, practices and procedures is being undertaken to enhance the internal monitoring of equalities.

Modern and Diverse Workforce

2. 27 - All employment procedures have been impact assessed and action has been taken to mitigate adverse impact and promote equality outcomes.	
Summary of Achievement	All HR policies and procedures have been through the Equality Impact Assessment and actions leading from this have been built into the Corporate Equality Action Plan, the employment data monitoring and the Service Heads yearly service plans. **Activities** • A Training programme has been running for 18 months based on best practice in selection interviewing. Attendance has been mandatory for any member of staff sitting on an interview panel. A comprehensive staff list is maintained by HR to ensure panel members have been trained

Modern and Diverse Workforce

2. 28 - The authority has made significant progress on its equal pay review and is working towards reaching agreement with unions.	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council has completed a pay and grading review consisting of a job evaluation exercise, followed by a review of the current pay structures, with the implementation date of 1 April 2010 which was met. This supports the Single Status Agreement 1997 and the National Agreement 2004, which encouraged local authorities to undertake such reviews. The Equal Pay Act and the Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations, also make it especially important to maintain a fair and equitable pay and grading structure. Job evaluation aims to provide a systematic and consistent approach to defining the relative worth of posts within an organization, and is a process whereby jobs are placed in a rank order according to overall demands placed upon the post holder, making it a fair and equitable process.

Modern and Diverse Workforce

2. 29 - It delivers a range of learning and development opportunities to support councillors and officers to deliver equality outcomes.	
Summary of Achievement	An extensive amount of work and resource has been put into this area over the last 12 months resulting in a new in house corporate training programme for all staff to increase our knowledge with the objective of improving the communities' level of service when accessing our services. The modular approach allows for Cherwell District Council's diverse workforce and how Equality and Diversity may impact upon their daily roles. The five modules within the course are: • **Equality & Diversity 'The Challenge' -** To outline the primary legislation governing service provision and employee behaviour and to raise the profile of CDC Equality policy and procedure • **The Work Environment: Is it a Fair Place for Everyone -** To provide employees with the ability to understand their work environment & culture and reflect on how attitudes and behaviours can effect others • **Equality & the Community -** To provide the student with a clear awareness of the cultural diversity of the population. The dangers of assigning certain attributes to groups and to identify potential ways to manage service provision to a diverse community • **Managing Equality & Diversity -** To provide managers with the knowledge to critically review their work environment to ensure it is fair and supportive allowing people to perform to their best level and to identify potential areas of organisation risk • **Completing Equality Impact Assessments -** To provide students with the knowledge and awareness of how to effectively complete Equality Impact Assessment Member Training is completed on a regular basis.

Modern and Diverse Workforce

2.30 Harassment and bullying incidents are monitored and analysed regularly. Appropriate action is taken to address the issues that have been identified.	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council has a clear policy and process to manage any incidents which at present no formal complaints have been made. **Activities:** • A question is also included within the anonymous Staff Survey 2008/2010 relating to harassment and bullying within the workplace.

Modern and Diverse Workforce

2. 31 - Equality implications inform the setting of objectives in management and individual appraisals.	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council has a holistic approach to performance appraisals that includes a direct assessment of the individual's commitment and performance in relation to equalities along side other competencies such as team working and customer focus. Managers are able to set equalities performance objectives for staff where required. There is a corporate equalities training programme that can support staff where development is required. The Council's policy requires all staff to have a full annual appraisal and a six monthly review. Completed appraisals are collected by the Learning & Development Manager for reviews to quality assure the process. The Learning and Development manager is also a member of the corporate Equalities Steering Group which ensures equalities issues are reflected in all staff development activities. Activities: • Annual staff appraisal • Six monthly review • Quality Assurance of appraisal process • Training offered to managers to ensure effective appraisals are undertaken.

Modern and Diverse Workforce

2. 32 - Staff are engaged positively in service transformation and in developing new roles and ways of working.	
Summary of Achievement	Cherwell District Council's People and Improvement Department use a range of techniques to ensure that the staffs is involved in service transformation and developing new ways of working. In addition the Council's service and financial planning process requires service heads to undertake staff engagement as part of the development of annual service plans. **Actions** • **Staff consultation group -** Involved in new and amended policy development i.e. Job Evaluation process. • **Cascade –** An internal fortnightly news and update presentation which is sent to all employees. • **Service planning Team Days –** Standard procedure for Team members to be involved in developing the yearly service plans alongside their managers • **Staff Liaison Officer -** This staff supportive role during times of change such as restructures and job evaluation. • **Anonymous feedback form** • **Various specific staff consultations** e.g. including travel, improving communications etc.

Modern and Diverse Workforce

Areas for Improvement:

Areas For Improvement

- Area of improvement would be to align our staff force to the Cherwell community
- 2010 figures will be published on Cherwell District Council website.

Modern and Diverse Workforce

Key Source of Evidence

HR Policies	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
HR Equality Impact Assessments	All available via the People and Development Team, Equality Officer, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
Performance Management Framework - Employment Data Reports	All available via the People and Development Team,
Staff Survey Results 2008 and 2010	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
Staff Survey Team and Corporate Action Plans 2008/2010	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
Corporate Equality Action Plan	Cherwell District Council can demonstrate our commitment to improving equalities within our district through the Corporate Equality Action Plan. This process allows us to investigate, highlight and commit to making improvements to the high level areas within our district whereby we feel we can make a real difference
Corporate Improvement Plan	Equalities and cohesion have specific improvement projects for 2010/11. These are monitored through the performance management framework.
Job Evaluation Procedure and Policy	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
Fair & Aware 'Moving Forward Training Schedule	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
Learning and Development Training Schedule	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
Member Training Schedule	All available via the Democratic and Scrutiny team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
Appraisal Policy and Selection on completed Appraisals	All available via the People and Development team, Cherwell District Council Intranet site and website.
Service and Financial Planning Guidance	Sets out how staff should be involved in service planning

Executive

Asset Management Plan 2010

6 September 2010

Report of Head of Regeneration and Estates

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the Council's Asset Management Plan for 2010/11

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

(1) To approve the Asset Management Plan for 2010.

(2) To approve that the proposal that vacant small industrial units be used for economic development purposes through lettings on flexible terms, and that this policy be monitored through future reporting on the Asset Management Plan.

Executive Summary

Introduction

1.1 The Council maintains an asset management plan which is updated each year. This plan describes the Council's property assets, and identifies how they contribute to the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities.

1.2 The plan also sets out administrative arrangements, summarises the performance of assets, and sets targets for the current year.

Proposals

1.3 It is proposed that vacant small industrial units be offered on flexible terms to appropriate supported small businesses, in order to encourage them to become established.

Background Information

2.1 The Council has invested substantially in recent years to upgrade its corporate properties, in particular the sports centres scheme, and the Bodicote House refurbishment. The refurbishment of Thorpe Lane depot will be completed this year. As a result the great majority of the Council's buildings are in good condition, and are occupied efficiently. As a result it has been possible to reduce annual revenue costs associated with running the buildings.

2.2 The major issues facing the Council in relation to its corporate premises, include the need to continue to reduce energy consumption and the Council's carbon footprint. Also, it is necessary to further improve the efficiency with which the Council occupies its office accommodation, and release surplus space so that it can be occupied by others, thereby reducing the Council's net costs.

2.3 So far as community assets are concerned, many of these are let to community groups or Town and Parish Councils. Some of these arrangements leave the Council with some current or future liabilities. Where possible, it may be appropriate to investigate transferring these assets to the tenants entirely.

2.4 The Council's investment portfolio provides a significant revenue income, at a yield which is much greater than that achievable on cash investments. The Council has agreed to increase these investments in order to ensure that the Bicester town centre redevelopment is progressed. Other small commercial investments are proving hard to let in current circumstances. In the past these assets have been let on commercial terms, but it is proposed that vacant industrial units be offered to small businesses on flexible terms, with support from Oxfordshire Business Enterprises, in order to ensure that these properties are utilised in line with the Council's economic development objectives. Flexible terms are likely to comprise a reduced rental for a limited period of up to a year, the inclusion of break clauses operable by tenants at an early date, or the ability to share premises. The precise detail will be subject to negotiation according to circumstances, but agreements will be relatively short term and without security of tenure.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

3.1 The Council must continue to seek opportunities to reduce its occupational costs, and maximise revenue income from its property assets. This may well require capital investment, but on the basis that the Council achieves a commercial return on that capital.

3.2 There is every reason to believe that energy costs will continue to rise at above the rate of inflation. Meanwhile government initiatives such as the introduction of feed in tariffs have made it much more attractive to invest in renewable energy initiatives, such as photovoltaic panels and biomass heating. The Council should investigate any opportunities to invest in these technologies.

3.3 The use of vacant industrial units for economic development purposes, by offering flexible letting terms to very small or new businesses is proposed as it is proving very difficult to let these units on normal commercial terms.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One The Plan is presented for approval subject to any amendments the Executive may wish to make. The only change in policy presented comprises the use of vacant small industrial units for economic development purposes, and option available is to continue to seek lettings on conventional commercial terms.

Implications

Financial: Letting vacant small industrial units on flexible terms will have no adverse revenue consequences, as approved estimates make allowance for these units to remain vacant. As the property market recovers it will be appropriate to review this policy.

Comments checked by Eric Meadows, Service Accountant 01295 221552

Legal: There is no difficulty in adapting the Council's standard form of lease to allow tenants greater flexibility in the manner proposed.

Comments checked by Malcolm Saunders, Senior Legal Assistant 01295 221692

Risk Management: Provided the units continue to be let on formal tenancies or licence agreements, the Council's liabilities will be protected.

Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Insurance Officer 01295 221566

[Other Implications] It is anticipated that it will be possible to identify suitable tenants operating small businesses through Oxfordshire Business Enterprises, who offer support and advice.

Comments checked by Steven Newman, Economic Development Officer 01295 221860

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

All

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Norman Bolster
Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Estates

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Asset Management Plan 2010
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	David Marriott, Head of Regeneration and Estates
Contact Information	01295 221603 David.marriott@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Asset Management Plan 2010

Context

Named after the river that winds through the District to Oxford and the Thames, Cherwell District lies in central England astride the M40 motorway between London and Birmingham. 228 square miles in area, the District offers a unique and successful combination: its fine rural landscape provides some of the most attractive and picturesque scenery in Oxfordshire, whilst established commercial and industrial centres brings prosperity and economic strength in a highly accessible and desirable location.

Cherwell is a generally affluent area but there are significant differences in wealth distribution. Currently, the economic recession is affecting employment, and initially this appears to be most significant in the retail sector across the district, and in manufacturing and automotive industries in the Banbury area. Banbury in particular has pockets of severe deprivation, second only to Oxford in the County. Other forms of deprivation derive from rural isolation. There are 75 parishes and three main urban centres - Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington - which contain 65% of the residents. So Cherwell's population is - perhaps surprisingly - mostly urban, which gives rise to challenges more often associated with urban areas, in addition to common rural issues.

Whilst the Council does not have an extensive portfolio of property assets, it has been active in using the property it owns in a strategic, forward thinking fashion, to improve long term service delivery, to minimise operational costs, and to facilitate regeneration. The operational portfolio has been extensively modernised through the sports centres modernisation scheme, including the provision of a new sports centre in Banbury on a site which was previously surplus to requirements. The Council's offices have been refurbished to operate with much greater efficiency, and to provide more accessible services to the public, and currently the principal depot at Thorpe Lane, Banbury is being refurbished. Meanwhile land in the town centres, primarily used for car parking is being used to promote regeneration schemes to improve the facilities available and vitality of these centres.

Cherwell is facing many challenges in the next few years. New initiatives are needed to combat the effect of the recession on the local economy, to ensure local people are skilled to participate in local businesses, and to ensure that there is sufficient affordable housing to meet needs. The supply of new affordable housing is particularly affected by the downturn in house building. At the same time we need to encourage people to stay fit and healthy by providing leisure and sporting opportunities, and ensure that when people are unwell the healthcare they receive is of a high standard. We need to ensure a cleaner and more sustainable environment. And with efficiency very much at the top of the national agenda for all local authorities, we need to ensure that what we provide represents excellent value for money and is demonstrating continuous improvement.

The Council is also facing more difficult financial circumstances, and in particular, the likelihood of reducing government grant. As a result it is substantially revising its Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The Council can no longer rely on investment income from its cash investments to finance services. It also needs to create and maintain new sources of income that can be used to sustain an appropriate level of future capital investment. This will be necessary to maintain and develop key community assets.

Working increasingly with our partners in the county council, neighbouring district councils, other public providers and the third sector, we need to find collaborative and effective ways of meeting these challenges. We need also to continually engage with our citizens and communities to ensure that the way we work and use our resources is meeting the aspirations of local people.

The Council's Asset Management Plan has always sought to ensure that property and related assets are used as effectively as possible, whether it is by reducing service delivery costs, adding value to services, or creating income. Changes in economic circumstances, and the Council's response, taking account of its own financial position as set out in the MTFS create different overall investment priorities. This could significantly affect the role property assets and investments play. More direct investment in property, and in income generating services related to property assets, is now, potentially, more attractive as part of the overall balance of use of the Council's financial (and human) resources.

Whilst the Council has made improvements to the energy efficiency of its buildings when refurbishment schemes have been carried out, reducing the Council's reliance on fossil fuels will continue to increase in importance. Initiatives such as the renewable heat incentive scheme make the installation of alternative technologies such as biomass boilers and photovoltaic panels, a much more viable proposition. The Council may well wish to invest in such technologies to reduce its expenditure on fossil fuels, to reduce the carbon footprint of its activities, and to generate a return through the incentives available.

The Council's investment criteria are security, yield and liquidity in that order of priority. In general property investments are perceived to be secure as tangible assets. The yield on property investments is generally very attractive as compared to the current return on cash. In 2009/10 the return was approximately 6.82%. However, income continues to be adversely affected by the recession as rental values are under downward pressure, and when premises become vacant. Property investment is not generally a liquid form of investment, as sales can be time consuming and expensive. However, in the medium term these assets can be expected to increase in value, and provide increasing returns. In developing a revised approach to asset management in this context, it remains important that any direct investments are carefully related to core council functions and community needs. The Council must be clear why it wants to hold (and sometimes) manage property directly. The Asset Management Plan already demonstrates examples of this, such as supporting town centre redevelopment for regeneration reasons, and partnership use of surplus office stock to facilitate health service development.

Overall it is likely that use of, and investment in, property assets will become more important for the reasons noted above.

How property assets are used to meet strategic priorities

The principles that guide the Council's approach to addressing community needs generally also informs the way we make use of our physical assets. The strategic priorities agreed by Cherwell District Council are as set out in the Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy:

1. Opportunities for all – our communities in 2030
2. Diverse and resilient – our economy in 2030
3. Connected and protected – our infrastructure in 2030
4. Resourceful and receptive – community leadership in 2030

Table 1 below illustrates how the Council uses its property and related assets to contribute to the council's strategic priorities.

Table 1 – Ambitions for the future and Asset Management

Ambition	Asset Management Priorities and Objectives
Opportunities for all • Focus activity on tackling deprivation in both urban and rural Cherwell • Offer high quality education, support and opportunities to our young people and families • Reduce the number of people who fear crime and feel unsafe in their area • Maintain and develop health services, including preventative health programmes that directly address health inequality and which enable residents to access services and information in order to lead healthy lives	To make assets available for community uses as widely as possible. To share assets with other public bodies to deliver a wide range of services by different service providers. Examples are:- • Community centres let to community groups and self managed • Bradley Arcade community centre leased to OCC and used by the Sunshine Centre • Bradley Arcade unit used for Street wardens' base • Former Banbury town centre offices used as a health centre • Shared use of Linkpoint centres by other bodies to deliver services (e.g. CAB)
Diverse and resilient – our economy in 2030 • Raise expectations and ambitions and provide a range of economic opportunities for everyone • Manage our infrastructure development matching housing growth with local jobs, transport to work, facilities and services • Promote and support business diversification and a sustainable economy in both urban and rural environments	The Council owns a number of small industrial units and neighbourhood shops. Currently these are let on commercial leases. It is proposed that the Council seeks to encourage small businesses and business start ups, by making premises available on non-commercial terms, and providing advice and support through Oxfordshire Business Enterprises. Whilst the Council retains very little land suitable for residential development, a number of garage sites and amenity areas on former council housing estates are retained. When the possibility of development arises, the provision of affordable housing is given priority rather than open market sale, when possible.
Connected and protected – our infrastructure and environment in 2030 • Cherish the resources that define Cherwell's character and distinctiveness including our natural environment, our built	The Council is a significant user of energy and water through its buildings. Much work has been done to reduce energy consumption, but this must continue. The Council has signed up to the Local Authority Carbon Management Scheme, and is developing a programme of work to

heritage and the vitality of our towns and villages • Mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change including minimising our waste and resource use • Improve accessibility and tackle congestion including a shift in transport methods • Ensure our social infrastructure grows at the same rate as our communities and current deficiencies in provision are addressed	further reduce its carbon footprint. Currently measures are in hand to increase the use of renewable energy through the installation of photovoltaic panels at Thorpe Lane depot, and the introduction of biomass heating is planned. Other opportunities to be explored include the installation of renewable energy technologies at other high energy consuming sites, such as Bodcote House The Council seeks to ensure that appropriate infrastructure and community assets to support new development are secured through s106 agreements, although in the current economic circumstances, the ability of development to finance this is reduced The Council is working with OCC and Bicester Vision to bring forward a scheme to improve Market Square, Bicester, including the Council's public car park.
Resourceful and receptive – community leadership in 2030 • Ensure fully inclusive democratic structures and processes with leaders at all levels who listen and act on what they hear • Support the community, voluntary and private sectors to develop their role in active leadership • Develop and implement effective performance management to measure and demonstrate our progress • Communicate clearly about how we make decisions and what we have been working on and achieved	As set out above, community assets are generally managed by community groups, with financial support from the Council. Some premises are shared such as the use of offices at Bodicote House by the Registrar, and by the PCT. Recently arrangements have been made for the Council's offices at 38 Market Square to be used by Job Centre Plus. Other opportunities:- • Increased sharing of premises with other authorities, such as surplus accommodation at Bodicote House, proposed future civic building in Bicester • Possible refurbishment and redevelopment at Exeter Close Kidlington to provide shared one stop shop and new Health Centre

The one to five year plan later in this plan illustrates in more detail the actions and priorities for asset management over the next one year and five year periods in order to deliver the specific goals and targets of the council and its community.

Overview of asset portfolio

Cherwell is a relatively small district, and whilst it has a portfolio of more than 120 properties, with a combined value of £108m, this is small in comparison to many Authorities. Consequently, arrangements for the administration and governance of property assets are proportionate to the complexity of the estate. However, it remains important to ensure that these arrangements are robust, and ensure that the assets underpin service delivery in an efficient, cost effective fashion. Table 2 below summarises the portfolio. This portfolio is diverse, covering:

- offices, depots and public buildings used in the delivery of services to the public;
- buildings owned by the council but used by others in delivering services, such as sports centres;
- buildings which provide capacity for local people themselves, such as community halls;
- civic amenities such as numerous car parks and public conveniences;
- temporary and specialised housing for vulnerable customers;
- properties let on a commercial basis, including a large shopping centre, smaller shop units and industrial units.

Table 2 Cherwell DC asset portfolio as at 31 March 2010

Description of asset type	Number	Value	Principal objective for asset type
Operational - General			
Administrative offices and stores	4		Refurbish Old Bodicote House in order that surplus office space may be let, reducing the Council's net office accommodation costs and improve space utilisation as its staffing levels continue to diminish.
Depots	2		Invest and maintain for direct service provision long term, following significant short term refurbishment and rationalisation and letting surplus space at Thorpe Way. Relocate Highfield depot Bicester to smaller premises, so existing site can be sold, when Thorpe Lane works have been completed.
Vehicle parks	27		Invest and maintain for direct service provision; facilitate development opportunities in short, medium and long term (Several Bicester car parks will

			be closed to enable the town centre redevelopment to start during 2011/12)
Sports centres	4		Contracts are in place for the long term management and maintenance of these facilities
Tourist information centres (including Banbury Linkpoint)	1		Invest and maintain for direct service provision (as required), long term
Museums (including Tooley's Boatyard)	1		
Public conveniences	5		
Bicester Shopmobility centre	1		
Operational - Housing			
Temporary accommodation units	10		It is proposed that temporary units at Ferriston shops be transferred to Sanctuary Housing under a lease, and be managed and maintained by them. Former temporary units at Orchard Way shops are to be transferred to Sanctuary and included in a redevelopment scheme due to start in 2010/11
Specialised (68 Springfield Avenue)	1		
Community Facilities			
Community Halls	7		Empower communities by facilitating support for community owners to invest and maintain long term; invest in/maintain new acquisitions in short term and seek transfer to community ownership in medium-long term
Sports Pavilions	2		
Miscellaneous (Trow Pool, Milcombe Dovecote)	2		
Miscellaneous parks and areas of public open space	-		Maintain to enhance environment while periodically reviewing opportunities for redevelopment or disposal
Miscellaneous amenity areas	-		Retained following Housing LSVT due to fragmentation of ownership of estates. Legal obligation to maintain amenity of estates. Formal appropriation in 2009/10, so no longer held for housing purposes, but held as public open space
Non-operational - General			
Let industrial units	14		Invest and maintain for

Let neighbourhood shop developments	4		commercial investment portfolio, with regular reviews to inform disposal/new acquisitions. In the current difficult letting market a number of units are proving hard to let. It is proposed that the possibility of making these available on flexible terms to new or small businesses, with additional support through the Economic Development service, is pursued. Orchard Way shops planned to be redeveloped by Sanctuary housing to provide replacement shops and modern affordable housing units starting in 2010/11
Shopping centres (geared ground rents)	1		Invest and maintain for commercial investment portfolio whilst influencing the supply of retail facilities
Miscellaneous	7		Invest and maintain for commercial investment portfolio, with regular reviews to inform retention/disposal decisions
Garage sites	16		Retained following Housing LSVT due to nature of occupation. Potential for development kept under review. Formal appropriation 2009/10 so held as investment assets.
Non-operational - Housing			
Shared ownership properties	20		Retained following LSVT but not core service requirement. Disposal to RSL under consideration

A detailed listing of all the council's property assets held in UNIform Property Management. This contains essential information on each property, including size, location (Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) linked to the Local Land and Property Gazeteer (LLPG)), physical characteristics, ownership status, leases, tenancies and rent payment records etc. Asset values are recorded on a balance sheet by the chief finance officer and reconciled annually with the Head of Regeneration and Estates' hard copy records. Given the size of the property portfolio the council has taken the view that there is no business case for developing UNIform functionality for recording planned maintenance, and consequently this is held in Excel format.

Governance

Cherwell seeks to drive its asset management on the basis of priorities within the Sustainable Community Strategy, corporate plan and the service plans that flow from this. The Council's Financial Strategy (MTFS) is also a driver of asset management. Within an overall process that is designed to ensure alignment of priorities and

resources and obtain good value for money, a range of individuals at officer and member level have a role to play:

- Corporate Plan and service plans are agreed annually by the Executive on recommendation from the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT). Both are an input into this Asset Management Plan.

- The Asset Management Plan is agreed, alongside a Financial Strategy, by the Executive following recommendation by CMT

- The responsibility for the strategic management of corporate and investment properties informed by the agreed Asset Management Plan lies under the control of the Executive Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Estates. Responsibility for the majority of day to day management maters, and routine transactions, is delegated to the Head of Regeneration and Estates. Acquisitions and disposals up to £250,000 are subject to consultation with the Portfolio Holder, whereas larger transactions are treated as key decisions and reported to the Executive. The Portfolio Holder formally reviews progress quarterly against the AMP with the Head of Regeneration and Estates, the minutes of this review being circulated appropriately both for information and to inform action (see below).

- The responsibility for the management and maintenance of service properties within their existing uses lies under the control of the relevant service Portfolio Holders. The question of whether individual service properties adequately satisfy relevant service delivery criteria forms part of relevant service and value for money reviews and suitability assessments.

- The Council's Head of Regeneration and Estates, reporting to the Strategic Director, Planning, Housing and Economy, maintains a strategic overview of the Council's property requirements, and is responsible for providing advice to CMT on valuation and estates management matters. He also manages the Council's investment property portfolio. Returns on investment from this portfolio are reported annually to members. Changes to the investment portfolio are informed by the contents of the Asset Management Plan.

- Responsibility for the management and maintenance of the Council's properties is delegated to the Head of Regeneration and Estates. His team provides a building maintenance service for all Council departments, and undertakes regular condition surveys of all properties in order to inform and update a corporate maintenance schedule. All properties are surveyed within a 5 year period. The planned maintenance schedule is an input into this Asset Management Plan.

- The Council's own accommodation requirements are overseen by the Accommodation Project Board. This comprises a group of nominated Executive Members and senior officers, who monitor projects to drive forward improvements to the Council's premises. This Board monitored the recent refurbishment of Bodicote House, and oversees the Thorpe Lane depot refurbishment project, and the Old Bodicote House refurbishment scheme.

- Also of relevance is the Capital Investment Delivery Group (CIDG), an officer group comprising key officers from all three Directorates. The Group's terms of reference are focussed on ensuring that the capital programme is managed efficiently, and makes best use of the available capital resources. This requires a

strong linkage with the Asset Management Plan. However officer level consideration and recommendation of the Asset Management Plan lies with CMT.

- Effective corporate communication and decision making is facilitated by CMT who review of the minutes of CIDG, and together with Portfolio Holder review, this ensures alignment of the AMP with the MTFS.

- The implications of and plans for acquisition of new community assets (e.g. community buildings or open space) via planning agreements are considered initially by the Council's Planning Obligations Group. Information on service requirements and potential responsibilities for holding and management of assets are then considered by Head of Regeneration and Estates and the Portfolio Holder as part of the AMP review process, with consequent decisions taken through the AMP.

The CIDG (noted above) is intended to refocus capital programme monitoring in the context of overall financial and asset management. It is an officer group which monitors progress on the capital programme and seeks to ensure that the Council maximises its investment return. It checks schemes are progressing as planned, and that cash flow is managed as efficiently as possible. It also provides advice to CMT on future capital projects and initiatives. The group will consider the Council's property investment income, and evaluate proposals relating to this.

A soundly formulated capital programme must be driven by the desire to provide high quality, value for money public services. The CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities requires that in making its capital investment decisions the Council must have explicit regard to option appraisal, asset management planning, strategic planning for the authority and achievability of the forward plan. This is to ensure that, within a clear framework, the Council's Capital Programme is affordable, prudent and sustainable.

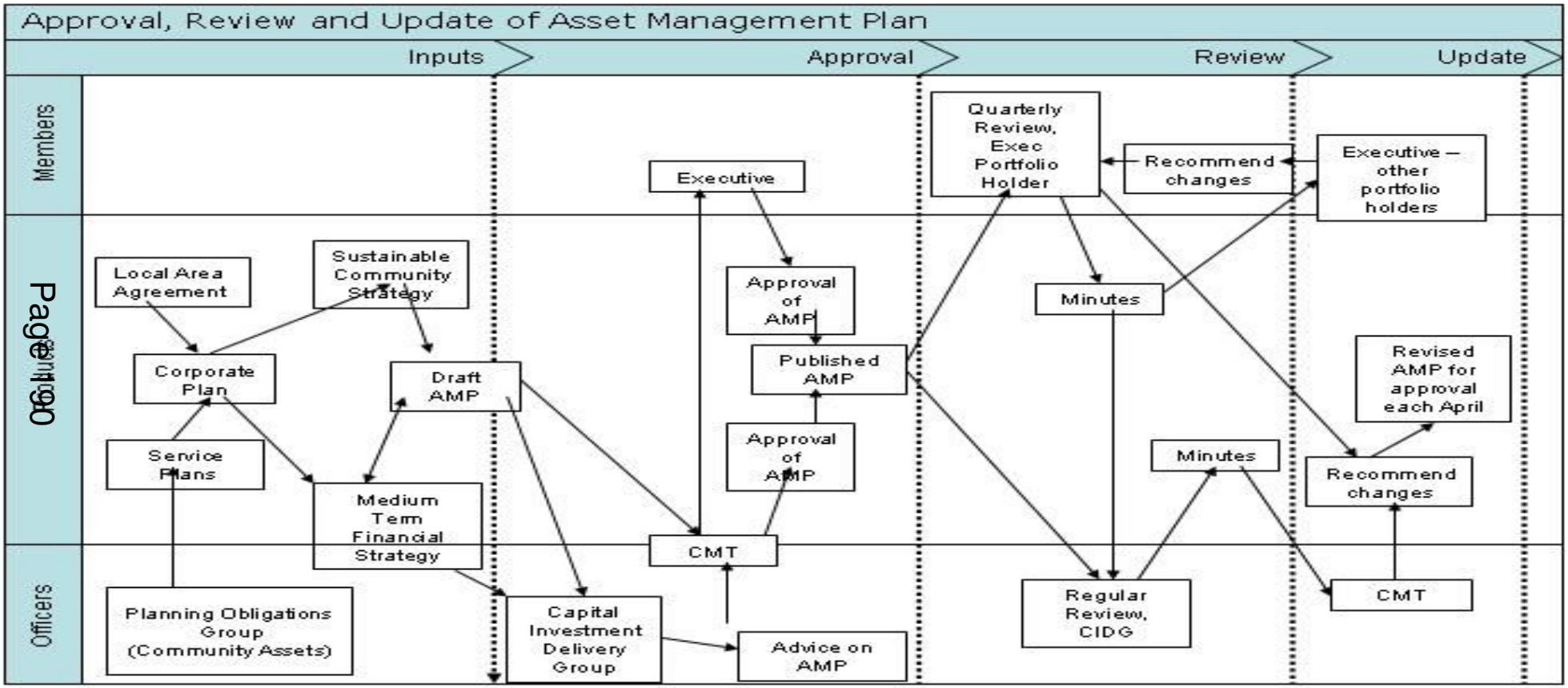
When making a decision to invest in capital assets, the Council must now do more than simply determine whether it can afford the immediate cost. In order to ensure long term affordability, the decisions have also to be prudent and, in the long term, sustainable. In considering the affordability of its capital plans, the Council must consider its wider financial strategy, as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The MTFS anticipates significant reductions in government grant in years to come, although the precise detail of such reductions is, as yet, unknown. This will create further pressures for reductions in revenue spending. Consequently, there will be increasing pressure to identify efficiencies and areas where revenue income can be increased, and expenditure reduced. The MTFS also recognises that the amount of capital available for investment in future projects has reduced substantially in recent year, and consequently there is likely to be the need to generate capital receipts to finance future projects in years to come.

The authority is also required to consider known significant variations within, and risks beyond, the timeframe of the MTFS. This requires the regular update of three-year revenue forecasts and three-year forward estimates of Council Tax as well as three-year capital expenditure plans. Also, when considering affordability, the Council must pay due regard to risk and uncertainty. Risk analysis and risk management strategies should be taken into account. This means that all schemes must have full project appraisals including a value for money assessment (i.e. an

option appraisal to compare the various ways of funding assets and to highlight the most prudent form of funding) and must detail any revenue impacts.

The use of PRINCE2 project management methodology is mandatory for all projects of more than £50,000 value.

A diagrammatic representation of these governance arrangements is set out below



Community engagement and consultation

Cherwell's property portfolio is relatively small. However, it is focussed on service delivery, and minimising administrative cost, whilst community self-management where possible combines to give it a large impact on peoples' daily lives. At the centre of this commitment is a general policy of seeking to transfer ownership and management of community assets to the lowest possible level, usually to parish or town council or directly to a community association. Provision is made for ongoing maintenance of new assets by commuted sums.

Beyond this most of the major elements of the programme set out in this plan draw on extensive community engagement and recognised priorities:

- the proposals for the redevelopment of Bicester Town Centre have been subject to major consultation with the public and with businesses.

- a public consultation event was held prior to the submission of the planning application for the redevelopment of the Orchard Way site.

- the proposed development of a new civic building in Bicester, to include a Linkpoint, is part of the programme to improve public access to services by replacing unsatisfactory premises.

- A public consultation exercise was held to consider options for the Market Square, Bicester improvement scheme, which includes the Council's Market Square car park.

The council is increasingly working with partners to maximise benefit, for example:

- potential joint venture with Kidlington Parish Council for development of shared offices and a Linkpoint. The council already lets space to the Citizens Advice Bureau and Kidlington Information Centre at Exeter Hall.

- shared used of Bodicote House with the County Council, and following the Old House refurbishment scheme, potentially with other partners. The intention is to offer facilities for partner organisations to occupy, generating income for the Council, and potentially reduce the financial support those partners require.

- shared space with the County at Thorpe Lane depot .

- provision of space for County services (library) in the Bicester Town Centre development, combining budgetary contributions form both councils.

- working with a Housing Association to redevelop the mixed use site at Orchard Way.

- the council also has shared use agreements with two schools for use of leisure facilities, and there are joint use agreements in place with OCC to provide school use of all three sports centres.

- the council engages as a matter of course with community associations and parish/town councils around the effective management and maintenance of properties, giving support and allocating resources where required. It also has regular liaison with the heads of property at the county council, other Oxfordshire

districts, the police authority and the PCT to discuss surplus property and shared use, and there are many examples of asset development issues being raised at the quarterly meeting between the leader of Cherwell and the Deputy Leader of Oxfordshire County Council (e.g. new libraries in Bicester and Banbury)

- working with the Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust to assist them to develop a GP led Health Centre in Banbury, utilising the Council's surplus town centre offices, whilst generating a revenue income for the Council.

Finally, Cherwell is working hard to ensure that its corporate objectives align to community priorities and ambition both locally and in Oxfordshire as a whole, as expressed in the Local Area Agreement and Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy. With specific reference to the latter Cherwell's asset management has a major contribution to make to achieving targets around:

- reductions in carbon dioxide emissions.
- meeting housing need.
- more effective waste management.
- development and regeneration of market towns.
- a strengthened voluntary and community sector.
- increased participation in sports and cultural activities.

Performance monitoring and management

The Council uses property Performance Indicators as a framework for setting targets and improving efficiency. Whilst these indicators reflect the overall performance of the portfolio, the data is collected for individual properties, and consequently it is possible to assess the performance of each property and determine where action is required to improve performance. The principal indicators are as devised and recommended by central Government, and were first implemented with effect from 2006/07. These Indicators are monitored and reported upon through the Performance Management Framework where appropriate. The outturn for 2009/10 is attached at Annex 1, compared to previous years where applicable, and with targets for 2010/11.

The property performance indicators measure the condition of the Council's building stock and the cost of maintenance, together with the expenditure incurred on energy and water consumed. Other indicators cover the suitability, accessibility and use of properties.

The picture emerging from the monitoring of indicators over the past 2- 3 years is generally a good one:

- 94% of the stock is either in satisfactory or good condition, the element falling below this relating wholly to a depot site at which the issues are well known and for which the intention is to dispose of in the not too distant future.

- of planned maintenance the vast bulk is of the lowest priority (desirable), and none is considered to be in the top category (urgent). To a large degree this reflects the Council's prudent use or revenue and capital to maintain its assets in a good and serviceable condition.

- although the council has been hit by higher energy bills driven by globally rising wholesale prices it is continuing to pursue future year on year reductions in carbon dioxide production and water costs. Over the last year energy consumption and hence CO2 produced has increased, but this is attributable to the completion of the sports centre modernisation scheme, including the re-opening of Woodgreen open air pool. There have been significant reductions at individual sites such as Bodicote House.

- All public buildings have been subject to an accessibility audit and have appropriate Accessibility Plans in place.

- there is no significant rent arrears problem, and tight control is maintained. However, the level of arrears is rising due to the recession, and close monitoring is necessary, and action may need to be taken if problems become worse.

- the proportion of capital spend absorbed by fees is monitored, although this varies somewhat according to the nature of the schemes completed each year.

The return achieved on investment properties is monitored and reported to the Portfolio Holder as part of the annual review of investments. In order to do this, the valuation of investment properties is updated annually as a desk-top exercise. This ensures that the return is calculated by comparing the actual income to the current capital value. All properties are re-valued formally every five years, in accordance with CIPFA guidance, with approximately 20% being reviewed each year. All valuations are carried out in accordance with the appropriate guidance notes published by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

In the short term the Council needs to work closely with any tenants who experience financial difficulties, to try and ensure that they are able to pay their rent. It has to be recognised that, should units become vacant, they may be difficult to re-let. There is close dialogue between staff managing the portfolio, and those collecting rents, to ensure that any arrears arising are managed appropriately, and to ensure that income is maintained so far as possible.

The Council needs to consider other opportunities to increase its investment income, which may involve the direct acquisition of property related assets. Opportunities to increase the Council's equity in existing assets need to be considered, in order to build capital value and income potential. Where possible, the Council will seek to increase income by offering additional services to tenants where the Council can offset part of its fixed overheads against a service charge.

The Council no longer owns a conventional housing stock, but there may be opportunities to utilise cash to assist those in housing need, such as through the provision of mortgages (probably in association with a competent specialist financial body), loans to Registered Social Landlords, and support for shared ownership housing schemes, or investment in property acquisition with RSLs. The field of social housing provision is likely to be an area of significant change in the next few years and the council will be alive to considering any new property investment routes that can support its Housing Authority role.

The council requires more directly comparable data for most of the performance indicators, and this is one area where action is planned in the next year to benchmark performance. This will also better enable us to set realistic targets in key areas, for example around emissions. National performance data is not necessarily directly comparable, as much of it is derived from Councils with quite different and larger property portfolios. Data from Councils with more similar property portfolios is being sought.

One to five year plan

Drawing on all the above, the principles which guide asset management over the next one- to- five years are:

- supporting the delivery of the five year milestone targets in the corporate plan.
- supporting the specific asset requirements of detailed service plans.
- monitoring occupancy and condition to inform action and decisions on reallocation or disposal.
- seeking and taking opportunities to generate capital receipts which can support the wider capital programme.
- seeking and taking opportunities to generate additional income from property assets and appropriate new property investments so as to support the Council's wider financial and capital strategies
- monitoring return on investment property to ensure that continued ownership is financially prudent, and to ensure that long term income is safeguarded by working closely with tenants.
- utilising vacant commercial units to encourage new businesses through flexible letting terms and additional advice and support.
- using assets creatively, including in partnership with others, to enable regeneration and renewal.
- seeking to empower communities though transfer of assets, including newly acquired assets, to community associations, parish and town councils.

The Council's property portfolio is generally in sound condition. Adequate maintenance budgets have been provided so that there is no backlog of necessary maintenance, and there are no adverse impacts on service delivery as a result of properties which cannot be used for their designated purposes. However, following the refurbishment of Bodicote House, which generated efficiencies in the way in which space is occupied, there is a surplus of office accommodation. At present this is situated in Old Bodicote House, which is not fit for occupation due to structural concerns with some floors. Consequently the Council proposes to repair and refurbish this accommodation in order that the Council can respond flexibly to any interest in occupying the Council's surplus space. The Council needs to be in a position to let or share such parts of its overall office space as may suit both parties. The will have the effect of reducing the Council's net office accommodation costs.

The key challenges facing the council in managing its assets in the coming one-year and five-year periods are:

For operational assets:

1. Improving the efficiency with which the Council occupies its office accommodation. It was established some time ago that there is scope to

reduce costs by reducing the amount of floor space allocated per member of staff at Bodicote House. An accommodation review was undertaken, and a strategy approved to refurbish the premises in such a way as to permit much more efficient use of the premises, achieving an annual revenue saving. At the same time more flexible working practices such as home working has been introduced. As a result, it was possible to dispose of the Council's existing Banbury town centre offices at 58 Bridge Street to the PCT for their new Health Centre, achieving a significant efficiency saving for the Council. The Council and PCT have taken a partnership approach to the future of the building. As part of arrangements the Council has provided value added fit out and management contracts to support the PCT's service delivery occupation of the building. This was done by using the Council's own capital investment programme to refurbish the building in return for an increased rental income, and then adjusting current building services arrangements, following the transfer of this property into PCT use, so as to provide managed accommodation paid for on a rolling contract basis. This will provide good value to all partners. The council sought to move from a space requirement/allocation of more than 12sqm per FTE in 2006/07 to a target of 7.5 sqm per FTE by 2009/10. This was achieved, although the figure has increased again to 9.7 sqm in 2009/10. This is due to reducing staff numbers, and highlights the need to find other occupiers for spare accommodation at Bodicote House. In order to complete the Bodicote House project, and maximise efficiency, the old house refurbishment scheme must be completed, so that surplus space can be let or shared with others. Where opportunities exist to share premises, the Council needs to be conscious of the benefits of marginal pricing, where a contribution towards the Council's overhead costs reduces the cost to the Council overall.

2. At the same time the Council has rolled out its Customer Services project, which includes the construction of a Linkpoint at Bodicote House. This has made considerable improvements in the provision of first contact services to the public. A Linkpoint has been provided at the Banbury tourist information centre at Castle Quay, improving the range of services available in the town centre, whilst vacating the town centre offices at 58 Bridge Street so that it could be let (see above). Works have also been carried out to improve the facilities available at the area offices in Bicester and Kidlington, although, in the longer term, further improvements in service delivery are planned when more suitable premises become available. These projects will provide new opportunities for the shared use of premises for joint service delivery.

3. Resolving the problems posed by the ageing and underused depot sites. Following the decision by Charter Community Housing to move out of the Council's Thorpe Lane depot in Banbury, the depot was considerably larger than required. A scheme to refurbish the depot by demolishing surplus buildings and modernising others is being implemented. This will enable an industrial unit currently used for storage to be vacated, and returned to the investment portfolio in order to generate rental income. The letting of surplus accommodation within the depot to the County Council has been made possible. The opportunity to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon footprint has been seized by improving insulation, reducing lighting demands, and installing renewable energy technologies. In Bicester, the Council's Highfield depot is in poor condition, and it was established some time ago that the site is larger that the Council requires. The intention is that the existing property should be sold, when the Thorpe Lane depot refurbishment has been completed. In the interim, the spare accommodation may be needed whilst works at Thorpe Lane are taking place.

4. Following the completion of the new Spiceball sports centre, the old sports centre has been demolished, and the site is available for redevelopment. In the short term a temporary car park has been constructed on the site. Currently a project has been initiated jointly with the County Council, and the Mill Management Committee, seeking to bring forward the development of this area as a cultural quarter. The County Council have capital available to invest in the construction of a new library, and aspirations to improve the adjacent Mill arts centre. Development proposals are being sought from the private sector to redevelop the site with a compatible range of uses, including replacement public car parking.

5. The implementation of the Council's emerging carbon management plan has a significant impact on assets, as the majority of the Council's carbon footprint relates to premises. Opportunities to introduce renewable energy have been taken as part of the depot refurbishment, and will be investigated at Bodicote House, particularly as part of the Old House project. Leisure centres are very high energy users, and the Council is working with the managing contractor to seek ways of reducing this. The museum is also a significant carbon producer, and measures to address this are to be investigated.

6. As a result of the proposed civil parking enforcement arrangements, under which the Council would take on responsibilities for on street parking enforcement, the Council may need to increase the number of parking wardens which the Council employs. The premises at Castle Street, Banbury, from which the existing wardens operate is only just adequate for the existing staff numbers, so this is an issue which will have to be considered.

Non-operational assets:

7. The Orchard Way shops site is considered to be in need of major investment. The site is in mixed use, comprising in part 8 unit neighbourhood shops of which 3 are currently vacant, together with social housing. The remaining shop leases are terminable on six months notice. Some of the social housing units are owned by the Council, and some are owned by a Housing Association. None of these units are currently occupied. The condition of the accommodation is such that the Council has decided to bring forward a comprehensive redevelopment scheme in partnership with an RSL in order to provide a reduced number of retail units to be managed by the Council, and an increased quantity of social housing. The Council has agreed to provide social housing grant to support this scheme, but currently the viability of the project is dependent on grant being provided by the Homes and Community Agency, and an application for this is outstanding.

8. The industrial investment comprising Units 1-7 Thorpe Way, Banbury has been identified as being in need of attention. The condition of the units is deteriorating, with leases expiring. Over the last year the Council has succeeded in renewing leases but two remain vacant. If the development is to be retained in the long term, substantial investment will be required in refurbishment or redevelopment. A discounted cash flow analysis has suggested that it may be more appropriate to dispose of the investment. The strategy is to secure new leases on all units, and consider offering the investment for sale at the appropriate time. However, currently the investment market is very weak indeed, with little investment finance available. It is

necessary to keep the strategy relating to this investment under review, with particular reference to the wider financial and capital strategy issues referred to in the overall AMP and in 10 below.

9. With declining investment returns on cash investments, the Council will need to maximise its investment income from other sources, in particular property. Whilst it would appear that investment values continue to decline, at some point the market will turn, and for those with cash to invest, there will be opportunities providing attractive investment returns. It may well be prudent for the Council to consider investing further substantial amounts of capital in good quality property related assets, where investment returns of 7% or more are likely to be available. It is proposed that any new investments in property should show an initial yield of at least 2% above the prevailing 12 month LIBOR rate. Meanwhile, the Council has resolved to invest in the Bicester town centre redevelopment scheme, by acquiring part of the investment to be created. This achieves two objectives; firstly it assists in the financing of the scheme helping the Council's development partner to bring forward the development, and secondly, it increases the Council's investment in property.

10. An opportunity exists to utilise vacant retail and industrial units for economic development purposes, by seeking to let on flexible terms, in order to encourage small and new businesses. Additional support and advice may be provided to tenants through Oxfordshire Business Enterprises and other agencies. There may be no short term loss of income if the units would otherwise remain un-let, although in the medium term, the Council may receive a lower income when the property market improves, and this approach is likely to reduce asset value. Consequently it is proposed that the policy be reviewed annually, to consider whether it should continue.

Community assets:

11. The Council owns numerous parks and areas of public open space, together with a number of community centres, which are held as community assets. The majority of the areas of open space were originally held as Housing land, being situated on the former housing estates, but having been retained when the housing stock was transferred. All this land has been subject to an exhaustive review to identify any parcels having development potential, so that they may either be used for the provision of affordable housing, or sold in order to generate capital receipts.

12. Much of the land which was retained as amenity land when the former housing stock was transferred is subject to restrictive covenants given to Charter Community Housing, which require the Council to maintain these areas for amenity purposes. Consequently, it is not usually possible to dispose of these areas either for development, or to adjoining owners as garden extensions. However, the Council does seek to exploit any opportunity which may arise to obtain capital receipts, such as from the grant of rights enabling the development of adjoining land. A number of parking areas are also retained where permission has been granted to erect private garages, and ground leases are in place in respect of these. Historically these assets were acquired for housing purposes, and have now been formally appropriated, and are held as investment assets. This does not change the general assumption that, should residential development become possible, the first priority is to use them to provide additional affordable housing.

13. New community assets are acquired regularly on new developments, generally secured under planning agreements. These may comprise areas of public open space, or may comprise community centres, such as the recently acquired Hanwell Fields Community Centre. Parks and areas of public open space are generally passed over to Town or Parish Councils for future management, but there are occasions when it has proved necessary for this Council to retain ownership in order to ensure the facility is provided. The acquisition of such assets is generally accompanied by a commuted capital sum which is used to finance future maintenance. The planning agreement for the South-West Bicester development will provide for the acquisition of a significant area of land for sports facilities.

14. The new Government is keen to encourage participation by community groups in the ownership and management of community assets. Currently the Council's community centres are let to community groups on nominal rental terms, but with the Council normally retaining some repairing responsibilities. The Council provides financial support by undertaking some repairs, and in some cases through the payment of service charges. It would be consistent with Government policy to transfer the ownership of these properties to community groups, and this would reduce the Council's revenue costs. It is proposed that the possibility of this be investigated, although it is anticipated that few groups will be in a position to take on full responsibility for the future ownership of the properties.

ANNEX 1: PROPERTY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
2009/10 OUTTURN

Measure	benchmark average *	08/09 outturn	09/10 target	09/10 outturn	10/11 target
% of floorspace in conditions A-D good, satisfactory, poor or bad	A – 14% B – 65% C – 20% D – 1%	A – 65% B – 30% C – 5% D – 0%	A – 64% B – 31% C – 5% D – 0%	A – 78% B – 16% C – 6% D – 0%	A – 64% B – 36% C – 0% D – 0%
% of planned maintenance which is urgent, essential or desirable	1 – 12% 2 – 41% 3 – 47% £155 psm	Due to the programme of on-going works, no surveys have been done to update the maintenance plans which provide this data	1 – 15% 2 – 35% 3 – 50%	1 – 20% 2 – 80% 3 – 0% £5.73 psm	1 – 0% 2 – 50% 3 – 50%
Energy costs/ consumption	(i) £9.59 psm (ii) 218.79 kWh psm	£13.13 psm 268.4 kWh psm	£13.9 psm 183 kWh psm	£10.37 psm 211.8 kWh psm	£13.9 psm 175 kWh psm
Water costs/ consumption	(i) £1.52 psm (ii) 0.88 m3 psm	£0.52 psm 0.24 m3 psm	£0.79 psm 0.47 m3 psm	£0.76 psm 0.56 m3 psm	£0.8 psm 0.47 m3 psm
CO2 consumption	0.102	0.10 tonnes psm	0.035 tonnes psm	0.057 tonnes psm	0.032 tonnes psm
% of Portfolio by GIA sq.m., for which a Suitability Survey has been undertaken over the last 5 years.	60%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Number of properties, for which a Suitability Survey has been undertaken over the last 5 years	N/A	1	3	1	3
% Of Portfolio by GIA sq.m., for which an Access Audit has been undertaken by a competent person.	88%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of properties, for which an Access Audit has been	N/A	31	30	30	30

undertaken by a competent person.					
% of Portfolio by GIA sq.m., for which there is an Accessibility Plan in place	66%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of properties, for which there is an Accessibility Plan in place.	N/A	31	30	30	30
% rents payable during the year which are received	N/A	97.12	97.5%	95.4%	98%
Net income on the Council's investment portfolio (NB yield for new investments to be minimum 2% above 12 month LIBOR)	N/A	7.07%	6.5%	6.82%	6.5%
Average sq. m office accommodation per member of staff**	N/A	8.5 sq m	7.5 sq m per member of staff	9.7 sq m per member of staff	7.5 sq m per member of staff
Average sq m office accommodation per workstation**	N/A	10.05	No target	9.27	
Ratio of fees to expenditure on construction capital projects.	N/A	3.73% (two schemes of which one was design and build)	10%	12.25%	10%

* - Benchmark averages are derived from CIPFA's national best value benchmarking scheme, and comprise to the most recent data available. This refers to 2006/07 and is derived from District Councils.

** Measured for Bodicote House only. Net internal floor area excluding toilets, kitchens, fire escape routes and the civic suite comprising the Council Chamber and Cherwell and Sor Brook rooms. The floor area includes other meeting rooms, Members' rooms, storage and copying rooms. Old Bodicote House and the Stables restaurant/external storage and training rooms are not included.
Reported both on the basis of the number of workstations provided, and the number of staff based at Bodicote House.

Executive

Performance and Risk Management Framework 2010/11 First Quarter Performance Report

6 September 2010

Report of Chief Executive and Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report covers the Council's performance for the period 1 April to 30 June 2010 as measured through the Performance Management Framework.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

(1) To note the many achievements referred to in paragraph 1.4.

(2) To request that officers report in the second quarter on the items identified in paragraph 1.5 where performance was below target or there are emerging issues.

(3) To agree the responses identified to issues raised in the end of year performance report in paragraph 2.1 or to request additional action or information.

Executive Summary

Introduction

1.1 This is a report of the Council's performance in the first quarter of 2010/11 measured through the Performance Management Framework. Central to this is the Corporate Scorecard, which is made up of the Council's priority performance targets. The Corporate Scorecard covers seven areas of performance. These are: performance against the Local Area Agreement; the Community Strategy (Our District, Our Future); the Corporate pledges; Priority Service Indicators; Financial Performance; Human Resources; and Customer Feedback.

Supporting information is also provided showing the performance on delivering all of the Corporate Plan; the Corporate Improvement Plan and Value for Money Programme; strategic service projects; and the performance of the Council's significant partnerships. For 2010/11 the Council has adopted an integrated risk and performance management framework which means that performance and risk is monitored and reviewed as part of a single process. This report includes a review of all strategic, corporate and partnership risks under each of our strategic priorities. All the supporting information is presented in the appendices to this report.

To measure performance we use a 'traffic light' system where Green is 100% of the target met, Amber 90% and above, and Red below 90%.

1.2 It should be noted that although this is primarily a report of corporate performance the Performance Management Framework also includes monitoring at service level against service plans. The majority of performance issues are dealt with at service and directorate level. However significant service successes and issues are reported upwards and where appropriate included in this report.

1.3 It is also important to note that at the time of writing this report a number of significant changes are being made to the national performance management framework by the new government. Confirmed changes are the end of the Comprehensive Area Assessment, the cancellation of the Place Survey that was due to take place in 2010 and the deletion of a number of national performance indicators. These changes are affecting all tiers of local government and partners in both the health and police services.

The Council will continue to monitor the situation and ensure that local performance management arrangements continue to be robust and effective, reflecting local priorities. Any changes to the performance management framework are clearly identified in the appendices to this report.

Proposals

1.4 We ask the Executive to note the significant progress made in delivering the Council's objectives. Particular highlights include:

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity

- Work has now started on the South West Bicester Development under a revised planning agreement.

- Stall numbers at the Banbury Market are higher over the period of the first quarter than expected in the original license agreement, contributing to the economic vitality of the town centre.

- Housing have launched a new strategy for older people, it aims to support people to stay in their own homes, improve the availability of information and advice, support better design for older people and increase customer involvement in the service.

A Cleaner Greener Cherwell

- The recycling rate for the first quarter is 62.5% and expected to be within a range of 58-60% at year end. As such we are currently well within range of meeting the target.

- 10 parish councils have benefited from recycled items from the former Spiceball Sports Centre, including doors, flooring and sanitary ware this has helped to improve community facilities.

- The Council has met is data centre power consumption targets and reduce costs from £33513 per year to £11,300.

A Safe and Healthy Cherwell

- Wood Green Leisure Centre opened as planned for Whitsun and has remained open throughout June to take advantage of the good weather.

- The Banbury Area Cohesion Group held its second community event. A large community marquee at the Banbury Show was run by the group to showcase the work of diverse community groups in Banbury. The event was well attended and supported Banbury Town Council through participation in the Banbury Show, community groups also benefited from the fund raising opportunity.

An Accessible Value for Money Council

- The performance for processing new benefits claims and changes to circumstances remains on target following the work to improve performance during 2009/10.

1.5 The Performance Management Framework allows Councillors to monitor the progress made in delivering our objectives and to take action when performance is not satisfactory or new issues arise. There are a number of such items identified in this report and we recommend officers should report on the latest position, implications, and the action they are taking in the next quarterly performance report. These are:

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity

- Achieve 300 new homes – an expected slow down in the number of housing completions means this target is off track. If completions continue to slow this target will be off track at year end (at current rates the number of completions at year end would be 152). This issue will be kept under review by the planning, housing and economy directorate management team.

- Local Development Framework (core strategy) – the changes in national planning policy resulting in the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies raises questions as to our ability to publish the LDF to our original timetable. The implications of policy changes are been kept under review by the planning, housing and economy directorate

management team.

An Accessible Value for Money Council

- Cherwell Link – the corporate plan for 2010/11 aims to increase readership of Cherwell Link (the residents' magazine published by the Council) and explore options for increasing the number of issues. Given the likely impact of budget constraints during 2010/11 and over the medium term it is unlikely that funds will be available to increase the number of issues produced. This may have an impact on the readership. This target is reporting red and is likely to continue to do so during 2010/11.

Conclusion

1.6 In this report we show that at the first quarter Council continues to make excellent progress on delivering its ambitions to improve the services delivered to the public. Risks and opportunities have been reviewed and the report highlights a small number of areas which the Council needs to keep under review to ensure targets are met. This report also identifies emerging issues which will be reported on in the next quarter.

Background Information

2.1 **Progress on Issues Raised**

The Executive on 7 June 2010 requested progress reports on a number of areas identified in the year end performance report as areas where targets had not been met or where there were emerging issues. The position in relation to these is outlined below:

Cherwell: A District of Opportunity

- Civil car parking enforcement and residents parking scheme:

  The planned report to executive has been deferred and no further action will be taken on Banbury residents parking or civil parking enforcement until after the medium term financial position is clearer.

- The processing of major planning applications and the percentage of planning appeals upheld against a refusal:

  Both targets are on track and reported as green in quarter 1. Increased scrutiny of delegated refusals has resulted in a more consistent performance at appeal.

Safe and Healthy

- Banbury Museum Attendance

  New targets have now been set for 2010/11 reflected the reduced opening

hours. Targets were met in April and May, but performance dropped slightly in June. The dip in performance is probably due to the interest in the World Cup. It is expected that visitors in July will increase as a result.

- Adults and children's participation in sport and positive activities (National Indicators 8 and 110)

  Adult participation is measured by the Active People Survey each year and the latest figure is not a statistically significant drop. The council's adult participation programme continues to grow with good numbers attending programmes, however, the officer responsible for delivering this programme left in June 2009 and has not been replaced.

  With regard to Positive Activities For Young people participation nationally, there has been a drop in participation from last year and for Oxfordshire the drop was from 71.2% participation to 61.7%. Concerns have been raised over the national "Tell Us Survey" which provides the data as there have been questions raised over how many schools actually get involved (1 in Cherwell) and how it is administered in the future.

An Accessible, Value for Money Council

- The time taken to process new benefits claims and changes of circumstances:

  The trend of improvement has continued with the time taken to process new claims at 15 days against a target of 20 days and the time to process changes to circumstances 11 days against a target of 13.

- The percentage of invoices paid within 30 days:

  The finance team continue to work with service departments to reduce the number of disputed invoices and improve payment times. Current performance is 97.8% against a target of 99%.

2.2 **Overview of Performance**

The performance against the Corporate Scorecard is shown in appendix 1. In the sections below there is a summary of the performance against each of the frameworks that make up the Corporate Scorecard. This is followed by a summary of the performance on delivering the Strategic Service Projects and the Corporate Improvement Plan; the performance of the Council's significant partnerships; and the status of the Council's Strategic Risks.

The details are contained in appendices one to eight.

2.3 **Corporate Scorecard – Local Area Agreement**

There are 16 National Indicator targets that are priorities for district councils within the Local Area agreement. Out of these in Cherwell 7 are green, 1 is red. The remaining indicators are not reported in this quarter.

Successes

- All the cleaner greener targets in the LAA are on track, including the quality of environmental cleanliness, the recycling rates and the amount of waste per household.
- Cherwell District Council continues to take a lead role in coordinating the Oxfordshire district councils' performance management of the 16 district LAA targets.

Issues

- National Indicator 154 – additional homes provided. Currently this target is not on track and due to current economic conditions impacting on housing completions there is a risk that the target will not be met at year end.
- The place survey provides the data for a number of the LAA indicators and a recent announcement from the Department for Communities and Local Government put the survey on hold. It is unlikely that the data for these indicators will be collected.

Details in Appendix 2

2.4 **Corporate Scorecard – Sustainable Community Strategy**

Progress in delivering the Community Strategy is measured against a set of local priorities set out in a delivery plan for the community strategy. The new delivery plans have been signed off by the Local Strategic Partnership. Delivering the Community Strategy involves a number of partners and local agencies not all of these targets are the responsibility of Cherwell District Council. Where they are then they are included in our Corporate Plan or are reflected in the Local Area Agreement.

Successes

- The Local Strategic Partnership has successfully launched a disabled person's forum and has set up a group to support the development of the faith forum. These activities directly contribute to the leadership and community engagement ambition in the Community Strategy.

2.5 **Corporate Scorecard – Corporate Plan Pledges and Corporate Plan**

The Corporate Scorecard includes the 16 pledges which were included in the 2010/11 Council Tax Leaflet which was sent to every household in Cherwell. Of these 14 are Green and 2 Amber.

The pledges are taken from the Corporate Plan which is comprised of local and national performance indicators that directly contribute to the Council's strategic priorities.

- Cross cutting priorities: (supporting the development of the eco-town in Bicester, and working to break the cycle of deprivation in the district).
- Cherwell: A District of Opportunity
- A Safe and Healthy Cherwell

- A Cleaner, Greener Cherwell
- An Accessible, Value for money Council

Successes

- The Brighter Futures in Banbury Programme has launched a support programme aimed at vulnerable families. This programme is being delivered in partnership with the county council and the local police and aims to support families at risk.
- P3Eco has held a series of consultative workshops in Bicester to help draw together a long term vision for the town and contribute to the development of a masterplan reflecting the town's eco status and aspirations.
- 528 local residents have used the Cherwell Job Clubs in the first quarter and this has been supported by a number of outreach events.
- The housing team working in partnership with Charter Housing has successfully piloted a project to help tackle worklessness. Alongside initiatives such as the job club and apprenticeship schemes this has contributed to a falling number of people claiming job seekers allowance in the district.
- Affordable housing delivery is on track to achieve 100 home this year.
- The number of households in temporary accommodation has steadied after a brief increase in May this year. Performance is still on target.
- The Council is working in partnership with Jon Centre Plus and now job seekers will be able to sign on at the Council's office in Bicester, improving the accessibility of this service.
- All the Council's targets around reducing and tackling customer complaints are on track.

Issues

- There are a number of crime related indicators that Thames Valley Police will be ceasing to collect. These include serious violent crime and assault with injury (NIs 15 and 20). This is due to changing government requirements. The Safer Communities Partnership will continue to focus on crime in the district and the Council's review of fear of crime and community safety will also consider future priorities and local targets where appropriate.
- In year LAA reward grant cuts have hit community safety work and there is a risk that some initiatives will not go ahead.

Details in Appendix 3

2.6 **Corporate Scorecard – Priority Service Indicators**

These are a basket of 39 National Indicators and local service indicators that measure key aspects of service delivery that are not covered in the Sustainable Community Strategy or Corporate Plan. Of these 28 are reported in this quarter. 19 are Green, 4 Amber and 0 Red. The remaining indicators rely on data from third parties such as the police or the department for work and pensions that has not yet been passed o the Council.

Successes

- School visits to the Banbury museum remain on track, building on the strong performance throughout 2009/10.
- Repeat homelessness cases are within target.

Issues

- NI 182 (satisfaction of businesses with regulatory services). The target (measured through a satisfaction survey) has been narrowly missed and the reasons for this are currently being reviewed.

Details in Appendix 4

2.7 **Corporate Scorecard – Financial Performance**

There are two finance targets, both are Green. There are no issues of concern at this point in time. In particular we are projecting that we will meet our target for efficiency savings this year.

Successes

- At the mid year point our financial performance is on track for our revenue and capital budget expenditure against projections. We are also on track to meet our efficiency targets.

2.8 **Corporate Scorecard – Human Resources**

Three Human Resources indicators are monitored: staff turnover; days lost through sickness; and workforce capacity. All three are Green.

2.9 **Corporate Scorecard – Customer Feedback**

Four issues are covered: satisfaction with customer service when contacting the Council (monthly sample survey); feelings of safety (annual customer survey); feeling well informed about the Council (annual customer survey) and customer satisfaction measured by mystery shoppers (monthly).

Successes

- The monthly performance target (over 95% of customers satisfied with our service when contacting the council) is at 97%.

2.10 **Strategic Service Projects**

There are 7 service-based projects that are of strategic significance because of the resources involved, their impact on the Council's reputation or their contribution to delivering the Council's corporate priorities. 3 of the projects are Green and 4 Amber.

Successes

- South West Bicester Development – the official start is on 7th July under a revised planning agreement.
- Eco- Bicester the demonstration projects are progressing including an on site exemplar of approximately 350 houses, local retail, care home and employment uses. The Project Steering Group is meeting fortnightly to discuss emerging proposals, workstreams and a masterplan. Currently the Council is awaiting decision on tranche 2 funding linked to milestones.

Issues

- Bicester Town Centre Redevelopment - not all the necessary land has been acquired by agreement, so work has started on preparing a Compulsory Purchase Order. Start on infrastructure works has been delayed due to problems completing the s278 agreement. Development agreement completed in March.
- Banbury Cultural Quarter – there has been good tripartite input to develop the concept. However, there is concern regarding overall funding for the Library/Mill in light of the County Council's funding review and Government funding cuts.

Details in Appendix 5

2.11 **Corporate Improvement Plan and Value for Money Review Programme**

On 1 March 2010 Executive agreed the 2010/11 Corporate Improvement Plan. For 2010/11 the Improvement Plan has been fundamentally reviewed and focuses on the Councils key priorities and challenges. The plan reflects the impact of the recession and ongoing budget constraints as well as the strategic challenges outlined in the district's sustainable community strategy and the Council's strategic priorities, for example the changing needs for an aging population, improving services for younger people, building safe and strong communities.

There are 11 projects within the improvement plan and 10 value for money reviews programmed for 2010/11. Of the improvement plan projects 10 are reported as green and 1 as amber. Of the value for money reviews 1 is reporting as red (due to a delayed start) and one as amber (due to difficulties accessing benchmarking information from other authorities).

Successes

- The Housing value for money review has been completed with the previous target of £660k savings met. A further £100k potential saving has been identified.

- The Older People's Housing Strategy has been successfully launched and this will help inform the Council's approach to the changing needs of an aging population.

- The 'Reducing the Fear of Crime' improvement project is underway. Research in rural areas indicates very low levels of fear of crime and in

urban areas some specific issues have been identified. The research findings will help drive a targeted action plan to address fear of crime hotspots.

Details in Appendix 6

2.12 **Significant Partnerships**

The Council has identified 19 partnerships as significant due to the level of resources involved, and the impact on the local community. Many of the most significant and difficult issues we face, crime, the environment, economic development, can only be tackled if agencies work together. Of these partnerships 9 are county wide (including the County Local Strategic Partnership and its supporting thematic partnerships) the remaining partnerships are specific to the Cherwell district and directly support our strategic priorities.

Successes

- The North West Bicester Strategic Delivery Board has been set up and its terms of reference agreed. This partnership will ensure the effective delivery and coordination of the eco-Bicester project.

- The Council has strengthened its Member training and support arrangements for Councillors who sit on outside bodies and partnerships and a successful training session was held in June.

Issues

- Oxfordshire Economic Partnership - the future of the partnership is under review following the government announcements on the possibility of Local Enterprise partnerships replacing the regional development agencies.

Details in Appendix 7

2.13 **Strategic Risks**

In order to effectively manage its performance and resources the Council needs to be aware of the risks it faces and to have arrangements in place to manage these. From 1st April 2010 the Council has integrated its risk and performance management and monitoring arrangements.

We have 19 strategic, corporate and partnership risks identified on our register that are reviewed on a monthly basis. Operational and service risks are reviewed at the directorate and service level and escalated to the strategic risk register where appropriate.

Status this quarter

- All current strategic, corporate and partnership risks and mitigation actions have been reviewed and updated on a monthly basis during quarter 1. No risk ratings have worsened and one has improved.

- There are no additional issues arising with regards to any of our strategic, corporate or partnership risks. However, all risks are being reviewed in the light of changing policy and budgetary requirements and constraints.

  Details in Appendix 8

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

3.1 This report presents the Council's performance against its corporate scorecard for the first quarter of 2010/11. It includes an overview of our successes, areas for improvement and emerging issues to be considered.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One

1. To note the many achievements referred to in paragraph 1.3.

2. To request that officers report in the first quarter on the items identified in paragraph 1.4 where performance was below target or there are emerging issues.

3. To agree the responses identified to issues raised in the end of year performance report in paragraph 2.1 or to request additional action or information.

Option Two To identify any additional issues for further consideration or review.

Consultations

No specific consultation on this report is required. However, it should be noted that several indicators are based on public consultation or customer feedback.

Implications

Financial:

Financial Effects – The resource required to operate the Performance Management Framework is contained within existing budgets. However the information presented may lead to decisions that have financial implications. These will be viewed in the context of the Medium Term Plan & Financial Strategy and the annual Service & Financial Planning process.

Efficiency Savings – There are none arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance 01295 221551

Legal:	Maintaining National Indicators is a statutory requirement. Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, 01295 221686
Risk Management:	The purpose of the Performance Management Framework is to enable the Council to deliver its strategic objectives and improve customer satisfaction. All managers are required to identify and manage the risks associated with achieving this. All risks are logged on the Corporate Risk Register and there is an update on managing risks recorded at least quarterly. A failure to identify and improve key drivers of customer satisfaction through effective Performance Management is one of the Council's strategic risks. Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk and Insurance Officer, 01295 221566
Data Quality	Data for performance against all indicators has been collected and calculated using agreed methodologies and in accordance with Performance Indicator Definition Records (PIDRs) drawn up by accountable officers. The council's performance management software has been used to gather and report performance data in line with performance reporting procedures. Comments checked by Helen Couperthwaite, lead officer on data quality, 01295 221801

Wards Affected

All

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Corporate Scorecard 2010/11
Appendix 2	Local Area Agreement
Appendix 3	Corporate Plan
Appendix 4	Priority Service Indicators
Appendix 5	Strategic Service Projects
Appendix 6	Corporate Improvement Plan
Appendix 7	Significant Partnerships
Appendix 8	Strategic Risks
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Claire Taylor, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager
Contact Information	01295 221563 claire.taylor@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Corporate Scorecard 2010/2011

April - June 2010

Total GREEN	19	23
AMBER	4	4
RED	1	1
NO DATA (N/A)	4	0

Measure Definition	Responsible Service	Reporting Frequency	Comment on Performance to date	Year End 2009/10	Q1 2011
Working in Partnership					
Local Area Agreement	Corporate Strategy, Performance & Partnerships	Quarterly	7 of the 8 indicators collected this time are green, but 1, NI 154, net additional homes is red. This is due to the very low housing completions as expected in the current national economic conditions. The remaining 8 indicators are collected annually or less frequently. Cherwell continues to collate and distribute monthly information (where available) for all Oxfordshire districts on their contribution to the LAA.	A	A
Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy	Corporate Strategy, Performance & Partnerships	Quarterly	Delivery Plans for the Sustainable Community Strategy have now been finalised and performance management arrangements are being put in place.	A	A
Corporate Plan Pledges					
A District of Opportunity					
Contribute to the creation of 200 new jobs	Planning Policy & Economic Development	Monthly	During the first quarter 185 jobs are known to have been created, but 238 have been lost.	G	G
Help another 1000 local people at our Bicester and Banbury job clubs	Planning Policy & Economic Development	Monthly	A total of 528 people have been helped so far this year. 169 in April, 98 in May and 261 in June. This includes support given at the Job Clubs and a number of special events including events held at; Bicester Village, Castle Quay Young Peoples Opportunities, Sunshine Centre Estate Day, and the Banbury and District Show.	G	G
Deliver 100 new homes for those in need of better housing	Housing Services	Monthly	Affordable housing delivery is on-track. The bulk of delivery will be achieved in quarter 4.	G	G
Work with partners to make significant progress on completion of Bicester town centre develop.	Regeneration & Estates	Monthly	Completed.	G	G
Launch new programme of work to tackle deprivation in Cherwell	Strategic Director - Environment & Community	Monthly	Good progress on multi agency basis. Clear geographic and specific resident need focus. Several new joint activities already underway. Effective partner coordination measures in place. Clarity on what, where and why. Community engagement plans being prepared.	G	G
Make significant progress on all the Bicester eco town demonstration projects	Planning Policy & Economic Development	Monthly	Pre-application discussions continuing as part of fortnightly Project Steering Group meetings.	G	G
A Safe and Healthy Cherwell					
Work with partners to deliver yet another reduction in crime & ASB offences	Safer Communities, Urban & Rural Services	Monthly	Borough Command Unit and LAA Award grant cuts may well have adverse impact on work and achieveing target.	G	G
Continue to support the provision of the best possible services at the Horton Hospital	Recreation & Health	Monthly	Consultant delivered model for obstretric and paediatric services agreed by the PCT and ORHT as being deliverable and additional funding agreed. Implementation plan being developed for immediate action.	G	G
Continue to support new and improved health services for Bicester and surrounding areas	Recreation & Health	Monthly	The PCT has agreed that their original procurement process required alteration. therefore a new procurement process is being developed which is simplifying the process based on one integrated solution in one location.	G	A
Attract an extra 100,000 visits to new & refurbished leisure centres and Woodgreen Pool	Recreation & Health	Monthly	New target for this year.	N/A	G

Corporate Scorecard 2010/2011

April - June 2010

Total GREEN	19	23
AMBER	4	4
RED	1	1
NO DATA (N/A)	4	0

Measure Definition	Responsible Service	Reporting Frequency	Comment on Performance to date	Year End 2009/10	Q1 2011
A Cleaner, Greener Cherwell					
Increase satisfaction with street & environmental cleanliness from 67% to 69%	Environmental Services	Monthly	Results for this year due in August/September.	A	A
Increase household recycling rate to 55% by 31 March 2011	Environmental Services	Monthly	Recycling rate 62.5% for the first quarter , expected to be in the range 58-60% for the year as a whole	G	G
Deliver a further year of CO2 emissions reductions from the council	Environmental Services	Monthly	On track.	G	G
An Accessible, Value for Money Council					
Reduce our costs by a further £800,000	Finance	Monthly	Detailed Building Blocks being prepared to achieve target savings of £800K. New target for this year.	N/A	G
Deliver a council tax increase in 2011/12 which is below inflation	Finance	Monthly	Budget for 2011/12 will be prepared in line with this target.	G	G
Double the number of council services that can be booked, paid for or applied for online from 50 to 100	Customer Services & Information Systems	Monthly	Direct Debit forms, for submission with and without signature, now available. Applications for season tickets now available and proving popular. New target for this year.	N/A	G
Performance Indicators					
Performance against Priority Service Indicators	Corporate Strategy, Performance & Partnerships	Monthly	Of the 28 Priority Service Indicators due to report this time 19 are green (68%), 4 amber. This means that 82% are known to have met or only narrowly missed targets. Data is missing for 5 indicators, but many of these are due by the end of July.	R	R
Financial Performance					
Percentage variance on revenue budget expenditure against profile (+2%/-5%)	Finance	Monthly	Projected to be on target to budget.	G	G
Percentage variance on capital budget expenditure against profile (+2%/-5%): Other projs	Finance	Monthly	Projected to be on target to budget.	A	G
Human Resources					
Staff turnover (voluntary leavers)	People & Improvement	Quarterly	Voluntary turnover remains low mainly due to current economic climate	G	G
Number of days lost through sickness	People & Improvement	Quarterly	Comfortably within target for first quarter	G	G
Workforce capacity (excluding temporary, casual and agency staff)	People & Improvement	Quarterly	Low staff turnover combined with the deletion of some vacant posts (efficiency targets) has resulted in increase in capacity during first quarter	G	G

Corporate Scorecard 2010/2011

April - June 2010

Total GREEN	19	23
AMBER	4	4
RED	1	1
NO DATA (N/A)	4	0

Measure Definition	Responsible Service	Reporting Frequency	Comment on Performance to date	Year End 2009/10	Q1 2011
Customer Feedback					
Ensure at least 82% of residents say they feel safe at home and in the community	Safer Communities, Urban & Rural Services	Monthly	Results for this year due in August/September.	G	G
Ensure that 72% of our customers when asked feel well informed about the Council	People & Improvement	Monthly	Increased levels of communications activity, both reactive and proactive. Communications team working towards marketing-led campaign approach to increase market penetration with residents.	G	G
Ensure that at least 95% of our customers are satisfied with our customer service when contacting the Council	Customer Services & Information Systems	Monthly	Total: 97% (488) happy 3% (14) not. Phones: 93% (182) happy, 7% (14) not. Face to face: 100% (306) happy.	G	G
Achieve above average performance in a nationally comparative mystery shoppers survey	Customer Services & Information Systems	Monthly	Cherwell's average performance across all factors in the first wave of 2010/11's telephone mystery shopping is 85% compared with an all-participant average of 87%. In October 2009 it was 82% and in May/June 2009 it was 75%. The trend is consistently improving; the next wave will be in the autumn and we will aim to reach our above-average target then.	N/A	G

Collected for information only (no RAG score):

Other Surveys			
Measure Definition	**Responsible Service**	**Reporting Frequency**	**Comment on Performance**
Customer Satisfaction Survey (for information purposes only)	Corporate Strategy, Performance & Partnerships	Annual	Satisfaction survey completed. General trend of improvement. Overall satisfaction: 2006 = 60% 2007 = 65% 2008 = 67% 2009 = 67% 2010 = due Autumn

Inspection Scores					
Measure Definition	**Responsible Service**	**Reporting Frequency**	**Comment on Performance**	**Rating 2009/10**	**Rating 20010/11**
CPA	Community & Corporate Planning		Awarded March 2009. CPA has now ended.		n/a
CAA - Area Assessment	Community & Corporate Planning		no longer applicable		n/a
CAA - Organisational Assessment	Community & Corporate Planning		no longer applicable		n/a
Use of Resources	Finance	Annual	No longer applicable.		n/a
Data Quality	Community & Corporate Planning	Annual	no longer applicable		n/a
Equalities Framework	Community & Corporate Planning	Annual	Peer review due November 2010.		n/a
Investors in People	Human Resources	Annual	Awarded January 2009	Accredited	Accredited

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Local Area Agreement 2010/2011
April - June 2010

	2009/2010 Actual	2009/2010 Target	2009/2010 Performance	Quarter One Actual	Quarter One Target	Quarter One Performance	Comment
Cherwell: A District of Opportunity							
NI154 Net additional homes provided	444	376	G	38.00	46.00	R	Very low housing completions as expected due to the national economic conditions.
NI155 Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	199	100	G	4.00	4.00	G	Delivery of affordable housing is on-track and should be achieved in quarter 4.
NI156 Number of households living in temporary accommodation	29	33	G	28.00	33.00	G	The number of households in temporary accommodation has steadied after a brief increase in May.
A Safe and Healthy Cherwell							
NI008 Adult participation in sport and active recreation (%)	21.22	27.30	R	N/A	N/A		Next report due March 2011.
NI021 Dealing with local concerns about ASB and crime	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		Place Survey indicator. Baseline in 2008/2009. The Place Survey now won't take place this year.
NI110 Young People's participation in positive activities (%)	N/A	80.50	R	N/A	N/A		Next report due March 2011.
A Cleaner, Greener Cherwell							
NI185 CO2 reduction from Local Authority operations	N/A	4	N/A	N/A	N/A		Annual reporting.
NI188 Planning to Adapt to Climate Change	2	2	G	N/A	N/A		Annual reporting.
NI191 Residual household waste per household (kg)	481.36	490.00	G	99	99	G	On target.
NI192 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	51.27	50.00	G	63	62	G	For first three months 62.5% , expected to be in the 58-60% range for 2010/11.
NI195a Improved street and environmental cleanliness (litter) (%)	2.00	4.00	G	2	4	G	98% of our Streets were litter free only 2% were below standard, this was better than expected.
NI195b Improved street and environmental cleanliness (detritus) (%)	8.00	9.00	G	8	9	G	Only 8% of our streets were below standard for detritus this was better than expected.
NI196 Improved street and environmental cleanliness - fly tipping	1.00	1.00	G	N/A	N/A		Annual reporting.

Local Area Agreement 2010/2011
April - June 2010

	2009/2010 Actual	2009/2010 Target	2009/2010 Performance	Quarter One Actual	Quarter One Target	Quarter One Performance	Comment
Cherwell: An Accessible, Value for Money Council							
NI005 Overall/general satisfaction with local area	83.80	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		Place Survey indicator. Baseline in 2008/2009. The Place Survey now won't take place this year.
NI140 Fair Treatment by local services	74.90	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		Place Survey indicator. Baseline in 2008/2009. The Place Survey now won't take place this year.
NI179 Value for money - total net value on ongoing cash-releasing value for money gains that have impacted since the start of the 2008/09 financial year (£k)	600,000	600,000	**G**	245000.00	200000.00	**G**	On target.

Corporate Plan
2010/2011 Action Plan
April 2010 - June 2010

	Quarter One	Comment
Cross Cutting Strategic Priorities		
Submit LDF Core Strategy	**A**	**CMT Emerging Issue** The letter from the Secretary of State announcing the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies raises questions as to our ability to meet our published timetable for submitting the Core Strategy.
Start Bicester Eco Town Demonstration Projects	**G**	Exhibition House/Building at The Garth proposal approved and due to be completed September 2010. Other demonstration projects progressing including travel behaviour survey.
Multi-agency programme to address inequalities in targeted areas	**G**	Good progress on multi agency basis. Clear geographic and specific resident need focus. Several new joint activities already underway. Effective partner coordination measures in place. Clarity on what, where and why. Community engagement plans being prepared.
Community engagement to ensure local people are included in pilot programme	**G**	First phase of community engagement commissioned and due to take place in July.
Launch new programme of work to tackle deprivation in Cherwell	**G**	Good progress on multi agency basis. Clear geographic and specific resident need focus. Several new joint activities already underway. Effective partner coordination measures in place. Clarity on what, where and why. Community engagement plans being prepared.
Consultation on masterplan for the site	**G**	Open planning workshops organised by P3Eco took place in Bicester between 5 and 12 June with feedback on 16 June 2010. Awaiting report of consultation from P3Eco.
Committee approval of masterplan	**G**	P3Eco continuing to develop masterplan strategy for submission by end of 2010.
Approval of detailed planning application for demonstration project	**G**	Pre-application discussions progressing with P3Eco Project Team with fortnightly Project Steering Group meetings. Detailed planning application to be submitted in November 2010.
Start on-site demonstration projects	**G**	Pre-application discussions continuing as part of fortnightly Project Steering Group meetings.
Submission of outline planning application for whole site	**G**	Pre-application discussions continuing as part of fortnightly Project Steering Group meetings.

	Corporate Plan Actions
Number Green and Amber	10
Percentage	100.00%
Status	**Green**

Corporate Plan
2010/2011 Action Plan
April 2010 - June 2010

	Quarter One	Comment
Cherwell: A District of Opportunity		
Submit LDF Core Strategy	**A**	**CMT Emerging Issue** The letter from the Secretary of State announcing the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies raises questions as to our ability to meet our published timetable for submitting the Core Strategy.
Start Eco Bicester Demonstration Projects	**G**	Exhibition House/Building at The Garth proposal approved and due to be completed September 2010. Other demonstration projects progressing including travel behaviour survey.
Strategy in place for Canalside Banbury	**A**	**CMT Emerging Issue** Progress on finalising the Supplementary Planning Document has been halted whilst the Council commissions further work on flooding. This is underway, however it relies on input from the Environment Agency. A revised date to bring the SPD back to Executive has been set, however this may be dependent upon the outcome of this work.
Significant construction progress on Eco Bicester development	**A**	**CMT Emerging Issue** A start date for the infrastructure works has yet to be set, as OCC continue to refuse to complete the necessary s278 agreement.
LDF draft to include proposals for at least two major new business sites	**A**	**CMT Emerging Issue** The letter from the Secretary of State announcing the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies raises questions as to our ability to meet our published timetable for submitting the Core Strategy.
Contribute to the creation of 200 new jobs	**G**	During the first quarter 185 jobs are known to have been created, but 238 have been lost.
Maintain the partnership delivering job clubs in Banbury and Bicester	**G**	Weekly job clubs held plus the following special events: Castle Quay NEET Opportunities Market 1 - 4 June attracted ~80 people 'not in education, employment or training'. 11 June Retail Job Club held at Bicester Village. 17 June event for 'non placed young people' at Oxford & Chewell Valley College incorporated Job Club stand. Young Persons Special Job Club at Banbury Job Club on 25 June. First aniversary of Bicester Job Club celebrated.
Initiate direct local job creation and skill development scheme	**G**	Cherwell District Council has taken on apprentices to help with skill dveelopment. Whilst management time has been higher than expected, the practical management experience gaianed during the first round of apprenticeships has been inavluable and can inform any further cohorts.

Corporate Plan 2010/2011 Action Plan April 2010 - June 2010		
Focus economic development & housing support for disadvantaged individuals in Banbury	G	Job Seeker Allowance claimants continue to reduce in Cherwell, the Job Club makes an important contribution to this. The worklessness project, supported by housing and Charter has been successfully piloted.
Help another 1000 local people at our Bicester and Banbury job clubs	G	A total of 528 people have been helped so far this year. 169 in April, 98 in May and 261 in June. This includes support given at the Job Clubs and a number of special events including events held at; Bicester Village, Castle Quay Young Peoples Opportunities, Sunshine Centre Estate Day, and the Banbury and District Show.
Deliver £300,000 funding for transport infrastructure through developer contributions	A	The uncertainty in the housing market in relation to changes in national planning policy allied to cuts in central funding to support affordable housing are likely to have a significant impact on developer funding for transport infrastructure. he start at SW Bicester should eventually contribute to this target.
Achieve 300 new homes	R	**CMT Emerging Issue** As anticipated in the Council's last Annual Monitoring Report, the first quarter has seen a significant slowing down in housing completions. A net total of 38 dwellings (42 gross) have been completed this quarter. At current rates this would produce an annual total of 152 against a target of 181.
Deliver 100 affordable homes	G	**CMT Success** Affordable housing delivery is on track - the delivery will be achieved in quarter 4.
Deliver 100 new homes for those in need of better housing	G	**CMT Success** Affordable housing delivery is on track - the delivery will be achieved in quarter 4.
85% customer satisfaction with Choice Based Letting Scheme	G	In quarter one of 2010/11 100% of housing register forms were registered within 20 working days.
Revise Cherwell Housing Strategy responding to the recession	G	A scoping document and draft timetable have been produced for the revision of the Cherwell Housing Strategy over the next year. The review will include considerable consultation with the public and service users to explore new methods of delivery.
Temporary Accommodation Strategy outcomes achieved	G	CDC is awaiting funding from the Homes and Communities Agency for developments at Orchard Way Banbury (including 4 purpose-built units of Tempoary Accommodation (TA)) and Bryan House Bicester (incl 6 purpose built units of TA). Currently National Affordable Homes Programme funding is in a period of moratorium.
Spend £420,000 on investing in better quality housing for vulnerable people	G	During quarter 1 a total of £86,399 has been invested (£29,826 in April, £17,742 in May and £38,831.00 in June).

Corporate Plan 2010/2011 Action Plan April 2010 - June 2010		
Start Banbury Flood Alleviation Scheme	G	Public Inquiry has taken place. Awaiting outcome.
Prepare the outline strategy for the future of Banbury Town Centre	G	Work on this has yet to commence, and is programmed for later in the year.
Start scheme for enhancement of Market Square in Bicester	G	This scheme is not programmed to start until after the Town centre scheme is completed, probably in 2012/13.
Develop implementation plans for Civil Parking Enforcement	A	**CMT Exception** No further progress pending member decision.
Decide on a Banbury Residents Parking Scheme	A	**CMT Exception** No further progress pending member decision on Civil Parking Enforcement.
Implement revised Bicester Residents Parking Scheme	G	
Implement a new Banbury Market operation	G	**CMT Success** Stall sales up above target in first Quarter. generating additional income for the council.
Work with partners to make sig. progress on completion of Bicester town centre develop.	G	
Planning policy framework for villages through LDF published	A	**CMT Emerging Issue** The letter from the Secretary of State announcing the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies raises questions as to our ability to meet our published timetable for submitting the Core Strategy.
Rural affordable housing action plan embedded	G	**CMT Success** Excellent progress is being made and actions are on track.
Working with arts partners improve the creative offer in village halls and rural schools	G	
Implement actions in the Rural Strategy Delivery Plan	G	
Support rural communities in implementing improved ICT access for older people & disadvantaged people	G	We are liaising with the rural strategy team to identify what constitutes, and how then to deliver, improved access

Corporate Plan 2010/2011 Action Plan April 2010 - June 2010							
A District of Opportunity : National Indicators							
	2009/2010 Actual	2009/2010 Target	2009/2010 Performance	Quarter One Actual	Quarter One Target	Quarter One Performance	Comment
NI154 Net additional homes provided	444	376	**G**	38.00	46.00	**R**	Very low housing completions as expected due to the national economic conditions
NI155 Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	199	100	**G**	4.00	4.00	**G**	Delivery of affordable housing is on-track and should be achieved in quarter 4.
NI156 Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation	29	33	**G**	28.00	33.00	**G**	The number of households in temporary accommodation has steadied after a brief increase in May.

	Corporate Plan Actions	**National Indicators**
Number Green and Amber	30	2
Percentage	96.77%	66.67%
Status	**Amber**	**Red**

Corporate Plan
2010/2011 Action Plan
April 2010 - June 2010

	Quarter One	Comment
A Safe and Healthy Cherwell		
Ensure at least 83% of residents say they feel safe at home and in the community	G	
Work with partners to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour by 200 offences/incidents	G	**CMT Emerging Issue** Borough Command Unit and LAA award cuts may well have adverse impact on this work/achievement of target.
Work with partners to deliver yet another reduction in crime and antisocial behaviour offences	G	**CMT Emerging Issue** Borough Command Unit and LAA Award grant cuts may well have adverse impact on work and achieving target.
Enable understanding and awareness between diff. cultures and minority groups	G	Ongoing. Equality information in Living in Cherwell and cohesion and equalities panels ongoing. Support to staff through Knowing our Community events.
Invite the public to a minimum of 4 public NAG meetings	G	
Continue to support the provision of the best possible services at the Horton Hospital	G	Consultant delivered model for obstretric and paediatric services agreed by the PCT and ORHT as being deliverable and additional funding agreed. Implementation plan being developed for immediate action.
Continue to support new and improved health services for Bicester and surrounding areas	A	The PCT has agreed that their original procurement process required alteration. Therefore a new procurement process is being developed which is simplifying the process based on one integrated solution in one location.
Deliver the programme to address health inequalities in the District	G	
Support the local health sector in developing services at Horton General Hospital	G	Consultant delivered model for obstretric and paediatric services agreed by the PCT and ORHT as being deliverable and additional funding agreed. Implementation plan being developed for immediate action.
Support the PCT in developing new and improved Bicester Hospital services	A	The PCT has agreed that their original procurement process required alteration. therefore a new procurement process is being developed which is simplifying the process based on one integrated solution in one location.
Deliver 3 new health improvement initiatives across the district	G	1. Targetted health improvement work in key Banbury wards through health trainers. 2. Extended women swimming sessions at Spiceball Leisure Centre which encourage swimming by women from all ethnic backgrounds.
Work with the PCT to address health inequalities and deprivation in the district	G	Good progress on multi agency basis. Clear geographic and specific resident need focus. Several new joint activities already underway. Effective partner coordination measures in place. Clarity on what, where and why. Community engagement plans being prepared.
Increase participation in active recreation by 1%	G	

Corporate Plan 2010/2011 Action Plan April 2010 - June 2010		
Increase income at joint use sports sites by 2.5%	G	
Promote the events section of www.visitnorthoxfordshire.com	G	
Increase the number of new walkers participating in local health walks by 10%	G	
Attract an extra 100,000 visits to new and refurbished leisure centres and Woodgreen Pool	G	
Increase numbers of new older people participating in group activities by 500	G	
Increase participation by young people in positive activities by 1%	G	
Develop and deliver programmes of events/activities in our urban centres	G	
Develop and implement a new Older Persons strategy	G	Not planned to commence until Q3/4.
Support and improve 18 community recreation venues through grant aid funding	G	

A Safe & Healthy Cherwell : National Indicators

	2009/2109 Actual	2009/2010 Target	2009/2010 Performance	Quarter One Actual	Quarter One Target	Quarter One Performance	Comment
NI015 Serious violent crime rate	0.41	0.38	**A**	N/A	N/A	**N/A**	**CMT Exception** No targets have been set by Thames Valley Police and none are expected. Investigating alternative indicators.
NI016 Serious acquisitive crime rate	7.21	7.76	**G**	1.40	1.90	**G**	
NI020 Assault with injury crime rate	6.19	4.77	**G**	N/A	N/A	**N/A**	**CMT Exception** No targets have been set by Thames Valley Police and none are expected. Investigating alternative indicators.

	Corporate Plan Actions	**National Indicators**
Number Green and Amber	22	1
Percentage	100.00%	100.00%
Status	**Green**	**Green**

Corporate Plan
2010/2011 Action Plan
April 2010 - June 2010

	Quarter One	Comment
A Cleaner, Greener Cherwell		
Remove 92% of fly tipping within 48 hours of reporting	**G**	
Achieve 95% of land inspected at an acceptable litter standard.	**G**	
Reduce the amount of fly tipping by 5% on 2009/10 levels	**G**	Small fall compared to 09/10 of just under 10%.
Increase satisfaction with street and environmental cleanliness from 67% to 69%	**A**	Annual customer satisfaction results due in August/September.
Increase household recycling rate to 55% by 31 March 2011	**G**	Recycling rate 62.5% for the first quarter , expected to be in the range 58-60% for the year as a whole.
Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill by 4000 tonnes by 31 March 2011	**G**	For 1st quarter - down by 1200 tonnes.
Produce a Biodiversity Statement and Delivery Plan and implement year 1	**G**	
Commission 6 farm advisory visits	**G**	
Deliver a further year of CO2 emissions reductions from the council	**G**	
Inform all residents how to reduce carbon emissions	**G**	
Achieve at least 73% resident satisfaction with green spaces and public areas	**G**	Survey not scheduled until later in the year.
Negotiate significant green spaces in developments through S106 agreements	**G**	

Corporate Plan
2010/2011 Action Plan
April 2010 - June 2010

A Cleaner, Greener Cherwell : National Indicators							
	2009/2109 Actual	2009/2010 Target	2009/2010 Performance	Quarter One Actual	Quarter One Target	Quarter One Performance	Comment
NI191 Residual household waste per household	481.36	490.00	G	98.72	98.75	G	
NI192 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	51.27	50.00	G	62.76	62.00	G	For first three months 62.5% , expected to be in the 58-60% range for 2010/11.
NI195a Improved street and environmental cleanliness (litter)	481.36	49.00	G	2.00	4.00	G	98% of our Streets were litter free only 2% were below standard, this was better than expected.
NI195b Improved street & environmental cleanliness (detritus)	51.27	50.00	G	8.00	9.00	G	Only 8% of our streets were below standard for detritus this was better than expected.
NI195c Improved street and environmental cleanliness (graffiti)	2.00	4.00	G	0.00	1.00	G	There was very little graffiti spotted on street cleansing inspections - too low to score.
NI195d Improved street and environmental cleanliness (fly posting)	8.00	9.00	G	0.00	1.00	G	There was very little fly posting spotted on street cleansing inspections - too low to score.
NI194i Emissions of NOx	2.00	4.00	G				Annual indicators, next due to report March 2011.
NI194ii Percentage reduction in NOx emissions	8.00	9.00	G				
NI194iii Emissions of PM10	0.00	1.00	G				
NI194iv Percentage reduction in PM10 emissions	0.00	1.00	G				
NI196 Improved street and environmental cleanliness - fly tipping	1.00	1.00	G				

	Corporate Plan Actions	National Indicators
Number Green and Amber	12	6
Percentage	100.00%	100.00%
Status	**Green**	**Green**

Corporate Plan
2010/2011 Action Plan
April 2010 - June 2010

		Quarter One	Comment
An Accessible, Value for Money Cherwell			
Seek accreditation for customer service - customer service excellence award		G	Work is on track to start in Q3
Support for parishes and community groups to have a website		G	The new multi-site functionality of the corporate site is now in place and 12 Parishes are signed up to have websites. Active users of "www.cherwell-local.com" are being advised of its closure and of opportunities to have a site linked to the corporate site. The ongoing capital project to provide self-service access to services in communities is ongoing, liaising with Parishes and community groups.
Carry out website testing to ensure it is user friendly		G	An action plan is being developed from the most recent report received from our usability testing partner "the Usability Company".
Retain the Crystal Mark for our website		G	Re-accreditation will be sought in Q3 when the existing accreditation expires. Work with contributors to ensure plain english is used throughout the site is ongoing.
Undertake a peer review of our performance in terms of equality		G	**CMT Emerging Issue** Possiblility that CDC will undertake a self assessment rather than incur the costs of an inspection. Self Assessment will be available for review in August.
Develop a 'hardest to reach' action plan to improve access and take up of our services		G	The Customer Service Specialist outreach workers have a target to attend 24 parish and community groups.
90% of complaints received are resolved within Stage One		G	
95% of all complaints that are escalated to Stage Two are resolved		G	
No complaints escalated from Stage Three to the Ombudsman		G	
Maintain our score of 3 in UoR Assessment and secure score of 4 for at least 1 KLoE			This action is no longer relevant and will be closed down as these assessments have ceased.

Corporate Plan 2010/2011 Action Plan April 2010 - June 2010		
Reduce our costs by a further £800,000	**G**	Detailed Building Blocks being prepared to achieve target savings of £800K.
Address the MTFS by developing a clear action plan which will reduce Council expenditure	**G**	The Medium Term Financial Strategy has been upadted to reflect current realistic 4 year deficit abd action plans being developed to meet the deficits ahead of the Comprehensive Spending Review announcement in October and will form the basis for 2011/12 service and financial planning targets.
Deliver a Council Tax increase in 2011/12 below inflation	**G**	Budget for 2011/12 will be prepared in line with this target.
Produce a combined annual report of performance and finance in June 2010	**G**	Completed.
Improve access to our services by delivering a 'link points-on-legs' service	**G**	This action has been completed.
Promote access to cultural and sporting facilities to Looked after Children	**G**	Supporting role by CDC of actions within the Childrens and young peoples action plan. This action will be closed down as Oxfordshire County Council take the lead for this.
Expand access to services provided by our partners through Council access points	**G**	DWP begin to offer a JobSeeker's sign on from our Bicester Office next month.
Establish a procedure for members of the public to submit petitions to the council	**G**	Considered by Executive in June and will be considered by Full Council on 19 July.
Provide more information to local people about how to become a councillor	**G**	Leaflet is on the internet and will be circulated to political parties and published next year.
Ensure that 72% of our customers when asked feel well informed about the Council	**G**	Increased levels of communications activity, both reactive and proactive. Comms team working towards marketing-led campaign approach to increase market penetration with residents.
Possible increase in the number of Cherwell Links produced	**R**	Budgetary implications may mean an increase in the number of Cherwell Link's produced each year isn't possible.

Corporate Plan 2010/2011 Action Plan April 2010 - June 2010		
Increase the readership of Cherwell Link	R	If Cherwell Link hand delivery not continued there is a risk of not reaching all residents and decrease in readership as a result.
95% of our customers are satisfied	G	Total: 97% (488) happy 3% (14) not Phones: 93% (182) happy, 7% (14) not. Face to face: 100% (306) happy.
Double the number of services that can be booked, paid for, applied for online (50 to 100)	G	Direct Debit forms, for submission with and without signature, now available. Applications for season tickets now available and proving popular.
Extend opportunities for customers to feed back their experiences of our services	G	Currently liaising with the community and corporate planning manager to identify the most useful areas to target with face to face mystery shopping this year, in tandem with the Customer Intelligence project.This action has now been superseded by 'seek accreditation for customer service - customer service excellence award, and will be now be closed down.
Ensure we use customer information to develop and improve our services	G	Project brief being prepared to move this project forward for consideration by CMT on 8 July.
Make our annual satisfaction survey available to all residents	G	Survey available on the council's consultation portal.

An Accessible, Value for Money Cherwell : National Indicators							
	2009/2109 Actual	2009/2010 Target	2009/2010 Performance	Quarter One Actual	Quarter One Target	Quarter One Performance	Comment
NI014 Avoidable contact: the proportion of customer contact that is of low/no value to the customer	7.23	15.00	G	7.16	12.5	G	total contact 12887, value 8812 failure 818 = 6.35% face to face total assessed 9116, value 8812, failure 152 phones total assessed 3771, value 3105 failure 666
NI179 Value for Money: net value for money cash-releasing gains for the current financial year	600,000	600,000	G	245,000	200,000	G	on target.

	Corporate Plan Actions	National Indicators
Number Green and Amber	24	2
Percentage	92.31%	100.00%
Status	**Amber**	**Green**

Priority Service Indicators 2010/2011
April - June 2010

	2009/2010 Actual	2009/2010 Target	2009/2010 Performance	Quarter One Actual	Quarter One Target	Quarter One Performance	Comment
Building Control & Engineering Services							
BCES 006 % of buildings accessible to people with a disability	100.00	100.00	G	100.00	100.00	G	A further cycle of re-auditing all relevant buildings will begin in 2010/11 and take 2 to 3 years to complete.
Corporate Strategy & Performance							
NI 35 Building resilience to violent extremism: (a) Understanding of, & engagement with, Muslim communities;	3.00	4.00	R				Annual indicator, next report due March 2011.
(b) Knowledge and understanding of the drivers and causes of violent extremism;	4.00	4.00	G				Annual indicator, next report due March 2011.
(c) Development of a risk-based preventing violent extremism action plan;	1.00	1.00	G				Annual indicator, next report due March 2011.
(d) Effective oversight, delivery & evaluation of projects & actions	2.00	2.00	G				Annual indicator, next report due March 2011.
Development Control & Major Developments							
NI157a Processing of major applications within 13 weeks	47.83	60.00	R	63.64	60.00	G	
NI157b Processing of minor applications within 8 weeks	85.83	65.00	G	93.69	65.00	G	
NI157c Processing of other applications within 8 weeks	92.19	80.00	G	99.12	80.00	G	
DCMD 001 % Planning appeals allowed against refusal decision	33.33	30.00	R	20.00	30.00	G	
Environmental Services							
NI 185 CO2 reductions from local authority operations (%)	N/A	4.00	N/A	100.00	98.00	G	**CMT Success** 100 % for 1st Quarter
NI 186 Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the LA area	0.30		N/A	100.00	88.00	G	
NI 188 Planning to adapt to climate change (score)	2.00	2.00	G				Annual indicator, next report due March 2011.

Priority Service Indicators 2010/2011
April - June 2010

	2009/2010 Actual	2009/2010 Target	2009/2010 Performance	Quarter One Actual	Quarter One Target	Quarter One Performance	Comment
ES 001 % of abandoned vehicles investigated in 24 hours	98.54	97.00	**G**	100.00	98.00	**G**	Emissions are on a two year time lag. For 2007 per capita emissions fell from 9.1 tonnes to 8.8 tonnes. This represents a 3% reduction.
ES 002% of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours	91.49	86.00	**G**	100.00	88.00	**G**	
Finance							
NI180 The number of changes of circumstances affecting HB/CTB entitlement processed within the year	N/A	10471	N/A	?	23049.00	**?**	**Emerging Issue** Data not available from DWP, they have only published up to April 2010 so far.
NI181 Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events	13.47	15.00	**G**	10.29	11.00	**G**	
BV009 % Council Tax collected EXCH001	98.31	98.50	**A**	30.06	24.68	**G**	
BV010 % NNDR collected EXCH002	97.90	99.00	**A**	31.57	24.70	**G**	
BV078a Average time for new HB/CTB claims EXCH003	32.63	20.00	**R**	15.46	20.00	**G**	
BV078b Average time to process change in circumstances EXCH004	10.97	13.00	**G**	11.46	13.00	**G**	
BV079bi.05 % HB Recovered: Overpayment EXCH005		77.50	Data avail July	?	78.00	**?**	Due to software problems data is only available quarterly. Data for first quarter will be added by the end of July.
BV079bii.05 % HB Recovered: including outstanding EXCH006		36.00	Data avail July	?	9.00	**?**	Due to software problems data is only available quarterly. Figures will be added by the end of July.
BV079biii.05 % HB O'Pay: Written Off EXCH007		4.00	Data avail July	?	1.50	**?**	Due to software problems data is only available quarterly. Figures will be added by the end of July.
FIN 001 % Invoices paid within 30 days	98.23	99.00	**A**	97.77	99.00	**A**	Overall this % is only a tiny amount below its target. The control of this lies outside of Finance but we are trying to help the Council achieve this target by actively chasing departments who are disputing invoices or who are having difficulty authorising them within the timeframe.

Appendix 4

Priority Service Indicators 2010/2011
April - June 2010

	2009/2010 Actual	2009/2010 Target	2009/2010 Performance	Quarter One Actual	Quarter One Target	Quarter One Performance	Comment
Housing Services							
NI 187 Tackling fuel poverty - people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency rating: (a) Percentage dwellings occupied with a low energy efficiency rating;	8.62	9.87	G				Annual indicator, next report due March 2011.
(b) Percentage dwellings occupied with a high energy efficiency rating	40.21	34.01	G				Annual indicator, next report due March 2011.
HS 001 Housing advice: repeat homelessness cases	1.00	5.00	G	1.00	2.00	G	Effective homelessness prevention by CDC and partners.
People & Improvement							
HR 012 Work days lost due to sickness	7.29	8.00	G	1.41	2.68	G	Comfortably within target.
Planning Policy & Estates							
NI159 Supply of ready to develop housing sites	90.65	100.00	A				Annual indicator, next report due March 2011.
NI170 Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years	0.04	0.04	G				Annual indicator, next report due March 2011.
PAHP 001 No of Conservation Areas	58.00	59.00	A	59.00	59.00	G	
PAHP 002 % Conserv Areas with up to date Character Appraisals	41.38	55.93	R	45.76	47.48	A	Progress on conservation area appraisal is proceeding with survey work underway on several CAs including Adderbury and Bicester. A delay in completing the most recent CA appraisal (Mollington) owing to the need to undertake further consultation here has resulted in a small delay to the overall programme.
PAHP 003 % of Conserv Areas with published Management Plans	82.76	82.76	G	94.92	77.97	G	

Priority Service Indicators 2010/2011
April - June 2010

	2009/2010 Actual	2009/2010 Target	2009/2010 Performance	Quarter One Actual	Quarter One Target	Quarter One Performance	Comment
Recreation & Health							
NI 56 Obesity among primary school age children in Year 6: (i) Percentage of children in Year 6 with height and weight recorded who are obese	16.40	N/A	N/A				Annual indicator, next report due March 2011.
RH 001 Number of visits to Banbury Museum in person (per 1000 population)	1563.01	1782.00	**R**	369.23	374.64	**A**	The dip in performance is probably due to the interest in the World Cup. It is expected that visitors in July will increase as a result.
RH 002 Number of pupils visiting Banbury Museum (per 1000 population)	3932.00	3150.00	**G**	772.00	600.00	**G**	
NI 184 Food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law (%)	93.58	85.00	**G**				Annual indicator, next report due March 2011.
Safer Communities , Urban & Rural Services							
NI032 Repeat incidents of domestic violence	n/a	n/a	**n/a**	?	?	**?**	Data not available from Thames Valley Police.
Cross-Service Indicator							
NI182 Satisfaction of business with LA regulation services	91	91	**G**	89.88	92.00	**A**	Narrowly missed target.

Number Green and Amber	22
Percentage	100.00%
Overall Status	**Green**

Strategic Service Projects 2010/2011
April 2010 to June 2010

	Year End 2009/2010	Quarter One	Comment
Banbury Canalside	G	A	Progress on finalising the Supplementary Planning Document has been halted whilst the Council commissions further work on flooding. This is underway, however, it relies on input from the Environment Agency. A revised date to bring the SPD back to Executive has been set, however, this may be dependent upon the outcome of this work.
Banbury Cultural Quarter	G	A	Good tripartite input to develop the concept. Concern regarding overall funding for the Library/Mill in light of OCC funding review and Government funding cuts.
Bicester Town Centre Redevelopment	G	A	Not all the necessary land has been acquired by agreement, so work has started on preparing a Compulsary Purchase Order. Start on infrastructure works delayed due to problems completing the s278 agreement. Development agreement completed in March.
Flood Alleviation	A	G	The Council has committed to delivering a package of demonstration schemes and all are progressing. Subject to the Inspector's decision, and legal processes completing, whereby confirmation of the order is first advertised and a general vesting certificate made, the earliest start on site is late September 2010 but this is not ideal for bulk earthworks and the Environment Agency are instead preparing to start on site early in 2011 and complete the works by late 2011. A contractor has been appointed to undertake the works.
RAF Upper Heyford	G	A	Planning application for part of the site under consideration.
SW Bicester Development	G	G	**CMT Success** Official start on site on 7 July under revised planning agreement.
Eco Bicester	G	G	Demonstration projects progressing including on site exemplar of approximately 350 houses, local retail, care home, employment uses. Project Steering Group meeting fortnightly to discuss emerging proposals, workstreams and masterplan. Awaiting decision on tranche 2 funding linked to milestones.

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Corporate Improvement Plan & Value For Money Programme 2010/2011
April - June 2010

	Quarter One	Comment
Corporate Improvement Plan		
Reducing Fear of Crime and Anti social Behaviour improvement plan project	G	Project Team established. Project brief signed off by CMT. Team members progressing with investigations. Further research commissioned.
Deprivation (including health inequalities) plan project	G	Good progress on multi agency basis. Clear geographic and specific resident need focus. Several new joint activities already underway. Effective partner coordination measures in place. Clarity on what, where and why. Community engagement plans being prepared.
Changing needs of an ageing population plan project	G	**CMT Success** The project is due to begin in quarter 3 however in advance of the project the housing strategy for older people element has already been agreed. The housing strategy for older people was launched on July 5 by Planning and Housing Portfolio Holder Cllr Michael Gibbard, Older Persons Champion Cllr Paul O'Sullivan, and Oxfordshire Age UK Chief Executive Paul Cann. The strategy will change the future of older people's services by giving better information and advice, like that delivered by the "Under One Roof" project of Oxfordshire Age UK. It provides services to allow people to remain living in their own home. It addresses better design for older people in new housing and increases customer involvement.
Cohesive Comminities plan project	A	**CMT Emerging Issue** Cohesion funding cuts and likely reduction in government priorty mean this area will need to be reconsidered. However, there are close links to the community engagement and development agendas that must be considered.
Use of Natural Resources plan project	G	Project meeting monthly to monitor progress on all workstreams. All on track.
Value for Money Review Programme	A	1st review completed to schedule and others largely progressing well. 3 of 4 Q2 project briefs completed to schedule but with delays in CMT agreement to 2 of 4.
Strategic Management of Assets plan project	G	Most of the necessary work to review asset management procedures had been completed before the decision to abandon the planned audit commission inspection under use of resources was made. The Asset Management Plan has been updated, and will be reported to the Executive in August.
Improve Data Quality plan project	G	2 Data Quality healthchecks undertaken - a general rapid review and environmental data. Third health check commissioned. Result for all 3 to CMT in Aug/Sept.
Customer Intelligence to Drive Improvement plan project	G	Project brief being prepared for CMT on 8 July.
Fexibility in response to recession & LA Grant decisions project	G	Project underway and on track.
Promote Equality and Diversity plan project	G	**CMT Emerging Issue** Project on track. But the financial situtaion may mean that we do not commission an inspection as there is a cost to the council.
Improving Services for Young People plan project	G	Initial project scoping report rescheduled to go to CMT 8/7/10.

Corporate Improvement Plan & Value For Money Programme 2010/2011
April - June 2010

	Quarter One	Comment
Value for Money Review Programme		
Housing vfm review	**G**	Review completed to deadline and reported to CMT 16 June. Majority of previous review recommedations implemented with £660k savings made. Further savings of £100k identified for 2011/12.
Corporate and Democratic Core vfm review	**A**	Still insufficient responses to financial benchmarking from other authorities. Treasury management review initially delayed but now under progress. Initial review work on Community Planning commenced.
Culture and Heritage vfm review		Not due to start until September.
Customer services vfm review	**G**	Project brief completed and reported to CMT on 23 June.
Economic Development and Tourism vfm review		Not due to start until December.
Planning Policy vfm review		Not due to start until September.
Support Servies Recharges vfm review	**R**	Review rescheduled for Q3 and focused on directorate support service costs.
Urban and Rural vfm review	**G**	Project Brief completed and agreed by CMT on 9 July.
Development Control & Major Developments Review	**G**	Report being finalised for presentation to CMT in July.
Recreation & Sport VFM Review	**G**	Project brief completed and agreed by CMT 23 June.

Number Green and Amber	18
Percentage	94.74%
Status	**Amber**

Appendix 7

Significant Partnerships 2010/2011
April - June 2010

	Year end 2010	Quarter One	Comment
Oxfordshire-wide Partnerships			
Oxfordshire Partnership Board	G	G	
Public Services Board	G	G	
Spatial Planning & Infrastructure Partnership	G	G	Work on the Local Investment Agreement with the Home and Communities Agency has been completed. Leadership of the partnership has transferred from Cherwell District Council to Oxfordshire County Council.
Children's Trust	G	G	
Health and Well Being Partnership Board	G	G	Ongoing county wide work regarding ageing successfully, obesity and mental wellbeing. Continued focus on deprivation and health inequalities. Further progress required converting strategic intent into practical partnership actions regarding supporting older people.
Environment and Waste Partnership	G	G	Loss of LAA money has meant no New Initiative funding is likely for the future. This doesn't have any immediate impact on delivering our priorities. Financial arrangements being reviewed.
Oxfordshire Safer Community Partnership	G	G	
Stronger Communities Alliance	G	G	**CMT Success** The Strategic Plan and the Business Plan of the Oxfordshire SCA is currently being reviewed.
Oxfordshire Economic Partnership	G	A	The future of OEP is under review following government announcements on funding constraints and new Local Enterprise Partnerships.

Significant Partnerships 2010/2011
April - June 2010

	Year end 2010	Quarter One	Comment
Cherwell-specific Partnerships			
Cherwell Local Strategic Partnership	G	G	The new partnership structure continues to work well. The Board has been actively engaged with the Local Transport Plan and the Brighter Futures in Banbury Project and had an extended meeting to steer the new Cherwell Economic Development Strategy. The Management Group has finalised the delivery plans, published the Partnership's first newsletter, and is working on the Partnership's Annual report which will include constributions from all partners. Many of the various forums that make up the Reference Group have had presentations on the new Community Strategy and given opportunities to feed in issues to the Board.
Brighter Futures in Banbury Steering Group	G	G	Good progress on multi agency basis vie Brighter Futures in Banbury Steering Group. Clear geographic and specific resident need focus. Several new joint activities already underway. Effective partner coordination measures in place. Clarity on what, where and why. Community engagement plans being prepared.
Cherwell Safer Community Partnership	G	G	
Cherwell M40 Investment Partnership	G	G	Special CHIP Working Group meeting on 1 April consulted with the development industry and business groups over the Draft Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework. A joint document was then submitted to ensure that the views of the property and land markets in providing jobs are known. A CHIP quarterly meeting was held on 20 May, attracting a broad range of partners including agents, chambers, Job Centre Plus and corporate finance representatives. Day-to-day contact has been maintained in dealing with an increasing number of investment enquiries, including key sites at SAPA and Origin 11 in Banbury, with others at Kidlington, Bicester and rural.
Banbury Town Centre Partnership	G	G	
Bicester Vision	G	G	The partnership is growing in size with new private sector partners agreeing to funding. There are a number of interesting on-going projects and representatives are very active in local schemes such as SW, NW and Town Centre developments.
Kidlington Village Centre Management Board	G	G	
Homelessness Strategy Partnership	G	G	Delivery of the homelessness strategy is on track, and it is continuing to help maintain strong homelessness preventative services.
Cherwell RSL Partnership & Sanctuary Housing Group	G	G	The RSL development group of key RSL partners and representatives of the Homes and Communities Agency met on June 24th. The agenda included discussion of a recent letter received from the secretary of state, an update on the latest funding context, a partnership review of risks, and an update on the large affordable housing development at Cassington Road Yarnton.
NW Bicester Strategic Delivery Board	G	G	Quarterly meeting of the Board set up and met on 26 April 2010. Terms of reference agreed. Next meeting to take place on 21 July 2010.

Risk Management 2010/2011
April - June 2010

Risk Heading	Owner	Description	As at 31/03/2010				Controls	Q1 : June 2010				Direction of Travel	Risk Mitigation this Quarter /Comments
			Gross Risk Rating	Gross RAG	Net Risk Rating	Net RAG		Gross Risk Rating	Gross RAG	Net Risk Rating	Net RAG		
Strategic Risks													
STRAT01 Deprivation & Equalities	Ian Davies	The risk in not breaking the cycle of deprivation and addressing inequalities across the District is that the life opportunities of residents in the greatest need will not be improved and as a result the reputation of the Council will suffer. The risk is particularly acute in areas such as the Neithrop, Ruscote and Grimsbury wards in Banbury where there is a high level of deprivation as measured by the Government's indices of multiple deprivation.	High Medium 12	A !	Medium 9	A	Proposals include a) Long term approach for support to local people and communities as many issued can only be addressed on this basis b) Multi agency action with clear and common objectives c) Additional funding from Government grants to supplement current resources	High Medium 12	A !	Medium 9	A	→	Moderate risk rating due to extent of partnership working already commenced and clear focus on spefic wards and resident needs.
STRAT02 Eco Town	John Hoad	The risks are that national and local policy support and resources will be inadequate to support the development of the NW Bicester Eco-Town. As a result the Council may fail to fully exploit the Eco-Town as an opportunity to develop a centre of excellence in terms of sustainable living.	High 16	R	Medium 8	A	a) Planning policy development through Local Development Framework. b) Eco Bicester Town Project plan and related partnership working with private and public sector partners c) Dedicated Project Team	High 16	R	Medium 8	A	→	All arrangements for partnership work are running well. Current issue is to secure a viable examplar phase.
STRAT03 Local Development Framework	Philip Clarke	The risks are that the Local Development Framework is not prepared adequately, in time, or is found unsound at public examination. Such outcomes would result in further risks arising from speculative planning applications, undesirable major developments and / or expense for the Council in contesting planning appeals. An unsound plan would mean that the Council would have to repeat 2 to 3 years work at high cost.	High 20	R	High Medium 15	A !	This risk will be managed through close dialogue with GOSE and other local authorities. Interim advice from the SoS is anticipated during July and Councillors will be advised when more is known.	High 20	R	High Medium 15	A !	→	**CMT Emerging Issue** No change to risk since previous month, however need to be aware of the possible implications of the letter from Eric Pickles MP regarding the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies. This may have an impact upon the timetable for the LDF.
STRAT04 Economic & Social Changes	John Hoad	The risk is that the Council does not identify and respond to general economic and social changes and as a result would not fulfil its role as a community leader and a provider of top quality services driven by a clear understanding of community and individual needs.	High 16	R	High Medium 12	A !	Control measures remain the same a) Service and financial planning process b) Sustainable Community Strategy c) Economic Development Strategy and related partnership activities	High 16	R	High Medium 12	A !	→	There are signs of economic recovery in the district. However, public sector financial position is likely to create new risks in the future.
STRAT05 Horton Hospital	Ian Davies	The risks to maintaining the Horton Hospital as a facility that meets community aspirations for local health provision are the deliverability and affordability of a revised consultant delivered service model for paediatrics and obstetrics. Failure of either will jeopardise current service provision and could result in a service reduction from the Horton.	High 16	R	Medium 9	A	a) Support to the PCT in challenging ORHT proposals b) Providing evidence of deliverability of consultant delivered services elsewhere c) Gaining consensus locally that this is important	High 16	R	Medium 9	A	→	Consultant delivered model for obstretric and paediatric services agreed by the PCT and ORHT as being deliverable and additional funding agreed. Implementation plan being developed for immediate action.
STRAT06 The Natural Environment	Ed Potter	The risk is that the Council does not take the necessary actions to meet its obligation, as set by National Government, to ensure its own operations and that of its District's residents and businesses reduce their carbon footprints.	High Medium 15	A !	Medium 9	A	a) Environmental Strategy for a changing climate b) Responsibility for delivery plans for the Environmental Strategy clear c) Relevant delivery groups	High Medium 15	A !	Medium 9	A	→	
STRAT07 Managing Change	Anne-Marie Scott	The risk is that the Council does not adequately manage the impact of major change programmes on organisational performance and individual morale.	High 16	R	High Medium 12	A !	Change management policies in place External legal and HR support planned Project management approach applied, incorporating risk identification and mitigation	High 16	R	High Medium 12	A !	→	**CMT Emerging Issue** Likelihood of risk has increased due to South Northants partnership working recommendation
STRAT08 Financial Resources	Karen Curtin	The risk is that in an uncertain economic and financial climate the Council will not have the resources to deliver its corporate priorities. Poor economic conditions also tend to produce increased demand on services. As the Council's income from capital reduces our dependency on interest to support revenue expenditure must also reduce and capital assets will need to be rebuilt to fund future infrastructure investments. Failure to do either will result in budgetary shortfall, service reductions, above inflation increases to council tax and lack of capital to fund future community schemes.	High 16	R	High Medium 12	A !	Whilst we don't under estimate the challenges presented as a result of the economic downturn, the council's financial position remains strong ensuring we are able to continue to meet our priorities in the future. Our rolling programme of VFM reviews has generated cost reductions of £3.7m over the last 3 years, proving our ability to deliver identified savings in full over extended periods of time. Support costs and frontline services alike have been subject to VFM reviews. We have reduced support costs by £1m over the last 3 years, a reduction of 18% in real terms. a) Budget 2010/11 b) Medium financial strategy and sensitivity analysis c) Workforce planning d) Dashboard – budget monitoring	High 16	R	High Medium 12	A !	→	Monthly Budget Monitoring produces a variance analysis which is reacted on by management. The council regularly updates its MTFS and takes appropriate action to reduce costs.

Risk Management 2010/2011 April - June 2010														
Risk Heading	Owner	Description	As at 31/03/2010				Controls	Q1 : June 2010				Direction of Travel	Risk Mitigation this Quarter /Comments
			Gross Risk Rating	Gross RAG	Net Risk Rating	Net RAG		Gross Risk Rating	Gross RAG	Net Risk Rating	Net RAG		
Corporate Risks													
CORP01 Health & Safety	David Marriott	The risk is that a failure to comply with health and safety and welfare legislation and policies could lead to injuries and death, high sickness absence and claims and litigation against the Council.	High 20	R	High Medium 10	A !	a) Wide range of Health & Safety policies and procedures in place as set out on the Council's intranet b) Training is given to all relevant staff undertaking manual work c) Relevant safe working practice notes are issued as part of standard induction procedures	High 20	R	High Medium 10	A !		a) Wide range of Health & Safety policies and procedures in place as set out on the Council's intranet b) Training is given to all relevant staff undertaking manual work c) Relevant safe working practice notes are issued as part of standard induction procedures
CORP02 Capital Investments	Karen Curtin	The risk is to the Council's ability to fund its activities because of a reduction in investment income or income from other capital assets such as buildings.	High 16	R	High Medium 12	A !	a) Utilisation of treasury management advisors to assist with investing in strong rated institutions. b) We adhere to an annual investment strategy that complies with CIPFA code c) All rental income from buildings is monitored monthly and managed by the Head of Estates to minimise the number of "empty" properties. In this economic climate we will review our occupancy rates. d) Budget 2010/11 e) Medium term financial strategy f) Asset Management Strategy g) Dashboard – budget monitoring h) Annual Treasury Management Strategy i) Counterparty Lists	High 16	R	High Medium 12	A !		Under daily review - cashflow and counterparties
CORP03 ICT Systems	Pat Simpson	1) ICT unable to provide Disaster Recovery Services as required by the Business Continuity Plan. 2) Loss of ICT systems that would have a significant negative impact on service delivery and cause exceptional costs to the Council.	High 20	R	Medium 8	A	1a) Disaster Recovery Plan to be tested by system administrators on a 6 monthly schedule. 2a) Architectural approach of systems and implementation of key projects is quality assured by external auditors; 2b) Annual compliance with ISO 27001 through annual testing of operation procedures by external auditors	High 20	R	Medium 8	A		The level of risk will fall after the next DR test.
CORP04 Equalities Legislation	Claire Taylor	The risk is the Council may be open to litigation and loss of reputation if it is not compliant with equalities legislation.	High Medium 15	A !	Medium 9	A	a) Equalities scheme b) Mandatory Equalities Training c) Equalities performance monitored through d) PMF e) IDEA Peer assessment planned for 2010 f) Equalities steering group and communications plan	High Medium 15	A !	Medium 9	A		Risk reviewed this quarter - no change. Equalities action plan on track.
CORP05 Job Evaluation	Anne-Marie Scott	The risk is the impact of a significant number of appeals arising from the Job Evaluation scheme on the resources of the Council and Human Resources in particular. Also there is a risk that Job Evaluation may encourage staff to pursue equal pay claims due to greater awareness.	High Medium 12	A !	Medium 6	A	1) Consultation with employee representatives 2) Equal pay audit 3) Job Evaluation project 4) Removal of Company Car Scheme	High Medium 12	A !	Medium 6	A		Small risk remains that staff may persue equal pay claims
CORP06 Civil Emergency	Paul Marston-Weston	Civil Emergency	High Medium 15	A !	Medium 5	A	As a Category 1 Responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the Council has a duty to prepare and maintain an Emergency Plan which is updated on a regular basis. Furthermore, the plan has an annual testing and exercising schedule. Table top exercises are carried out annually to test the robustness of the plan and for plan familiarisation. Training is also provided as necessary to relevant staff to enable them to undertake effectively their emergency planning duties/role.	High Medium 15	A !	Medium 5	A		Gross risk remains high but mitigated by effective planning and training
CORP07 Data Quality	Claire Taylor	The risk is that unreliable data sources are used to support decision and policy making putting the Council at risk of making poor decisions. Decisions are made on the basis of information about the population and the nature of the district. If data is out of date, incomplete or inaccurate, those decisions may turn out to be inappropriate.	High Medium 12	A !	Medium 9	A	a) Single trusted data source available for all decision makers to access b) Use external trusted and reliable data source as the basis for our own information c) Internal audit programme for performance indicators d) Initiate a series of data quality health checks	High Medium 12	A !	Medium 9	A		risk reviewed 08/07/10 DQ action plan on track.

Risk Management 2010/2011 April - June 2010														
Risk Heading	Owner	Description	As at 31/03/2010				Controls	Q1 : June 2010				Direction of Travel	Risk Mitigation this Quarter /Comments
			Gross Risk Rating	Gross RAG	Net Risk Rating	Net RAG		Gross Risk Rating	Gross RAG	Net Risk Rating	Net RAG		
Parntership Risks													
PART01 Local Area Agreement	Claire Taylor	The risk is the failure to deliver the Council's elements of the Local Area Agreement having a negative impact on service delivery to the public, the Council's reputation with other local authorities and this being reflected in national inspection regimes.	High Medium 12	A !	Medium 9	A	a) PMF b) High level of District engagement in LAA2 negotiation c) CDC coordination of all Oxon districts LAA performance management arrangements. d) LSP management group to monitor performance	High Medium 12	A !	Medium 9	A		No change however impact of risk may decline as there will be no funding resulting from LAA2 and the policy priority of the LAA is likley to decline.
PART02 Local Strategic Partnership	Claire Taylor	The risk is the failure of the Local Strategic Partnership to deliver its objectives having a negative impact on service delivery to the public, the Council's reputation with other local agencies and this being reflected in national inspection regimes.	Medium 9	A	Medium 6	A	a) Partnership governance review implemented b) Management group to support implementation of LSP decisions c) Annual self assessmnet of performance	Medium 9	A	Medium 6	A		No change. LSP new working arrangments are currently effective. Good progress with delivery plans.
PART03 Community Safety Partnership	Chris Rothwell	Failure of the Community Safety Partnership to deliver a continuous reduction in crime and the fear of crime.	High Medium 12	A !	Medium 9	A	The four Action Groups produce annual action plans to deliver the priorities of the partnership. This is monitored bi-monthly by the partnership's performance management team (CDC head of service and TVP local commander) which reports into the quarterly strategic partnership meetings.	High Medium 12	A !	Medium 9	A		
PART04 Spatial Planning & Infrastructure Partnership	John Hoad	The risk is the failure of the Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership to establish itself as an effective body locally and in relations with National Government. The consequences are reduced funding for the local area and failure to fully exploit development and infrastructure provision opportunities.	High Medium 12	A !	Medium 8	A	Control Measures remain the same. a) Partnership Work Programme / Forward Plan b) Resource provision for Partnership work (use of LAA Reward Grant)	High Medium 12	A !	Medium 8	A		Partnership well established. However, government funding changes around LAA are raising questions about future resources (see control b).

Indicated by:-		**How the risk should be managed**
High		**Requires Active Managament** High impact / High Probability: this risk requires active management to manage down and maintain the exposure at an acceptable level. Escalate upwards.
High Medium		**Contingency Plans Required** A robust contingency plan is required, together with early warning mechanisms to detect any deviation from the profile. Escalate upwards.
Medium		**Monitoring Required** This risk may require some additional risk mitigation to reduce the likelihood (if it can be done cost effectively), but good houskeeping to ensure that the impact remains low should be adequate. Monitor to identify any change in the risk.
Low		**Review Periodically** This risk is unlikely to require further mitigating actions, but the status should be reviewed quarterly to ensure that conditions have not changed.
		Risk rating stayed the same Last month compared to this month
		Risk rating improved Performance increased (risk rating decreased) Last month compared to this month
		Risk rating worsened Performance declined (risk rating increased) Last month compared to this month

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Executive

2010/11 Projected Revenue & Capital Outturn at 30 June 2010 and 2009/10 Treasury Management Annual Report

6 September 2010

Report of Head of Finance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report summarises the Council's Revenue and Capital performance for the first 3 months of the financial year 2010/11 and projections for the full 2010/11 period. These are measured by the budget monitoring function and reported via the Performance Management Framework (PMF) informing the 2010/11 budget process currently underway.

To receive information on treasury management performance and compliance with treasury management policy during 2009/10 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice. This report also reviews the treasury performance in Q1 2010/11.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

(1) To note the projected revenue & capital position at June 2010.

(2) To approve the changes in the 2010/11 capital programme as follows:

(3) Slip £4.8m of project funding into the 2011/12 capital programme (detailed in Appendix 1) and consider this as part of the 2011/12 budget process

- To note the performance against the 2009/10 investment strategy and the financial returns from each of the 3 funds (Appendix 2) and recommend that this report is considered by Full Council in line with CIPFA best practice.

(4) To note the Q1 performance against 2010/11 investment strategy

(5) To note the change in cumulative counterparty limits from £8m to £15m.

Executive Summary

Introduction

1.1 In line with good practice budget monitoring is undertaken on a monthly basis within the Council. The revenue and capital position is reported monthly to the Corporate Management Team and formally to the Executive on a quarterly basis. This reports includes the position at Q1.

1.2 The revenue and capital expenditure in Q1 has been subject to a detailed review by Officers and reported monthly to management as part of the corporate dashboard. An additional benchmark has been included this year to measure the accuracy of projections by budget holders on a month by month basis.

1.3 The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management which this Council has adopted requires an Annual Report to be presented to the Executive at the end of each financial year. This report is included in Appendix 2.

Conclusion

1.4 Due to the downturn in the economy, impact of the credit crunch on Council services and the volatility of the financial markets, the Council is keeping a watching brief on any challenges that they may need to face which may result in a redirection of budgets.

1.5 The variances on the revenue and capital projections are within the Council's stated tolerances of +2% / -5%.

1.6 The Council has a General Fund Revenue reserve to meet any budgetary surplus or deficit.

1.7 The Council's investment performance was 28 % lower than anticipated in the 2009/10 budget and the approved policy was adhered to throughout the financial year.

Background Information

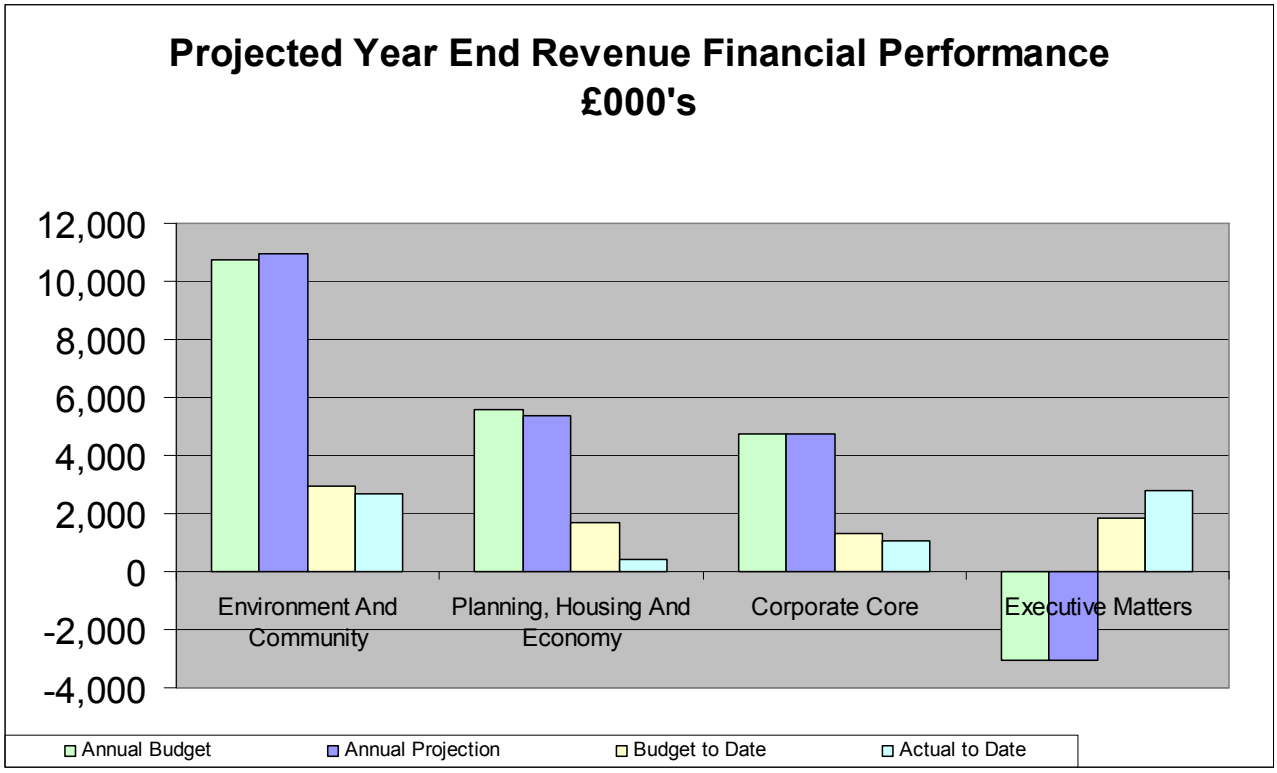
Revenue and Capital Position at 30 June 2010

2.1 The Dashboard Revenue Report for June 2010 shows an underspend against budget of (£915K). This differs from the projected year end position detailed below through profiling of expenditure and income.

2.2 Total capital spend to June 2010, including commitments, amounts to £700K. This represents 5% of the total annual budget and 17% of the periodic budget. This is prior to adjustment for profiling and projects that are to be deferred. (Appendix 1)

Revenue Projected Outturn 2010/11

JUNE 2010 PROJECTIONS	Full-Year Budget 2010/11 £000's	Projected Out-turn 2010/11 £000's	Projection Variance 2010/11 £000's
DIRECTORATES			
Corporate Core	4,738	4,718	**(20)**
Environment & Community	10,758	10,961	**203**
Planning Housing & Economy	5,603	5,347	**(256)**
Net Expenditure Services	**21,099**	**21,026**	**(73)**
Reduction in Investment Income		**80**	**80**
	21,099	**21,106**	**7**
Net Revenue Projected Overspend 2010/11 @ June 2010			**7**



2.1 We are currently projecting to be on track to budget at the year end. This assumes that the reduction in investment income will be met from the earmarked interest rate reserve and the underspends in Q1 within the Corporate Core and Lanning Housing & Economy Directorates remain to offset income reductions in EAC.

2.2 The overspend in Environment and Community primarily relates to car park income shortfalls. Income is currently £87k underachieved, which projected to the year end, is £348k. This is offset by Excess Charge Notice income overachieved by £22k, which projected to the year end is (£88k), leaving a net £260k. Car parking income is down nationally; however, proposed changes to fees and charges have been put forward and will partly mitigate these losses if implemented. Other underspends within the directorate reduce the projected overspend to £203K as detailed above.

2.3 The underspend in Corporate Core of £20K relates to projected underspends of £11k in Finance and £9K in Legal & Democratic Services.

2.4 The underspend in Planning, Housing and Economy of £256K relates to planning fee income for the first three months being significantly above estimate however this will be carefully monitored over the coming months to ascertain any impact of the economic downturn. Additionally there is additional rental income and recovery of consultancy costs within Regeneration & Estates.

2.5 Investment Income: After the first 3 months we are currently showing an under recovery of Investment income of £20K. This is primarily due to the performance of Investec which is currently under review. Therefore at this stage we are projecting an under recovery of £80K for the year.

Capital Projection 2010/11

2.6 Total capital spend to June 2010, including commitments, amounts to £700K. This represents 5% of the total annual budget and 17% of the periodic budget.

JUNE 2010 PROJECTIONS	**Full-Year Budget 2010/11** £000's	**Projected Out-turn 2010/11** £000's	**Projection Variance 2010/11** £000's
DIRECTORATES			
Corporate Core	101	36	**(65)**
Environment & Community	2,619	1,792	**(827)**
Planning Housing & Economy	12,342	7,998	**(4,344)**
	15,062	**9,826**	**(5,236)**
Analysed:- (See appendix 1)			
Approved Deferral from CMT / Exec Away Day			767
Additional Deferrals (June Dashboard)			4,094
Net Deletions			375
		As above	**5,236**

2.7 The projected spend for capital schemes as at June 2010 is £9.8M.

2.8 A detailed review of the Capital programme was conducted and is detailed in Appendix 1. Approval is sought from the Executive for Slippage (Deferrals) identified in Appendix 1.

2.9 Of the £4,09m identified as additional deferrals, due to the delay in the commencement of the Bicester Town Centre Development – only £1m (1st Tranche) of the approved £5M programme will be required in 2010/11.

Annual Treasury Performance 2009/10

2.10 The actual return on investments for 2009/10 was £2.03m compared with a budget of £2.82m, a negative variance of £0.79m. The budget was based on an average investment balance of £84m and an interest rate of 3.35 %. The actual average balance was £75m which attracted an average return of 2.70%.

2.11 Our Treasury Management Annual Report can be seen in Appendix 2.

Treasury Performance Q1 2010/11

2.12 The first quarter of 2010/11 saw:

- The new coalition government enact a fiscal squeeze set to be the most severe since the end of the 1930's, through its Emergency Budget on the 22nd June;
- Activity indicators suggest that the recovery picked up a little pace in the first quarter;
- High street spending recovered after a weak start to the year;
- The labour market showed some tentative signs of improvement;
- The UK's trade position deteriorated, despite the weak pound;
- CPI inflation remained above target, however the measure of underlying inflation fell;
- The Monetary Policy Committee maintained QE and kept Bank Rate on hold at 0.5%;
- The equity rally went into reverse over concerns about the shape of the global recovery;
- The recovery in the US remains fairly strong, but remains weak in the euro-zone.

The key development of the first quarter was the Emergency Budget delivered on the 22nd June which unveiled plans by the new Chancellor to severely tighten fiscal policy. According to the new (and independent) Office for Budget Responsibility, cyclically adjusted net borrowing – the portion of borrowing that will not disappear with economic growth – will now fall from 8.7% of GDP in the fiscal year just gone to 0.8% in 2014-15.

The Budget directed the bulk of the fiscal tightening at households and the public sector instead of private companies. Key measures within the Budget included a rise in the standard rate of VAT from 17.5% to 20%, to take effect in January 2011. Plans for social security payments were also scaled back. However, the burden on lower income households was partly offset by an increase in the income tax personal allowance by £1,000 to £7,475 from April 2011 from which high earners will not benefit.

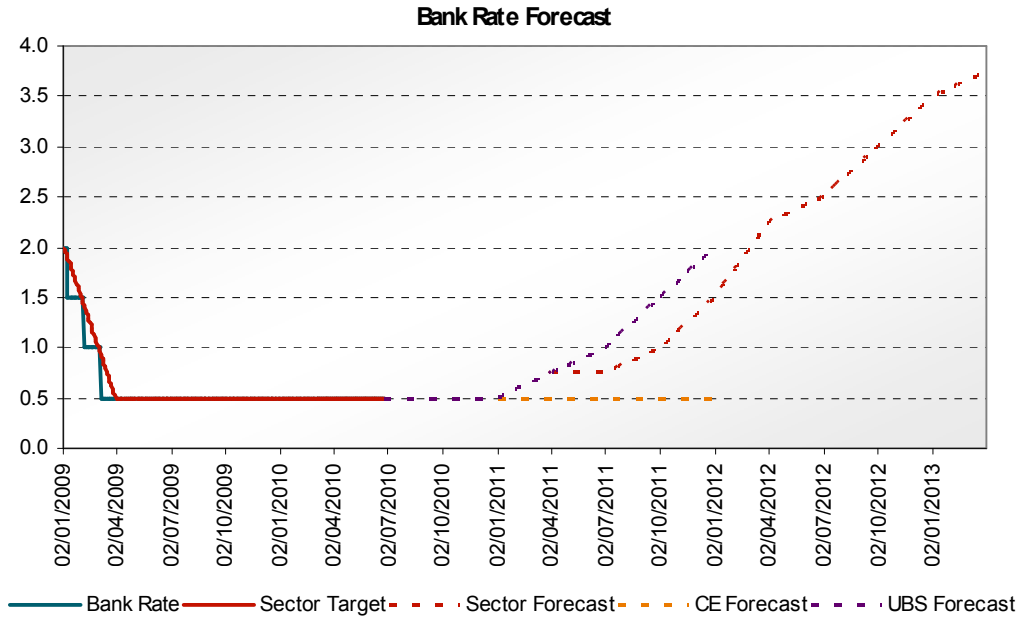
Meanwhile, activity surveys suggested that the recovery gathered pace in the first quarter after the economy's 0.3% expansion. Encouragingly, the labour market has shown some tentative signs of improvement. The number of people claiming unemployment benefit fell by 32,000 in April and 31,000 in May, leaving the total at 1.48m. Employment also rose by 5,000 in the three months to April. However, the workforce increased at a faster rate, so that the total number of unemployed according to the wider ILO measure still rose by 23,000 in the three months to April.

The UK's trade position continued to deteriorate, despite the support provided by the lower pound. The trade in goods and services deficit widened from £3.2bn to £3.3bn in April. Exported goods volumes fell again, this time by a monthly 0.5%. However, the export orders balances of the activity surveys continued to suggest that volumes would pick up soon.

Inflationary pressures have finally begun to ease. CPI inflation rose from 3.4% to a recent peak of 3.7% in April before falling back to 3.4% in May. Temporary factors, such as the rise in the rate of VAT to 17.5% in January and the rise in oil prices last year, continued to support above-target inflation.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) continued to keep Bank Rate on hold at 0.5% and to maintain its stock of asset purchases. The Bank of England's quarterly Inflation Report in May also projected inflation to be below the 2% target at the two year horizon, suggesting that rates will remain on hold for a considerable period. Some MPC members expressed concern that the recent bout of high inflation could lead to a permanent shift in inflation expectations if it persisted much longer.

Sector have made the following predictions as to the Bank Rate Forecast going forward.



2.13 Previously our counterparty list has been contracting and we have taken the decision not to invest with any of the Santander banks. Therefore finding homes for cash has been difficult. Our current investment strategy has a cash

limit of £8m with any bank or cumulative total if the bank is part of a group. This represents 10% of our current average portfolio.

Sector, our treasury advisors, have proposed that we have a percentage limit of 20% (this equates to £15m based on our £75m average portfolio) with any one bank. This would mean that we could put more deposits with the UK banks.

2.14 The actual return on investments for the quarter to June 2010 was £317k compared with a budget of £337k a variance of £20k. The primary reason for the variance is the poor performance of Investec's £20m portfolio which was £73k below budget.

2010/11 Budget by Fund Manager

	Amount Managed	Avg rate %	Interest Receivable	Monthly equivalent
TUK	25,000,000	3.31%	826,513	68,876
Investec	20,344,370	1.97%	400,000	33,333
In House	15,000,000	0.81%	122,240	10,187
	60,344,370	**2.24%**	**1,348,753**	**112,396**

2.15 The actual return on investments by Fund manager can be seen below:

	Amount at 30 June 2010	Q1 Interest Budget	Q1 Actual Interest	Variance	Rate of return
TUK	25,000,000	206,628	230,393	23,764	4.11%
Investec	20,344,343	100,000	26,163	(73,837)	0.40%
In House	26,333,425	30,560	61,230	30,670	0.98%
Total	77,677,768	337,188	317,786	(19,403)	1.80%

The investment portfolio in-house and TUK as at 30th June 2010 is as follows:

Borrower	Principal (£)	Interest Rate	Start Date	Maturity Date
Natwest	8,000,000	0.85%		Call
Rbs Mmf	7,400,000	0.45%		MMF
Clydesdale	7,000,000	0.80%		Call
Santander Uk	4,500,000	1.00%	30/04/2010	02/09/2010
Kent Reliance Bs	1,000,000	1.15%	08/04/2010	17/09/2010
Nottingham Bs	1,000,000	1.20%	08/04/2010	17/09/2010
Bank Of Scotland	2,500,000	1.30%	17/05/2010	17/11/2010
Skipton Bs	1,000,000	1.23%	01/06/2010	07/02/2011
West Brom wich Bs	1,000,000	1.15%	01/06/2010	07/02/2011
Newcastle Bs	1,000,000	1.65%	02/03/2010	01/03/2011
Principality Bs	1,000,000	1.45%	18/05/2010	15/03/2011
Yorkshire Bs	1,000,000	1.20%	29/06/2010	15/03/2011
Norwich & Peterborough Bs	2,500,000	6.20%	30/03/2009	30/03/2011
Barclays	5,000,000	6.35%	28/10/2008	28/10/2011
Lloyds Tsb	4,000,000	1.71%	02/03/2009	02/03/2012
Barclays	3,000,000	2.50%	01/05/2009	01/05/2012
Hsbc	5,000,000	5.65%	24/07/2008	24/07/2013
Borrower - Icelandic Exposure	**Principal (£)**	**Interest Rate**	**Start Date**	**Maturity Date**
Glitnir Bank	2,000,000	5.72%	26/10/2006	26/03/2011
Glitnir Bank	2,000,000	5.74%	06/02/2007	08/02/2011
Glitnir Bank	2,500,000	6.30%	31/08/2007	30/03/2011
Total Investments	**£62,400,000**	**2.58%**		
Total Investments - excluding Icelandic exposure	**£55,900,000**	**2.19%**		
Total Investments - Icelandic Exposure Only	**£6,500,000**	**5.95%**		

2.16 The interest rate decline has been monitored and as a result an interest rate risk reserve of £600k was created in 2008/09. As part of the review of reserves in conjunction with the preparation of the 2009/10 statutory accounts, the reserve balance has been reduced to £200k. The £400k has been used to fund the loss of interest due to 0.5% Bank of England base rate which had been fixed for 14 months. The latest projections show that this is adequate to meet the budgeted shortfall.

2.17 The Council's Treasury Advisers, Sector, provides the following forecast for the 2nd quarter of 2010 onwards.

Sector's Interest Rate View	NOW	Sep-10	Dec-10	Mar-11	Jun-11	Sep-11	Dec-11	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	Dec-12	Mar-13
Sector's Bank Rate View	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.75%	0.75%	1.00%	1.50%	2.00%	2.25%	2.75%	3.00%	3.50%
5yr PW LB Rate	2.29%	2.50%	2.60%	2.80%	2.95%	3.20%	3.45%	3.80%	4.15%	4.40%	4.50%	4.65%
10yr PW LB View	3.58%	3.80%	3.85%	4.00%	4.20%	4.40%	4.50%	4.70%	4.75%	4.90%	4.90%	5.05%
25yr PW LB View	4.31%	4.45%	4.50%	4.55%	4.70%	4.80%	4.90%	5.05%	5.15%	5.20%	5.25%	5.25%
50yr PW LB Rate	4.29%	4.45%	4.55%	4.60%	4.75%	4.85%	4.95%	5.05%	5.25%	5.25%	5.30%	5.30%

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

3.1 This report illustrates the Council's performance against the 2010/11 Revenue and Capital Budget and includes the Annual Treasury Report 2009/10.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One To review current performance levels and consider any actions arising.

Option Two	To approve or reject the recommendations above or request that Officers provide additional information.

Consultations

The revenue and capital position has been subject to regular review by the Corporate Management Team.

The investment strategy has been subject to regular review with Members, Corporate Management Team and PWC at the end of the 2009/10 financial year.

Implications

Financial:	Financial Effects – The financial effects are as outlined in the report. Efficiency Savings – There are no efficiency savings arising from this report however the budget 2010/11 was based on a number of efficiencies. In addition to our own internal efficiency targets we also have to meet the Governments 4% efficiency target – National Indicator 179. Not all of our efficiencies can be counted towards this target and the finance team are therefore undertaking an exercise to allow progress against the Government target to be monitored. Comments checked by Karen Muir, Corporate System Accountant 01295 221559
Legal:	Presentation of this report is in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice. Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services 01295 221686
Risk Management:	The position to date highlights the relevance of maintaining a minimum level of reserves and budget contingency to absorb the financial impact of changes during the year. It is essential that the treasury annual report is considered by the Executive as it demonstrates that the risk of not complying with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy has been avoided in 2009/10. Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Insurance and Risk Manager, 01295 221566.

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

An Accessible and Value for Money Council

Executive Portfolio

Councillor James Macnamara
Portfolio Holder for Resources

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Capital Programme 2010/11 – Slippage / Deferral
Appendix 2	Treasury Management Annual Report 2009/10
Background Papers	
2010/11 Budget Booklet 2010/11 Capital Asset Strategy Medium Term Financial Strategy 2010/11 Investment Strategy CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice	
Report Author	Karen Curtin, Head of Finance Karen Muir Corporate System Accountant Jessica Lacey Technical Accountant
Contact Information	01295 221551 karen.curtin@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1				
CAPITAL PROGRAM 2010/11 - Projects Idenitified for Deferral / Deletion June 2010				
AwayDay Deletions / Deferrals				
Service	**Description**	**Deletion**	**Deferral**	**Reason**
Finance	Financial Ledger - Agresso 5.5		£ 50,000.00	Expenditure can be deferred until 2011/12
Finance	Budget Module		£ 15,000.00	Expenditure can be deferred until 2011/12
Environmental Services	Fleet Management System		£ 28,000.00	Expenditure can be deferred until 2011/12
Health & Recreation	Village Hall, Recreation Play Grants		£ 19,000.00	Expenditure can be deferred until 2011/12
Health & Recreation	South West Bicester Sports Village		£ 270,000.00	Expenditure can be deferred until 2011/12
Urban & Rural Services	Implementation of Banbury Residents Parking - Sign		£ 27,000.00	Expenditure can be deferred until 2011/12
Urban & Rural Services	Urban Centres Improvements		£ 7,000.00	Expenditure can be deferred until 2011/12
Urban & Rural Services	Car Park Refurbishments	£ 25,000.00	£ -	Will not be required in this financial year. Will apply again if Engineers' survey highlights required work.
Urban & Rural Services	Replacement Cabling Infrastructure for CCTV		£ 55,000.00	Expenditure Deferred until next year
Customer Services & ICT	Sunray and Mitel Integration (supporting hotdesk &	£ 15,000.00	£ -	Project deleted because we need to establish the thin client solution within the organisation before extending it in this way.
Customer Services & ICT	Telephone Voice Recording	£ 35,000.00	£ -	Project deleted because it is a nice to have rather than mandatory.

Service	Description	Deletion	Deferral	Reason
Customer Services & ICT	Self Service Terminals		£ 26,000.00	Project deferred pending an assessment of what's been delivered so far (kiosks) and the residual need within those parts of the District not covered/without suitable locations for kiosks.
Customer Services & ICT	Online Service Provision via Forms		£ 20,000.00	Project deferred pending examination of alternative, cheaper options to provide online end to end access to services. If still required it will be revived for 2011/12.
Customer Services & ICT	ICT Bids Fund	£ 50,000.00	£ -	£50k deleted due to a number of projects proposed to be funded from the pool being withdrawn as either undo-able this year, or too expensive.
Regeneration & Estates	Bicester Pedestrianisation		£ 250,000.00	Not starting this year
		£ 125,000.00	£ 767,000.00	
Additional Deferral Amounts				
Regeneration & Estates	Banbury Pedestrianisation		£ 20,000.00	End of defects may slip to next year
Regeneration & Estates	Bicester Cattle market		£ 24,000.00	On site, end of defects next year
Regeneration & Estates	Thorpe Lane Depot		£ 50,000.00	End of defects next year
Regeneration & Estates	Bicester Town Centre Development		£ 4,000,000.00	Ist tranche only may be required this year
		£ -	£ 4,094,000.00	
No Longer Required				
Health & Recreation	Sports Centre Modernisation	£ 250,000.00	£ -	Provision for Pension Transfers no longer required.
	TOTAL	**£ 375,000.00**	**£ 4,861,000.00**	

Appendix 2

Treasury Management Annual Report 2009/10

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To receive information on treasury management performance and compliance with treasury management policy during 2009/10 as required by the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

1 Executive Summary

Introduction

1.1 The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management which this Council has adopted requires an Annual Report to be presented to the Executive at the end of each financial year.

1.2 The actual return on investments for 2009/10 was £2.03m compared with a budget of £2.82m a negative variance of £0.79m. The budget was based on an average investment balance of £84m and an interest rate of 3.35 %. The actual average balance was £75m which attracted an average return of 2.70 %.

Proposals

1.3 The Executive receives the report as required by the Code of Practice and notes performance for 2009/10.

Conclusion

1.4 The Council's investment performance was 28% lower than anticipated in the 2009/10 budget. This was due to the Bank of England base rate remaining low at 0.5% and a worse than anticipated performance for our Fund Managers Investec. The approved policy was adhered to throughout the financial year.

1.5 Pending the issuance of revised CIPFA and statutory investment guidance expected towards the end of the year, and in the light of continuing stresses on the world banking system, enhanced priority was given to security and liquidity in order to reduce counterparty risk to the maximum possible extent. Accordingly, some of the investment portfolio was moved into lower earning investment instruments due to their lower level of counterparty risk.

2 Overall Performance

2.1 The actual return on investments for 2009/10 was £2.03m compared with a budget of £2.82m a negative variance of £0.79m. The budget was based on an average investment balance of £84.2m and an interest rate of 3.35%.

The actual average balance was £75.3m which attracted an average return of 2.70%.

2.2 The Council's investments are spread over three different operations: in-house and two fund managers. Their relative performance can be summarised as follows:

£000	Balance 1.4.09 £s	Balance 31.3.10 £s	Average Balance £s	Return £s	Return (%)
In House	31,670	22,320	21,109	394	1.87
Tradition	29,000	25,000	29,000	1,300	4.73
Investec	26,230	20,344	25,340	337	1.33
Total	**86,900**	**67,664**	**104,075**	**2,031**	**2.70**

Fund Manager Performance

2.3 As a consequence of the coalition government's determination to tackle the budget deficit, our Fund Managers Investec, have changed their investment strategy to reflect the likelihood of an extended period of low interest rates. The strategy has been to sell the majority of Cash Deposits with a maturity of less than 3 months and purchase 12 month Cash Deposits at yields between 1% and 1.45%. The yields vary considerably depending on the counterparty, but the strategy is to have a mix to maintain a certain amount of liquidity found in those banks deemed better quality and achieve some extra yields in those banks less fortunate. This process will continue as Cash Deposits fall under 3 months to maturity. This will lengthen the portfolio and increase the yield on the portfolio over time.

The Strategy for 2009/10

2.4 The treasury strategy for 2009/10 was based on the view that there was an intensifying global recession which would not only require central bank rates to be cut to unprecedented historically low levels, but could also require further action from central banks to reverse the downward path of economies.

Bank Rate was expected to continue falling from 2.0% in December 2008 to 0.5% in March 2009 and then stay there throughout 2009/10 before starting to rise in the second quarter of 2010. However, there was a downside risk to this forecast if the recession proved even deeper and longer than expected at that time; this would mean that the first rise in Bank Rate would be delayed.

The effect on interest rates for the UK was therefore expected to be as follows:

- **Shorter-term interest rates** - The "average" City view anticipated that Bank Rate would fall to 0.5% and remain there at the end of 2009 due to the scale of the recession before starting to rise back towards more normal levels in 2010, though it would be 2012 before Bank Rate returned to around 4.5%.
- **Longer-term interest rates** - The view on longer-term fixed interest rates, 50 years, was that they would remain around 3.90 – 3.95% during 2009/10 with the 25 year rate being about 10 – 15 basis points (bps) higher.

2.5 The adopted treasury strategy put to the Council based upon the above forecast was that:

2.5a The major issue for treasury management in 2009/10 has been the huge difference between investment rates and borrowing rates that has emerged during this recession due to: -

- ❖ the unprecedented fall in Bank Rate
- ❖ the disappearance during the year of the margins over more normal investment rates caused by the credit crunch as the Bank of England's quantitative easing operations had the desired effect of easing the supply and cost of credit in the economy during 2009.

2.5b A further strong theme has been the major emphasis on mitigating risk by giving heightened preference to security and liquidity at a time when the world banking system was still under stress and pending the issue, later in 2009, of new CIPFA and statutory guidance on investing. This has therefore resulted in more of our investment portfolio being moved into investment instruments with lower rates of return but higher security and liquidity. This has compounded the significant fall in total investment earnings compared to previous years.

The Economy & Interest Rates

2.6 During 2009/10 the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) was focused on helping the economy to turn around from plunging into the deepest and longest recession the UK economy had experienced for many years.

Despite keeping Bank Rate at an unprecedented historical low of 0.5% all year, the MPC also had to resort to extreme measures in terms of pumping liquidity into the economy through quantitative easing by purchasing £200bn gilts and corporate bonds. This had the effect of boosting prices for gilts and corporate bonds and therefore bringing down yields, so also reducing borrowing costs for both the corporate and public sector.

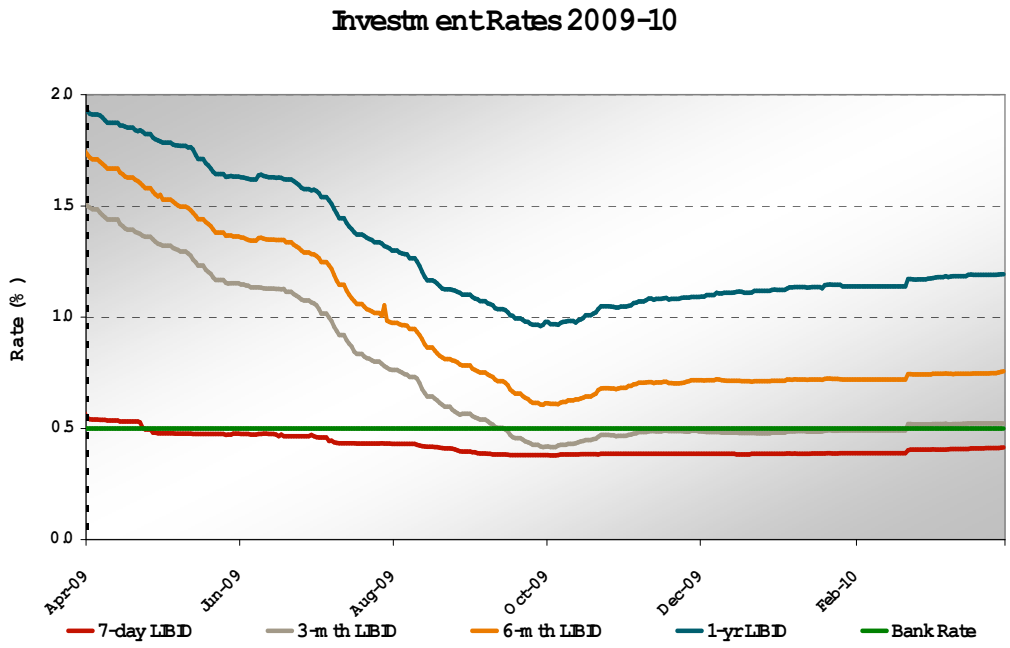
It was notable that the increase in money supply in the economy generated by this programme brought the credit crunch induced spread between Bank Rate and 3 month LIBID (investment rate that depositors could earn) down from 0.95% at the beginning of the financial year to zero during August 2009.

The dominant focus in 2009/10 was on quarterly GDP growth figures. The recession bottomed out in quarter 1 of 2009. There was then major disappointment that the end of the recession failed to materialise in quarter 3 2009 but the fourth quarter of 2009 did then see economic growth return at +0.4%.

Inflation has not been a major concern of the MPC as it fell back below the 2% target level from June to November. However, it did spike upwards to reach

3.5% on the back of the unwinding of the temporary cut in VAT to 15% on 1 January 2010. This was not seen as a cause for alarm as this spike was expected to fall out of the inflation index and inflation was forecast by the Bank of England to fall back under target by the end of 2010.

The graph below shows the investment rates against the bank rate for 2009/10.



Iceland Investments

2.7 The Council is one of over 100 local authorities that were affected by the collapse of Icelandic banking institutions. The Council currently has a total of £6.5 million in 3 investments with Glitnir and is in the process of trying to recover these funds through the applicable legal process.

The Icelandic Government has stated its intention to honour all its commitments as a result of their banks being placed into receivership. The U.K. Government is working with the Icelandic Government to help bring this about. At the current time, the process of recovering assets is still ongoing with the Administrators. The Local Government Association is coordinating the efforts of all UK authorities with Icelandic investments. Members will be periodically updated on the latest developments on these efforts.

Decisions on the priority status of local authority deposits will be made by the Icelandic courts. Allowing for the court cases to be heard, and for the appeals process to run its course, it is considered unlikely that there will be a settled position on priority status before the second quarter of 2011.

The Government, the National Assembly of Wales and the Scottish Parliament have all issued regulations to allow local authorities to delay recognising any loss on these investments that may eventually be incurred until the financial year 2010/11. This authority made an application for capitalisation of these losses in December 2009, but unfortunately we were refused on the grounds that the

Council has enough reserves to cover the losses. Following this, the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 allowed the Council to defer the impact of the impairment charge relating to the 3 Icelandic investments until 2010/11. The Council has decided to take advantage of the Regulations and has accounted for the Icelandic Investments in accordance with CIPFA`s LAAP Bulletin Update 82. Any outstanding credits authorised by the regulation must be reversed in the 2010/11 accounts.

The Local Authority Accounting Panel considers, on the basis of the legal advice obtained by local authorities and advice provided by the Local Government Association, that it remains the most likely outcome that the claims will enjoy priority status. Based on this assessment, the Local Authority Accounting Panel recommends that the estimated recoverable amount to be included in the balance sheet is based on the assumption that local authority deposits will enjoy priority status.

The value (recoverable amount) of these deposits at 31 March 2010 has been reassessed in line with FRS 26 - Financial Instruments which states that the recoverable amount of financial assets carried at amortised cost is the present value of the expected future cash flows discounted at the instrument's original effective interest rate.

In line with guidance provided and latest available information on the likelihood of recovery the Council has reassessed the future cash flows of the deposits with Glitnir on the assumption that we receive preferential creditor status and receive 100% of principal and interest by June 2011 and this results in an impairment charge.

Although the Council remains confident of getting all of its investment back as a priority creditor the Council has considered the possibility of an outcome where we only receive 29% of the principle. This strategy has been built into our Medium Term Financial Forecast.

The non-return of the deposit has not caused any immediate cash flow problems for the Council except for the loss of investment income due to its non-availability for reinvestment.

Compliance with Code

2.8 There has been one instance of non-compliance during 2009/10. We breached our limit with Barclays due to sharing limits in-house and with Investec. This was rectified by increasing the limit with Barclays to £8m on 1st May 2009. It was agreed by the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Organisational Development.

2.9 In light of the change of limits from £8m to £15m we have recently agreed with Investec that they will limit their exposure to any UK Clearer to 10% of their allocation of the fund (£2m) which will allow in-house & TUK a maximum of £13m.

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Executive

Executive Arrangements - Strong Leader Model

6 September 2010

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider arrangements for adopting the so called 'Strong Leader' model of Executive governance as required by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, until this act is repealed later in the year.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

(1) To note that the Government intend to repeal these requirements later in the year and consequently to agree a minimal response to ensure legislative compliance as set out in the following recommendations and endorsed by the minister in his letter as set out in Appendix 1.

(2) To note that Cherwell already operates a Strong Leader Model

(3) To agree the proposals in 1.3 to 1.7 below, including the changes to the approval process for the Scheme of Delegation, the appointment of Leader and Annual Council and recommend them to Council for approval.

(4) To agree that a summary of the proposed changes be placed on the internet and any responses will be reported to Council.

(5) To agree that the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be requested to draft constitutional amendments for consideration by Council to implement the changes.

Executive Summary

Introduction

1.1 Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, local authorities which had previously adopted an Executive and Leader model of governance are required to consult on changing to either a directly elected mayor or new style leader and Executive. This was part of a rolling 3 year programme beginning with counties, then unitaries and finally districts

by 31 December 2010.

1.2 The Local Government Act 2000 requires local authorities to consult on any such change to governance arrangements; however the coalition government has informed all district council's that this consultation should not incur significant expenditure and should be minimal, as it is intended to repeal the legislation later in the year. However it is the law now and we must comply with it.

Proposals

1.3 That the following minimal actions be taken to ensure the council complies with legislative requirements until the requirements are repealed.

1.4 That the constitution be amended to confirm the Leader of the Council's power to determine the size of the Executive, appoint members of the Executive, allocate all Executive functions and serve for a four year term of office.

1.5 That the constitution be amended to confirm the method by which the Leader may be removed from office.

1.6 That the constitution be amended to allow the Leader of the Council to make changes to the scheme of delegation, however these will not take effect until, they are reported to Council.

1.7 That the constitution be amended with regard to the procedure to be followed at Annual Council in light of the above proposals.

Conclusion

1.7 The 2007 Act raises a number of issues regarding governance arrangements which the council is required by legislation to address. This report sets out a measured approach to enable the council to meet these requirements whilst not incurring additional expenditure and allowing it to continue to operate in a way which has proved effective without unnecessary change, until the legislation is repealed.

Background Information

Executive Arrangements

Section 11 of the Local Government Act 2000 provided a number of different models of governance and this Council opted for the Leader and Executive model. The legal requirement was (and still is) for the Council to elect a Leader of the Council. The Council then had a choice of the appointment of between 2 to 10 Councillors to the Executive to be either appointed by the elected Leader (the 'strong' leader model) or by the council (the 'weak' leader model).

Under Part 3 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, Section 62 of the Act introduces a so-called "new style" Leader and Executive, provides for the continuance of directly elected mayor and Executive arrangements but abolishes the mayor and council manager style of executive.

In the case of a local authority electing by thirds, the Leader of the Council is to be a councillor elected by the authority for their four-year term. The Leader of the Council appoints two or more councillors to form the Executive which has a maximum number of 10 (i.e. the 'strong' leader model).

All leaders are required to be 'strong' leaders and must –

(a) determine the size of the Executive;
(b) appoint members of the Executive;
(c) allocate all executive functions; and
(d) have a four-year term of office.

This Council chose the former the strong leader model when the 2000 act was implemented. Therefore arguably there is no need for the Council to change it's Executive governance arrangements or to consult on any change and therefore no need for a special meeting of Council to be called to make any changes.

Any districts which do not currently operate a strong Leader model will be required to go through this process by December 2010.

Executive Delegations

Under the provisions of the Local Government Public and Involvement in Health Act, all executive powers are to be vested in the Leader of the Council who is responsible for delegating decision making as appropriate (e.g. collective Executive decisions, decisions reserved to the Leader of the Council, decisions delegated to Executive Portfolio Holders, decisions delegated to individual members and decisions delegated to other executive decision-making bodies). Executive functions are those that by law must be the responsibility of the Executive.

Currently, these delegations are set out in the constitution and agreed by full Council following consideration and referral from the Executive. Therefore, it will be necessary to amend our processes and constitution to reflect this new power of the Leader of the Council, which transfers to him from full Council.

However, the current constitutional amendment process in terms of delegations has served the Council well and protected the Council from sudden changes in delegation which could prove problematic as this also affects all delegations to

officers and Executive members. It is therefore recommended that the constitution be amended to allow the Leader of the Council to make changes to the scheme of delegation, however these will not take effect until they are reported to Council.

Changes to Annual Council and Appointment of Leader of the Council

There will also be a need to change aspects of the Annual Council meeting and the appointment of Leader.

Currently the Leader of the Council is the leader of the majority party group and holds office as long as they are leader of that group; this is endorsed annually at Council.

It is proposed that in order to comply with the new requirements, that the Leader of the Council be appointed for a four year term, holding office until they resign, are removed by Council or complete the remainder of their term of office as a Councillor.

The Leader of the Council would be eligible for re-election.

Annual Council would no longer annually appoint or note the appointment of Leader. Additionally, Annual Council would no longer have to agree portfolios or Executive members. If the proposal as recommended above is adopted they would merely be reported by the Leader of the Council at any Council meeting (usually Annual Council) before taking effect.

Consultation

As no change is proposed in the Executive governance arrangements, there is no statutory duty on the Council to consult, additionally as this change is compulsory it is questionable whether consultation is meaningful or what value it can add. This has been acknowledged in the letter from the Minister for Housing and Local Government as set out at Appendix 1.

However, as changes are proposed to the method of amending the Scheme of Delegation it is proposed that a summary of the proposed changes should be placed on the internet and any responses received reported to Council.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One To agree the recommendations

Option Two To amend the recommendations

Consultations

Public Consultation Comments will be provided for council

Implications

Financial: There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance 01295 221551

Legal: The proposed course of action is in line with legislation and proportional given the clear government indication to repeal the legislation.

Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services 01295 221686

Risk Management: The measures set out in the report mitigate any risk to the council in light of the legislative requirement

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance 01295 221551

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

None

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Barry Wood
Portfolio Holder for Policy, Community Planning and Community Development

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Letter from Minister for Housing and Local Government
Background Papers	
None	
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Communities and Local Government

The Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
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Leaders of Non-Metropolitan District Councils in England

7 July 2010

Dear Leader

Requirement to consult under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

I am writing to you about the requirements on your council to adopt a new governance model from May 2011, and before doing so to consult your local electorate and interested parties in the area. Whilst it is for each council to decide how it will meet these requirements, I would wish to highlight the Government's view that councils need not incur any significant expenditure on these requirements, and our expectation in today's circumstances that all councils will pursue this at minimal cost.

These requirements are in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and necessarily remain in force unless or until that Act is repealed by fresh primary legislation. It is our intention to do this. For your council the requirements mean that you must resolve by 31 December 2010 to move to either the new leader and cabinet model or mayor and cabinet model, and before so resolving you must take reasonable steps to consult the local electorate and other interested parties in your council's area.

In considering how to approach these requirements you will wish to have regard to the circumstances of today, including both the priority of cutting out all wasteful spending and the Government's commitments to allow councils to return to the committee system, should they wish to, and on elected mayors. We also intend to remove the necessity to elect a leader for four years. We intend to provide for these commitments in our Localism Bill to be introduced later in this Parliamentary session. This may mean that any governance model you adopt in May 2011 may be further changed within a year or so. Your decisions about consultation will also be taken in the context of the greater transparency and openness agenda which I am confident you will be putting in place throughout your council.

Accordingly, the case is strong for any consultation now about future governance arrangements to be the minimal cost option. It will be for each council to decide, but in our view no more than a small newspaper advert/article or press release on your website may be proportionate and right in these circumstances.

Yours sincerely

GRANT SHAPPS MP